

Friedrich Ratzel, The History of Mankind, Volume III, London, 1898. Macmillan and Co., Limited. New York: The Macmillan Company. Translated from the second German edition by A.J. Butler, M.A. with introduction by E.B. Tylor, D.C.L., F.R.S., with coloured plates, maps, and illustrations. 599p.

The text below is extracted from the extensive monograph written by F.Ratzel, an outstanding German ethnographer and geographer, whose studies paved way for human geography ("Anthropogeographie, 1882, 1891"), political geography ("Politische geographie, 1897") and some important disciplines of anthropology.

**Book V, CHAPTER D, WESTERN ASIATICS AND EUROPEANS.
THE CAUCASIAN RACES (pp. 534-545).**

Historical position of the Armenian and Caucasian region - Statements as to survivals of races - Effects of seclusion - Antiquated manners and customs - The chief groups: Armenians, Kurds, Georgians, Cherkesses, Chechenes, Lesghians, Ossetes -Scattered fragments of races and colonies - Dress - Economic and political features.

THE almost impracticable mountain-ranges between the Black Sea and the Caspian were even in ancient times the abode of numerous peoples. Here races were crowded together, unable to settle down tranquilly on the narrow tracts of often unproductive soil. Emigrations and immigrations played, down to the most recent fighting with the Russians, a great part. Refractory tribes were often tamed and broken up by means of compulsory settlements. Even in ancient times the origin of the Colchians was traced to forced colonisation from Egypt. Armenian and Georgian colonies in large numbers were planted by Persian monarchs on Persian soil; since the time of Shah Abbas there have been seventeen Armenian villages in the province of Feridan. Similarly Cherkesses have been removed to Bessarabia, and great numbers of them are found in all Cossack pedigrees. Races moved to and fro across the neck of land between the Euxine and the Caspian, which was one of the gates between Europe and Asia; and in the Caucasian mountain country, to either side of which the roads led, remnants settled, and remained hemmed in and secluded. Thus the Ossetes lived confined between Grusians and Kabardians, completely cut off from the lower valleys and the roads to the plain; which explains much in their manners and customs. Near them dwell others into whose midst people retreating from the plain have thrust themselves. Where the contrasts in natural privileges are as great as here, where, only a few days' journey from the Kuma steppe - "undoubtedly," says Koch, "the most desolate region in Europe" - rise the fertile foothills of Besh-tau, there was no question in which direction the thronging swarms would give way.

Much that is antiquated and much that is crude has kept itself alive in these mountain solitudes. Points recalling even the Stone Age have been noticed, as when

the Armenian Kurds weight the yoke of young bulls with a perforated stone of 12 lbs. weight or so, to prevent them from being over-frisky. The ramifying caverns, in which Xenophon found the Carduchi, still serve as winter quarters for the Kurd and Tartar herdsmen, and even some of the Armenian husbandmen. On the inclement Armenian plateau this marmot-like life is explained by the lack of fuel, but not so in the middle valley of the Kur, on the border of fine forests and close by fortified villages, where a bullet-proof stone tower is attached to each house. At Nij Noukha they leave a woman in childbirth to herself; among the Mussulman Georgians in the province of Zakataly, who are called Ingiloizes, the poor woman, when her pains come on, is even driven from the living rooms as "unclean," and has to seek some stable or barn, where she must bring her child into the world without any kind of help. Not for a period varying from five to seven days may she return to her family and go about her household affairs. A Khevsur woman has even to be delivered without help in a hut outside the village; and formerly she had to stay there a month, while the father abstained from all festivities for seven weeks. In the Caucasus it is not unusual for children to be suckled till their third year. The servile position of the married woman can hardly anywhere be more pronounced than among Ossetes, Lesghians, and Khevsurs. In winter she has to fetch faggots from the extreme limit of trees down into the mountain-valley, and she does all the labour except ploughing and hay-cutting. It is sometimes said that the men have been so long used to a warlike life as to have lost the habit of work; but the low position of the woman is too universal to have grown up so casually. The Khevsurs still like to give their children names that sound like echoes of their pagan past, as Wolf, Lion, Panther, Bear, for boys; Little Sun, Sun-girl, Rose, for girls. All petting of children in public is scouted. Betrothals are made in the cradle, and purchase of wives is universal. A show of wife-capture precedes the conclusion of the marriage proper. Monogamy appears to have prevailed originally; then concubines were allowed, their children remaining in the house as semi-slaves. The family community of the Caucasian Iberians was noticed by the Romans. Among the Georgians such a community often embraces a hundred members in one homestead. The sacredness of hospitality cannot be exceeded anywhere. When the Cherkess has adopted any one as his guest, that person's life and safety are guaranteed. If danger threatens him, the wife of his host will give him milk from her own breast, whereby he is recognized as a lawful son, and it becomes the duty of his new brothers to defend him against his foes at the risk of their own lives, and to avenge him if slain. The guest only loses his rights if, visiting the same village, he puts up with some other - conduct which turns his first host into his bitterest foe. Blood-vengeance is universal for such crimes as cannot be redeemed with cattle. In Suanetia a church is an inviolable asylum for the criminal. The Khevsurs take dying persons out of doors that they may give up the ghost there. Formerly corpses were arranged in a sitting posture on the stone benches of the dead-house, armed, and with their pipes at hand; but they are now laid in stone graves. The Ossete, funeral feast is repeated every Saturday for a year, and is attended by sports and pugilistic

competitions; and the same among the Khevsurs. Not in language only is the Caucasus a region of ethnographic relics and debris.

All Caucasians are perhaps not hybrids in the sense of the Suanetians, who go back to fugitives of Georgian stock, or the Khevsurs, "a mixed race," says Professor Radde, "which has in the course of centuries formed itself in the recesses of the high mountains out of the populations round about"; but in a region of transit and crowding, in a land of refuge, there can be no question of pure races. In the pre-Russian time numerous crossings took place in the Abkhasian lowlands between fugitives from Turkey -Turks, Arabs, even negroes - and native women. The lower strata of Cherkesses are much blended with their Tartar subjects. Koch has already described the Natokhvagas of the North Kuban. In this constant renewal of blood he has seen the primary cause of those physical advantages for which Massudi sang a hymn of praise to the Circassian women, and which induced Blumenbach to make the Caucasian the type of the white races. Before their subjection the Kabardians were pointed out as having among the North Caucasians maintained themselves in greatest purity, and also as the oldest branch. With them, as among the better class of Cherkesses, great stress was laid upon purity of blood, perhaps not without an afterthought as to the market value of well-bred female slaves.

The Armenians in appearance remind us strongly of Jews; fairer in skin than the Persians, black-haired - though brown hair is often found, and in young people even fair hair - with noses sharply curved, and inclined like the lips to fleshiness, and a marked tendency to putting on fat. Many Armenians could be described as fairer and fatter Persians. This race, which from its numbers, capacity, and past history seemed specially called to play a great part in the seething struggle of the Eastern Question, long kept so quiet as to cause a doubt whether any strong resolve would ever again be developed from its Jewish pliability. In their political dependence, and in the linguistic isolation which obliges them to learn other tongues, the Armenians have become the link between Turks and Greeks. None of the races of the once vast Turkish empire has ever approached the Turk in a like degree. The Armenians take part, but also profit, in the maintenance of Turkish rule in Asia and Europe.

Far apart from them, on the contrary, are the Kurds, of whom Polak says, that in colour of hair, skin, and eyes, they are so little different to the northern, especially the Teutonic breed, that they might easily be taken for Germans. There is nothing to contradict this racial affinity in the reputation for honour and courage which, in spite of their rapacious tendencies, the Kurds enjoy wherever it has been found possible to compel them to labour or to the trade of arms. In Persia the Shah entrusts the security of his person to Kurdish officers rather than to any others. Their loyalty to their hereditary Wali, which neither Turks nor Persians have been able to shake, is also noted with praise. The Kurd prefers to wander with his herds, and in the winter lives in caves in the earth, like Xenophon's Carduchi. Where Kurds and Armenians come into contact, there arises the opposition between nomad and settled, herdsman and husbandman, oppressor and oppressed. Hence among the gnawing cankers of Turkey

in Asia is the claim of the Kurds to a share of the Armenians' property, real and personal - a claim not only set up but acted upon, though the Armenians are tributary subjects of the Porte. The Kurds are a highly-mixed race of a type chiefly Iranian, which has been compounded with the Afghan, but is not homogeneous. The eastern Kurds must have received a larger infusion of Turkish blood than the western. "Husbandmen by necessity, fighters by inclination," says Moltke; "The Arab is more of a thief, the Kurd more of a warrior." They are a vigorous, violent race, running wild in tribal feuds and vendettas. Not selling their children, like the Caucasians, they increase rapidly, and have thus extended into Armenian and Persian territory. Their women hold a freer position than those of the Turks and Persians. But the Kurd's greatest friend and fairest ornament is his damascened gun. In Islam they are on the Semitic side, that is, opposed to the Persians, but they have adopted also Nestorian and Jacobite usages.

The Syrians and Mesopotamians have become mixed races, seeing that wherever the plains extend, the Bedouins have pressed in, while in the settled regions the ancient Syrian race, belonging to the Aramaic branch of the Semites, exists now only as a rare survival, having been replaced by Arabs, Turks, Jews, and in recent times even Cherkesses. The basis of the people has, however, remained Semitic. In the towns are also Greeks, Spanish Jews, and those undefinable Levantines of European, half-European, one-tenth European, origin or blend, who prefer to call themselves Catholics. As everywhere in the East, differences of faith go deeper than those of race. The Maronites of the Lebanon, Christians of old standing, annexed only in late times to the Church of Rome, are faced by the Druses with a religion which upon a Mussulman foundation embraces Christian and Zoroastrian elements. After hard fighting with the Maronites, a great part of them has in these last decades migrated to the Hauran. A peculiar position is held by the Ansariebs of Syria. Christians and Mussulmans treat them as outcasts, and will not take their evidence in a court of law. They are said to deform their skulls.

The Georgians, called by the Russians Grusians, are of all the Caucasian races that which most nearly corresponds to the ideal; tall, powerful figures, clear-skinned, brown or black-haired, dark or gray-eyed, of strong physiognomy, owing to the broad low forehead, somewhat strongly prominent nose, and broad face. In many valleys the population is disfigured by goitre and cretinism; and in the higher mountain regions the strain is on the whole better than in the lowlands. Naturally, all the forms are not beautiful. There are Tartar blends of unmistakable stamp, and many a traveller has been as much disappointed in the Caucasian beauties as in the Colchian wine. There are districts with handsome people and less handsome. Artwin is rich in this line, while the surrounding Armenian country and the district of Tiflis are poor. The Georgians, whose historical importance has long been a thing of the past, have by means of their daughters exercised continuously an ennobling effect on the breed of the neighbouring peoples. Georgian women are numerous and influential in all the harems of the East; their blood flows in the veins of Turkish, Egyptian, Persian, and Tartar grandees, and in more recent times they have frequently married Russians. The Georgian character has

an indolent and sensual vein, which has tended more and more to repress them, and that not in presence of Europeans only. The Armenians, especially, have found the way to attract to themselves the once large possessions of the Georgians, and in Tiflis, the old capital of Georgia, it is not the Georgians but the Armenians - who make up 40 per cent of the population - that set the tone to-day.

Beside the Mingrelians, the Lazes, who inhabit the ancient Colchis, and the Swans or Suanetians who live north of the Mingrelians, between them and the Abkhasians, in the most secluded of the larger Caucasian valleys, are more closely akin to the Georgians in language. The 12,000 "free Swans," independent till a generation ago, who live about the sources of the Ingur on the south side of the great chain, are among the most vigorous races of the Caucasus, dwelling exclusively in villages of castellated houses with tall towers for defence. Imeritians seem to have immigrated from the south-east, Mingrelians from the west; but to both the Suanetian language, developed in the seclusion of the mountains, has become almost unintelligible. In spite of vendetta and frequent village feuds, they are an industrious race of men, making an active use of the four months of growth which the climate of their high valley allows. Near akin to them in origin are the Tushins, Pshavs, and Khevsurs, settled further east along the great range; similarly small mixed races, started, no doubt mainly by fugitive Georgians, who live to the east of Tiflis in the basin of the Yora, in the middle and upper mountain regions. Poor, vigorous, simple, quite old-fashioned in manners and usages, they represent a highly original national existence. Their religion is an indication of their fortunes. Like that of the Suanetians and Ossetes, it is a very motley Christianity, worn very threadbare, in which, spite of the mutilated Church prayers recited by the "decanos," Islam has crossed its notions in great variety with those of Christianity; while in addition to these, nature-worship goes on at sacrificial altars and in sacred groves. Among the Suanetians, Queen Tamara is the great saint. Her churches are little chapels, inconspicuous among the gigantic towered houses.

We do not find among the Northern Caucasians that affinity of language, or that yet more intimate affinity of customs, which we do among those south of the range. They fall into several linguistic groups, and have undergone more modifications from the surrounding races. At least three groups may be distinguished. We have first the Cherkesses in the western half of the Caucasus district, and beyond from the frontier of Mingrelia nearly to the Straits of Yenikale. Physically, these people come nearest to the Georgians, with whose daughters the famed "Circassian" girls vie for the prize of beauty. Among their individual tribes differences are noted, which come to this, that certain groups like the Abkhasians, to whom is ascribed a strong mixture of Georgian blood, are browner of skin, blacker-haired and leaner, while the Kuban Cherkesses who roam the country about the northern foot of the Caucasus are less regular of feature and less conspicuous of stature. But the princely families of the Cherkesses and Kabardians are also said to be darker of skin and hair than the majority of their subjects, which they themselves, as Mussulmans, love to ascribe with pride to Arab descent. The Cherkess character is distinguished from that of their neighbours on the east, especially

the Kists and Lesghians, by nobler traits. But a good deal of Tartar reaches from the steppe into the Northern Caucasus; such as the imitation in architecture of the felt *yaourts*, or where a stationary mode of life is in fashion, the arrangement of the *sakla* or flat-roofed hut of wattle-work daubed with clay, supported by four posts, and the watch-tower of wattle and daub to correspond. Deeper in the mountains the building is more solid. The Cherkesses in all their ramifications are Mussulmans, and afford, especially where they have immigrated amid Georgian populations, several examples of the rule that in the Caucasus the Mussulman is more industrious than the Christian. They fall into the two great groups of Adighes - to whom belong the Cherkesses proper - and Kabardians, and of Asegas and Abkhasians. Large portions of both have migrated to Turkey since the last Russo-Turkish war.

The Chechenes, as the Russians call the people whom the Georgians call Kisti, and who call themselves Nakhtchuri and Nakhtche, that is "people," live, about 140,000 in number, to the east of the Kabardians, and the great military road. By Chechnia is briefly understood the country between the Assa the Sulak, and the last terraces of the Caucasian range known as the mountains, of Little Chechnia. The Chechenes migrated to their present seats from the mountains, and drove the Turkish Kumuks eastward; but in the course of the struggles with the Russians, in which they were some of the most stubborn participators, some of their clans withdrew again into the hills. They are a race of "Uzdi," or free men, knowing no chiefs, but self-governing within their clans, which still bear the names of the villages once occupied by them in the mountains. Tradition, manners, and customs all point to their having once been Christian. Islam did not succeed in penetrating them till the end of last century. The Chechenes have always passed for one of the most warlike, and at the same time most savage and cruel, of Caucasian races.

The Ossetes, about 111,000 in number, occupy the highest inhabited regions of the Caucasus, round Kasbek. Their language assigns them to the Perso-Armenian kindred, history to the once Christian stocks of the Caucasus. Islam has indeed loosened the bond between them and other Christian races, but has not been able itself to gain a footing. A religion has grown up quite peculiar to themselves, recognising no priestly status, but only hereditary or elective priests, strictly speaking only overseers of the popular temples, and with the name of "*decanos*" or "*papar*." The Ossetes still revere the Virgin as "Mady Mairam"; but they locate her on mountain-heights and in caverns, where the tutelary spirits of the villages also have their places of worship in towers and houses lying higher than the village. The oldest man in the commune holds the office of sacrificing priest, and has alone the right to enter the narrow door of the temple whither the victims are brought. The temple is small, low, dark, without windows or ornament of any kind; inside stands a stone altar for sacrifice, covered with a few glasses of beer and various amulets. These village tutelary spirits seem to get more reverence than all the other saints to whom the Ossetes apply, like Elias and Nicholas; and next to them the patron saints of all beasts of the chase, of whom the Ossete always first asks permission to shoot when he will go a-hunting. Inanimate things, also,

have their patron saints; in short, there is no object connected with Ossete life that has not its "god" or "saint." Ossete magicians and soothsayers, as also the persons who conduct marriage and burial ceremonies, apply to "saints" without number in their prayers and conjurations-to the saint of the cobweb, the saint of hair and nails, the saint of wind and grass, the saint of beetles, worms, and snakes. Every step is surrounded with magic and incantations, and the magician is the real priest. To him are known most of the songs that contain a mythology of their own, singing as they do of the giant heathen race, the Narts, who once inhabited the Caucasus. The deeds of the Nart princes, among whom the Promethean figure of Batras or Batirae is conspicuous, remind us of those who are renowned in the heroic legends of Persia. Many other things in the manners and customs of the Ossetes point to an exterior source in the remote past. Unlike Orientals, they sit on benches and stools. Judgements are pronounced in the assembly of the village *patres familias*, formerly even capital sentences; but the head of the house has to execute them on his own people. Family ties, and those of hospitality, stand high with the Ossete. Before a carouse with his friends he says a kind of grace, his cup in one hand, the meat in the other. Originally the Ossete has neither writing nor numbers; he casts his accounts with a notched stick.

The most easterly group of North Caucasian peoples embraces the inhabitants of Lesghia and Daghestan; small peoples, with some 400,000 souls, who speak several distinct languages, and have been pressed far back by their neighbours. Part of them, in racial character and mode of life, form a transition to the Tartars of the adjacent lowlands; pasturing herds and flocks, they dwell, like their predecessors in Roman times, the Albani, in felt *yaourts*, differing from those of the Tartars in their elongated form, or in little wooden houses put together in separate pieces for convenience of transport from one feeding-ground to another. The very name points to mixed descent. The centre of Daghestan is inhabited by so-called Avars. "Avar" is of Turkish origin and denotes "robber." These people have, however, no common name, but call themselves after the principal villages of each tribe. The name Lesghian is said also to mean "robber." The agricultural Kumuks or Kasi-Kumuks of this region have nothing in common with the Turkish tribe of the same name north of the Terek, save the name, which has been applied to them without justification. Persian influences are strongly felt here. The architecture of the flat-roofed stone house, with its broad surrounding wall, the careful fittings of the interior, are far enough from Cherkess simplicity. Their strict Shiite profession marks the Lesghians as more pronounced Mussulmans than their western neighbours, but has not prevented their Bairam feast from borrowing many features of the Russian Easter.

The Avars of Daghestan, mentioned above, are not of Turkish type. Racially, they are Caucasians, and their language stands near that of the Chechenes in the East Caucasian group. Thus they have nothing to do with the Huns who penetrated to Central Europe. There seem, however, to be points to support the assertion of their kinship with the Avars who entered Europe later. Tradition and language point to a northern origin and arrival from a level country; according to Khanikoff even to a former

nomad state. When we remember that the Avars are said to have carried an Alan tribe along with them, that the Ossetes came into connection with the Alans, and, lastly, that in the Ossete territory skulls have been found deformed in the same way as the Avar skulls, we seem to have an explanation of the so-called Avar skulls here and in Eastern Europe.

In the dress of the Caucasian peoples Tartar influence prevails to the north, as also in the use of felt for clothing, as in the *bourkas* or sleeveless coat; Armenian and Persian to the south. Religious differences make themselves apparent also in the clothing. The women of the Shiite Lesghians wear the long baggy trousers, close-fitting coat reaching to the knees - both gaudy in colour - blue shift, low fez-like cap; but among them, as among their Mussulman sisters in the Caucasus, the veiling of the face is found only as an exception. Armenian and Georgian women, on the other hand, wear long clothes. White, which men avoid, is preferred by women; and they wear red caps, which the men despise. On the other hand both sexes, especially among the vain Kabardians, take much trouble to get as small a waist as possible. There can be few places where the women's dress, through the influence of silk and cotton goods, has lost its originality so much quicker than that of the men. The peculiar ornaments of the head and the belt are all that remain in many valleys of Daghestan. The men's dress is more uniform. The *chokha* or close-fitting coat reaching beyond the knee and usually girt, its gray colour relieved by fur trimmings, the cap of cloth or fur, sometimes hemispherical, sometimes of fantastic height - its variations in these respects, and in shagginess afford some index of the wearer's greater or less pugnacity - the socks knitted in tasteful patterns and sometimes with a gold thread in them, and, finally, the leather slippers of Persian shape with pointed toes, are found both north and south of the mountains. Variations in details are naturally not excluded. Customs like that found in Suanetia of sewing crosses on the garments, especially where a stab or a shot has pierced them, are not universal. The arrangement of the cartridge-belt across the breast, the shape of the head-covering, the longer or shorter cut of the clothing, are subject to alterations. Mussulmans shave the head, the Lesghians leaving a triangle over each ear; and the fashions of dressing the beard vary from tribe to tribe.

The primary weapon in the mountains is the iron-shod pole, to which a projecting handle or arm on which to hang a powder-flask, and a forked top to serve as a gun-rest, give an original appearance. It is a long way from this to the load of weapons in which the Cherkess swaggers. In the fighting times sword, dagger, and pistol were indispensable component parts of these people's dress. For special occasions were added the mail-shirt, the musket, the Asiatic bow, and a well filled quiver. Many valuable damascened weapons were formerly imported from Persia and Turkey, and old panoplies, handed down from generation to generation, were the pride of princely houses. Horse-trappings were similarly treated. Arrows with white eagle-feathers were highly valued, and people of low rank might not venture to use them. Archery has remained till the present day a favourite diversion of young people in the Cherkess country.

The mountain districts and elevated plains of the Caucasian region not being on the whole eminent for fertility, the Ossetes, Khevsurs, and their fellows in the higher parts are unable to carry on either Alpine farming to any adequate extent, or agriculture with any certainty of profit. Above all they have no means of wintering large herds. The single great cattle-breeding district is what was Turkish Armenia, from which there has long been a large exportation of sheep. The well-known story of the fat tails, which for convenience sake are stowed in little go-carts, has been recently related afresh by Dr. Arzruni of Tiflis with reference to the flocks at Van, where Angora goats are also bred. A considerable amount of live-stock too is bred in Lesghian territory, where a peculiar thin and goat-like breed of sheep is well suited to the mountain pastures. The Caucasian goats are said to pair with the wild *bezoar* goats. The warlike Cherkesses take much trouble in breeding thoroughbred horses. In the fertile lowlands and terrace-lands of Mingrelia, Imeritia, Georgia, Kakhetia, agriculture, which here includes rice-growing, has fallen off. The vineyards and orchards, of which former travellers tell with delight, occupy now a much smaller region. It is asserted that the climate has grown more and more uncertain, and the vine-disease has attacked even the wild grapes of the Mingrelian forests. But the natives of this part are lazy and luxurious. The wines of Kakhetia have the reputation of being the oldest and most genuine in the Caucasus. The Georgians, however, both make and drink the most wine; drinking it too at in terminable carouses regulated by traditional customs. Opium-smoking has unhappily been introduced from Persia. The vine grows at even 3 300 to 4300 feet above the sea. Here too silk is grown, and maize and the Italian millet (*setaria*) cultivated, as well as wheat. Life is less easy here than in the lowlands, but in the Caucasus industry increases with the altitude. Barley and oats are the mountain crops. On the north-eastern slope the limit of corn extends to 8000 feet or more. In the lower parts of Daghestan, where drought proclaims the proximity of the steppe, artificial ponds may be found near almost every village. The plough is little used, and the sickle full of notches serves rather to catch hold and tear up than to cut. Corn is kept in large baskets standing on frames in the open, or in trenches underground. Bread is of the oriental kind, toasted rather than baked; often too in the form of unleavened flat cakes. In Daghestan it is made of barley or bean-meal. The taste for onions and garlic is very general; in many districts they may be called the chief garden vegetable. Pulse, especially in the form of broad beans, ranks next to them.

How important is the preservation of the forests in these elevated, cold, and in parts naturally arid regions may be learnt from the decline of industry and population at Erzeroum since the cession of the Soghanlu forests to Russia. The legend that these forests were the creation of an Armenian king has been taken to imply that forestry once stood higher in that country; and from Daghestan we have a story ascribing to plantation the origin of a plane-grove near Nukha. Wood, above all the fine wood of the box, has long formed an article of export in the Caucasus. Many of the wild plants that grow there in profusion have been turned to use by the Caucasian peoples. In Daghestan the shoots of a certain *rhamnus* are used for tea, and the stalks of various species,

heracleum, *andropogon*, *cnidium* are eaten, as well as the leaves of *Sempervivum pumilum*.

The women support a domestic industry, which formerly was in the main concerned with clothing. The coarse Lesghian cloth, the gold embroidery on leather of Daghestan, the silk sashes of Kumukh, the home-made carpets which cover the floor of Lesghian huts, have become articles of trade. The taste for wooden vessels, cut out of one block, seems to recall older times; the like are used by the Basques. Very good unglazed earthenware is made in the Caucasus. Plates and dishes, beautifully painted and glazed, such as adorn the walls of peasants' rooms in Daghestan, are the produce of trade or of ancient raids into the border provinces of Persia. There is a demand for earthenware vessels of large size, milk being churned by shaking in them, and wine being stored in them underground. Bronze-working was once highly developed in the Caucasus; later, and indeed to the present day, the industry, imported from Persia, of inlaying polished steel with gold has flourished.

The entire political life and the historic activity of the Caucasian races is closely dependent on the fashion of living in strong castellated houses of several stories, walled round, often furnished with loopholed towers 70 or 80 feet high, which, even combined into villages, stand detached on the hillside. These towered houses are most frequent in the mountains. Among the free Suanetians every homestead has its tower. But even the Mingrelian, where the fertile lowlands invite to denser habitation, sticks fast to his solitary walled farm-buildings, while in Daghestan an embankment and ditch surround the homesteads, the gate being a mighty structure of stone. Here, in rooms often very comfortably furnished, the members of the family live together in a close and exclusive union of housekeeping, such as the Romans admired long ago in the Iberi of the modern Georgia. Here was developed their vigour in self-help and their readiness for the fight. Wife and children, as regards the father's authority, are slaves. Among the Ossetes and other peoples, no son starts a conversation or sits in his father's presence; when the father enters, all rise. Questions of peace and war are decided in the assembly of heads of families. Common interests, which among the smaller races have been clearly circumscribed by geographical considerations, bound these compact village-tribes together politically; and similar confederations have been by no means always confined to the heart of the mountains. Armenia possesses a remarkable relic of ancient freedom in its republic of Khotorjur, consisting of eight Catholic villages, the inhabitants of which are by ancient custom bound to render mutual services almost amounting to community of goods. The lively family and tribal sentiment of the Armenians is at times in its economic results found inconvenient by neighbouring peoples.

Like their social arrangements, the much-lauded valour of the Caucasians, which is not unconnected therewith, is not peculiar to one stock, but is a common possession of all, though not exercised by all alike. Georgians, Cherkesses, and Lesghians were formerly the most conspicuous. Vendettas and the interminable feuds between clans and villages have contributed to its training. Where warlike practice pervaded whole

generations, as during the long period of the Russian wars in the Caucasus, a closer union was effected among the clans of freemen under fighting chiefs, of whom Schamyl is the most notable example. Turkish Beks from the borders of the steppe had long intruded as conquerors into the independent life of the village republic, and reduced large populations on the north side to serfage; while the relations of dependence in which some Nogai tribes of Turks, like the Karachais, stood towards the Kabardian mountain tribe had been broken up. Even since their subjection the mountain peoples have remained bound together in free family union. Persian influence seems to have operated on weapons and equipment, but also that of mediaeval Christianity on manners. Even at this day the Suanetian dedicates himself in chivalrous devotion as *linturali* to a woman by the ceremony of kissing her on the breast, after which he is bound to her by a relation of pure friendship and protection.

The days have gone by when the Caucasian coast tribes appeared as sea-faring people, equipped with swift galleys, dreaded as pirates; and when great expeditions were sent out to put a stop to this mischievous trade, which even in ancient times was bound up with kidnapping and slave-dealing. Trade, necessary then as now to the not over-productive mountain country, must have been served, as it would seem, in earlier times also, more by foreign than native navigation. The Caucasians have always wanted salt and corn, offering in exchange timber, hides, wax, and honey. They had not, like their Sarmatian neighbours, who Strabo tells us, would not even procure iron, and had accordingly to tip their spears and arrows with bone, any objection to trade. In metal-work they formerly surpassed all their neighbours. The raw material they must have got out of Caucasian mines; but in the forms of the ancient bronze articles of which quantities occur, Iranic influences, older than Islam, make themselves felt.