

civilities, that though now a Mahometan he would present me to his wife, the daughter of a bey or gentleman of the country. She had been bred in all the customs of Turkey; yet she made no difficulty, when the servants were away, to lay aside her veil. She was but a girl of fourteen, of small stature, lively, not ungraceful in her manner, and would pass for handsome in any part of the world. She presented to me her child four months old, and acquitted herself of her various duties as the mistress of the house, during my visit, with perfect ease and self-possession. Mount Mertchika impends so closely over Premiti that the sun is never seen by the inhabitants after he passes the meridian.

Having satisfied myself that the town has not succeeded to any place of note in antiquity, we proceeded on our route for Tebelen, crossing the Aous at Premiti by a stone bridge of seven arches. Going down the right or north-east bank of the river for a league, on the side of Mertchika I saw two hamlets, Lippa and Bonali, placed on two eminences, just without musket-shot of one another, which, until Aly subdued both, were continually in warfare together. The melancholy solitude was now in some measure varied by the appearance of shepherds in arms and beys on horseback, tending their flocks and herds. We also encountered companies of the Toxide Albanians, whose bold martial mien brought to my mind what we are told of the ancient Macedonians; and these Toxides seem to want only another Pyrrhus, another Scanderbeg, to restore their former military character. Two leagues and a half north-north-west from Premiti, on our right, we began to discover some of the villages of the district of Dagli, and about an hour afterwards, in attempting to ford the Liocnitza, our horses, beyond their depth, were thrown down, and riders and baggage all plunged in the water, from which we escaped with only a thorough wetting—no great misfortune in the excessive heat which then beset us in the valley. After some time the Aous changed its course from north to north-west, and we came in front of a spacious valley which extended north among the mountains. This valley contains the road to Berat, on the Argent or Apsus. At the beginning of this valley the Aous penetrates to the westward, between gloomy impending precipices of great elevation, where the stream is scarcely to be seen. The place where the four vallies met was in abundant cultivation, whilst the surrounding mountains presented scenes of deep forest or naked pinnacles of the most picturesque contrast, scenes worthy of the pencil of a Titian or a Salvator Rosa. We came at last to a bridge over the Desnitza, the river which comes

