

PREFACE.

It is generally admitted, that the tract of country known as the Caucasus affords to the Philologist, as well as to the student of Ethnography, most interesting and important subjects of inquiry. Already in the time of the well-known Aboolfédá, who wrote his work on Geography in the year 1321, the Caucasus, or Djébé el Cáíták (جبل القَيْتَق) has been denominated, on account of the numerous languages which were spoken there, "Djébé el Alson" (جبل الالسن), "The mountain of languages;"* and the researches and inquiries of modern geographers and historians most completely confirm this view. According to the treatise entitled "Elázeeze," (العزيرى) quoted by Aboolfédá, there were not less than three hundred different languages spoken by as many different tribes inhabiting the districts generally spoken of as the Caucasus; and this estimate is fully borne out by the accounts of recent authors. From all we can discern of the past, it appears a settled fact, that in the remote ages of the world, various great waves of population flowed, so to speak, from that mountain, and gradually overspread the earth. The nations and tribes thus descended have been able, with more or less distinctness, to trace their genealogy to the descendants of Noah; and to the greater and lesser immigrations from Central Asia, the present Teutonic and Scandinavian families in Europe undoubtedly own their origin. The author of the His-

* ومن العزيرى قال ويقال له جبل الالسن لان فيه امة لعائيم مختلفة قيل انهم اهل نلتهاية لغة

Géographie d'Aboulféda. Texte Arabe publié d'après les manuscrits de Paris et de Leyde, &c., par M. Reimund et M. le Baron Mc G. de Siane. p. 71.

tory of the Empire of Trapezunt calls the Caucasus the gate through which the first glimpse of culture from the East penetrated into Europe. Ritter is quite certain, that the aborigines of the Greeks ought not to be looked for in the Peloponnesus, nor in Attica or Doris, but in the valleys of the Caucasus; for he maintains, that in remoter ages, certain tribes, either with a view to conquest or in the pursuit of agriculture, came from the neighbourhood of the Caucasian isthmus into the cis-Euxine countries near the Haemus and Olympus.* The Caucasus therefore claims the attention of the Scholar more than any other spot on the Globe.

But, notwithstanding the acknowledged importance of the Djébé el-Alson very little information has hitherto been obtained in comparison with what has been achieved in other branches of philology. The impracticability of much intercourse between Europeans and the people who inhabit the mountain chain of the Caucasus, and the great difficulty of acquiring their respective languages, have hitherto presented almost insurmountable impediments in the paths of the studious inquirer. I therefore cheerfully responded to the call of the Philological Society of London to fill up, to a certain degree, the gap which remained in the field of research since the time of Klaproth,† by placing before their learned members and the public at large my "English-Circassian-Turkish, and Circassian-English-Turkish Dictionaries" which I trust will assist to lift the veil that has so long hung over the Caucasus, and facilitate the acquisition of a language spoken by its earliest inhabitants. To make it more easy for the student to penetrate into the spirit of the Circassian language, I deem it necessary to say a few words respecting the locality of the different districts which the Circassians now occupy; their religious observances, and the opinions of European and Oriental Scholars concerning their language.

* v. Der Kaukasus und das Land der Kosaken, by Moritz Wagner, pp. 19 and 20.

† Ghori-Beg-Mursin-Nogma, in St. Petersburg, is said to have composed a Grammar and Dictionary of the Kabardian language. Sjögern and Dubois de Montperreux have made interesting researches respecting the West-Caucasian languages. The latter is of opinion, that the languages spoken by the Circassians, Kabardians, and Abkhasses belong to the Tshoodish stock, and bear a close affinity to the Finnish language (v. Wagner's "Der Kaukasus," p. 20). Unfortunately, I have not been able to see any work written by these authors.

The Circassians call themselves the people of Addee-gney (which word I take to signify "Mountaineer," or "Highlander," from the Circassian "Áttághágh" (أططاهغ), "height" of a place), and occupy the territory of the Caucasus situated between the rivers Ssotscha (pr. Ssotshá) and Láábá, the Lower Kuban (pr. Kooobán) and the Black Sea. To this territory belong the following provinces:—

The province of the Besstiney (pr. Bésteené-y), situated between the Urup (pr. Oorooop) and Chods (pr. Khóds).

The province of the Machothi (pr. Mákhót-hee), between the Láába and Káárs.

The provinces of the Jegerukai (pr. Yéghérookáí); the Ademi (pr. Adémee); and the Témirgói (pr. Temirgói), situated on the coasts of the rivers Láábá and the Kuban, on the north-western boundaries of the province of the-Nágáí.

The provinces of the Shane (pr. S-láné); the Gatjukoi (pr. Gátýookói); and the Bsheduch (pr. Bs-leydookch), between the Schaongwascha (pr. Shá-o-oogwáshá) and the Áfíps.

The province of the Abasech (pr. Abásekh) is bounded west by the district inhabited by the Schapsuch (pr. Shápsookh); south by the district of the Schapsuch and the Ubych (pr. Oobykh); east by the Schaongwascha; north by the province of the Gatjukoi and that of the Bsheduch.

The province of the Ubych, situated between the Schapsuch and the Dshighethi (pr. Ds-hig-het-hee).

The province of the Schapsuch, which is bounded east by the province of Ubych, west by the province of Natchokudash (pr. Nátkho-koodásh), north by the Kuban, and south by the Pontus.

The province of the Natchokudash (pr. Nátkho-koo-ádsch), situated between the Taman, the Kuban, the province of the Schapsuch, and the Pontus.

The province of the Karatschai (pr. Kárat-tsháí), near the sources of the Kuban and the province of the Nagai (pr. Nágáí).*

The province of the Nagai, between the Kuban and the Láábá.

Since the appearance of Sheykh Manzoor the princes and nobles profess the Mookhammadan religion, and belong to the sect of the

* v. Die Völker des Kaukasus, by Fr. Bodenstedt, p. 171.

Soomites, but the mass of the people adhere faithfully to their former idolatrous worship. Their principal deities are :—

I. Sheebley, the god of thunder, war, and justice. To him all the warriors address their supplications previous to their going to battle ; and if the result of the war be favourable they sacrifice to him the best sheep of their flock. Should there be any thunder and lightning before the fighting commences they regard it as a good omen. The tree struck by lightning is regarded as holy ; and, under its branches, the greatest criminal finds safe refuge. For the same reason they also consider a man stricken to death by lightning as holy, and he is interred with unusual honors.

II. Tleps, the god of fire. The worship of this deity is probably a mutilated fragment of the fire-worship practised by the Guebers ; and of this old worship there are still many traces among the various tribes that live high up in the mountains.

III. Sseoszéres (pr. Ssey-ó-s'tsérés) the god of the waters, rivers and winds. To this deity the sea and the clouds show obedience ; at his command the great masses of snow fall from the icy tops of the mountains, and springs of water flow spontaneously from the rocks. The husbandman who prays to that deity for rain, pours a libation over the parched vegetation of the field. The young woman, the wife and the mother, if the objects of their love and attachment happen to be at sea, entrust their sacrifices to a river discharging itself into the ocean, believing the waves to carry the holy message before the deity, whose throne is in the deep ; and Sseoszéres, on his part, makes known his answer to his devout worshippers by the rushing winds or the moving clouds.

IV. Sekutchá (pr. Sey-koo-t'khá) the god of travellers. He extends his dominion over those who travel on foot, and favours particularly the individual who sets out on a holy pilgrimage. He rewards hospitality with blessings and prosperity, whenever it is practised cheerfully and disinterestedly. On the arrival and at the departure of a traveller, the master of the house always offers a libation to this deity.

V. Mesitchá (pr. Mey-see-t'khá) the god of forests, is worshipped in the shadow of groves ; these being generally consecrated to him, as well as to the other deities. As far as the foliage of

the tree selected for worship extends, the criminal who there takes refuge is sure to find a safe asylum ; as it was formerly, in the temples of the Greeks and Romans. Under the shadow of the consecrated oaks in the forest, the old men of the tribe assemble to administer justice. There also counsel is held respecting war or peace, and it is in such a consecrated spot that the people assemble previous to their going to battle.*

The Circassian language is considered one of the most difficult in the world ; it differs both in the nature of the words and the syntactical constructions from all other Caucasian languages. More than this, the pronunciation is so difficult, that even the most distinguished linguists find it hard to imitate the sound of a syllable as uttered by the mouth of the Addee-ghéy people.

Klaproth expresses himself on this subject in the following words "La langue tcherkesse est une des plus difficiles du monde à prononcer, et aucun alphabet n'en peut complètement peindre les sons. Elle offre sur-tout, dans plusieurs lettres, un claquement de langue impossible à imiter, et une modification excessivement multipliée des voyelles et des diphthongues. Plusieurs consonnes se prononcent si fort du gosier, qu'aucun Européen n'en peut rendre les sons."† It is related among the Turks, that on one occasion, a Sultan of great repute for his learning sent an eminent student, belonging to the College of the Oolámá at Constantinople, to the Caucasus, for the purpose of there acquiring a knowledge of the Addee-ghéy language, with the ultimate intention of compiling a Grammar and Dictionary. After being absent for a considerable time, he returned to his master hopeless of success, and carrying in his hand a bag of pebbles. "There," said he, shaking the bag, "I can give you no better imitation than that of the sounds of the language spoken by that people."‡

They have no Alphabet of their own ; no Grammar or Dictionary ; no literature whatever, except some poetry, in which they give vent to their feelings, on occasions of victory or defeat ;

* Die Völker des Kaukasus, by Fr. Bodenstedt, pp. 201 and 202.

† Voyage au Mont Caucase et en Géorgie, par M. Jules Klaproth, tome second, p. 381.

‡ Spencer, in his "Travels in Circassia," vol. ii., p. 176, relates a similar story.

but they are supposed, as I stated before, to be the original inhabitants of the Caucasus. On this account alone the student should endeavour to form a better acquaintance with them than he has hitherto attempted; because by such knowledge he may be the means of supplying the long-required link in that chain of languages by which some of the first races of mankind communicated.

I have composed this Dictionary, together with a Grammar and Dialogues of the Circassian language, whilst in company with five, ten, and sometimes twenty of the Addee-ghy people. I communicated with them in the Turkish language, and put down, in writing, in their presence, every word which I heard from them; I then read it over to them, and made them translate the same into Turkish, so that I could convince myself of having expressed with correctness every sound as it fell from their lips. I was not satisfied with one examination of each sentence, word, or syllable, but I caused my companions, on various occasions during a period of six months, to listen to my reading and pronouncing their language, and made them always translate it again into Turkish. Sometimes, I used to invite new comers from their different provinces, and I had the satisfaction of hearing them translate the Circassian words which I read to them by such Turkish words as I had in my manuscript.

I have adopted the Arabic Alphabet with some of the Persian and Turkish letters, so as to enable me to express every sound of the Addee-ghy language. With regard to the mode of transcribing it by English letters, I thought it best to approximate it as much as possible to the usual English pronunciation, that the English student may acquire a knowledge of that language with but little trouble. It will, however, be necessary, that he should pay attention to the following remarks in reference to the pronunciation of some of the vowels and diphthongs and a few of the consonants:—

The letter "a," when it is to have the sound of "a" as in "barter," is expressed by the accent above; thus "á."
 "i," when representing the sound which it has in the word "be" is expressed "ee" except in monosyllables as "it," "fit" where the letter retains its usual form. To express a sound like

that which "ey" has in "money," "honey," &c., I have invariably adopted the diphthong "ey."

"o" represents the same sound which it has in the word "abode," and whenever particular stress is to be laid on the sound it is followed by the letter "h."

"oo" represents the sound it has in "moon."

"û" gives the sound of the French "u," as in the word "bu," "su."

"eu" expresses the sound which that syllable has in the French word "peur."

"g" when it represents the sound it has in the English word "get" is expressed by "gh," and when it is to have the sound like "g" in "gin" by "dj."

"gh" indicates the guttural sound of the letter "r" as pronounced by the natives of Berlin in the word "Braten," "Brunnen."

"kh" expresses the sound of the "ch" in the German word "Buch" or that of the "j" in the Spanish word "junta."

I have affixed to this Dictionary a Table containing the Arabic Alphabet with some of the Turkish and Persian letters, together with their names and the corresponding English letters. The student, or traveller in the Caucasus will find this exceedingly useful, as he will have the opportunity thereby afforded to him of making the Circassian Chief or Priest of the community pronounce the Addee-ghy word by pointing it out to him in the book.

In conclusion I have to observe that in the whole of the Dictionary as well as in my Grammar and the Dialogues, there is not a single word which I have copied from any printed book, or manuscript; but that I have extracted, as it were, every word from the mouth of the Circassian and tested the accuracy of my pronunciation in the manner before described.

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