

injuring the divers whilst engaged in seeking pearls under water, one twentieth part of all that they take. These fish-charmers are termed *Abraiaman*; and their charm holds good for that day only, for at night they dissolve the charm so that the fishes can work mischief at their will. These *Abraiaman* know also how to charm beasts and birds and every living thing. When the men have got into the small boats they jump into the water and dive to the bottom, which may be at a depth of from 4 to 12 fathoms, and there they remain as long as they are able. And there they find the shells that contain the pearls [and these they put into a net bag tied round the waist, and mount up to the surface with them, and then dive anew. When they can't hold their breath any longer they come up again, and after a little down they go once more, and so they go on all day].² The shells are in fashion like oysters or sea-hoods. And in these shells are found pearls, great and small, of every kind, sticking in the flesh of the shell-fish.

In this manner pearls are fished in great quantities, for thence in fact come the pearls which are spread all over the world. And I can tell you the King of that State hath a very great receipt and treasure from his dues upon those pearls.

As soon as the middle of May is past, no more of those pearl-shells are found there. It is true, however, that a long way from that spot, some 300 miles distant, they are also found; but that is in September and the first half of October.

NOTE I.—MAABAR (*Ma'bār*) was the name given by the Mahomedans at this time (13th and 14th centuries) to a tract corresponding in a general way to what we call the Coromandel Coast. The word in Arabic signifies the Passage or Ferry, and may have referred either to the communication with Ceylon, or, as is more probable, to its being in that age the coast most frequented by travellers from Arabia and the Gulf.* The name does not appear in Edrisi, nor, I believe, in any of the older geo-

* So the Barbary coast from Tunis westward was called by the Arabs *Bār-ul-'Adwah*, "Terra Transitūs," because thence they used to pass into Spain. (*J. As.* for Jan. 1846, p. 228.)