

race upon the earth ; and from the treacherous road along the Murad-su the traveller looks up, not without reverence, to Ala-dagh, from whose snowy peak the eternal river commences its course through a land which from immemorial times has been the scene of vanity of vanities, bitter strife, flourishing and decaying kingdoms.

Nine graves beside the road make a dismal impression in this wilderness. In answer to my inquiry, Shakir informs me that last year a party of Armenians made an incursion from the Russian side, and from an eminence fired at the Turks who stood on the defence, killing nine of them.

The Euphrates winds through a broad hollow below us, and the road on its right bank terrace would be excellent were it not for the ravines which so often cross it. Beyond Karka-bazaar the huge cone of Aghri-, or Egri-, dagh appears in a gap in the northern mountains ; its majestic summit is veiled in clouds and its flanks are covered with snow. In front of us, to the north-east, now rises one of the most famous mountains of the world, which, at least in Christendom, enjoys the same reputation as the holy mountain of the Tibetans and Hindus farther east. It is Ararat. We are still forty-three miles from it ; soon we shall come nearer. Now it stands out dull and pale against the background of the darkening sky and clouds, which, parting and dispersing in other directions, seem to be preparing to form at night a canopy around the holy mountain. The chain to the south, about the source of the Euphrates, affords a more attractive spectacle ; the refracted rays of the setting sun produce a wonderful play of colours in pink and blue tints on the clouds which hover over the snow-capped crest.

The last stretch of road is excellent—dry, hard, and even ; Shakir slackens the reins and the horses speed along at a rattling pace, alert, snorting, and sweating, and eager for the mangers filled with barley and hay. The waggons lag far behind us, and the troopers of the escort have hard work to keep up. The two in front turn constantly in the saddle to see that they keep their distance and do not get suddenly entangled in the team. The sun