

coast traffic, and *sandal* are small sailing-boats. The houses of Trebizond grew more and more scattered, the road turned away from the shore again, the busy marine spectacle vanished behind us, and the murmur of the waves died away, wishing me a lucky journey to the heart of Asia, and I wondered when I should next behold a seascape.

At Degermen-dere, or "mill village," I parted from the dragoman and mounted my own carriage. In rapid course we drove along the excellent macadamized road which mounts the left side of the river valley towards the south. Now for the first time I was alone and on the road; in front the whole of vast Asia awaited me, which was to retain me for three years and three months. A succession of unknown adventures and grand plans lay before me,—Armenia, Persia, Seistan, Baluchistan, Tibet, burning India, frozen Siberia, the rising sun of Japan, Korea, Manchuria,—it was to be a tremendous journey if all went well—that I knew; and the red line of my route would, like a lasso, involve in its loops the last great secrets of the continent. My pilgrimage commenced to the melodious murmur of the breakers of the Black Sea. How many winters' snows would melt away on undiscovered heights in the mysterious land—"Trans-Himalaya"—before the day dawned when in the farthest east I should see the sun rise like a ball of fire from the bosom of the Pacific Ocean?