

# WANDERINGS

AMONG THE

## FALASHAS IN ABYSSINIA;

TOGETHER WITH

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS  
VARIOUS INHABITANTS.

Illustrated by a Map and Twenty Engravings

OF SCENES AND PERSONS, TAKEN ON THE SPOT.

BY THE

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books may improve, or perhaps change the creed of those idolaters." Delighted with the prospect of a speedy departure from a place in whose malarious and putrescent atmosphere, vultures, hyenas, and Tougrourees only can exist, I pushed my way back through the steaming groups of greasy natives, and hurried to the market, where, assisted by the Sultan's secretary, as the Sheikh is pompously styled, I engaged camels, and made arrangements for our departure to *Wochnee*.

Previous to starting, the sottish *Jumma*, in a fit of generosity, sent us two large bags of flour, and also several fowls as a present; and, grateful for our deliverance from that horrid place, we hastened away as fast as our patient animals could carry us.

On our way we passed close to the spot where the mangled remains of the cowardly invaders who had here fallen victims to their own rapacity and love of plunder lay exposed to a broiling and burning sun. The sight was most revolting, and, notwithstanding the hardening influence of barbarism, I felt a cold aguish sensation creep over my heart as I heard the shouts of delight bursting from the camel-drivers when an eagle or vulture sailed over our heads holding a blackened limb or a foul piece of human flesh suspended in his beak.

From here to *Wochnee*, the whole surface, occupying about sixty miles, is utterly destitute of all human habitations—of all signs of human life. The lion and tiger, the buffalo and rhinoceros, the elephant and giraffe are the sole occupants of the whole region,

and the traveller from every overhanging cliff can see the more bulky of these dwellers in the forest leisurely enjoying their noonday siesta on the bank of some stream, or beneath a clump of shady trees. The caravans which for about six months in the year pass and re-pass this solitary route, invariably travel in large parties to ensure mutual protection against an attack of predatory *Tougrources*, and the no less dangerous assaults of wild beasts. As our own party was not very strong we marched almost without intermission, by day and night, an effort which, in our exhausted condition, made our limbs ache, and our heads throb with most agonizing pain.

On the second morning we descended through a long range of hills down into a steep, green wilderness; and from thence, between groves of bamboo, ebony, and different species of euphorbia, we rode on to *Wochnee*, which we reached ere the sun had mounted above the horizon. I had heard so much of *Wochnee*, that I expected to see a large village, occupied by an industrious, busy population; but, to my surprise, I found that the grand market of Western Abyssinia's trade is periodically held in the depth of a dense forest, where, even during the driest season, the luxuriant vegetation hemmed in by steep, towering mountain-ranges, exhales from its humid soil a pestilential miasma. A few miserable huts for the accommodation of the grim collectors of the duty, and the distillers of *detch* and *dallah*, were the only habitations visible in this wooded solitude. My companion, who had preceded me with