

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

Archaeology

The discovery of material remains from the recent or the ancient past has always been a source of fascination, but the development of archaeology as an academic discipline which interpreted such finds is relatively recent. It was the work of Winckelmann at Pompeii in the 1760s which first revealed the potential of systematic excavation to scholars and the wider public. Pioneering figures of the nineteenth century such as Schliemann, Layard and Petrie transformed archaeology from a search for ancient artifacts, by means as crude as using gunpowder to break into a tomb, to a science which drew from a wide range of disciplines - ancient languages and literature, geology, chemistry, social history - to increase our understanding of human life and society in the remote past.

Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh

Well versed in oriental languages and antiquities, and possessed of an 'insatiable thirst for seeing new countries', Claudius James Rich (1786/7–1821), the East India Company's resident at Baghdad, set out for Kurdistan in 1820 despite his delicate health. Before he succumbed to cholera the following year, he had visited and described many historic locations in present-day Iraq and Iran. His written account has long stood as an important early record of the region's geography, culture and archaeology. This two-volume work was edited by his widow and published, with maps and other illustrations, in 1836. Rich's *Narrative of a Journey to the Site of Babylon in 1811* (1839), including his two archaeological memoirs, is also reissued in this series. Volume 1, including a biographical sketch of the author, covers the journey to and time spent in Kurdistan, closing with the author's 'sorrow at bidding adieu to its interesting people'.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh

*With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad
and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis*

VOLUME 1

CLAUDIUS JAMES RICH



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge, CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108077484

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2014

This edition first published 1836

This digitally printed version 2014

ISBN 978-1-108-07748-4 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



The material originally positioned here is too large for reproduction in this reissue. A PDF can be downloaded from the web address given on page iv of this book, by clicking on 'Resources Available'.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NARRATIVE
OF A
RESIDENCE IN KOORDISTAN,
AND ON THE
SITE OF ANCIENT NINEVEH;
WITH JOURNAL OF
A VOYAGE DOWN THE TIGRIS TO BAGDAD
AND AN ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO
SHIRAUZ AND PERSEPOLIS.

BY THE LATE
CLAUDIUS JAMES RICH, ESQ^{RE}

THE HON. EAST INDIA COMPANY'S RESIDENT AT BAGDAD,
Author of "An Account of Ancient Babylon."

EDITED BY HIS WIDOW.

TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
JAMES DUNCAN, PATERNOSTER ROW.
MDCCCXXXVI.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Notice respecting the Maps | ix |
| Preface | xi |
| Brief Notice of the Life of Mr. Rich | xv |

CHAPTER I.

| | |
|---|---|
| Departure from the Residency—Manner of travelling—Description of our Party—Thunder-storms—Kifri—Sassanian Ruins—Beiat Chief's Hospitality—Naphtha Springs at Toozkhoormattee. | 1 |
|---|---|

CHAPTER II.

| | |
|--|----|
| Departure from Toozkhoormattee—The Valley of Leilan—Yusuff Aga's camp—His hospitality—Entrance into Koordistan—Cultivation and appearance of the country—Present of provisions from the Pasha of Sulimania—Arrival at our camp before Sulimania—Visit of the Pashas—Of Koordish gentlemen. | 35 |
|--|----|

CHAPTER III.

| | |
|--|----|
| Osman Bey—Entrance into Sulimania—Visit to the Pasha—Description of our House—Attachment of the Koords to their Chiefs—Anecdotes—Partridge Fighting—Afghans in Shehrizoor—Xenophon and the Ten Thousand. | 76 |
|--|----|

CHAPTER IV.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Conversation with the Pasha—Kai Khosroo Bey—Koordish Tribe of the Jafs—Climate of Sulimania—Breakfast with the Pasha—Population of Sulimania—Firing at a Mark—Takhti Suliman—Ancient Excavations—Musical Party—The Zor Khaneh, or Gymnasium—Dinner at Osman Bey's—Oriental prayers—Suliman Bey—Feats of Swordsmanship—Agriculture—The Ramazan. | 111 |
|--|-----|

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

iv

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER V.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Brave Russian Soldier—Cruelty of the Prince of Kermanshah—Great Mahometan Saint—Natural Productions of Koordistan—Piety of Mahmood Pasha—Anecdote—Abdullah Pasha arrested—The Bairam—Koordish Tribes—Anecdote—The Bulbassi Tribes—The reigning Families in Koordistan—Arrival of Delli Samaan with Antiques. | 139 |

CHAPTER VI.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Departure from Sulimania for the Mountains—The Pass of Giozheh—Tents pitched at Gherradeh—Beauty of the situation—Noise and bustle of loading—High Mountains—Vineyards—Corn—Beautiful Country—Officer of the Chief of the District of Kizzeljee—Laughable Equivoque—Steep Ascent—Sons of Khaled Bey—Cantonment at Ahmed Kulwan—Reapers singing the Tale of Ferhad and Shireen—Locusts—Temperature of Springs—Green Frogs—Curious Game—Leave Ahmed Kulwan—Journey to Beestan—Artificial Mounts—Unhealthiness of Beestan—Our People all taken ill—Leave Beestan—Penjween—Jaf encampments—Moving parties—Lady and her servants—Jews. | 159 |
|---|-----|

CHAPTER VII.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Entrance into Persia—Lake of Zeribar—Kai Khosroo Bey—Jaf encampment—Djereeding match—Cross Mount Zagros—Garran peasantry—Inclement winter—Jaf quarrel—Sinna—Magnificent collation—The palace—Tyranny of the Vali of Sinna—General mourning—Rebellion—Death of the Vali's son—Despair and cruelty of the Vali—Terror of his subjects—Change in our plans—Consternation of the Vali's ministers—Entreaties of the council—Are successful—Their joy and gratitude—Departure from Sinna for the camp of the Vali | 185 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER VIII.

| | |
|--|--|
| Leave Sinna—Appearance of the Country—Tents of Gulaneh—The Koords great politicians—The Kizzel Ozan River—Encampments—A Peasant's remark—Lawless conduct of the Jafs—Precipitous Road—Refreshments of Honey and Butter—Arrival at the Village of | |
|--|--|

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

Y

PAGE

| | |
|--|-----|
| Meek—Mrs. Rich taken on to another Village—Bee-hive—Rejoin Mrs. Rich—Present of Fruit from the Vali—Arrival at Bana—The Vali's Son—Fine Fruit. | 221 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER IX.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Visit to the Vali of Sinna—The Castle of Banna—Conversation of the Vali—Marriage of his Son—The Vali returns my visit—His cruelty at Banna—Preparations for our departure—Unexpected hindrances —Difficulty of obtaining Cattle—Vali's Apologies—The Sultan of Banna—Begin our march—Village Chief—Refuses to allow us to proceed on our journey—Disagreeable situation—Determine to fight our way—The Chief alarmed—Allows us to proceed—Mountains— Enter the Bebbeh Territory—Omar Aga's retainers—Ruins of Karatcholan—Fine Fruit—Precipitous Hills—Arrival at Sulimania | 242 |
|---|-----|

CHAPTER X.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Failure of Vaccination—Death of Osman Bey's Son—Sorrow of the Pasha—Antiquities of Shehrizoor—Alexander the Great and the Indian Princess—Names of districts—Omar Aga—His persecutions and imprisonment—Attachment of his Followers—His disinterested- ness—His dislike of Osman Bey—Rahmet ullah Tartar—His jour- ney through the wild and inaccessible Mountains inhabited by the Chaldean Christian Tribes—Amadia—The Pasha's advice to the Tartar—His difficulties and dangers—Chaldean Cantonment—Rice- bread—Astonishment of the Chaldeans at the sight of Rahmet ullah—Their contempt for Mahommed—Yezids—Van—Names of Koordish Clans—Wedding feast—Ladies dancing—Condition of the Koordish Women—A Koordish Marfisa—Dress of the Men— Tale of Darishmana—A Bebbeh Patriarch | 268 |
|--|-----|

CHAPTER XI.

| |
|--|
| The Pasha melancholy and depressed—His eldest Son sent a hostage to Kermanshah—Sickness of the youngest—Dissensions in his family—Ahmed Bey of Darishmana—Tribes of Rewandiz—Koordish funeral—Bebbeh family—Series of Bebbeh Princes—Death of Pasha's child by Small-pox—Affliction of the Pasha—Suliman Bey—Commerce of Sulimania—Conversation with Osman Bey— The Pasha's desire to abdicate—Omar Aga—His intelligence and |
|--|

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| accuracy—Comparison between the Koords, the Turks, and the Persians—Lokman—Farewell visit to the Pasha—Religious conversation—Osman Bey ordered to his Government—Refuses to obey—Traits of Koordish character—Flight of the great Dervish Sheikh Khaled—Pasha's last visit to Mr. Rich—Interesting conversation—Pasha's grief for the loss of his Son—His character—Preparations for leaving Koordistan—Sorrow at bidding adieu to its interesting People | 298 |

APPENDIX.

| | |
|---|-----|
| I. Fragment of a Journal from Bagdad to Sulimania, by Mrs. Rich | 331 |
| II. Information, collected from Natives, concerning Jezira and the adjacent Country | 375 |
| III. A Series of the Princes of the Bebbeh Family | 381 |
| Dates and Facts connected with the History of Koordistan | 385 |
| IV. Routes procured at different places | 388 |
| V. Particulars relating to the Topography of Koordistan | 390 |
| VI. Specimens of the Koordish Language, in various Dialects | 394 |

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)DIRECTIONS FOR PLACING THE MAPS, PLANS, AND
PLATES.

VOLUME I.

| | PAGE |
|--|---------------|
| Route from Bagdad to Sulimania, &c. | to face Title |
| An Officer of the Pasha of Sulimania | 67 |
| A Man of the Jaf Tribe | 112 |
| Koordish Soldiers of Avroman | 202 |
| Koordish Marriage | 282 |



VOLUME II.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Map of the Country between Sinna in Persian Koordistan, Arbil, and Mousul | to face Title |
| The City of Arbela | 14 |
| Plan of Nineveh opposite Mousul | 29 |
| Nineveh | 34 |
| A Yezid Man and Woman | 85 |
| Convent of Rabban Hormuzd | 99 |
| Nestorian Family | 111 |
| Bricks from Nimrod | 131 |

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTICE RESPECTING THE MAPS.

WITH respect to the Maps which accompany this Work, it has been considered necessary to give a brief description of their construction.

In the Map of Koordistan and the adjacent countries, the line of routes and all the detail were protracted, in the first instance, by Mr. Rich, from his bearings and distances; after which a considerable number of observations for latitude and longitude were put into our hands; having compared the differences of latitude that were determined by observation, with those which were protracted by Mr. Rich, they coincided with remarkable accuracy; and therefore required very little correction to adjust the positions by the observed latitudes. With respect to the longitudes, we have placed Sulimania in $45^{\circ} 27' 45''$, by mean of a great number of eclipses of Jupiter's satellites. We have selected this position in preference, because Mr. Rich made a great many more observations at Sulimania than at any other place in Koordistan; it was likewise the connecting point from which his routes either began or terminated. The differences of latitude by Mr. Rich's survey, having agreed so nearly with his observed latitudes, we have not hesitated to adopt his differences of longitude by his survey, in preference to those by celestial observation which he made in the course of his journey, because, in short distances, it is almost impossible to determine the difference of longitude with any degree of accuracy, by one or two observations.

In the small general Map, the position of Mousul and Sulimania are taken from that of Koordistan. The longi-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

NOTICE OF THE MAPS.

tude of Bagdad has been determined by the mean of several sets of lunar distances, taken by Mr. Rich, and which have been calculated and worked by Mr. Coleman, and also by a great number of eclipses of Jupiter's satellites; the mean of the whole makes Bagdad in $44^{\circ} 25' 21''$. The latitude has been settled by the mean of a great number of observations. The river Tigris has been laid down from a minute survey by bearing and distance on a large scale by Mr. Rich, and adjusted by several observed latitudes between Mousul and Bagdad. In any map which could be brought within the compass of a book, it would not have been possible to give it on a scale sufficiently large to show the detail with which this survey has been executed; we have therefore contented ourselves with merely giving a general outline of it.* The routes between Bagdad and Sulimania have been laid down by bearing and distance, from Mr. Rich's Journal, and adjusted by several observations for latitude, in the course of his journeys.

J. WALKER.

* Mrs. Rich has allowed a copy of this Survey of the Tigris, on a large scale, to be made for the use of the East India Company.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

P R E F A C E .

THE account of the Author which is contained in the following Introduction supersedes the necessity of any biographical notice in this Preface. For that account the editor is indebted to the kindness of a friend, who does not wish his name to be mentioned, and of whom, therefore, she will say no more, than that his personal knowledge of the subject, and his intimate interest in it, well qualified him for the office which at her request he undertook.

The volumes now submitted to the reader are all which exist of a work begun by Mr. Rich on a very extensive scale. He therefore applied himself diligently to the study of various scientific subjects, by the knowledge of which he hoped to accomplish his design. He felt that a very different book of travels in the East would be expected from one who had enjoyed so many advantages as himself, than could be claimed from the generality of travellers; for he had spent many years in Asia; he spoke

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

PREFACE.

several Asiatic languages fluently ; and he was intimately acquainted with the character and manners of the people. It will be found, accordingly, that he is evidently at home in the countries which he describes ; that his observations, being in his own mind the result of long experience, are not given as new discoveries, but as well ascertained facts ; and many allusions are made which indicate his intimacy with the feelings and habits of the country, but which will perhaps either appear obscure, or pass unheeded by those who may not be equally well acquainted with the subject. If he had been spared, and had himself published his materials, he would have added alike to their interest as to their bulk, by introducing very full details of his personal narrative, and of his daily intercourse with the people.

As it is, his papers now published record chiefly those particulars which he noted down at once, lest they should escape his memory, and the whole value of which depended upon their accuracy. These he would probably have compressed, after finishing his map, for the purpose of constructing which, he was thus minute in his observations on the face of the country, and other points connected with geography.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE.

xiii

However, though these volumes are less filled up with the incidents which occurred in the journey, than would have been the case if they had passed from the author to the press, the Editor hopes that they will not be without their use. They in great part describe a country little visited by Europeans, and never, it is believed, described by any Englishman; and, in that view, if in nothing else, they will, it is hoped, repay the reader.

If it be asked why this work was not published sooner, the Editor can only answer that the delay arose from many circumstances, with the recital of which she need not trouble the world.

Under a deep consciousness of her own inability for such an undertaking, she long shrunk from attempting it, but she has been encouraged and cheered in her task by the sympathy and assistance of many kind friends, among whom she cannot forbear naming Sir R. H. Inglis, who, in the midst of his numerous avocations, spared no pains to make her work easy to her, and was always ready to afford her help and counsel.

Clapham, 5th March, 1836.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

BRIEF NOTICE
OF THE
LIFE OF MR. RICH.

CLAUDIUS JAMES RICH, the writer of the following Journal, was born on the 28th of March, 1787, near Dijon in Burgundy: and while yet an infant, was carried to Bristol, where he spent the first years of his life under the eye of his parents.

At an early age he discovered a very extraordinary capacity. Even while passing through the usual course of instruction, the elements of the Latin and Greek tongues being taught him by a relation of his own, his active and successful curiosity led him to acquire several modern languages, without a teacher, and assisted only by books. When but eight or nine years old, having seen some Arabic manuscripts in the library of a gentleman at Bristol, he was seized with a strong desire to make himself acquainted with that language; and this accident, which gave a particular impulse and direction to a passion that was already working in his mind, probably decided, more than any thing else, the bent of his studies towards oriental learning, and had a powerful influence on the whole current of his future life. By the help of a grammar and dictionary, and of some manuscripts lent him by Mr. Fox of

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Bristol, he not only learned to read and write that very difficult language, but to speak it with considerable ease and fluency. By the time he had attained his fifteenth year, guided by this decided bias which his mind had taken, and aided by unwearied application, he had made no mean progress in several oriental languages, and among others, the Hebrew, Syriac, Persian, and Turkish.

About this time, as he was taking an evening's walk on Kingsdown, near Bristol, he happened to meet a Turk, and being desirous of ascertaining whether his pronunciation of the Turkish were sufficiently correct to be understood by a native, he addressed him in that language. The Turk, after expressing his pleasure and surprise at being so unexpectedly accosted in his own tongue, informed him that he was a merchant, but was then in distress, having been recently shipwrecked on the coast of Ireland. Besides the satisfaction arising from his successful experiment, Mr. Rich had the still higher gratification of contributing to the stranger's relief.

His uncommon proficiency in a line of study so remote from the beaten road, excited the attention of those immediately around him. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Marshman introduced him to Dr. Ryland, at that time a divine of eminence in the place: and he was enabled to cultivate the society of several other men of letters in Bristol, particularly of Mr. Fox, of whom he always spoke with peculiar affection and gratitude, and who, by his advice and the use of

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTICE OF MR. RICH.

xvii

his library, essentially assisted him in the progress which he was now making in his favorite oriental studies. But although he drew attention chiefly from the unwonted direction which his studies had taken, and his success in prosecuting them, he was no less remarkable for his application to his general improvement; and even at this early period, was distinguished for his high and generous, and somewhat proud spirit, and for the ardour which he showed in every manly exercise and accomplishment.

The turn which his studies had taken naturally pointed out, both to himself and to others, India as the fittest scene for his future exertions. When the friend, through whose interest he was, in 1803, appointed to a cadetcy in the East India Company's military service, informed him of the nomination, and expressed his regret that he could not procure something better for him, Mr. Rich, who felt a just confidence in his own powers, exclaimed with delight, "Let me but get to India, leave the rest to me." The wide field which hitherto he had only contemplated in imagination, or at a distance, seemed now to be within his reach; and his mind was filled with all those bright visions which float before the eye of youthful hope. He hastened to London, and repaired to the India-House to complete the forms necessary to be observed before he received his appointment. It was at this period that the letter, of which the following is an extract, was written by the

VOL. I.

b

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

NOTICE OF MR. RICH.

celebrated Robert Hall to his friend Sir James Mackintosh, which will show, better than anything else can, the impression which he had made, even at this early period, on those around him.

“Shefford, near Cambridge, Dec. 30, 1803.

“May I take the liberty, before I close, of recommending to your attention a young gentleman of the name of Rich, who is going out in the same fleet with you, as a cadet, to Bombay. He is of Bristol, where I had the pleasure lately of seeing him. He is a most extraordinary young man. With little or no assistance, he has made himself acquainted with many languages, particularly with the languages of the East. Besides Latin, Greek, and many of the modern languages, he has made himself master of the Hebrew, Chaldee, Persian, Arabic, and is not without some knowledge of the Chinese, which he began to decipher when he was but fourteen. He is now seventeen. He has long had a most vehement desire to go to India, with the hope of being able to indulge his passion for eastern literature; and, after many difficulties, he has at length succeeded in being appointed to the situation of cadet. He is a young man of good family, and of most engaging person and address. His name, I believe I mentioned before, is Rich. If it is consistent with your views to honour him with your countenance, he will not, I am almost certain, give you any reason to repent of your kindness and condescension.”

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTICE OF MR. RICH.

xix

While Mr. Rich was in attendance at the India-House, Mr. (now Sir Charles) Wilkins, so eminent for his knowledge of the languages of the East, had his attention called to the young cadet's acquirements in the oriental tongues, which on trial he found so much beyond any thing that he could have anticipated, and so extraordinary, compared with his means of attaining them, that he at once pointed him out to the Directors as a young person of such singular and rare talents, as would amply justify and do honour to any exertion of their patronage. On this representation of Mr. Rich's merits, a writership on the Bombay establishment was in the most honourable manner presented to him by the late Edward Parry, Esq., which changed his destination from the military to the civil branch of the service; and in order to enable him to perfect himself in the knowledge of the Arabic and Turkish languages, in which he had already made such unexpected progress, he was attached as secretary to Mr. Lock, who was at that time proceeding to Egypt as Consul-General; his rank, contrary to the usage of the service, being allowed to run on while he was in this occupation, in the same way as if he had at once repaired to India.

Mr. Rich, early in 1804, embarked in the Hindostan store-ship, to join Mr. Lock in the Mediterranean; but that vessel being by some accident burnt in the Bay of Rosas, he escaped with the crew

b 2

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

NOTICE OF MR. RICH.

to the coast of Catalonia ; whence, by the assistance of a friendly quaker of Bristol, he was enabled to make his way to Malta, after a residence of some length in Italy, where he perfected himself in the beautiful language of that country, and devoted himself to the study of music, an art which he ardently cultivated at every period of his life, and in which he took enthusiastic delight. Of all the countries that he ever visited, perhaps Italy was that most suited to the turn of his mind, and to which he looked back with the greatest pleasure. His amiable and accomplished friend Mr. Lock having died at Malta before entering on his mission, Mr. Rich was now allowed by the Court of Directors to follow such a course of travel as it was supposed might be most conducive to the object he had in view, in which he had the valuable advice of Mr. Wilkins. He therefore proceeded from Malta towards Constantinople, touching at several of the Greek islands by the way. While sailing up the Archipelago, a suspicious-looking vessel was one day observed bearing towards that in which he was a passenger. It was believed to be a pirate, and every thing was made ready for a desperate defence. On her nearer approach, however, she was discovered to be a Turkish merchantman, when Mr. Rich and several others went on board. He had not been long on the deck, when one of the Turks who was richly dressed, eyed him so steadfastly for some time as to excite his par-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ticular attention. At length the Turk addressed him, saying, "Sir, I know you." "And I," replied Mr. Rich, "have seen you before." An explanation followed. It was the man whom he had assisted when in distress at Bristol.

Mr. Rich remained for some time at Constantinople, and afterwards repaired to Smyrna, where, that he might thoroughly master all the niceties and peculiarities of speaking or writing the Turkish language, and gain an insight into the nature and extent of the acquirements of the Mussulmans in the various branches of learning, he put himself to school with the young Turkish students of his own age. At this period he made several interesting journeys in Asia Minor, when having been appointed for a time assistant to Colonel Missett, Consul-General in Egypt, he repaired, by way of Cyprus, to Alexandria. His residence in Egypt he employed in perfecting himself in the Arabic language and its various dialects; and he at the same time devoted his leisure to gaining that skill in horsemanship, and in the management of the scimitar and the lance, for which the Mamelukes were so remarkable. It is not surprising, that one, who, like him, to a manly deportment united the mildest manners, and the most lively and sportive wit, should have gained the esteem and affection of Colonel Missett, and of all the Franks within the circle of his acquaintance; or that when the object of his visit to that country was

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

attained, and he was about to leave them, they saw his departure with regret. He resolved to make his way by land to the Persian Gulf, and leaving Egypt in the disguise of a Mameluke, he travelled over a great part of Palestine and Syria. Confiding in his knowledge of the Turkish language and manners, he ventured to visit Damascus while the great body of pilgrims were assembled there, on their way to Mecca, and to enter the grand mosque, an act which at that time would have proved fatal to any one known to be a Christian. His host, an honest Turk, who was captivated with his address, eagerly intreated him to settle at that place, offering him his interest, and his daughter in marriage. From Aleppo he proceeded by Mardin and Bagdad to Bussora, whence he sailed for Bombay, which he reached early in September, 1807.

We have seen that the Rev. Robert Hall had particularly recommended Mr. Rich to Sir J. Mackintosh, at the time when it was expected that they were to sail for India in the same fleet. When Mr. Rich's destination was changed, he had an opportunity, just before embarking in the Hindostan, of calling on Sir James, then at Ryde, waiting to embark for Bombay. A correspondence had ensued between them; and, on reaching Bombay, Mr. Rich went to reside with him. The sequel may be related in Sir James's own words, in a letter to a friend written at the time. "You may recollect,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

NOTICE OF MR. RICH.

xxiii

perhaps, to have read in the newspapers in 1803, that Mr. Parry, the present chairman, gave a writer-ship here, to a young man of the name of Rich, merely on Mr. Wilkins's report of his extraordinary proficiency in Eastern languages, without interest, and, I believe, without even personal knowledge. He came out as assistant to young Lock, who was appointed Consul at Alexandria; and, since his death, has travelled over the greater part of Turkish Asia, in various directions, with the eye and pencil of an artist, and with the address and courage of a traveller among barbarians. He acquired such a mastery over the languages and manners of the East, that he personated a Georgian Turk for several weeks at Damascus, amidst several thousand pilgrims, on their way to Mecca, completely unsuspected by the most vigilant and fiercest Mussulman bigotry. He was recommended to me by my friend Robert Hall, and I had several letters from him. I invited him to my house; and at his arrival on this island, on the 1st of September, 1807, he came to us. He far surpassed our expectations; and we soon considered his wonderful oriental attainments as the least part of his merit. I found him a fair classical scholar, and capable of speaking and writing French and Italian like the best educated native. With the strongest recommendations of appearance and manner, he joined every elegant accomplishment and every manly exercise; and combined with them,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07748-4 - Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh: With Journal of a Voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an Account of a Visit to Shirauz and Persepolis: Volume 1

Claudius James Rich

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

spirit, pleasantry, and feeling. His talents and attainments delighted me so much, that I resolved to make him a philosopher; I even thought him worthy of being introduced into the Temple of Wisdom, by our friend Dugald Stewart; and when I went to Malabar, I left him at the house of my philosophical friend Erskine, busily engaged with the “Philosophy of the Human Mind.” On my return, I found that this pupil in philosophy was desirous to become my son in law. He has no fortune, nor had he then even an appointment; but you will not doubt that I willingly consented to his marriage with my eldest daughter, in whom he had the sagacity to discover, and the virtue to value, the plain sense, modesty, purity, and good-nature, which will, I hope, make her a source of happiness to him during life.

“Soon after, the most urgent necessities of the public called for a Resident at Bagdad. He alone was universally acknowledged to be qualified for the station. He was appointed: having thus twice before he was twenty-four, commanded promotion by mere merit. They were married, and are gone to Bagdad.”

In writing to Mr. Robert Hall about this time, he says, “Rich, whom you recommended to me, is become my son-in-law; and he is indeed a son-in-law to whom the fondest parent may gladly intrust his child.”