

NUBIA.

29. *Nubia* is bounded on the N. by *Egypt*, on the E. by the *Red Sea*, on the S. by *Abyssinia*, *Kordofan*, and *Darfur*, and on the W. by the great *Libyan Desert*: it contains about 311,200 square miles, and its population is estimated variously from 500,000 to 2,000,000 souls. It is occupied by a number of *Arab* tribes, some of whom reside in towns, and support themselves by manufactures or commerce of the most simple kind, others cultivate the ground, but by far the greater number of them roam over the extensive deserts of which the country is chiefly composed; these were independent until the conquest of the country by the Pasha of *Egypt* in 1821. Four great divisions are readily distinguished in *Nubia*: these are *Turkish Nubia*, which extends from the frontiers of *Egypt* to *Wady Halfa*, or the *Second Cataract* of the *Nile*, and is subject to the *Turkish* viceroy of *Egypt*; the kingdom of *Dongola*, which extends along the great river from *Wady Halfa* to the banks of the *Blue Nile*, the *Tacazze*, and *Mareb*; the kingdom of *Sennaar*, which occupies the Southern part of the country as far as the frontiers of *Abyssinia*; and the territory of the *Bedjas*, extending along the shores of the *Red Sea*. The *Nubians* are almost all black, though their appearance differs materially from that of *Negroes*; they all profess the *Mahometan* religion, but they have combined with it many pagan superstitions, and some few hardly distinguishable remains of the *Christian* faith, which was introduced amongst them at a very early period, and which they appear to have maintained down to the 12th century, or even later.

30. *TURKISH NUBIA* extends along the *Nile*, from *Es-Souan* on the frontiers of *Egypt* to *Wady Halfa*, of *The Second Cataract*: it is composed of a narrow valley about 190 miles long, and generally not more than six or eight miles broad, which is watered by the river, and is the only part of the country capable of cultivation, the rest being a mere desert. The two chief places are *Dir* and *Ibrim*, both situated on the right or Eastern bank of the *Nile*. The former is said to be increasing in trade and importance, the latter is much decayed.

31. *THE KINGDOM OF DONGOLA*, of *Dankala* as the *Arabs* call it, occupies the central part of *Nubia*, being bounded on the N. by *Turkish Nubia*, on the E. by the *Nubian Desert* and the territory of the *Bedjas*, on the S. by the Kingdom of *Sennaar*, and on the W. by the great *Libyan Desert*. It lies principally along the banks of the *Nile*, about as far Southward as the union of its two great branches, and is divided into several districts, each governed by a chief, whose power is absolute within his own little territory, though he is himself in a manner dependant on the sovereign: the names of the principal of these districts are, *Batn el Hadjar*, *Sukhot*, *Dar Mahass*, *Dongola Proper*, *Dar Sheghya*, *Dar Erbatap*, *Berber*, *Chandi*, and *Halfaia*. This country suffered much from the incursions of the *Mamelukes*, when they were driven out of *Upper Egypt*; they maintained themselves here in security and independence for some

time, and were rapidly concentrating their scattered and exhausted forces, when the *Turkish* Pacha attacked them in their retreat, destroyed many of their towns, and reduced the country to subjection. *Maragga*, or *New Dongola*, the present capital of the kingdom, is situated on the left or Eastern bank of the *Nile*, not far from the great Southern bend, and contains about 6,000 inhabitants: it is a place of some importance as a military post, a dépôt for the slave trade, and as containing a manufactory of indigo. *Old Dongola*, the former capital of the country, is about 60 miles further Southward, close on the extremity of the bend of the *Nile*: it is thought to occupy the situation of the town anciently called *Primis Parva*. The *Berbers* are cantoned about the junction of the *Tacazze* with the *Nile*: their chief town is *Goos*, the ancient *Primis Magna*. Higher up the river is *Chandi*, or *Chendi*, within the island of *Meroe*, and no great distance from the ruins of the famous city of the same name; it was once a place of some consequence, and was much frequented by the caravans travelling between *Egypt* and the interior, but it was nearly destroyed about eighteen years since by the troops of the Pacha, and is now merely a halting-place. Some distance above it is the town of *Halfaia*, close on the borders of *Sennaar*, and near the junction of the two great arms of the *Nile*: it contains about 5,000 inhabitants.

32. THE KINGDOM OF SENNAAR is bounded on the N. by *Dongola* and the roving *Arab* tribes of the *Nubian Desert*, on the E. by the *Red Sea*, on the S. by *Abyssinia*, and on the W. by *Kordofan* and the Great *Libyan Desert*. It is by far the most important and settled of all the states into which *Nubia* is divided: and it is so powerful that it has often subdued several of the surrounding territories, and prosecuted successful wars both against *Abyssinia* and *Dar-Fur*. The government is more fixed than that of any other *Nubian* state, but it is by no means less oppressive: the king is elected by the chief officers of the army, and not only makes his acts and decisions subservient to their will, but can be put to death by their command whenever they decree that his services are no longer necessary to the good of his country. The religion of the people is *Mahometanism*; but it contains many traces of Christianity, which was professed here to a much later period than it was in the lower districts. The kingdom of *Sennaar* was founded at the beginning of the 16th century, by a body of *Shillock* negroes, who descended from their settlements on the upper course of the *Bahr el Abiad* into the low country of *Sennaar*, and, having subjected or driven out the *Arab* population, founded the kingdom, which they have ever since maintained. *Sennaar*, the capital of the kingdom, stands on the left bank of the *Bahr el Azergue*, or *Blue Nile*, and is thought to occupy the situation of the ancient *Sirbitum*. It is large, but the houses are in general miserable huts, built of clay with a mixture of straw, to defend them against the fury of the tropical rains; the king's palace which is the only edifice in the least worthy of such a name, is surrounded with a brick wall; but its various buildings are run up without any order, though there is some attempt at magnificence in their interior. The city of *Sennaar*

is said to contain 100,000 inhabitants, but this number is thought to be considerably overrated. To the E. of *Sennaar* lie the towns of *Teawa* and *Beyla*, and still farther in the interior is *Mandera*, the old capital of the country, now reduced to ruins.

33. THE *BEDJAS* dwell in the Eastern part of *Nubia*, along the shores of the *Red Sea*, and are more powerful than any of the *Arab* tribes, who wander over the country between the *Nile* and the sea. Nearly the whole of this extensive tract is excessively arid and sterile, and is hence generally termed the *Nubian Desert*: it is traversed by several ranges of mountains, some of which attain a considerable elevation, and is interspersed with oases, where a few springs of water bursting up from the ground spread a scanty cultivation round them, and furnish the only exception to the torrid waste. The great road between *Abyssinia* and *Egypt* lies through this desert, and is therefore constantly traversed by the caravans of the two countries, who have no means of supporting themselves during such a long and perilous journey, but such as they take along with them: there are several halting places on the road, the most important of which are *Chiggre* and *Terfowi*. Upon the shores of the *Red Sea* is the famous port of *Suakin*, or *Osrok* as it is also called, which is so large and commodious that 200 ships can conveniently ride there at anchor; it is situated on an island, and was taken possession of by the *Turks* at the same time that they reduced the opposite coast of *Arabia* to subjection; after which they made it their maritime capital in the *Red Sea*, and the station of a very powerful navy. In the 15th century it was a place of great wealth and importance, and one of the richest cities of the East; but it is now a mean and miserable place, and derives what little importance it possesses from being the channel by which the communication is kept up between *Arabia* and the interior of *Africa*. The *Turks* still maintain possession of *Suakin*, but their power is limited to the island on which it stands; its population amounts to 8,000 souls, of which number about two-thirds are to be found in the continental suburb of *El Gejf*.

THE KINGDOM OF ABYSSINIA.

34. *Abyssinia*, called also *Habbesh* or *Abex*, and sometimes *Upper Ethiopia*, is bounded on the N. by *Nubia*, on the E. by the *Red Sea*, on the S. and W. by the unexplored regions of the interior; it contains about 241,500 square miles, and its population is estimated at 3,000,000 of souls. It is divided into three principal parts, viz. *Tigre*, which comprehends the provinces between the *Red Sea* and the *Tacazze*; *Amhara*, which includes the country to the Westward of this river; and the provinces of *Shoa* and *Efat*, in the Southern part of the kingdom. These three divisions are all governed by separate princes, each of whom is independent of the others, and maintains a despotic authority over the lives and property of his subjects; and there being no superior the whole country has for a long time presented a constant scene of war and bloodshed, in consequence either of the perpetual devasta-

tion of the savage tribes by whom it is surrounded, or of the open acts of treachery committed by its rulers. About 350 years ago the kingdom of *Abyssinia* was in a much happier condition, and was then governed by one sovereign alone, whose power was so firmly established, that he was able to keep his savage neighbours in check, and to preserve his own dominions from that internal anarchy which has since proved their ruin. In the course of time, however, a tribe, called the *Galla*, originally dwelling to the S. of *Abyssinia*, broke in upon its limits, and gradually overpowering the forces of the king, fought their way into the possession of the whole territory to the W. of the *Tacazze*, where they have ever since maintained their ground. The legitimate sovereign was compelled to retire to the country of *Tigre*, and soon saw the Southern provinces of *Shoa* and *Efat* wrested from his sway, to be placed under the dominion of another barbarian chief: so that his own dominions now form only a small portion in the North Eastern part of that extensive territory which was once governed by his ancestors, and over which he exercised only a nominal authority.

35. The religion of the *Abyssinians* properly so called, in the present state of it, is unworthily dignified with the name of Christianity, and consists of a motley collection of traditions and tenets, which have not any influence on practice; and it is mixed up with many Judaical observances. They are generally considered as a branch of the Copts or Jacobites, but the doctrine is that of the *Greek* church, which they received on their conversion to Christianity by Frumentius. The *Abyssinian* church is governed by a bishop, or metropolitan, styled *Abuna*, sent them by the *Coptic* patriarch of *Alexandria*, who is the only person that ordains priests. There are monasteries in the country both of monks and nuns, who are very far, however, from professing a rigid austerity.—The Mahometans of *Abyssinia* are reckoned to amount to about one-third part of the whole population, and are everywhere intermixed with the Christians. The *Gallas*, and most of the savage tribes who have now obtained settlements in the country, are Pagans.

36. *Adowa*, the capital of *Tigre*, and the residence of the king of *Abyssinia* after the *Galla* obtained possession of *Gondar*, is situated a short distance to the E. of *Axum*, the ancient *Auxume*, and capital of the *Axomitæ*. It is a town of but little consequence, containing only 8,000 or 9,000 inhabitants, and is surpassed by many others in the country: it derives all its importance from being the channel by which the communication between the coast and the interior is almost exclusively carried on. *Massuah* is situated on a small island of the same name in the *Red Sea*, at the North Eastern extremity of *Abyssinia*, and is the great sea-port of the country; it has a safe and excellent harbour, with water deep enough for ships of any size to ride close to the island: its intercourse is chiefly carried on with the opposite coast of *Arabia*. Other great towns of *Abyssinia*, properly so called, are *Dixan*, *Abha*, *Shire*, *Antalo*, and *Chelicut*.—*Gondar*, formerly the capital of *Abyssinia*, and still the largest town in the whole country, is now the metro-

polis of the *Galla*; it is situated a few miles to the N. of *Lake Tzana* or *Dembea*, which is traversed by the Eastern arm of the *Nile*, called the *Bahr el Azergue* or *Blue Nile*; at a short distance from its source in the mountains of *Gojam*. It is about ten miles in circuit, and is situated on a hill of considerable height, surrounded on all sides by a deep valley; the houses are of clay, with conical thatched roofs, and are seldom more than one storey high, with the exception of the king's palace, which is the only building in the whole town which deserves notice; there are, however, numerous churches. The population of *Gondar* in time of peace is estimated at 5,000 souls. *Emfras*, on the shores of the Lake, is the next most important town in the *Galla* country; others are *Tchelga*, *Tcherkin*, and *Sancaha*.—The chief towns in the Southern part of *Abyssinia* are, *Tegulet*, the capital of *Shoa*, and anciently of the whole kingdom; and *Ankober*, the capital of the province of *Efat*.—The district of *Adel*, or *Adaiel*, erroneously called the kingdom of *Adel*, occupies the South Eastern part of *Abyssinia*, and is divided amongst a number of barbarous tribes, completely independent of the other powers of the country, and generally at war with them: its chief town is *Zeyla*, the ancient *Avalites*, on a bay of the same name at the Western extremity of the *Sea of Bab-el-Mandeb*.