

THE
CABINET
OF
FOREIGN VOYAGES AND TRAVELS;
OR,
ANNUAL SELECTIONS
FROM THE LATEST WORKS OF THAT DESCRIPTION WHICH
HAVE NOT YET APPEARED IN ENGLISH.

VOL. I.—FOR 1825.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
RETROSPECT
OF THE
GEOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERIES
OF THE LAST TEN YEARS.

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Sarepta on the Wolga, that is, between 48° and 49 north latitude, has been known to be 32° and 33° Reaum. Here, as at Moscow and St. Petersburg, quicksilver has been seen to freeze in the open air. There are probably few parts of Europe which experience greater vicissitudes of heat and cold.

Hills and mountains are very uncommon in the desert itself. There are, however, in the steppe, between the Ural and the Wolga, some eminences of very considerable height. These are the Mount Bogdo, and the rock salt mountains Tschaptschatschi and Arsagar. The first, with the salt lake of the same name at its foot, is extremely remarkable, because it incontestibly rose formerly as a distinct island, above the ancient level of the sea. Its base, which is of granite, bears evident traces of this fact. Tschaptschatschi and Arsagar, which are situated more to the south, are not less worthy of notice. They consist of large solid masses of the valuable rock salt, which is not inferior to that found at Wieliezka in Poland, and at Ilezk in Orenburg; though, on account of the remote distance, and the difficulty of conveyance, hardly any use is made of it. It likewise differs from the salt last mentioned, in forming a mountain of considerable height; whereas the other is found

in strata under ground, and must be obtained by the operation of mining.

If, to the peculiarities of inanimate nature in the steppe, we add its living inhabitants, the nomade tribes of shepherds, of Tartar and Mongol origin, incessantly roving about with their flocks, and the animals peculiar to the desert; it may be readily conceived that the steppe presents a picture extremely different from all European countries; which, it is true, cannot vie with the cultivated parts of Europe; but offers the observer of nature and mankind ample materials for interesting remarks. Among the animals, we will mention only the camel, (*Camelus Dromedarius*); the antelope, (*Antilope suiga et gutturosa*); the jerboa, (*Dipus jaculus et sagitta*); the wild horse, (*Equus caballus*); the Polish marmot, (*Arctomys Bobac*); and the Casan marmot, (*Arctomys citellus*); which are extremely numerous in some parts.

The low steppe of southern Russia has evidently been gained from the sea, and was formerly a part of the Caspian. The ancient limit of that sea may still be clearly distinguished and ascertained. It is pointed out by a continuous chain of hills, extending from the foot of Caucasus, through the Cuman desert, to the Wolga,