

CHAPTER XXV.

NUBIA

Where rippling wave and dashing oar,  
That midnight chant attend ;  
Or whispering palm-leaves, from the shore,  
With midnight silence blend.

KEBLE.

Light was her form, and darkly delicate  
That brow, whereon her native sun had set,  
But had not marred.

*Tom Cringle's Log.*

As our boat shot away from beautiful Philœ, the dark precipitous cliffs closed gradually round us, and the Sacred Island remained but as a vision. If the days of hermitage were ever to return, the Solitary could find no place on earth like this, wherein to cultivate self-discipline, to study uninterruptedly, and, whilst preparing for his translation to another world, to communicate his own high hope of immortality to the gentle and intelligent savages that surrounded him.

Nubia differs very widely, in the character of its scenery, from the land we have just left. It is true, we had still the palm, the river, and the desert, like those we left behind us, but there are no more forests; the cliffs, dark red, assume wilder forms and approach nearer to the river, the stream itself is narrower and more rapid, the line of vegetation is more limited but brighter, and the desert appears more frequently. The inhabitants, also, exhibit a striking change, becoming more savage as their scenery becomes wilder, and darker in complexion, as the sun increases in intensity. They are a very mixed race, even between the Cataracts, and the people bordering on Egypt speak one dialect called *Kenooz*, while those above Kalabshe speak an-