

threats induced them to let the merchants go free.¹ Throughout the whole journey, however, robbers were constantly making snatches at the tail of the caravan. And once it befel our friend Benedict that he had dropped behind the party and was attacked by four brigands who had been lying *perdus*. The way he got off from them was this: he snatched off his Persian cap and flung it at the thieves, and whilst they were making a football of it our brother had time to spur his horse and get a bowshot clear of them, and so safely joined the rest of the company.

After eight days of the worst possible road, they reached the TENGI BADASCIAN. *Tengi* signifies a difficult road; and it is indeed fearfully narrow, giving passage to only one at a time, and running at a great height above the bed of a river. The townspeople here, aided by a band of soldiers, made an attack upon the merchants, and our brother lost three horses. These, however, also, he was enabled to ransom with some small presents. They halted here ten days, and then in one day's march reached CIARCIUNAR, where they were detained five days in the open country by rain, and suffered not only from the inclemency of the weather, but also from another onslaught of robbers.

From this in ten days they reached SERPANIL; but this was a place utterly desolate and without a symptom of human occupation; and then they came to the ascent of the steep mountain called SACRITHMA. None but the stoutest of the horses could face this mountain; the rest had to pass by a roundabout but easier road. Here two of our brother's

¹ There are some doubtful points in reading this. In Trigautius the sentence runs: "*Misit dux quidam e maximis, nomine Olobet Ebadascan, Bucharatis regione fratrem suum, qui minus Calcienses rebelles adegit ut negotiatores liberos abire permitterent,*" where Olobet Ebadascan ('Ala-Beg Ibadat Khan?) is treated as one name. Perhaps however the original ran, "Olobet e Badascan"—"a chief by name 'Alá-Beg (or Wali-Beg) of Badakshan, a country under Bokhara." In the latter clause I have supposed *minus* to be a misprint for *minis*; otherwise it must be "induced the less rebellious of the Calcha people," which would be awkward.