

hurry back to my tent, after a very short walk through the bazaar, and to the muddy beach—along which are scattered some singular vessels, built high at the stern, like those of many ages back. The only interesting view was that of the distant mountains towards Sinai, into whose defiles I was now eager to penetrate.

After a brief survey of Suez, and loitering an hour or two on the sands, together with dining under the shade of my tent, I set off towards evening to go across the gulf, walking slowly round the shore in advance of the camels. A short distance from Suez, on the left hand, are the mounds called Tel Kolzum, the ancient Kolzum, or Clyasma, near which are several small salt-pans; and leaving the mounds of the ancient canal far to the left, we struck directly across to the other side, the tide then being out. This appeared to be a well-beaten track, as we met trains of camels, and it is probably the shortest way across the head of the gulf. The ground had evidently been recently overflowed by the sea, which formerly extended, there can be little doubt, still further up to the northward, towards the mounds of the canal (see Map) which communicated with it; but its bed has gradually become filled up by drifts from the region of shifting sands, which lie to the north and north-east, and which are brought down with such force by the north wind, as in a few hours to raise mounds sufficiently large to obliterate the pilgrim route, as we subsequently found on our return. This part of the gulf must therefore, at one time, have been, beyond all question, both broader and deeper than at present.

The sun had set long before we cleared the sea-beat sands, and reached the plain beyond, on the Asian side of the gulf. There was a wild and most thrilling excitement to me in this passage: the sun set beyond the long dark mass of Mount Attaka—the “Mount of Deliverance”—shooting its fiery rays through a mass of lurid clouds; a strong wind set up the gulf; the distant roar of the sea was on our right; the time, the place, the darkness, the knowledge that either here, or not far hence, is supposed to have occurred so stupendous a manifestation of divine power, affected the imagination with peculiar force: the tempestuous wind; the divi-