NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY INTO KHORASĀN,

IN

THE YEARS 1821 AND 1822.

INCLUDING

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRIES TO THE NORTH-EAST OF

PERSIA;

WITH

REMARKS UPON THE NATIONAL CHARACTER, GOVERNMENT, AND RESOURCES OF THAT KINGDOM.

By JAMES B. FRASER,

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PREFACE.

So many works relating to Persia have of late years appeared before the public, that some account may be expected of the motives for bringing forward another volume upon the same subject.

The author when he determined to travel in Persia, resolved also to devote all the time he could command, to exploring new tracts, and thus to exert his best ability in adding to the information already before the public, rather than to follow in the course of former travellers. With this object in view he proposed to himself to leave the beaten track as soon as possible, and as the country to the east of Tehrān had not been visited by Europeans for many years, he selected it as a fit field of enquiry; and purposed to proceed through Khorasān, by such route as might promise to be most interesting, to Bockhara and Samarcand, or even further to the eastward, as circumstances might suggest or admit.

With the wish of rendering this journey as useful as possible, he supplied himself with the best instruments that India could afford, for taking astronomical observations to fix the latitude and longitude of the various places through which he should pass; and these, as will be seen in the sequel, were constantly and assiduously employed.

In the same spirit, although he has no pretensions to a scientific acquaintance with geology, he yet selected specimens of the pre-

dominating rocks and minerals as he passed along, carefully noting the formation and stratification of the hills, with such other localities as might tend to describe the country in his route; and these have all been laid before the Geological Society.

Sketches were also made on the spot of every remarkable or interesting scene that occurred upon the route, and great pains were taken to embody in these the characteristic features of the country, including its buildings and costume.

In soliciting the public attention, therefore, to the present volume, the author purposes to describe a part of the country hitherto very little known; and he has spared no exertion to render that description as complete as circumstances would permit. Disappointed, as he unfortunately was, in carrying his intentions fully into execution, he has only been enabled to give a few particulars regarding the more remote but very interesting countries to the east of Khorasān, collected from such sources as he could command; but he trusts that the geographical observations which he has been enabled to make upon the countries in and bordering upon the line of his route, may be found of some importance.

The author also conceives that he enjoyed some peculiar and considerable advantages in the course of his travels; not the least of these was his intimacy during the early part of the journey with the late Dr. Andrew Jukes, a gentleman who, independent of the official situation he held, had, during a long residence in Persia, become well acquainted with the country and its inhabitants, and who was ever ready to communicate the knowledge he possessed, or to assist in obtaining further information.

His protracted residence at several places, although under circumstances often painful and embarrassing, was yet very favourable

to the prosecution of his enquiries; and the circumstance of his wearing the native dress, with the various introductions he received from native friends, procured him admission upon intimate terms, into the houses of several chiefs and nobles. It may be added that he enjoyed the means of visiting the courts of most of the Persian princes of consideration, and had access to many of their principal and confidential servants; nor ought it to be omitted that he received from every Englishman in Persia, all the information which their respective situations enabled them to afford; to many of them, indeed, he holds himself indebted in a degree that no acknowledgments can sufficiently express.

But a desire to communicate original information, though a powerful motive to this work, was not the only one. If the author may be permitted to judge from his own experience, a very erroneous impression appears generally to prevail regarding the character and value of the Persian nation, and the power and resources of its government; not that the opinions commonly entertained of either the one or the other are very precise or very exalted, but that the extreme degree of poverty, depravity, and weakness which characterize the country, are by no means understood, and that, as the author humbly conceives, sufficient pains have not been taken in most of the works that have appeared upon the subject, to impress these facts upon the public.

In the present work the author has endeavoured to convey to his readers, the impressions which he himself received from the events that passed before him, during his residence in the country, and as these (he trusts) are faithfully and impartially related, every one will be enabled to judge for himself, how far the conclusions that have been drawn in certain parts of it, are correct. He would earnestly

wish to avoid the charge of presumption, in differing, as he may occasionally appear to do, from some high authorities that have preceded him, but not for this would he withhold or disguise his real opinion. Truth can only be elicited by free and open discussion, and if it be desirable to know the real condition of a country so remote, but on many accounts so interesting, and the friendship of which has more than once been considered as of consequence to Great Britain, that object can only be attained by submitting to a strict examination, and comparing together the various accounts which travellers bring from thence.

In the prosecution of his intended journey, the author, after reaching Tehrān by the usual route, travelled eastward into Khorasān, as far as its capital, Mushed; but finding the state of the country around that city too disturbed to admit of his further progress towards Bockhara, he returned westward by the route of Koordistan*, Goorgaun, Astrabad, and Mazunderān (supposed to be the ancient Parthia and Hyrcania), and coasted the Caspian Sea, as far as Resht, the chief town of Gheelan, where he was detained a prisoner for a considerable time, under circumstances of a singular nature. Upon his release he continued his journey along the sea coast, occasionally striking into the interior; and ascending the lofty mountains which separate the provinces of Gheelan and Azerbijan, occupied by the wild tribes of Talish, he passed through Ardebeel, and finally rejoined his countrymen at Tabreez.

It was at first expected that the whole work might have been compressed into a single volume quarto, or two volumes octavo; but when the materials were arranged, this was found impossible. It

* A district so called from being inhabited by colonies of Koords, of which a description will be found in the work, and which must be distinguished from the great district of that name, situated in the West of Persia.

was, therefore, determined to divide it into two parts, the first of which, now published, carries on the narrative to Astrabad; and the second, to contain every thing that occurred after reaching that place, will be published as soon as circumstances permit.

It was intended to have inserted, in the Appendix of this volume, a Geological Memoir, prepared from the materials furnished to the Geological Society; but this could not be got ready in time, and it will appear in the Appendix of the Second Part.

Of the large number of sketches descriptive of the scenery, buildings, and costume which were taken by the author, it was proposed that a selection should be engraved to accompany the present volume; but it was found that even a small number, if tolerably executed, would add very greatly to the expence of the book, while they could convey but a very imperfect idea of the appearance of the country. It was, therefore, resolved upon to insert none; but, if sufficient encouragement should be found, to execute and publish a separate work, to consist entirely of engravings after drawings from these sketches, placing it thus in the power of any one to possess himself of the book or plates separately. A prospectus of this intended work is bound up with this volume, and may be referred to for further particulars.

The map and geographical sketches in the Appendix require a more particular notice; but this will be found in the note prefixed to the former. The sources from whence the author derived his information have generally been mentioned in their respective places. That which relates to Khorasān and Khyvah was almost entirely collected by himself; but for much of that which regards Mawur-a-ul-nehr, and every thing to the east of Khorasān, he feels himself deeply indebted to the friendship of Mr. William Erskine,

late of Bombay, who not only furnished him with some valuable routes and memorandums connected with those countries, but who, having himself had occasion to make them the objects of his particular study, was enabled to assist the author with many suggestions of great importance to this part of the work. The extracts from the journal of Meer Izzut Oollah form not the least valuable portion of his obligations to the liberal kindness of this gentleman.

The Author was, unfortunately, unprovided with any instrument for determining the height of mountains; but, with the view of forming a scale which should give some idea of the relative heights of places, he used a large and sensible thermometer to ascertain the boiling point of water, in different situations; and the results will be found tabulated in the Appendix. There also will be found such few observations on the state of the weather and the thermometer which the uncertainty of halting, the unavoidable accidents of travelling, and his numerous other avocations enabled him to collect.

In the first part of the narrative, which describes his voyage up the Persian Gulf, and his journey to Tehrān, the author has endeavoured to avoid those subjects which have been amply treated of by late travellers, except where difference of opinion made it necessary to notice them, and has confined himself to such incidents and observations as promised to be interesting, or as were connected with the objects of the work. On this principle he has said nothing regarding Persepolis, or the other antiquities situated near the road; and no descriptions have been given of the principal towns or cities which occur in the way. The latter, and most considerable part, is occupied by the journey from Tehrān to Mushed, and thence to Astrabad, which, passing over new ground, he has done his

best to describe minutely, and, by relating many incidental occurrences, to give the most lively idea in his power of the country and the people that came under his observation.

With regard to the general execution of the work, he can only say that he has endeavoured to relate, truly and simply, what he saw and heard. He can make no pretension to elegance of style, and is aware that, from the nature of the subject, and his own unskilfulness, his book must be defective in those charms which depend upon the interest of great personal adventure and felicitous narration. Such as it is, however, he submits it to the judgment of the Public, assured that where the author's intentions have been good, imperfections in execution will meet with indulgence.

NOTE RESPECTING THE MAP.

Those who are acquainted with the geography of Persia as it is delineated in the existing maps, will observe upon looking over that which accompanies this work, that a considerable change has been made in the position of several important places, the accuracy of which had not heretofore been impugned; thus Tehrān has been moved thirty miles more to the eastward, Semnoon and Damghan still further, and in the situation of Nishapore and Mushed an alteration of nearly two and three degrees, respectively, was found necessary in longitude; and in latitude, the latter was wrong a whole degree.

It is therefore due to the public to explain the method by which the map was constructed, and the ground upon which these alterations have been made.

It has already been observed that the author carried along with him astronomical instruments * of a superior description; with these a regular and daily series of observations was conducted from one place to another, during the whole course of his journey. Latitudes were taken at every halting place; a meridian altitude of the sun, or of one or two stars, was used for this purpose, when resting but one day or night; two celestial bodies were always observed when practicable, and those of opposite declinations were preferred, that errors of the instrument, or those which depend upon refraction, might be neutralized: whenever the party remained longer than one day, a great number of observations were taken, and the true latitude deduced from a mean of the whole. †

In order to obtain the chronometrical interval between each halting place with the greatest possible accuracy, the rate of the watch was constantly and carefully ascertained; equal altitudes of the sun, or the altitude of some celestial body being taken every day, for the purpose of finding the true time;

* These instruments consisted of a capital sextant, 10 inches radius, by Berge, on a gravitating balance stand, a fine chronometer by Arnold, another by Hatton, a large telescope by Harris, calculated for observing the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, and possessing magnifying powers from 80 to 140 degrees: the only surveying compass was a small one by Schmalchalder with sights and a reflecting lens.

† So accurate was the instrument found to be, that the meridian altitude of the same star taken for three or four nights running seldom varied a second, and never more than 5″ of double altitude

means were thus obtained for deducing the true longitude (nearly) of each stage, from the several points fixed by more detailed observations.

As the best method of doing this, all the occultations and emersions of Jupiter's satellites visible at places on the route were carefully observed; and fortunately a good many very excellent observations of this kind were obtained at places of principal importance. Finally, the distance between the moon and sun, or a star, was taken as often as circumstances permitted, and particularly at the chief stations; a celestial body on each side of the moon was preferred to two on the same side, when such could be observed.

The author is very sensible of the great degree of inaccuracy to which all such observations are liable, particularly when made during the continuance of a long journey, and consequently subject to a good deal of confusion and irregularity; and he is aware that mistakes or accidents will often disappoint the observer, particularly when time cannot be afforded for calculating the results upon the spot; nevertheless where little or almost nothing is known of a country, all of this nature that can be procured becomes valuable, and these observations will doubtless afford results not only useful for the present, but for comparison with such as may hereafter be obtained. With the view of giving them full effect, the precaution was taken of sending those of most importance to be calculated by a scientific person in London, while at the same time all the materials were put into the hands of Mr. Arrowsmith, for the purpose of constructing the map; and the author cannot omit this opportunity of publicly offering his acknowledgments to that gentleman for the laborious and skilful manner in which he has verified and made use of them, adapting them to the best, though often perplexing information extant, regarding these regions.

In this way the observations were calculated by two and sometimes by three different persons; when any difference occurred a mean was taken, and the result will be found in the tables inserted in the appendix. *

On referring to these, it will be observed that the position in longitude indicated by them for several places, differs considerably from that adopted in the map, particularly when lunar observations are in question; to those who are acquainted with the process of constructing a map, from various routes and observations, and who know the perplexing results that will sometimes occur, even with such as have been taken under every advantage, there is no need of explaining the reason of such a difference; every one acquainted with the subject knows that from the imperfection of the tables, lunar observations are subject to so much uncertainty, that an error of twenty or

* Many more lunars were taken than those put down in the appendix, but some were not required, and others were found useless from some inaccuracy at the time of noting down: only those used in the formation of the map have been inserted in the tables.

thirty miles in the longitude they indicate is far from uncommon; and that even those of the occultations and emersions of Jupiter's satellites sometimes afford very wide results; when, therefore, they differed greatly from the chronometrical interval and the road distance, it became highly proper to make a corresponding allowance for possible errors of observation. As an instance in proof of general accuracy on the great scale, however, it may be mentioned, that of seven very long and important bearings by compass on Demawund, a lofty and snowy peak of the Elburz, near Tehrān, viz. from Cashān, Koom, Tehrān, Eywanee Key, Saree, Balfroosh, and Amol, no two intersections differed more than ten miles of distance, this, when it is considered that the variation of the compass is by no means accurately ascertained, shews that these places respectively cannot be laid down far from their true positions. The hills, villages and other points were filled in from bearings taken by a good small surveying compass of Schmalchalder.

Besides the positions of Nishapore, and Mushed, that of Herāt has been materially altered, it was laid down by several good routes from Mushed, and it may be remarked that the longitude generally given of that place in the translations of the old and valuable tables of Ulug Beg must be quite incorrect, probably from errors in copying them, for few copies can be had of these tables even in the original Arabic, that can be depended upon as accurate. The position of Balkh, Bockhara and Samarcand seem to be more correctly laid down, probably because they have been more accurately reported, and were nearer to one of that great astronomer's observatories (at Samarcand). The routes which were procured from Mushed and from Herāt to Balkh, appear to confirm this.* It will, however, be observed that no alteration or addition has been made to the *map* in the countries to the north or east of Khorasān, because the routes and information that were obtained regarding them were not of a nature sufficiently precise to warrant any interference with that which is already before the public.

Little more remains to be said regarding this part of the work; the map and memoirs will speak for themselves; it is to be regretted that the information they contain is not more extensive, and in some places more precise, but when the difficulties are considered, with which a single traveller has to contend in countries so rude and unsettled, the candid reader will rather be inclined to give credit for what has been accomplished, than to censure for what has been omitted.

The last sheets both of the narrative and appendix of this work had

* A great change has been made in the courses of the rivers, Herirood, Moorghaub, and Tedjen, with that of all the waters which flow from the northern face of the Elburz mountains: It will be observed that these three rivers uniting, form the stream which runs past Merve, but which never reaches the Caspian, being lost in the sands a little below Merve, neither does the Moorghaub as has hitherto been supposed run into the Oxus.

been printed and corrected, before the author learnt, that an account of the Russian embassy to Bockhara, under charge of M. De Negri, had been translated into French, and was about to be published in Paris. By the kindness of a friend he obtained the loan of a copy in sheets, but imperfect, and without the map which should accompany it; and he wishes that this advantage could have been enjoyed before his own work had gone to press, as it would have yielded him considerable assistance in describing Mawur-a-ul-nehr with the several states it contains, and occasioned some modification of the geographical remarks connected with it.

It may, however, be remarked generally that there appears to be a very close coincidence between the account given of the different states of Mawur-a-ul-nehr, by the Russian travellers, and that which the author himself received and has given from the various sources to which he has been indebted; in fact the Russian observations are very much confined to the town and country of Bockhara alone, and on these they are of course far more minute than any that could be offered in this work; among other things it may be observed, that the population of the country is estimated at about 2,500,000, but those contained within the walls, only at 8000 families, or about 70,000 persons. All the information which the author possesses on the subject, is calculated to induce the belief of an amount far greater than this.

With regard to the geographical information it contains, as the author has not seen the map, he cannot, and ought not to make many remarks; he saw no table of latitudes or longitudes in that portion of the work which came under his observation; these is, it is true, a list of the positions of several places taken from a MSS. copy of Ulug Beg's tables, but of these the only one said to have been verified by the writer, is the latitude of Bockhara, which is set down at 39° 50′ N. and which he says is correct within two minutes. Nothing is said of its longitude nor is there any mention made of the means in possession of the mission, for determining the position of places by astronomical observation.

One of the chief facts that seem to be placed beyond a doubt by this journey, is, that the *Amoo* and *Seer* rivers (the Oxus and Jaxartes) *do not* form a junction (as was stated to the author of this work), but that both separately fall into the sea of Arul.

Regarding the origin and course of the Amoo, no new information is given; on the contrary, the writer states that he can offer nothing on these subjects in addition to that which Mr. Elphinstone has said; and he thus dismisses the subject. Neither are any new facts brought forward regarding the branch of this river which has been supposed at one time to have reached the Caspian sea, at the bay of Balkan; the opinion that it did once flow in that direction is supported on the authority of Mouravief, Bekewitch, and a

Cossak Major, a native of Khyvah, and a man of information, who in speaking on the subject treated it as a thing never doubted or disputed in the country; the Khyveans believe that the change of the river's course was occasioned by an earthquake which occurred about 500 years ago.

That some change of this nature may have taken place, is far from impossible, although, if the various accounts we have regarding the country be considered, the period must be very remote: in so loose a soil as the Steppe of Khaurezm, water might easily be forced to change its course, and it is said, that earthquakes do still occasionally occur in these countries. From several observations made by the Russians during this journey, it appears that in the Kirgeesh Steppes through which their road lay, rivers are very liable to quit their bed, and even to disappear totally. The *Djan Deria* (or river) which, probably, was a branch that detached itself from the Seer, and which, when full, was 200 yards broad, had totally disappeared in the course of ten years from some unknown cause, to the great astonishment of the Kirgeesh who accompanied the mission. The only way in which they could account for this phenomenon, was by supposing that the sands of the Kizzil-Coum (red sand) desert, had gradually overwhelmed it. The Russian author suggests that this Djan Deria may have been the ancient Kizzil Deria, although they observed another dry river bed, forty versts more to the southward.

All the rivers in this quarter seem to have a tendency to shift their beds, and they either form lakes in the sand which absorbs their waters, or they gradually diminish and disappear entirely. Several small lakes of this kind were seen by the mission; one called the Ak Sakāl, 130 vrests distant from the sea of Arul, formed by the Irghiz and Toorghai, small streams sometimes dry, is particularly mentioned. The Zurafshan, or Kohick, which flows past Samarcand and Bockhara, in the same manner, never reaches the Amoo, but loses itself in a lake called Kara Coul.

Little is said of the sea of Arul; it would seem that though the mission passed near it, they did not see much of it, the author of the account is of opinion that a great and rapid diminution has taken place in the volume of its waters, which it would appear, extended at one time to the feet of certain hills, between which and the shore, there is now a great distance.

The copy of the Russian work which the author saw was too imperfect to admit of any judgment being formed of its full value, but it contains a good description of the remote, barren and almost boundless steppes which surround, and stretch to the northward of Bockhara, with an account, in some detail, of the city and oasis of Bockhara itself; all of which in the dearth of authentic information relating to these subjects will doubtless prove interesting to those who are curious regarding them.

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ERRATA.

Page 14. line 16. for "of Wahābee" read "of the Wahābee."
27. line 30. for "in the Appendix" read "in a future volume."
28. line 10. from bottom, for "of" read "off."
33. line 2. from bottom, for "without" read "with our."
42. line 13. for "Suffooian" read "Suffavean."
64. line 15. for "have" read "had."
69. line 21. for "firs" read "furs."
89. line 14. from bottom, for "Kuht" read "Tucht."
102. line 3. from bottom, for "Nackshee, Rustum" read "Nackshee Rustum."
107. line 3. from bottom, for "ravine" read "revenue."
117. line 3. for "Yezid" read "Yezd."
131. lines 20. & 35. for "Hoorsain" read "Hoossain."
142. line 12. for "Persia. Though" read "Persia, though."
144. line 7. for "*Khoosk*" read "*Khooshk*."
149. line 30. *et passim*, for "Abool Hussein Khān" read "Abool Hussun Khān."
164. line 5. for "wonders" read "wanders."
174. line 2. for "have" read "has."
176. line 2. from bottom, for "there" read "these."
194. line 6. from bottom, for "and that being" read "and being."
195. line 8. for "Kaud" read "Kand."
196. line 3. from bottom, for "Turoshes" read "Furoshes."
203. line 8. from bottom of col. 1. for "Muckee" read "Nukee."
203. line 4. from bottom of col. 2. for "Amob" read "Amol."
234. lines 1. & 2. from bottom, for "Reeza Koolee Khan, chief of Kabooshaum Koordistan" read "Reza Koolee Khan, chief of Kabooshān in Koordistan."
274. line 2. from bottom, for "fifty and three" read "fifty or three."
298. line 2. for "provided: the" read "provided, the."
303. line 23. for "in rose" read "it rose."
339. line 5. from bottom, for "the knives" read "their knives."
405. line 18. for "Hoossain Allee" read "Hussun Allee."
452. line 13. for "excited" read "exerted."
[41.] line 11. for "Mero" read "Merve."

NARRATIVE

OF

A JOURNEY INTO KHORASAN.

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EARLY in the year 1821, after travelling over a large portion of the northern and western provinces of Hindostan, I reached Bombay, intending to embark there for Bushire, thence to continue my journey through various parts of Persia, and finally to Europe, by such route as circumstances might render advisable.

During my stay at Bombay, I became acquainted with Dr. Andrew Jukes, who was soon after appointed envoy from the government of

that residency, to the court of Persia; and I eagerly availed myself of that gentleman's offer to accompany him on the voyage up the Gulf, and afterwards as far on his journey through Persia, as might be mutually convenient.

On the 14th May, 1821, we embarked on board the ship Francis Warden, and on the next morning sailed from the harbour of Bombay. The voyage, as might have been expected from the advanced period of the season, was tedious, a wearisome succession of contrary winds prevailing for the greater part of the time it lasted.

The incidents that occurred in the course of the passage merit but little notice; it may, however, be interesting to mention the places we visited; giving, at the same time, such information as we obtained regarding them, and which appeared to us to be of sufficient consequence for insertion.

To those who have sailed only in European vessels, there is at first something picturesque and interesting in the spectacle of a ship manned, as ours was, entirely by Asiatics; so totally does it differ, in most respects, from all they have been accustomed to: the machine is similar, but the moving power appears quite of another character; there is more bustle, more noise; there are more hands, but less order and regularity prevails, and less effect is produced, and this unfortunately is most manifest in times of difficulty and danger. The peculiarities of colour, costume, and manners add to the confusion of ideas, and the whole forms a striking contrast to our recollections of a British vessel and British seamen.

We had on board about one hundred and twenty souls, including Dr. Juke's suite, tent Chlassies, and Lascars; Moollah Feridoon, an old Parsee or Ghebre attached to the mission, with his attendants; some Arab passengers, and some Persian, Portuguese, and Hindostanee servants, besides various animals for stock and milk; so that the deck had a very motley and crowded appearance, partaking more of the picturesque, but having less of that beautiful order which is so observable in a well-regulated Indiaman.

Totally disappointed in our hopes of making the direct passage, we were forced to the southward of the line as far as latitude 5° S. where we at length fell into a south-eastern breeze, which gradually changing into the south-west monsoon carried us steadily along. The heat was often most oppressive, and we were only relieved from it by a gale of wind that drenched the ship with heavy seas, destroying every thing in our cabins, and effectually putting an end both to occupation and comfort.

When the gale diminished, we had an alarm of a different nature: while airing our wetted things, and repairing damages, a cry of "fire" was heard from the after-hold. There is perhaps no calamity more appalling than that of fire on board a single and crowded ship at sea, very inadequately provided with boats, and in a swell so high as to forbid the hope of safety even from them. Every one was doubtless affected by it; but it was curious to remark the different effects produced: some were roused to instant and useful exertion; others were shaken even to tremblings and tears; others desirous, but incapable of assisting, ran about, impeding the more effective efforts of the rest; and many, careless, as it seemed, of the event, idly eyed these efforts without attempting to assist in them. The behaviour of old Moollah Feridoon was very characteristic: he had left his birth for the first time since the gale, and was seated, gaunt and immovable like a re-animated corpse, on some bales of goods in the steerage. He it was who first perceived the smell of fire; but instead of giving the alarm with the energy which the occasion called for, he remained seated and fixed as before, uttering his information to those who accidentally passed him so slowly, and in so low a tone, that it attracted no attention. When at last he was questioned, he gravely informed them, that he had known the fact for half an hour, and had told it to many; what more could he do? and while the rest were tumbling about the bales, to search for the evil, he maintained his seat and his almost ghastly gravity to the last. Happily, we were soon relieved from our alarm, the origin of which we never could discover.

On the 5th July, we made Raus-ul-Hud, (vulgarly called Rasselgate,) which literally means "Land's end." Very dark weather added to the majesty of the mountains that lie near this promontory, and which are generally mistaken for the Cape itself; the true Cape, however, is comparatively low, and runs much further out to sea. The whole coast is a rocky wall; the mountains, of brown and bare rock, streaked with light grey veins and patches, rise in several ranges, one behind the other. The little town of Raus-ul-Hud lies on a small piece of beach just round the Cape, with a good many date-trees about it; and two castles may be seen, built by the Imaum of Muscat as a protection against the Wahabees. The whole looks dismal and barren as can be; not a blade of grass or green thing, except the date-trees above-mentioned, can any where be detected.

It is remarkable, that on rounding this cape, the south-west trade constantly fails; the heavy sea it occasions is exchanged for still water, and light baffling airs succeed; which render the remainder of the voyage to Muscat tedious and uncertain. In one of these baffling calms, we narrowly escaped going on shore; but had an opportunity of contrasting to a striking degree the supine helplessness of our Indian crew, with the energetic activity of the Arabs of the Gulf. While coasting along, the wind failed us, abreast of a small inlet that had attracted our attention, in the in-draught of which we were caught before we were aware; and failing equally in our attempts to wear or stay, we drifted shore-wards, right down upon an Arab buggalow, becalmed and helpless like ourselves, and at anchor off the entrance of the creek. Our vessel having little way, the collision did no material harm; but it was not till after two anchors were let go, that the best bower brought us up, within two ships' length of the rocks: it was fortunately calm; but as the least breeze would have probably proved our destruction, we sent on board the buggalow to request that they would move into deep water, and send a line to warp us out. Some of the officers were fortunately recognised by the Arabs, who readily promised their assistance; and though some on board had at first thought proper to express their contempt at the vessel and her crew, their opinions were rapidly changed to admiration, at

the energy and skill with which this aid was afforded: their huge boat was tossed over board in a moment, as if by magic, without the aid of tackles; and manned by fifteen or twenty stout fellows, who sprung over board into the water as the quickest way to reach her. Their two large anchors were spliced together, and, with all the cables they had, stowed in the boat, with equal celerity: they next rowed off to sea, dropt the double anchor, and returned to meet our jolly-boat, which carried our tow-lines to be bent to theirs: then pulling towards us, they sprung up our ship's sides, and, without being either asked or ordered, manned the capstern, and began to heave away. We then had time to observe these men, so strong a contrast to our own heartless crew: they were mostly negroes from Mozambique and Zanguebar, belonging to the Arab tribes; athletic fellows, many of them six feet high, and models for a Hercules; and we could not help reflecting on the miserable chance we should have stood against them, with such puny wretches as ours, had they boarded us, with the same vigor, as enemies. In a few minutes the cables were hove in, and an offing gained; and a gentle air which sprung up from landward soon placed us in safety. We dismissed our Arab friends with handsome presents; and it was a striking sight to see them as they quitted us, plunging from the ship's side, and diving and swimming about like porpoises in their own element, as fearlessly and at ease as if they really were amphibious beings.

The whole Arabian coast in this quarter wears the same sterile aspect already noticed, offering in many places a precipitous rocky belt towards sea, alongside which ships might float unharmed. These rocks, entirely denuded of soil or vegetation, exhibit their external strata, crumbled into fragments, which partly adhere, partly lie loose on their surfaces, offering a remarkable image of ruin and desolation to the mind. Several ranges of mountains may be seen from the sea; but none, so far as we could judge, exceeded the height of fifteen hundred feet, and most of them were far below it.

On the 8th July we entered the Cove of Muscat. This singular harbour, the best and almost only one on this part of the Arabian coast, is formed, on the south-eastward, by the Muscat island, a ridge

of rocks from two to three hundred feet high, which is separated from the main land by a narrow channel, capable of admitting small boats; and on the other, or north-western side, by a ridge of mountains that project into the sea. The cove, from its entrance to the interior extremity, is about a mile deep, running to the south by west, and about half that space in breadth: it is open to the north and north-west, but sheltered from all other winds. The anchorage is good throughout, and there are no dangers; but the entrance is so little conspicuous, that a stranger unacquainted with the black rocks that surround it would scarcely detect it, on arriving from sea.

The town is built on a small sandy beach at the bottom of the cove, and looks better than it really is: the Imaum's palace is the most conspicuous edifice in it. Upon an eminence on the north-west side, there is a fort consisting of several towers connected by a wall, including two or three batteries of guns; and on the opposite side, just above the channel between the main and the island, there is another, consisting of two towers connected by a curtain, pierced with two tiers of embrasures: these forts are called "Jellallee," and "Cumallee," or the "Glorious," and the "Excellent." Several smaller forts crown the eminences around, and watch-towers are to be seen on most of the mountains in the vicinity.

The town of Muscat, according to the calculation of the best authorities, contains from ten to twelve thousand inhabitants, of which about one thousand may be Hindoos from Sinde, Cutch, and Guzrat. The rest are principally Arabs, and negro slaves: these last are very numerous, and are generally a stout and well formed race. They go very sparely clad in a pair of ragged trousers, or a scanty waist-cloth, with an equally scrimp turban. The negresses wear a blue shift that covers the body from head to foot; with a pair of trousers of the same colour, all of coarse cotton cloth: they are strong made damsels, though far from being so good looking as the men; and it was ludicrous enough to catch a glimpse of the visages that were hid behind the half mask of black cloth with which they so scrupulously cover their faces, when it happened accidentally to be disarranged.

The Arab women are also to be seen flitting about, enveloped from head to foot in long and ample black drapery, serving at once for veil and mantle, and looking like nuns escaped from their cells. These shroud-like dresses are sometimes made of black silk, but more frequently of a stuff resembling camblet.

The Hindoos are chiefly, indeed, I believe, exclusively, mercantile people; and of so much utility in commercial matters, that the Imaum finds it his interest to protect and encourage them: they are permitted the exercise of their own religion in a certain degree; and there even are, as I was informed, one or two public temples to to Calee Devee, besides many in private houses; but the worship is conducted with the least possible noise, that the precarious tenure of Mahometan toleration may not be pressed too far. A few of the Jain persuasion occasionally visit this place; as also some individuals of the various religious mendicants of India, as Jogees, Byragees, Sunyassees, &c. The chief residence of the Hindoos is at Muttra, a small town three miles' distant from Muscat, where, however, they have their shops, and transact their business.

The greater part of Muscat consists of small and ill built houses and huts of date-tree leaves of the most wretched description, hardly sufficient to give shelter from the weather; all huddled together in the greatest confusion, pervaded by narrow and crooked alleys winding in every direction. The only decent houses are those upon the beach; that of the Imaum, though a building of stone and lime, in the common form, a square, with apartments opening into a small court, is still poor enough. It is somewhat remarkable, that in a country where materials for building, of the most substantial sorts, are abundant, the dwellings should be of so wretched a description: scarcely a building was to be seen in decent repair; every thing was falling into decay, and more from bad construction, than age. The plaster was dropping off the walls of all the forts, disclosing the masonry in an equally bad state; and not a gun was fired without bringing down clouds of dust, and abundance of the stones and mortar from the embrasures. Perhaps the cause of this is to be sought in some destructive principle in the air, that counteracts the

excellence of the materials used; for the rocks which surround and inclose the town on all sides are composed of the finest serpentine and limestone; and coral of the best quality for lime abounds upon the beach.

The aspect of the place reminded us, at first, of a very wretched Indian town; perhaps the numbers of Hindoos and the variety of costume had the greatest share in producing this resemblance: at all events it did not extend beyond the town itself, for no Indian scene ever presented the aspect of sterility with which Muscat is surrounded: its black and baked rocks are void of any vegetation, save where in some of the cliffs the inhabitants contrive, by irrigation, to rear a few miserable date-trees, a few broad-leaved almonds, some patches of grass, and of greens resembling spinach, a few bushes of red peppers, and one or two small fields of the Arabian jasmin (here called by its original name *Yasmun*): these are dignified by the name of gardens: the wells from which they are irrigated are from thirty to forty feet in depth, from the general level of the surface.

Notwithstanding this sterility of aspect, the country around Muscat enables that town to afford very considerable and comfortable refreshments to vessels trading to the port. The water is excellent, and is conveyed to the beach in such a manner, that the casks of a vessel may be filled in her boats while afloat. Fire-wood may be had pretty abundantly, and even at a lower rate than at Bombay, notwithstanding the apparent scarcity of wood in the country. It chiefly consists of Bābool, (that species of the mimosa which yields the gum-arabic,) which grows in certain spots near the sea, to the westward of the town, and is brought from a distance of sixteen or twenty miles by land or water carriage. Fruit, in its season, is to be had in great abundance, and of excellent quality: grapes both black and white, tolerable mangoes, indifferent peaches, very good plantains and figs, remarkably fine pomegranates, water and sweet melons, with capital sour and sweet limes, and dates in the greatest abundance.

I know of no place equal to Muscat for the abundance and excellence, perhaps too for the variety, of its fish. The water around

the ship was continually alive with them. Those particularly of the herring and pilchard kinds swarmed, thick as gnats in a summer's evening, seeking, as it were, protection in the shadow of the vessel from the larger fish, that contsantly pursued them for food; the sere fish, the king fish, and cavally, with many other sorts, of whose names we were ignorant, were continually darting in every direction among the shoals, which scattered and fled on all sides, till the water was all in a foam; and we remarked that they were particularly active at this exercise, about nine in the morning, and four in the afternoon. The rocks too are equally well supplied with their peculiar sorts; there were plenty of oysters, small but of excellent flavour, and other shell fish, all of which were sold at very cheap rates.

The bazars were well supplied with beef, and mutton both of goat and sheep, but the former in greatest abundance; indeed they are the most numerous in the country, and seem to be preferred, both for eating and for their milk. The cows have humps, and resemble those of India; milk, butter, and ghee are very abundant, and good of their kinds; this is the more remarkable, as the cattle have but little pasture in the neighbourhood of the town; and it is certain, that one chief article of their food is dried fish, a little salted; the cattle become very fond of this, which, with pounded date stones, is all they get to eat for a considerable portion of the year: the natives assert, that so far from the milk being spoiled when the cattle feed on these things, they drink much more water, which increases both the quantity and quality of the produce. Horses and sheep as well as cows are fed on this diet, and thrive equally well upon it. Poultry may also be obtained in the Muscat market at reasonable rates.*

* The coin in most common circulation at Muscat is the French and German crown, and the Spanish dollar; the former varies somewhat in value, according to the demand for silver: when we were at Muscat, 100 German crowns were worth 217 Bombay rupees. Every thing however is there sold by the Mahomedee, a copper coin struck in the place, of which 20 are equal to a dollar: there is yet a smaller denomination of copper money called goz, five of which make one pie, and 20 goz or 4 pies make a mahomedee. There

We were informed, that the bazars of Muscat are subject to peculiar regulations, well calculated to promote health and cleanliness in the town: fish, fruit and vegetables, and articles of a like perishable nature, are sold by established brokers to the highest bidders, in the morning; and such portions as may be left undisposed of in the evening, are carried outside the walls, and sold again at another auction for what they may fetch, so that the accumulation of nuisances and filth is prevented.

The climate of Omaun, and particularly of the Cove, is very unfavourable, at least to the European constitution; no one has ever resided here for many months, without suffering much from illness; and many have fallen victims to its pernicious effects. The heat is always great; while we remained there, the thermometer varied from 92 to 102 of Fahrenheit; the greatest inconvenience we experienced, was from the suffocating heat of the nights, the wind blowing parchingly from off the rocks, deprived us of that cool freshness which the dewy morning brings in most countries; and kept

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is a nominal money also termed Mahomedees, used in accounts, 11½ of which are considered equal to a French dollar, and 100 of which constitute a tomaun, which latter is also a nominal money. Cowries are not used here in circulation.

The following prices of certain articles to be had at Muscat, may serve to give an idea of the value of provisions at this port. Every thing is sold by the Mahomedee of 20 to the dollar, and generally, by the Muscat maun, which weighs somewhat more than 9lbs. English.

Bread, per maun, - -	6½ mahomedees.	A common cow, not a milker, at from	1½ to 6 dollars.
Butter - - -	40 —		
Cheese - - -	15 —	A milch goat at -	4 to 6 —
Milk - - -	5 —	Mangoes, per 100, -	7 to 8 mahomedees.
Beef - - -	10 —	Limes - - -	2 —
Goat or Sheep Mutton	18 —	Peaches - - -	4 —
Fowls, per Dozen	40 to 60 —	Pomegranates, of the sort without stones,	60 —
Grapes, per maun, according to quality	3 to 12 —	Do. with stones - -	40 —
Figs - - - -	3½ —	Plantains, per 100. -	7 —
Dates, fresh and good -	4 —	Apricots (ripen in June) -	4 —
- indifferent - -	3 —	Rose Apple (in July) -	4 —
A good milch cow sells from	16 to 17 dollars.	Sweet Limes (July & August)	7 —
		Oranges - -	5 to 6 —
		Mulberries, per maun, -	4 —

the frame so continually relaxed and unrefreshed even by sleep, that it could not but be ready to yield to the first exciting cause of disease, to which it might be exposed. The Arabs themselves are sensible of this, and many have country houses in the vicinity, particularly at Serdāb, a village a few miles to the south-eastward, which is considered comparatively a pleasant and healthy spot. The Imaum himself resides principally at Bourkha, a place fifty or sixty miles to the eastward, upon the sea coast, once a post of the Portuguese.

The following is the amount of such information as I have been able to procure respecting the family of Seyud Saeed, the present Imaum of Muscat, his territories and resources.

The province of Omaun extends from Aboothubee (vulgarly called Boothbee), in the Persian gulf, to the island Masseira, south of Raus-ul-Hudd; and was inhabited chiefly by two Arab tribes, the Hinawee and Ghauffree; from the latter of which the Imaum of Omaun has generally been selected; and they resided commonly at Ristauk; but about seventy-five years ago some political changes took place, which weakened the power of the Ghauffree, and the Hinawee tribe obtained the ascendancy.

In the year of the Hegira 1160, and A. D. 1746, Nadir Shah sent an army to invade Omaun; and landing at Raus-ul-khymah, they subdued all the country to Muscat; which place they also took, with the exception of the two forts Jellāllee and Cumallee. The Ghauffree tribe had been much weakened by the loss of many chiefs during the war; but Nadir Shah dying, the Persians immediately abandoned their conquests, and returned to their own country.

At this period, Ahmed-bin-Saeed, of the Hinawee tribe, and grandfather to the present Imaum, who was a chieftain in the service of the then Imaum, in command at Sohar, thought the times afforded a favourable opportunity for asserting his own independence, in which he succeeded after a feeble resistance from the Ghauffree, now completely broken; and in a few years more, being supported by the priesthood of Omaun, he was proclaimed Imaum.

The title of Imaum, which is of religious origin, can only be conferred by the priests of Omaun; but, it appears, there are two distinct descriptions of Imaums, Imaum e Shawree, and Imaum e Diffaaee. The former is expected to be of pure, holy, and devout life, ready to die, if needful, in defence of the faith or in religious wars: the latter is less bound to such extremes; has more of the lay character of a ruler, and in such emergencies as those adverted to, may, if necessary, save his life by flight, without disgrace.

Ahmed-bin-Saeed was of the latter description; he enjoyed the dignity forty years, and was the first of the Hinawee tribe who did so: he was succeeded in his power by his son Seyud Sooltaun, who, however, constantly declined receiving the dignity of Imaum, though repeatedly urged on his acceptance, and the title was only applied to him in courtesy, as the ruler of Omaun.

About fifty years ago the island of Bahrein was tributary to Bushire; when sheikh Nausur-ul-Muskoor, grandfather to the present sheikh of the latter place, and the most powerful Arab chieftain on the Persian coast, resided there. An Arab tribe, the Attoobees, of which Ahmed-bin-Khaleefa was chief, occupied the Arabian coast to the north-west of Bahrein, the port of Graine being their chief hold; but, at this period, they came and settled themselves at Zobarra, to the south-east of Bahrein, where they increased in wealth and power, carrying on commercial dealings with all the gulf, with India, and with the Red Sea.

This increasing importance perhaps encouraged them to commence a course of petty depredations on the inhabitants of Bahrein; which, united perhaps to a fear of consequences, induced sheikh Naussur to attempt to humble their power, before it should become too formidable; and he assembled a large force to attack them at Zobarra. The enterprize however miscarried, through the precipitation of his nephew Nassur, governor of Bahrein, and perhaps from the timidity of the uncle, in not seconding a rash but gallant attempt to storm the town; he withdrew with his army after the defeat; and the Attoobees, almost immediately after, seized on Bahrein, in the year Heg. 1199. A. D. 1784. Several attempts were made to dislodge

them; but, from the state of internal disorder in Persia, and consequent indecision in their opponents, these all failed; and the Attoobees kept possession of the island until A. D: 1800.

At this period, Seyud Sooltaun fitted out an expedition against Bahrein. From time immemorial, a duty of one-half per cent. upon all boats trading to India, the Red Sea, and the coasts of Arabia and Africa, upon their return to the Gulf, was considered a right of the Imaum of Omaun: the Attoobees refused to comply with this custom, and this was the cause of the quarrel. The Imaum took possession of Bahrein without much opposition, but used his success mildly; neither making the chiefs prisoners, nor seizing their boats, according to common usage. He placed his own son Seyud Saulim, a youth of 11 or 12 years of age, as governor, a few months after, and appointed sheikh Mahomed as his counsellor and minister; but little more than twelve months subsequent to this, the Attoobees regained possession of Bahrein, not without suspicion of treachery on the part of sheikh Mahomed; and they remained there seven years unmolested.

About two years after this event, Seyud Sooltaun was killed in an affair with the Joassmee pirates. While proceeding with this fleet to the island of Kishmee, and thence to Khameer, to visit the great sulphur mines, which he rented from Persia, he left his ships, five in number, becalmed between Polior and the Tombs *, and got into a boat to proceed alone; when, night coming on, he was attacked by five Joassmee boats, which happened to be crossing from the Arabian coast, to celebrate a wedding at Linga; the contest was severe, but ended in the murder of the Imaum, and his whole party; and it was the more distressing, as his own ships were near enough to see the flashes of the guns, though being becalmed they could have rendered no assistance, had they even known the danger of their chief.

Seyud Sooltaun had three sons, Seyud Saulim, Seyud Saeed, and Seyud Hamed: the two former by different wives, the latter by an Abyssinian slave girl, manumitted for the purpose of sharing her

* Islands in the Gulf, so called.

master's bed; a custom, it seems, always observed when the master takes a fancy to a slave.

In 1807-8, the Wahābees took possession of Bahrein, and sent fifteen of the principal sheikhs to Dereyah, as hostages; one of them however, Abd-ool-Rahman-bin Resheed, having found means to escape, fled to the Imaum of Muscat, who received him with kindness, and gained from him in return such particulars respecting the military strength and resources of Bahrein, as induced him to send an expedition, which succeeded in taking that island from the Wahābees. Abdool Rahman had continued to inspire the Imaum with such an opinion of his zeal and devotion to his service, that he bestowed on that sheikh the command of the island. But he was soon painfully undeceived, for the new governor immediately entered into correspondence with the Attoobees, and threw off his allegiance to the Imaum; finding, however, that the latter was about to send an army to punish his treason, he threw himself on the protection of Wahābee chief of Dereyah, and agreed to pay him tribute.

However indignant the Imaum might feel at this successful perfidy, or his own loss, he was unable to attempt its punishment, until 1816, when he applied to the Persian government for aid: this was promised indeed, but so tardily afforded that the Imaum fitted out an expedition himself and proceeded without his allies. He was however unsuccessful; an injudicious attack made by his brother and two other chiefs, combined with the treachery of some of his soldiers, who went over to the enemy, occasioned the miscarriage of the enterprize: the Imaum, forced to support his brother with the Muscat troops alone, was defeated, and he himself escaped with difficulty to his ships, which witnessed the disaster, but could render no assistance.

The Imaum, under the disgrace of such a defeat and the loss of his brother, who was killed in the action, might well be supposed to feel the bitterest enmity to the Attoobee tribe; accordingly, he returned to Omaun to collect an army more to be depended on, and it was even said that he entertained hopes of assistance from the British expedition under Sir William Keir Grant, then in the Gulf. This could not be granted; but the Attoobees alarmed at the preparations

made, even after the British had left the Gulf, offered terms of peace; a tribute* of 30,000 dollars yearly, and the usual custom on all merchandize carried up the Gulf, the withholding of which had occasioned the war.

It was not possible to arrive at any probable estimate of the population of the Imaum's territories: in the course of conversation he himself observed that, on an emergency, 80 to 100,000 armed men might be collected from all quarters; but he allowed, that the number brought into the field had hitherto never exceeded a third of that number; the former account would presume a population of at least 500,000 or 600,000 souls in Omaun, which must be far beyond the truth.

Besides his hereditary dominions on the Arabian coast, the Imaum at present holds in possession the islands of Kishmee and Ormuz†, in the Gulf; and rents from the court of Persia, Gomberoon or Bunderabbassee, and its dependencies, including the district of Juroom, which extends from Meenab on the south-east, to Khumeer on the north-west inclusive, along the coast, a tract of about ninety miles.

The revenues of the Imaum are derived from various sources; he receives a tenth part of the produce of the territories of Omaun;

* It has been asserted that the island of Bahrein has paid tribute to the reigning family of Persia; but this, it appears, is not the case. In the time of sheikh Naussur the Zund family were upon the throne, and since that time no payment was ever made to Persia. The Attoobees indeed, sent presents to the prince of Sheerauz to induce him to withhold his assistance from Seyud Sooltaun; and lately, when alarmed by the preparations of the present Imaum, they made a verbal declaration of their willingness to pay tribute to Persia, provided it did not cooperate against them; and received a person deputed to them from the court, with great distinction, sending him back with a rich present of pearls, and Arab cloaks, &c. — but the sequel showed how insincere these professions were. The prince of Sheerauz, delighted at the success of his envoy, wrote to court to say that he had rendered Bahrein tributary, and great were the rejoicings and anticipations of the rich pearls and other wealth to be drawn from this new possession. The next year dispelled the illusion, for the same person being sent for the expected tribute, instead of being made the bearer of valuable presents, was not even acknowledged, nor allowed a house to live in: — the danger was passed, and the mask, no longer needed, was dropped.

† Called by the Arabs *Hurmooz:* for considerations on the Imaum's claims to these islands, see a note to Appendix A.

a duty of ½ per cent on all merchandize passing up the Gulf on Arab bottoms; he rents, as has been seen, considerable tracts of country, including valuable mines of sulphur, from the Persian government, and he possesses considerable landed property in the country of Omaun.

The first source is trifling: the produce consisting almost entirely of dates: and it is said, his share does not suffice for the consumption of his family.

The duties collected on merchandize passing up the Gulf, is a far more productive head of revenue: from the province of Omaun alone it amounts to from ninety to hundred and twenty thousand dollars, annually: and from all other ports of Arabia, and from Zanguebar, above 30 or 40,000 dollars more.

I could not learn any thing certain of the value of his Persian farms; the country about Meenab is fruitful and productive; the sulphur mines at Khumeer not only furnish materials for the powder used by government, but a large surplus for exportation; and the salt of Ormuz is also a valuable article of commerce.

The Imaum's landed property in Omaun is rented out to tenants, like that of his subjects; and it is said he receives from it several thousand dollars a-year; but I never heard the amount accurately stated.

Commerce is a great, and perhaps the chief source of the Imaum's income. He possesses five fine ships, his private property; two of which are frigates, the Shah Allum of 50, and the Caroline of 40 guns; besides two large Buggalows, and four Batteels:* and when he requires it, can command the boats and vessels of his subjects. He trades to all parts of India, and the East; to the coasts of Arabia and Africa; to Madagascar and the Mauritius; besides the ports of the Persian Gulf. The trade is indeed chiefly a carrying trade; but Muscat is a great entrepôt for warehousing and exchanging the produce of many nations; and in such a trade, the sovereign doubtless possesses many advantages over his subjects.

* Buggalows and Batteels are different descriptions of vessels used on the Arabian coast.

The demands for out-lay are not heavy, in a degree correspondent to the Imaum's income. There is no regular military establishment to keep up, nor any expensive machine of government; a few retainers fed, and poorly paid, serve for the purposes of police and guard; and the trifling allowance given to the officers of government is eked out by exactions, fees, and bribes, in the manner practised in all eastern countries. One of the chief heads of expence is the maintenance of his own family and establishment; he also keeps up a considerable stud of horses; and makes many and occasionally expensive presents. The expeditions he is forced to fit out against refractory tribes, or pirates, when they occur, are seriously expensive. The fighting men he summons to meet him on such an occasion in the vicinity of the spot to be attacked, are indeed bound to bring provisions for a certain time; but if retained for service beyond that period, the needful provisions must be found by the chief, or the force would speedily melt away. His ships too, though on the whole a means of profit, are for a considerable period of the year very expensive; for his Arab commanders are deficient in the skill necessary to navigate them during the south-west monsoon; and they are consequently laid up, and unproductive during the whole of this unfavourable season.

After all, the Imaum's income so considerably exceeds his usual expences, that it is said he can lay up a surplus of nearly one hundred thousand dollars annually.

The produce of Omaun is confined almost exclusively to dates, and a little wheat. It has been asserted, that of these, there is not a sufficiency raised for its own consumption; but this is at best a doubtful point. There is certainly a large quantity of both articles imported from Bushire and Bussora; but there are likewise large parcels of dates exported; those of Omaun enjoying, it is said, a preference over the produce of the former places, particularly in Sinde, to which place they are exported, and those of the Gulf used in their stead.

Dates indeed are not only the staff of life in these countries, but the trees that bear them, as being the most valuable article on all

landed estates, become the standard by which such property is estimated. A date tree is valued at from seven to ten dollars, and its annual produce at one to one and a half dollars; an estate is therefore said to be worth three, four, or five thousand date trees, as it possesses that number, or other secure annual produce of equal value. The other property of the Arabs consists, for the most part, in live stock, sheep, goats, camels, asses, a few horses, and cows. Camels vary in value from 30 to 300 dollars a-piece, according to blood and quality. The asses of Omaun are celebrated as the finest of Arabia; and individuals of the best breeds sell for very extravagant sums. The value of the common kind varies from one to forty dollars, goats from four to six dollars, sheep from one and a half to six. No mules are reared, and horses are of too various prices and values to quote; neither are they at all abundant in the province.

Landed property descends by inheritance; the proprietor possessing the right of disposing of it as he pleases. The sovereign has no rights in the soil further than the tenth of its produce; nor can he in any way interfere with the proprietor's rights. In case of misdemeanor, the proprietor of a village may be divested of any command he may possess, or may even be expelled the district; but he still retains his right of property, which he may dispose of as he pleases. Lands are commonly let out on lease, or annual rent, payable in a portion of the produce. Slaves are made use of here as throughout Arabia, in the labours of agriculture; but they are treated with kindness and indulgence.

Omaun is by no means celebrated for its manufactures. Turbans and waistbands, or girdles of cotton and silk, striped or checked with blue, and having the ends ornamented with red, green, or yellow borders; cloaks called abbas, of sheep's wool or camel's hair, of various degrees of fineness; cotton canvass, gunpowder, and arms of no superior quality; earthern jars called murtuban, for the Zanguebar market, these comprise almost all their fabrics. They also prepare an esteemed sweetmeat called *hulwah*,* from honey or sugar, the

Hulwah means "sweatmeats," in general. In Muscat it is appropriated to this one kind as the most esteemed.

gluten of wheat, and ghee, with a few almonds; and sharks' fins, and dried salt fish for the eastern markets.

The provinces of Arabia, to which Muscat is the chief inlet, are too poor to consume much foreign produce, or afford any considerable quantity of their own in exchange; still there is a certain demand for many Indian productions and other articles, as rice, sugar, spices, cotton, and cotton cloths, silk, indigo, ship-timber, &c.; coffee from Mockha, cowries, ivory, Joarree grain, gums, civet, oil for burning, cocoa-nuts, wood for building, and slaves from Zanguebar, and other African ports; dates, rose-water, &c. from Bushire and Bussora. Some of these articles are indeed sent merely in transit, but no inconsiderable portion is consumed in the country, for which payment is chiefly made in dollars and crowns. It becomes therefore a question of no easy solution, whence comes this quantity of specie? and I never could obtain any satisfactory reply to it. The duties on vessels trading to the port are indeed paid in those coins, and perhaps their disbursements may be so likewise. This sort of money too, having got into circulation here, an inducement was held out to those who required cargoes of the articles usually found in the port, to send the amount required in the same kind of money; but this is not sufficient to account for the large portion which appears to find its way into the interior, among those who can have no connexion with, or benefit from the transit trade.

On the evening of our arrival, Seyud Abdool Kaher, the Imaum's chief minister, waited on the envoy with his master's assurance of welcome; and next evening the envoy himself having business with his highness, landed to pay him a visit, accompanied by all the European gentlemen of the party, and the commanders of two of the company's cruisers lying in the cove.

We were received by the Imaum in a verandah overhanging the water; under the terrace of which, by way of distinction, the boats were pulled to land us — a very inconvenient compliment; as the surf was so high as to threaten to stave the boats. The room was neatly fitted up, and chairs provided, with a large table, which was soon covered with a very plentiful collection of fruit, sweetmeats,

and sherbets, set out in cut crystal, of the most elegant European fabric: and coffee was served both before and after. There was no affectation of state; not an attendant was present but the minister, and one or two servants to supply our wants. The Imaum's dress was the plain Arab costume: a white cotton gown opening down the breast, but buttoned to the throat, and reaching down to the ancles, with wide Arab sleeves; a scarf of blue checked cotton round his waist, in which was stuck a silver-hilted dagger, of the peculiar Arab form, crooked and broad; and round his head a blue checked cotton handkerchief, with ends bordered red, green, and yellow, loosely wound as a turban; his sword of the Persian form, in a plain black scabbard, stood near him in the corner. The minister was as plainly dressed as his master, in the same costume, with the exception of having a shawl round his waist, instead of a checked scarf. Neither wore jewel nor ornament of any kind.

The countenance of the Imaum is of a mild and pleasing expression. He assumed a gravity of deportment, which did not seem altogether habitual, and was far from bordering on austerity. His complexion, like that of most Arabs, is of a light yellow; his eyes are dark and expressive, though rendered almost sleepy at times, by their heavy lids and long dark eyelashes, unlike the Arab eye in general, which is oftener remarkable for the fiery quickness of its bright black orb. His beard is full and black, without the assistance of dye; the moustachios and parts about the mouth being clipt rather short, allowing something of the cheek to be seen, a custom, I was informed, peculiar to certain tribes. His age, I think, could not have exceeded thirty-five.

The envoy had it in charge to present on the part of the Governor General, for the Company, to the Imaum, a sword elegantly mounted, in token of the sense entertained of his gallant bearing in the affair of Captain Thompson's detachment; and the readiness with which he assisted our troops in the expedition under General Smith; and accordingly the sword was presented at this visit with a suitable compliment in Persian, which the minister rendered to his master in Arabic; and we found it was the etiquette, that conver-

sation should pass in this way, although each party understood what was said by the other without any such interpretation.

In a few days the Imaum returned the envoy's visit; a piece of attention not quite expected. He came without any parade, in a single ten-oared boat belonging to one of his frigates, and attended only by the minister, and his nephew, a boy. Apologies being made for our inability to receive him in a manner befitting his rank, he replied, that he came not to see a fine ship, or fine accommodations, or to receive fine compliments, but to see the envoy as a friend; and it was the same thing to him whether he were in a palace or in a corner (pointing to one as he spoke); that he was aware the envoy would have dissuaded him from coming, had he announced his intention; therefore he had decided for, and come to announce, himself.

He remained near an hour, conversing on various subjects, and with less of the intervention of a third person; and it was in the course of this conversation that we learnt several of the particulars regarding the country above detailed. Among other things, he confirmed a report which had before reached us, of the epidemic cholera having visited Muscat, where it had committed considerable ravages. His highness informed us that he had lost by this disease at least ten thousand of his subjects; that Muscat had by no means suffered the most, as it had extended over the most part of Omaun. It had broken out spontaneously, first at Rooee, a village three or four miles from Muttra, without any known means by which contagion could have been conveyed. A ship with slaves from Zanguebar, which had lost a number on the passage, had, it is true, come to Muscat, but not until after the disease had appeared there; at the time we were here it had entirely ceased.

Being detained at Muscat some days longer than was expected, I became desirous of seeing a little more of the country; and, having learnt that about eighteen or twenty miles towards the interior there was a village with some gardens, celebrated for a warm spring, of very salubrious as well as holy repute, I determined to go thither; and, having received from the Imaum an order to be supplied with cattle and necessaries, I set off, in company with one of my fellow-

passengers, at three in the morning of the 10th, to Muttra, a town in a neighbouring bay, where our horses were to await us. Our attendant, who had only expected one of us, had provided but one horse; and considerable time was lost in arranging for the conveyance of my companion; but the guide, who was thus dismounted, soon supplied himself with an animal, by seizing the first ass that passed, and pressing its owner, as well as a boy that was with him, into the service, ordering them to follow him. I could not discover how this arrangement was effected, whether by an act of arbitrary power, or by promise of remuneration; but we were not at all consulted in the matter. Our equipage was, indeed, more characteristic of the country than conspicuous for its elegance or comfort: a few skins, or felts, girthed round the animals very insecurely with ropes, served for saddles; mine, being one of the Imaum's horses, was covered with a red and yellow cloth; but neither of them had stirrups. On the unfortunate ass which had fallen to the lot of our guide, and which was none of the largest, were deposited the whole provisions for our journey; which, including clothing and ropes for our horses, amounted to no despicable weight. On top of this sat perched the guide himself, who, trotting onward, was followed by the unhappy owner and his boy.

The bay of Muttra, which we saw by the quiet light of the dawn, is not so safe an harbour as the cove of Muscat, being open to the north and north-east winds; but there is plenty of water, and good anchoring ground for ships. The town, though situate on more level ground than Muscat, is, like it, surrounded with black barren rocks; it is protected by a wall, and a stone gateway gives egress to the country beyond, which has the same forbidding aspect a the rest of the coast. The buildings of which the town consists are as contemptible as those of Muscat, those situate on the beach having the best appearance. The bazar, through which we rode, is extremely miserable, being scarcely protected from the rays of the sun by a wretched covering of date leaves; all was narrow, dirty, and offensive, and a very peculiar and disagreeable odour saluted our senses, as we traversed the place.

Passing through the gateway, and a most miserable suburb of date-tree huts, we proceeded along a narrow hollow, our only path being over the ruins of the rocks around; for soil there was none: and about a mile and a half further on we reached another space, in which there was a village with some plantations of date-trees, a few mangoes, plantains, and figs, reared by constant irrigation. The water for this purpose is procured from those subterraneous canals called in Persia cannauts, the course of which was indicated in the ravines, and by rows of small mounds, dug from the wells sunk for this purpose. Somewhat further on we passed another village, with a more abundant supply of wood; tamarind, mango, date, and babool trees, all grown to a very respectable size, and some fine patches of grass and lucerne, beautifully fresh and green. The water which supplied these was raised from a very fine large well, yielding a copious supply, from about sixty feet below the surface. It was so warm when drawn that I was induced to take the temperature of it, which, at sunrise, was 96°, that of the air being 81° only.

Our route from hence lay through a succession of stony vallies, torrents' beds, and dark rocky ravines, among mountains most fantastic, both in shape and colour, perfectly denuded of soil, and without a vestige of vegetation; save occasionally in a low spot where moisture perhaps lingers longer than in other places, a solitary babool would root itself, seldom rising to a height of three feet, and without a green leaf to shew that it was alive. We crossed some ridges of brown sand-hills, and passed several other villages, with their plantations of date-trees; and, at about half past nine in the morning, reached the villages of Gullah and Abooshehr, having been four hours on the way; which, at the pace we rode, gives a distance of not less than seventeen or eighteen miles from Muttra, and in a direction, as far as I could calculate, about S. 35 W. from that place, and S.W. from Muscat.

The road, upon the whole, considering the ground we had to pass over, was tolerably good, though stony and uneven; in several places it bore the mark of human aid, the larger stones having been rolled off to one side, where they formed a boundary line, while the

path was improved by the operation; nevertheless, enough of rough and painful remained to excite our wonder, how the soft and ill-defended feet of the camel, the chief beast of burthen in this country, could move along uninjured. This was, in fact, one of the chief high roads of the country, running, as we were informed, by Boorkha, and other places on the coast, all the way to Bahrein, and even to Bussora.

We met many of the peasantry, riding on camels, and asses loaded with the produce of their grounds; dates, mangoes, grapes, melons, &c. The camels appeared to be poor of their kind, and were not to be compared with those of Upper India; but the asses were wonderfully fine; indeed, the one we had pressed into our service, though far from remarkable for its size, proved an excellent specimen of the strength and docility, at least, of the celebrated breed of Omaun; for its unfeeling owner, not content with the heavy burthen it already bore, as the day became hot, sprung up himself upon its very rump, there being no other spot vacant; while the poor animal, under this double weight, trotted on just as steadily and good-humouredly as before, though without bit or bridle, directed in its movements only by the heavy blows most unnecessarily bestowed upon it, on either side of the head, by the foremost of its two riders.

The village Bushire, or Abooshehr, is situated at the foot of a range of hills, continuous with those we had kept on the left hand all the way from Muttra: they are not of great height, but extremely picturesque in shape and colour, exhibiting red, grey, yellow, and dark brown, in peaks and ridges, bearing a greater resemblance to primitive than to secondary mountains, which their composition would probably declare them to be. The stratification is everywhere conspicuous, and strangely contorted and disturbed: no soil can be detected on any part of them; nor, as far as the eye can distinguish, do they bear any wood or vegetation whatever. The ground to the north-east slopes to a wretched sandy flat, extending to the sea, which may be about six miles distant. This flat is sprinkled with tufts of babool trees, and, near the shore, with a few

date-tree gardens: the former is grubbed up, roots and all, and is carried for fuel to Muscat.

The village is a miserable one, of mudhouses and date-tree huts, with a few mud towers, looped and windowed for defence; dates are its only produce worth naming; but they showed us a few small plots of ground, on which they said that wheat is sometimes raised. The only water possessed by this village is the warm spring which we had come to see; there are, indeed, three sources, but two of them are trifling; the largest occupied all our attention.

It rises in a small cavern, at the foot of one of the mountains behind the village, issuing through a small aperture in the back; and runs along a channel naturally worn in the rock, into a square cistern or bath of mason work, constructed to receive it; from hence it passes by a run cemented with lime, into a large square reservoir of earth, where it cools; and from hence it is distributed all over the village, for the purposes of irrigation. The bulk of this stream where it issues from the rock, down its steep inclined plane with considerable force, may be from two to two and a half inches square; and its heat at the same place was $111\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, while the temperature of the cavern was only 81°.

The water is perfectly limpid, and, so far as taste could determine, was perfectly unaffected by the calcareous rock through which it has wrought a passage, or by any other foreign substance: it forms indeed the only beverage of the villagers, who deem it peculiarly salubrious. In truth, not only medicinal but sacred and miraculous qualities are attributed to this spring; by which it is believed capable of healing the maladies of such as come to bathe in it, particularly those who are affected by constitutional complaints, old inveterate sores, &c. &c. Accordingly, while we were there, we saw a wretched paralytic man, who had almost totally lost the use of his lower extremities, writhing himself along to get into the bath, and two or three miserable objects covered all over with sores were actually at work in it, washing their diseases away, while many others lay around, waiting their turn to go through the same ceremony. Those of the village who had accompanied us strongly pressed us also to bathe; but the sight of

those already in possession of the basin would have taken away all inclination, had any before existed, to avail ourselves of the opportunity. We excused ourselves observing that, "Thank God, we had no need "to try the efficacy of the water, which we nothing doubted;" and merely washed our hands and faces in the pure stream, as it issued from the rock; but I am convinced their respect for us was by no means increased by our slighting so great a blessing. The name of the sacred source is Alleeshere.

We were accommodated at the village with an empty mud-built hut, without carpets or any species of furniture to repose on; we lay down on our horse-cloths and saddles, and had a very agreeable repast placed before us of fresh dates and mangoes, milk curdled, sweet, and sour, to which we did sufficient honor; and while thus engaged, were visited by numbers of the villagers, who appeared at least as well entertained by looking at us; as we could be by seeing them; nor did we object to their gratifying their curiosity, which gave us an opportunity to observe their manners and costume. They were civil and respectful, though many were of a strangely wild appearance. Some among them had made occasional voyages to India, and could speak Hindostanee tolerably well, and one or two had even gone to *London* in some of the country ships.

The men chiefly wore what I should term an undress, consisting of a cloth girt round the loins, and descending to the knee, and sometimes tucked up between the thighs like the Indian Dhotee*, round the upper part of which, about the waist, is wound a checked handkerchief by way of girdle. On the head they wore a red cap, around which, in dress, they wind a checked scarf for a turban, but which now was thrown carelessly over one shoulder. These are the handkerchiefs, of which mention is made among the manufactures of Muscat.

* Dhotee is the term applied to a piece of cloth which wraps round the loins, descending down to the knees, and probably obtains its name from being used in bathing; this, with another piece of cloth of a similar description termed Chudder (a sheet) forms the usual dress of many casts of Hindoos, particularly in the warmer parts of Hindostan.

A number of the Arab women were moving about, carrying water from the cistern; and here they were not so scrupulous in veiling their faces as in the town. Truly there was little need; their complexions of yellow, looked as if that colour had been artificially heightened by some dyeing drug; their dress was a pair of trowsers, silk or cotton, of various colours, or striped, with a shift covering their persons from the shoulders to the feet, and totally unfastened about the waist; over all, a blue veil of cotton cloth enveloped the whole figure, head and all, falling down to the feet in various folds: the feet were defended by a species of sandal, like a shoe sole, with one or two thongs in place of the upper leather. They wore bracelets and armlets of silver, with ornaments of the same metal in the ears and nose. This description of costume, varying in degrees of richness and fineness of materials, will apply to that of both Arab and Negro women.

The heat in our hut was considerable, though it was well calculated for excluding it in great degree. At twelve o'clock the thermometer stood at 98° in the hut; suspended in the sun it rose to 115°; at two o'clock it rose to 102° in the hut, and 118° in the sun. Water exposed to evaporation in a porous earthen vessel became cooled to 76°.

About half past four, we quitted the village, and returned to Muttra by the same road we came. We arrived about nine o'clock, having suffered considerable inconvenience, until the sun went down, from the scorching wind which blew from off the sand; and refreshments of excellent fruit and sherbet, provided for us at the house of an obliging Parsee merchant, were extremely grateful.

I omit here any particular remarks on the nature of the rocks and mountains, as these will be found with observations of a similar description in the Appendix.

CHAP. II.

LEAVE MUSCAT, 14TH JULY. — PASS CAPE BOMBAREEK. — THE SHIP TAKES GROUND IN THE MUD. — GETS AFLOAT WITH THE LOSS OF AN ANCHOR AND CABLE. — REACH KISHMEE ROAD 16TH JULY. — FIND THE GARRISON IN GREAT SICKNESS AND DISTRESS. — VISIT THE CANTONMENTS. — THEIR STATE AND THAT OF THE ISLAND. — THE ROADSTEAD, POPULATION, CLIMATE, PRODUCTS, WINDS. — PRESENT MISERY, FORMER PROSPERITY. — CHOLERA MORBUS. — VISIT ORMUZ 20TH. — HISTORIC NOTES REGARDING ORMUZ, AND GOMBEROON. — PRESENT STATE OF BUNDER ABBASSEE. — OF ORMUZ. — MISERABLE CONTRAST WITH THEIR FORMER SUPPOSED WEALTH AND SPLENDOR. — NATURAL PRODUCTS OF ORMUZ. — ITS GARRISON. — ARMS OF THE PEOPLE. — THEIR PERSONS AND FEATURES. — LEAVE KISHMEE, 22D JULY; REACH BUSHIRE THE 4TH OF AUGUST.

Circumstances detained us at Muscat until the 14th of July, when we willingly bade adieu to its black and scorching rocks, and proceeded up the Gulf. For some time we were distressed by calms, but came in sight of the Kohe Mubaric by noon of the 16th. This insulated rock, vulgarly called "Bombareek rock," by our sailors, receives its Persian name "The Fortunate Hill," from its being the first land usually made on entering the Persian Gulf; it appears to rise to a height of 700 or 800 feet, about three miles in land from the level beach, and seemed to be of the same calcareous and stratified formation as the grey limestone mountains at Muscat.

While passing Cape Bombareek (Mubaric) of which there is much shallow water, the vessel grounded in the mud without any one being sensible of the accident, and it was only discovered upon our return to the deck after dinner, by one of the party, who, desirous to see the ship's rate of sailing, looked over the side, and observed that she was perfectly motionless: to add to our mortification we found this had occurred just at high water; and as the ship was by that time deeply wedged in the mud, we had for some time but little hopes of extricating her; the greatest exertions were instantly made, all spare water was started and pumped out, our anchor carried into

the deepest water within reach, and after a very anxious hour, we had the pleasure to see her once more afloat, with the sacrifice of only an anchor and cable. A fine breeze stood our friend all night; by noon the next day we passed the island of Larrack, and at a quarter after three the same afternoon anchored in the roadstead of Kishmee. That evening, Colonel Kennet, commander of the troops on the island, came on board to see the envoy, and on the morning of the 18th, before sunrise, we landed, and went to the cantonments.

We found the station in great distress; of the whole force, there were but about three hundred Sepoys and a few Europeans fit for duty; and not one officer able to attend parade, except the commandant himself, Captain Whaite the commissary, and Lieutenant Watkins of the artillery. Many had died previous to our arrival, five or six had been forced to try a sea-voyage in search of health, and two died while we remained at the place: all the rest were either suffering under severe illness, or pining under the effects of that which had gone by.

The chief ailment that had proved so destructive to the Europeans was a severe bilious fever, which, when it did not terminate fatally, degenerated into an intermittent, under which all who were convalescent laboured more or less; even those who went to sea had derived but little benefit from their trip; and it was remarked by all, that we had never seen more ghastly objects than the sick and convalescent at Kishmee.

The black troops were also afflicted with fevers, but of a description somewhat different from that which attacked the Europeans; in addition, however, a very remarkable sort of scurvy made its appearance among them; usually commencing by the breaking out of a small sore, which would increase in spite of the greatest attention, under every mode of treatment, and terminate in extensive sloughing, causing finally the death of the patient; it was attended by all the usual scorbutic symptoms, swellings, spongy gums, &c.; and none who had been attacked hitherto, had recovered.

We could not discover that this severe visitation of illness was referable to any description of excess. Previous to the commencement of the excessive heats, which set in about the month of May, the use of wine and ardent spirits had been chiefly abandoned; no temptation for exposure to the sun existed. The commanding officer, with the most anxious and praiseworthy solicitude, exerted himself to preserve the health of the troops; no duty was required of them from the hour of sunrise till that of sunset, and every one was strictly enjoined to keep within doors; yet, in spite of every precaution, sickness attacked one after another, until, of the officers, not one was left fit for duty, except those above mentioned, one of whom had to discharge the whole staff duties of the station; and to the constant occupation this afforded him, he attributed, in a great measure, his freedom from disease.

The natives informed us, that autumn was, in truth, the most sickly season in these parts; but when the localities of the station are considered, and the great privations of comfort under which its occupants laboured, the extremity of disease they endured will appear the less extraordinary.

Nothing can be imagined more desolate and unpromising than the island of Kishmee; from whatever quarter it be seen, it presents to view nothing but light grey rocks, of shelly aggregates or calcareous stone, or brown sand, all equally devoid of the smallest verdure. The cantonment was situated on the N.N.E. end of the island, nearly two miles from the town of Kishmee, on a projecting mass of rock, nearly insulated by ravines, and scarped in such a manner, as to form a good defensible post: an old Portuguese fort within its circuit was partially repaired, and made the depot; but the whole area was so miserably confined and rugged, as hardly to afford a level spot on which to build; and so bare of soil, that it was impossible to drive a tent peg into the ground; so that the tent-ropes were in general fastened round stones, and projecting points of rock. The troops paraded on a strip of beach below the fort. The only tolerable water in the island is found in a small valley to the north west of the cantonment, which doubtless was the chief

reason for selecting this wretched spot for the station; it is procured by digging wells inthe sand to a considerable depth, and at first it is sweet enough, but in a few days it becomes brackish; when by sinking another well quite close to the former, a fresh and good supply may be always procured. The quantity afforded is, however, by no means abundant, and fears were entertained that it might become altogether exhausted. So valuable and scarce is this necessary of life, that the Arabs of the town carry all they require from the cantonment, a distance of two miles; that which they have nearer hand being so bitter as to be hardly drinkable. A serious objection to this position is, that the north-westers, which are the prevailing breezes of the gulf, taking from the form of the land a more westerly direction, blow over extensive tracts of sand and rock, and reach the cantonment charged with burning heat; so that instead of bringing to its exhausted inhabitants the refreshment of a sea breeze, it adds seriously to their distress. The thermometer, while we remained on the island, never indicated a greater degree of heat than 95°; but from its excessive dryness and the great glare reflected from the rocks around, that degree was extremely distressing; it does howeve rfrequently rise to 110° in the shade, and 130° in the sun.

Upon this parched and dreary spot were our troops encamped; many were still in tents, and the rest disposed of in miserable huts, constructed chiefly of date-tree leaves; a very few of the officers had got into hastily built and very insufficient houses. All the date-tree leaves, and the little wood required in the construction of these buildings, were brought at considerable expence from the main land, and the best of them were but ill calculated to exclude the scorching rays of the sun, the burning winds that blow all day, and frequently at night, and the still more distressing reverberation of heat and glare from the rocks around; few of them, indeed, had either windows or doors of any kind.

Depending as they did for provisions entirely upon supplies from Bombay, with which place their intercourse was precarious, particularly at this season, it is not surprising that they were often very ill off in this respect; and it was peculiarly unfortunate at this

time that a large quantity of stores of all sorts had been embarked on board of our vessel, which, independent of her long detention at Bombay, was a very bad sailer; and having to contend with the adverse season, did not reach Kishmee until several months after the time at which she was expected. We found the station thus in the most deplorable want of necessaries; beef and mutton indeed they had of tolerable quality, but as the town of Kishmee had for some time been deserted by its inhabitants, they had not had fish for a long time. Their baker had died, so that the only bread they could command was unleavened cakes of a very inferior flour, mixed with barley-meal purchased on the island; the little rice they had, bad and scarce, had been supplied by passing ships; fruit or vegetables they had none, not even a date had been seen in the bazar for many weeks; not a blade of grass was to be had; the horses and cows were fed on coarse bad straw and salt fish, which latter, for the use of milch cattle, was mingled with a little barley meal. Even the articles of food and spicery, so indispensably necessary for the native troops, were scarce, or not to be had.

In a climate like this, when the strength is greatly reduced and the appetite diminished by the effects of the heat, the stomach loathes more solid food, and seeks relief in fruit, vegetables, and lighter aliments; and the want of these creates a degree of distress which can hardly be conceived; a deficiency of solid food in colder climates, where the appetite is sharpened by the keen air, is hardly so painful. But worse than this was the almost total want of medicine that prevailed in camp; the extraordinary degree of sickness had exhausted the stock on hand at an early period, and there were no means of replenishing it; the consequence was, that when we reached the cantonment, there was hardly to be found in it a common purgative, except a little senna, accidentally procured from Muscat; and this at a time when the raging fevers that prevailed so strongly, called imperatively for such assistance. It is melancholy to reflect on the consequences of such a deficiency, however unavoidable.

The sufferings of men in a situation like this, are indeed only to be appreciated by such as have seen or experienced something similar.

In India, and in many other parts of the world, climates may be found as bad, the heat even greater, and the hot wind more severe; but those who live under such circumstances are generally prepared to resist their influence. In India the houses are good, and calculated to exclude the heat; there is an abundant supply of water and wetted mats to cool the interior; refreshments and conveniencies of all sorts, and capital servants for those who are in health; the best assistance, medical aid, and friendly attendance for such as are sick; wholesome exercise and pleasant rides may be enjoyed when the weather permits, over a country neither barren nor desolate; amusements are contrived, and the mind is kept contented and healthy. The contrast here was striking indeed: in a climate and under circumstances that demanded every comfort and recreation to preserve health, or rather life; not even its necessaries were to be procured; no adequate protection from the scorching heats or parching winds, no means of keeping up an artificial coolness, hardly water enough to quench the constant thirst of exhaustion; the sick devoid of every comfort, of medicine, or medical attendance; the medical men, themselves equal sufferers with others, unable even to assist themselves; hope almost seemed excluded by the knowledge of their situation, and the instances of death continually occurring around them. Those who retained their health were debarred the enjoyment of salutary exercise, by the continual heat and the forbidding nature of the country, the barrenness of which lay like a load on the drooping spirits, and the distressed state of the camp denied equally the relaxation of any amusement, and the common consolations of society. It cannot be surprizing if in such a situation, with nothing to divert or occupy the mind, a degree of despondency should steal over it, and increase by its depressing effects those of a disease already too fatal.

The situation of this force naturally gave rise to a question as to the good purpose to be answered by retaining so unhealthy, so fatal a position, and one to which there were so many concurring objections; the object was to maintain a force at some point, where it might be at hand to co-operate without cruizers, in overawing the piratical tribes, and preserving the peace of the gulf. Experience

had shown, at a very great expence of men and money, that this object was not to be attained by holding a post on Kishmee; as for a great and important part of the year, any force kept there was likely to be quite inefficient. This subject demanded and received the most serious consideration of the political agent, whose duty it was to report to government on the nature and capabilities of the position, and the result of this report combined with other events, was the total abandonment of Kishmee as a military station.

Kishmee, however barren and deserted now, is said at one time to have presented a very different aspect; it contained, we are informed, 360 well inhabited villages, and a great extent of date and other fruit-tree gardens; and when Ormuz was at its height of glory, Kishmee supplied it with fruit, vegetables, and many sorts of provisions. Since that period, however, it has been the scene of great disturbance and rapine, the predatory disposition of the Arab tribes in the gulf, was of itself sufficient to repress the prosperity of a place unable to keep them at a distance; and of late years the Joassmee pirates, who haunted its environs, have made many destructive descents upon the island itself; plundering and destroying every thing within its reach, and wantonly cutting down the date and fruit trees, so that it can hardly now supply the few remaining families with the food they require. The fear of these descents drove the greatest part of the remaining inhabitants into the town of Kishmee, which is walled and prepared for defence; when all were assembled we were informed, that it may contain about 8000 souls, though this is probably an exaggeration, as the population of the whole island is not rated at more than 10,000, of which no inconsiderable part reside in the town of Luft.

The harbour, or rather roadstead of Kishmee, is not very safe, being open on the north-east to the deep channel that lies between it and Gomberoon; so that during the prevalence of the north-east winds, which blow violently in November, December, January, and February, boats cannot land for many days together on account of the surf. These gales continue usually to blow for three days, if they exceed that they go on to seven, and if then they do not break, they

will continue blowing hard for fourteen days; the inhabitants at their approach send their small boats and even buggalows to Foulah, a small bay round the north point of the island, or to Bunder Abbassee and Ormuz. The roadstead has, however, good holding ground, and for eight months of the year it may be considered safe; but the difficulty and uncertainty of communication with the shore will always form a strong objection to this place as a commercial port.

At this season of the year it was the custom for most of the inhabitants of Kishmee to go to Meenab on the mainland, to gather in the date harvest which was now ripe, and to enjoy the superior comforts of the place, in fruit, shade, and vegetation; the town was, in fact, almost quite empty, but not entirely through this cause. The epidemic cholera had made its appearance in Kishmee, many had fallen victims, the rest had fled to escape the danger; they found not refuge, however, at Meenab, for there the disease had also reached and made serious havoc, and the inhabitants had fled to the mountains, leaving the town empty, and the rich fruits of the surrounding gardens to fall unheeded to the ground.

The result of our enquiries regarding the commencement and progress of this disease was as follows: The first case occurred on the 9th of the month of Ramzaun, in the person of a slave girl, in the house of the sheikh, who could have had no communication with any one from without; another person was taken ill a few days after, then another, and thus it continued in single cases until the 29th, when seven or eight persons were taken ill at once, and died, and for several successive days the town of Kishmee continued to lose nine, ten, or twelve people daily; great alarm was excited, and vast numbers of the inhabitants fled to Meenab on the Persian coast, so that the town became nearly empty.

The sheikh himself, whom we particularly interrogated, did not believe that the disease had been imported; nor, admitting such to have been the fact, could he indicate any channel by which it might have arrived. From his account it does not appear to have assumed here the violent character it generally bore in India; there were few or no sudden deaths: those affected seldom died in less than six

hours, and most of them appear to have survived beyond twenty-four. In a country where the art of medicine is so little known as here, it is not to be supposed that much could be done for the relief of the sick; yet several recovered without such aid, or after the exhibition of medicines, which from their nature could have done no good. The strong desire for cold water, so striking a symptom of the disease, and the indulgence of which in India was prohibited as injurious, was here permitted, and other remedies of a cooling description were given, as they believed, with advantage. The sheikh said, that the few cases where our remedies of laudanum and peppermint had been administered, did not terminate in cures: bleeding had never been tried. The disease was not here considered contagious, but from all accounts appeared to have assumed the same capricious and uncertain character it has exhibited in India; the symptoms were precisely the same, vomiting and purging, attended with a violent sense of burning about the præcordia, succeeded, sooner or later, by clammy cold extremities, sunk features, and death: cramps were less common and less violent than in India. No new case had occurred for three days previous to our arrival. Some few of the troops had been attacked, but the disease had yielded to the usual remedies of calomel and opium; but the camp does not appear to have been seriously visited by this additional and fearful scourge. We learnt that it had reached Bunder Abbassee and Bahrein, but no communication had taken place for several days, either with these places or Meenab.

Little on the whole could be gathered, either here or at Muscat, calculated to throw much additional light either on the nature of epidemic cholera, or on the means by which the disease is propagated or conveyed; there are the strongest grounds for believing that it may be carried in vessels by means of cargo or personal effects, yet, it appears spontaneously where no known or even possible communication could have taken place: in some cases we saw persons in health continually employed in assisting and touching the sick with impunity; other cases have occurred, where whole parties concerned in burying or burning the body of one of its victims have themselves been carried off by this fell disease to a man.

While the ship lay at anchor in the road of Kishmee, I resolved on visiting the island of Ormuz, and town of Bunder Abbassee (formerly Gomberoon), to trace, if possible, the remains of former grandeur and prosperity at these celebrated places; and having procured a boat for the purpose, we left the ship early on the morning of the 20th, and reached the road of Gomberoon about 9 A. M.

The aspect of the coast as we approached it gave no promise of fertility; the land near the beach is low and of a greyish brown hue, devoid of the smallest verdure; the higher lands retreat into the interior, and the lofty mountain called Kohe-Ginow, visible to us while at sea, before we could distinguish Kishmee, although it is thirty miles inland, was at this time hid from our view by thick haze. The town, wretchedly built of the materials afforded by the soil, resembles it in colour, and makes but little show: extensive ruins are discerned on nearing the shore, and those of the English and French factories may be seen to the westward overhanging the very surf: the present town occupies the site of, and is partly formed from the remains of the Dutch factory, the fort of which now serves as a house for the Arab sheikh.

When we landed we were met upon the beach by two persons sent by this chief, who conducted us to his house, at the door of which the sheikh himself welcomed us with perfect civility and respect, and led us up to an open tower, where the sea breeze blew fresh and delightfully, and where, after awhile, he left us to repose, sending us ample refreshments of fruit, sweetmeats, and milk, in various shapes. We had no want of visitors, however, for the Arabs are extremely curious, and though they are never rude, their free and unceremonious habits lead them to consider it no breach of good manners to satisfy their curiosity by entering unrestrainedly to visit strangers.

The origin and history of Gomberoon, now called Bunder Abbassee, is intimately connected with that of Ormuz; the former having, in fact, risen upon the ruins of the latter: and as both are names of interest in Eastern story, although from their remoteness they may not have attracted a very general attention; it may save the trouble

of reference, and not be deemed impertinent, to insert here a short notice regarding the rise and fall of these places.

The name of Ormuz, or Hurmooz, appears to have existed long before the rock which now bears it was known at all. It was the appellation of a state situated upon the northern shore of the Persian gulf, the capital of which (of the same name), was placed somewhat to the eastward of the present town of Bunder Abbassee. Its chiefs were Arabs, descendants of those who followed the standard of the Prophet in the early days of Mahomedanism, to propagate its doctrines with the sword throughout the East, and whose posterity are still to be found scattered over Persia and the adjacent countries.

The fifteenth sovereign of this state, Meer Bahadour Eyas Seyfin, pressed, as it would appear, by the Tartar descendants of Chengiz Khan, in the year of the Hegira 700, and in the latter part of the reign of Ghazan Khan, determined on quitting the main land of Persia, and retired first to the island of Kishmee. He did not, however, settle there, but having obtained a grant of the desert island then called Gerun, now Hurmooz or Ormuz, from the sovereign of Khais* (now Kenn), he removed thither, and commenced the foundations of a city destined not only to become the emporium of commerce in the gulf, but for a long time, of that between Europe and the East. To this city he gave the name of the country he had quitted, and for two hundred years it enjoyed a course of high prosperity, in the acquisition of power as well as of riches, for it extended its sway along both sides of the Persian gulf nearly to Bussorah: indeed, by one account, we find its limits described as reaching from Cape Raus-ul-Hudd to Cape Musseldom, including many considerable cities, and that the chiefs, even to Bahrein, were all tributary to the sovereign of Ormuz.

By this time the Portuguese had extended their dominion over a great part of India, and their fleets overspread and monopolized the commerce of its seas: it is not surprizing that the wealth and splen-

* There are on the island of Kenn extensive ruins, indicating the site of a very considerable city, which, it is said, once enjoyed the trade afterwards monopolized by Ormuz.

dour of Ormuz and its dependencies attracted their cupidity. Alphonso de Albuquerque first attempted the conquest of this place in August 1507, when he sailed up the Persian Gulf, with seven ships carrying 460 soldiers, and visiting as he passed the cities of Omaun, then forming a part of the dominions of Ormuz, attacking some, and negociating with others, he succeeded in making himself master of the whole: among the rest, he attacked and destroyed Muscat, but gave up its ruins to the inhabitants, on the proviso that they should pay to the king of Portugal the same tribute they had paid to the sovereign of Ormuz.

He then proceeded against Ormuz itself, and although it was guarded by more than thirty thousand armed men, he summoned its king to become the tributary of the Portuguese crown: this being refused, he attacked the place, and after a gallant struggle his small band reduced their enemies to acknowledge, for the time at least, their vassalage to the conquerors. Not long, however, did the vanquished submit to these humiliating terms; as the Portuguese force became diminished, they renounced their allegiance, and Albuquerque, ill seconded, as appears by his officers, was unable to compel the fulfillment of their engagements; and although a force dispatched to the Gulf occasionally succeeded in obtaining payment of the tribute of fifteen thousand xeraphines, it was not until Albuquerque was made governor-general of India, in the beginning of 1515, that with an armament of twenty-seven ships, and fifteen hundred men, he not only forced the king of Ormuz to acknowledge his vassalage to the crown of Portugal, but to permit his soldiers to occupy and garrison the fort they had formerly commenced, and their officers to reside in the neighbourhood. At this time, too, did Albuquerque receive a very splendid embassy from Shah Ismael of Persia, and dispatch in his turn, to the court of that monarch, an ambassador, with more than equal pomp; acts that, situated as he was, sufficiently indicate the state of subjection to which the wealthy and powerful kingdom of Ormuz was reduced: from this period its prosperity rapidly and totally declined.

In the year 1521, however, we find the king of Ormuz still possessing the insignia of power; but the fact of his real impotence is proved by his demand for assistance from the Portuguese governor, to humble his vassal the king of Bahrein, and force him to pay the tribute due to Ormuz; without which, he alleged, it was not in his power to satisfy the demands of his Portuguese superiors. The request was complied with, the capital, Lasah (now Ul Kateef), taken, its king slain, and the country reduced to complete subjection.

The conquerors had now begun to tighten the chains that bound their captives, and more sorely to oppress them in many ways; no measure was more offensive than the appointment of Portuguese instead of native officers to collect the customs, on pretence that the payment of the stipulated tribute was tardy and irregular; conspiracies were formed, which broke out into open rebellion, not only at Ormuz, but at most of the cities of the Arabian coast, on the same night; and which, though rendered ultimately unsuccessful to any considerable extent, by the determined courage of the Portuguese, occasioned much confusion and blood-shed, whilst they proved the earnest desire that existed everywhere among the people to get rid of their oppressors. The king, with many of the inhabitants, on this retired to Kishmee, where he was soon after murdered by his own officers, who placed his son Mahmood Shah on the nominal throne. With him the Portuguese entered into a new treaty, raising the tribute to sixty thousand xeraphines, although the commerce was destroyed and the state entirely disorganized.

A faint and transient gleam of relief broke over Ormuz in 1529, when Nuno Da Cunha was appointed governor-general of India; he visited the island, and to the surprise and gratification of its inhabitants, redressed many of their private grievances, and punished those who had occasioned them; but no relaxation took place in the demands of the crown, nor, as we may infer, in the degree of oppression exercised over the state; for, in 1543, we find that the tribute had been raised to 100,000 ducats annually, and that the arrears amounted to five times that sum. As we cannot conceive that a payment of this full sum could be seriously burthensome in itself to a state so

rich as Ormuz once was, its inability to discharge this demand proves, as fully as possible, the decay of the sources whence its wealth arose; and this decay, there is every reason to believe, commenced exactly with the first conquest by the Portuguese. As a mean of liquidating this accumulation of arrears, the then governor, De Souza, arranged that the customs should be given over entirely to the Portuguese government; a measure in which the wretched king of Ormuz, sick of their tyranny, readily acquiesced.

In the year 1552, the Turkish court sent an expedition, consisting of 16,000 men, against the Portuguese, then acknowledged lords of Ormuz, under the command of Pirbeck (Peer Beg), a veteran pirate. They took Muscat after a month's siege; but, failing in an attempt upon the fort of Ormuz, they plundered the city, and also the island of Kishmee, and returned to Bussorah with a rich booty.

Little worthy of remark occurs in the history of Ormuz for several years after this. Its commerce, and, consequently, its importance appear to have suffered a gradual decline, owing, doubtless, as much to the progress of navigation and discovery, which changed the channels of trade, as to the effects of tyranny and rapacity in its rulers. The power and wealth which the Portuguese had acquired in the East, and the monopoly they exercised over the commerce of the Persian, as well as Indian seas, had by this time excited the jealousy as well as the cupidity of Abbas the first, then sitting on the throne of Persia. The former passion was no doubt exasperated by viewing the settlement they had made, some time before, on the main land, at Gomberoon a grant of which they had obtained from the king of Lār; and this province, which had been dismembered from the crown of Persia in the reign of his grandfather, being now reunited to it by his own conquest, it was not extraordinary that he should wish to possess also the seaport that belonged to it. Ormuz was, however, a possession which Abbas greatly coveted; and the progressive decline of its rulers probably tempted him, at this period, to strike the blow he had long meditated. Assisted by the English, who contributed the naval part of the expedition, he attacked and took Bahrein, in the year 1611; but it was not until 1623, that Ormuz itself fell, after a severe

conflict. The city was plundered by the Persians, and rendered totally desolate, in which situation it has ever since remained.

The Persian monarch now fortified and garrisoned Gomberoon. He gave to the town and port his own name; and fondly hoped, that the opulence and prosperity of Ormuz might revive in Bunder Abbassee. As the price of the English assistance on this enterprize, he assigned to them a portion of the customs levied there on imports, exempting them from payment of such duties themselves. But it does not appear, that the English factory at Gomberoon was ever highly prosperous; even the favour of the monarch for whom they had fought, was uncertain and fleeting; and under succeeding potentates, they suffered much loss and oppression, whilst in the troubles that constantly agitated Persia, after the decline of the Suffooian dynasty, little security could be hoped for. But the name and character of the nation, even in those days, appears to have possessed an influence which gave confidence to others, and thus became one principal cause of prosperity to the place. The English flag was the sanctuary to which those who dreaded oppression would fly for succour; and when this flag was removed, that confidence gave place to alarm and distrust, and Bunder Abbassee fell as rapidly to decay as it had risen to prosperity; while Abooshehr (or Bushire), to which place the factory was removed, as quickly improved, under its influence, which continues more powerful than ever; but there can be no doubt, that a similar fate would attend that port in the event of its experiencing a similar loss.

The country around Bunder Abbassee is sterile, the climate overpoweringly hot, and the air unwholesome; nevertheless, there was for a considerable time a great resort to its port, and the Dutch and French had extensive factories there. But all those have long since been abandoned; and, though the south eastern provinces of Persia still receive a few supplies through this channel which occasions a little trade, the place is nearly fallen into the same decay to which it was so greatly the cause of reducing Ormuz.

The present town is a mere collection of wretched huts, built of mud, or stone with mud cement. The bazar, which when we saw it was

almost empty, is a miserable place: the fort, patched up at different periods, was in great disrepair; it had a few guns about it, but the carriages were quite unserviceable. We remarked, that all the buildings in the place were subject to a rapid external decay; the effect probably of some acrid principle in the atmosphere, acting upon the stone which is chiefly calcareous. The stone buildings have, for the most part, been covered with a cement, which soon matures into a firm mass like stone; but which, after a while, rising in blisters from the stones beneath, cracks and leaves them exposed; the stones themselves then begin to rot and drop off in flakes, so that the building assumes a singular aspect of decay; nevertheless, the great proportion of calcareous matter in the soil creates so strong a tendency to agglutination, that even the rotten stone and lime reunite firmly as by a regenerative process, and cannot be broken without difficulty: the clods of the earth thus, too, adhere firmly to the surface; and land which has even been lately ploughed soon hardens, so as to bear up the footsteps, or to give way like half-frozen soil. Lime is every where the chief component substance. The soil in many places was principally formed of coraline sand, and the *detritus* of oysters, madrepores, and various shells.

The population of Bunder Abbassee, at the fullest season, may amount to three or four thousand souls, but at this time there were few remaining within its walls. Fear of the disease that was ravaging the islands in its vicinity, had combined with the motives that always induce its inhabitants at this season to fly from its burning and unwholesome climate, and refresh themselves at the villages in the interior, where the date harvest had commenced, and the fruit and shade were peculiarly grateful. The sheikh, when he heard of the cholera having broke out in Kishmee, shut his gates against all from thence; and no case had occurred at Bunder Abbassee, up to the time of our visit there.

In the evening, when the heat had become less intense, we sallied out to view the remains of the former town. Proceeding westward along the beach, the first thing that attracted our notice, was the remains of a square fort with bastions at the angles, one of the fortifications

added to the place by Shah Abbas. Close to this, might be seen a set of hummāms, contemporary, no doubt, with the fort; the various chambers and domes of which were little injured by time. Adjoining, are the remains of a large water reservoir, of good masonry, over-arched by a large dome; and several sets of smaller hummāms might be traced in the neighbourhood.

A little further on, in the same direction, we found the gateway of the former town; and the ruins of houses, thickly scattered around, gave evidence of the denseness of the population that once existed here.

Still further to the westward, and almost overhanging the surf, stand the remains of the English factory; an extensive mass, so completely gone to decay, that it is difficult to trace the original plan of the buildings. The ruins of one or two tanks still exist, and long suites of sirdābs or subterraneous apartments to retire into during the hot weather. Near the factory can be traced the remains of a creek, which served the purposes of a quay, where boats might be loaded and discharged. Several heaps of red ochre from Ormuz, and bits of sulphur from Khumeer, still lay where they had been thrown when the factory was inhabited. Coins are occasionally found in this place; and some years ago, a parcel of golden ornaments, a chain and a pair of gold-mounted spectacles were picked up, and sold for two hundred dollars (as we were assured) to an English gentleman.

Our attention having been attracted by certain buildings of a remarkable pyramidal appearance at a little distance, we went towards them, and discovered them to be the monuments of Englishmen who had died at the factory. There was something peculiarly striking in thus discovering the memorials of our departed countrymen on a distant, desert, and almost hostile shore. We looked for inscriptions, but the external parts had suffered too much from the weather to have retained any that might once have been there. There were twelve in all, of various shapes and sizes; some were small buildings covered with domes, like Mahometan mausoleums; three were pyramidal; and one, a pillar placed upon a pedestal: all were fast going to decay,

fading, like the names of their silent tenants, from the knowledge and memory of the world. We could not but muse somewhat mournfully upon the transformation thus forcibly recalled to us; the bustle and activity of the place, and the gaiety or ambition of its inhabitants, alike exchanged for silence and desolation, for the cold and narrow dwelling of the tomb.

We quitted the ruins, and returning to the fort took leave of the hospitable sheikh, and proceeded to our boat, intending to sail immediately for Ormuz; but the wind had raised so heavy a sea, that the boatmen were afraid to venture by night, clear and beautiful as it was. They therefore told us an untruth, affirming that both wind and tide were against us, and that we should not be able to proceed for some time; but that, if we would bivouac upon the beach for a little, they would call us when the tide turned in our favour; we therefore procured a few carpets to spread on the sand, and, having refreshed ourselves after the heat of the day with melons and tea in the delicious sea breeze, we lay down to rest; guarded by two of the sheikh's soldiers, appointed to wait upon us.

These two worthy personages appeared inclined to try the extent of our credulity, by the relation of wonderful tales, particularly of certain beasts of prey that occasionally committed extraordinary ravages, not only on men and animals, but on their goods; and as we rather apprehended, that this caution might be but a preparative for finding some defalcation in our baggage, we deprived them of any excuse for negligence or pilferage, by removing all our goods into the boat, which lay outside the surf. It was somewhat singular, that as we lay wakeful from anxiety on the beach, two large animals were seen prowling around at no great distance, perhaps wolves or hyænas, which were prevented from a nearer intrusion by the fire we kept up.

Our boatmen behaved ill. Anchored as they were without the surf, they went to sleep, and either did not or would not hear our repeated hails until morning, when, after venting our spleen in a hearty scold, we got under weigh with a light air, and steered for Ormuz, which we reached at a little past 9. A. M.

On approaching this island, we were presented with the view of a very remarkable assemblage of rugged and aspiring peaks, which form the crests of its mountains. Indeed, the whole island is but a mass of rocks varying in colour as much as in shape; some are dark brown, others reddish, greenish, or ashen grey; some are almost black, while others are of a pure snowy white: every thing stimulates curiosity to explore the strange formations they offer to view.

We landed on a spit of sand upon the point of which stands yet the old Portuguese fort, and after a rapid glance around us, begged for a shelter from the sun's intense heat. Crossing the half-dry ditch the sheikh received us at the gate, and conducted us to an apartment on the walls, which a full exposure to the sun's rays, and the number of our host's retinue rendered hot even to suffocation. After compliments our wants were enquired into, but though fruit would have been most acceptable, such a luxury had not for months been seen at Ormuz, and we were content to obtain bread and milk. This, however, we were not suffered to enjoy in peace. Successions of visitors came, until I think every individual of the garrison, which includes the whole population of the island, had satisfied his curiosity; and then an old man in company found out that the strangers might require repose, and they slowly withdrew.

About three in the afternoon we left our quarters to explore. The rocks, which compose nearly the whole island, sink abruptly, near its northern extremity, into a plain comprising an extent of six or eight square miles of comparatively level country, terminating in a sandy spit that divides the harbour of Ormuz into two parts, and on which stands the old Portuguese fort. This was never of great extent or of regular figure; but assumes that, indicated by the ground it occupies. The walls have been most carefully and substantially built, of the rock afforded by the island, cut into large square pieces which are of great thickness. Strong bastions command each face; and the heighth from the water to the ramparts may be eighty feet. The walls themselves are in good repair, and are likely long to continue so, but the interior is in ruins. The ramparts are full of bomb proofs,

in which no doubt the garrison formerly resided. Two large reservoirs for supplying them with water still subsist; both are covered in, the roof of one rests on two rows of massy pillars, and its diameter might be an hundred feet. There was a good deal of water in it at this time, and about thirty feet more in depth remained unoccupied; but it was too dark within to judge accurately, either of former or present dimensions.

The Fort was formerly separated from the mainland by a canal cut through the neck of sand, and this was crossed by a draw bridge, but it is now chiefly filled up, the eastern part serving as a dock for repairing boats in. A rotten plank served as a bridge leading to the gateway, which is strongly defended by guns from the neck of the opposite bastion; and there are, I think, two doors, the passages to which are so commanded, as to expose assailants to a heavy fire in making an attack. Upon the walls there are several iron, and at least two brass guns, bearing the Portuguese arms, supported by two angels, with the motto "Gardai Vosi Demi," without any date; but on another part of the gun may be seen an Arabic inscription engraved by order of Shah Abbas, and under date 1031 of the Hegira, commemorative of the capture of the place. The calibre of these guns is considerable; but there are some balls both of iron and stone lying about the fort, too large for any guns we saw: the carriages of all are so bad, that they could not be sufficient to resist a single discharge; and in several instances the trucks had rotted off the axle-trees.

A mud wall just beyond the old ditch, incloses between itself and the fort, the few miserable huts, still occasionally tenanted, on the island. Beyond this, upon the plain extending to the feet of the mountains, lie scattered the ruins of the ancient Arabian and Portuguese city, with its villas and seats. The perishable materials of which these were constructed, has probably been the cause that not one relic of sufficient importance to invite a nearer inspection, came under our observation. The only remarkable object is a minār or tower near the mud wall, which some conjecture to have been a light-house; although neither its situation nor form, in my opinion,

warrant the supposition. It is a round tower which has been encircled at intervals with galleries, the wood work of which, formed of the date tree, having given way, they have also fallen to pieces. A winding staircase of the same perishable materials and consequently very ruinous, conducts to the top. The exterior has once been ornaornamented with Mosaic work in coloured tiles, the greater part of which have fallen off. Its appearance, as far as I can judge, very satisfactorily confirms the tradition of the country, that it was a minaret, built by Shah Abbas, after the capture of the place, to call the faithful to prayer. The Mosiac work, in particular, is quite in conformity with the taste of that period; there are, indeed, no remains of a mosque; but that might have been built of less substantial materials; and it is far from uncommon in Persia, to see minarets erected quite distinct from, and of superior architecture to the mosques they belong to.

Along the shore, both of the eastern and western bays, not far from the water's edge, may be still seen the ruins of a row of houses, arcaded into apartments of various shapes and dimensions, these were probably sirdābs or apartments for the warm weather; or they may have been cellars for receiving merchandize. The whole were of the same description of solid architecture, which characterized the Fort. The ground beyond, for a considerable space towards the mountains, was thickly strewed with broken tiles, pottery, glass, and the other usual and very destructible relics of an ancient eastern city, chiefly resolved into heaps of rubbish.

If the subject were accurately examined, we should probably discover, that the wealth and splendour of Ormuz have been infinitely overrated, and that the magnificent descriptions of Raynal and others, have less foundation in truth, than the flowery accounts of travellers, whose ideas on such matters were far less refined than we now suppose; and which consequently are calculated to convey very exaggerated impressions of what they described. Splendour and magnificence when spoken of in the East, refer almost solely to the person and immediate attendants of the Sovereign. The people *may be*, and often are, poorer in an inverse ratio to the wealth which that

sovereign displays; and though Ormuz may have been rich, compared with the petty and demi-savage states in its immediate neighbourhood, it appears evident from the distress to which its ruler was so speedily reduced for payment of the small tribute demanded by the Portuguese, that it never could have possessed any great accumulation of real wealth. A display of rich and uncommon goods in its bazars, more extensive than in those of its neighbours, and a considerable degree of luxury, with the pomp and shew of an extravagant Eastern court, might readily be magnified by their poorer and more frugal visitors, or even by their stern conquerors, into a shape that would admit of the florid descriptions we possess of this city. If, in addition to these considerations, we contemplate the nature of the island itself, we shall have further evidence of these exaggerations. Unprovided with one drop of natural fresh water, the greatest portion of the island consisting of volcanic rocks, and the remainder of an uneven stony plain strongly impregnated with salt, the means of improving the face of the country do not exist. Not a tree, not a shrub can grow or can be reared, for the first necessary, water to irrigate, is wanting. All vegetable supplies come from Kishmee or the main land; so that how the flowering and aromatic shrubs that are said to have decorated the streets, were maintained, it is not easy to comprehend.

The surface of the plain, though level when contrasted with the mountains beyond it, is found rugged enough on nearer approach, and even broken into ravines, which, near the feet of the mountains. increase its inequality so as to render it difficult to travel. The soil, principally coraline *detritus*, resembling that of Kishmee, is mingled with a clayey and calcareous earth, formed from the decomposition of the rocks around, which are strongly impregnated with iron; specular iron ore is very abundant. These rocks rise every where above the surface, in rugged amorphous masses, strewing the ground with ruins, from which the mountains rise abruptly in bare desolate crags, and sharp lofty peaks of every variety of form and hue. In many parts these, as well as the plain below, have a crumbling volcanic aspect, and a parched looseness of texture that alarms the

traveller, lest the surface should give way under foot, and swallow him up in yet smoking ashes.

Proceeding in our walk, we reached a ravine forming the bed of a salt spring, and which presented a striking appearance. The whole surface of the water, which in some places is confined, in others expands into small sheets, was covered as well as its immediate banks, with a thick and purely white incrustation of salt, exactly resembling the condition of a rivulet after a fall of snow in winter; so that we had the gelid appearance of that season, united to the burning heat of an Arabian summer. A white efflorescence covered the ground in many other places; and so strongly was the soil impregnated with salt, that every stone was firmly fixed to the earth where it lay, by the congelation of saline exudations, as if it had been frozen there. On the banks of the rivulet lay a great quantity of salt, cut, from the solid mass that filled the bed, into square pieces ready for lading on any ship that might require such a cargo.

The only products of Ormuz are, iron in various shapes, particularly that of specular ore, and red ochre; sulphur and salt; the latter is procured, as above described, from several salt springs, and forms almost the only source of the revenue derived from the island by the Imaum. But, lest his trade in that article should interfere with the Company's monopoly, he is under agreement that no British ship shall receive on board more than a certain quantity; and that none, British or foreign, bound for any Indian port, shall load with it at all. The export to other places is, however, considerable.

The garrison of Ormuz consists at present of about eighty soldiers, belonging to the imaum of Muscat, who live, immured in the desolate spot, in a wretched manner. Their appearance, as well as that of those we saw at Bunder Abbassee, entirely resembles that of the Arabs of Muscat. The broadsword and target, their chief arms, were interesting, as bearing a strong resemblance to those borne by the Scots Highlanders; but their sword is edged on both sides. A few of these weapons are made at Yemen; but the greater part are procured from Egypt, whither they are brought from different ports of the Mediterranean. Many may be seen with the Solingen mark;

and not a few with that of Andrea Ferrara, one of which I endeavoured to purchase, but could not prevail on the owner to part with it. These swords are sharp and thin, and, previously to making use of them in attack, they make them quiver and ring in the hand with a jerk, while held in an upright position; and then charge with loud shouts. The targets are brought from Zanguebar, made, as we were informed, from the hide of some amphibious animal, probably the hippopotamus. They are very thick and tough, but not above eight or nine inches in diameter, just enough to cover the hand and wrist; and they rise in the middle, almost to a point.

The Arabs in colour resemble mulattoes of a sickly yellow hue, with a deeper brownish tinge about the eyes, neck, and joints; some are very dark, and an admixture with negro blood seems to be common. Among the negroes, who were pretty numerous, there were some who bore the most hideous physiognomies; these are chiefly natives of Madagascar. We were much amused with one of these, who, on his part, appeared equally so with us. He watched, with great interest, all our movements, while preparing for our meal; and laughed loud and long for very delight, grinning like an ogre when he saw us eat. The genuine Arabs, with some exceptions, are rather spare and active than athletic men. Those of the superior orders who came under our observation, as the sheikhs and their families, bore a strong characteristic resemblance to each other in features. The countenance was generally long and thin; the forehead moderately high, with a rounded protuberance near its top; the nose prominent and aquiline; the mouth and chin receding, giving to the line of the profile a circular rather than a straight character; the eye, deep set under the brow, dark and bright: thin and spare, deficient in muscle, their limbs were small, particularly their hands, which were sometimes even of feminine delicacy; their beards were almost always of a deep black, artificially coloured, if not naturally so; a few wore them grizzled, and we observed an old man, whose beard, of a milk-white colour, he had died yellow, which, contrasted with a singular pair of blue eyes, had a very extraordinary effect.

One veteran, covered with scars of the most desperate wounds, and with a beard as white as snow, but a bright intelligent eye, and a stout athletic frame, interested us much. He told us that his wounds had been received in fighting against the Ben-i-Meinee and Joassmees, with whom, he assured us, there used to be daily and almost hourly skirmishes, in former times. He had fought under the great-grandfather of the present imaum, and was contemporary with Nadir Shah, whose course of glory and conquest he was quite familiar with; and finally he was, he said, a hundred years old. "Well," observed we, "but in spite of your advanced age, should "there be any fighting again, would you not make one?"—"To be "sure," said he; "fighting is, and continues to be my business."—"Yes," returned we, "but at your age you might quit your pro-"fession, if you chose; but you seem to love it."—"Yes," cried he, and his eye fired up, "I do love it; and while I live, where fighting "is, there I will be."

We remained lingering on the interesting, but now desolate shores of Ormuz, musing on the changes, the scenes of deep interest to the statesman and the warrior, to the historian and the poet, which those rocks, and the waters of "Harmozia's Bay," now glittering in the bright moonshine, had often witnessed, until our boatmen plucked up courage to venture upon the placid sea, which rolls between Ormuz and Kishmee. It was a lovely, a magnificent night. The scene, the time, the place, the costume of our attendants, could not fail to bring powerfully before us the descriptions of one of our sweetest poets, in one of his most touching compositions. This was the sea on which "Hinda" woke to recollection "upon a galliot's deck;" from whence she witnessed the termination of her "Ghebre's" struggles and life; and which then received her cold remains; and, little as the people or country justify the poet's glowing imagery, we could not sail upon that sea, sleeping, as then, "in bright tranquillity," nor view the wild outline of the mountains, silvered by the pale moonlight, without, for a while, yielding to the illusion, and permitting ourselves to fancy that

we gazed on a land of gallant enterprize, romantic love, and generous feelings.

We reached the vessel at seven o'clock on the morning of the 22d., and next day we left the sultry Kishmee. Nothing worthy of record occurred during the remainder of our passage to Bushire. We were long baffled by calms and contrary winds, and suffered greatly from heat, although the thermometer seldom rose beyond 96° or 97°. As the ship was seldom out of sight of land, we had opportunities of viewing the greater part of the Persian coast, which greatly resembled the parts we had left on the coast of Arabia and above Gomberoon, consisting principally of grey calcareous cliffs, marked with dark horizontal strata, and often rising to a majestic height abruptly from the sea.

On the 4th of August we reached Bushire, and landed under a salute from the militia of the place, assembled for the purpose; their dress and hands betrayed the nature of their trades, from which they had been called for the occasion, and they were headed by the sheikh, who came in person to meet the envoy. It was a relief to escape from the noise and dust to the shelter of the English factory.

CHAP. III.

BUSHIRE AND THE DUSHTISTAN. — PREPARE FOR OUR JOURNEY TO TEHRAN. — ARRIVAL IN THE ROADS OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP LIVERPOOL. — DREADFUL SUFFERINGS OF HER OFFICERS AND CREW FROM HEAT ON THEIR PASSAGE FROM MUSCAT. — DEPLORABLE ACCOUNTS OF THE GARRISON AT KISHMEE. — CHOLERA APPEARS AT BUSHIRE, ABOUT THE 20TH AUGUST. — REMOVAL FROM THE TOWN TO TENTS, ON THE 23D. — EPIDEMIC INCREASES. — A CASE OCCURS IN CAMP. — ARAB TREATMENT OF THE DISORDER. — IT SPREADS INTO THE INTERIOR, AND GREAT ALARM PREVAILS. — OUR ENGAGED MULETEERS REFUSE TO PROCEED. — DOUBTS REGARDING THE ADVANCE OF THE MISSION. — COMPARATIVE TRIAL OF THE EUROPEAN AND ARAB TREATMENT OF CHOLERA. — MEHMANDAR ARRIVES, SEPT. 1ST. — THE EPIDEMIC INCREASES. — CAPTAIN WRIGHT, OF THE HONOURABLE COMPANY'S CRUIZER VESTAL, DIES OF IT. — MULES ARRIVE. — DISEASE REPORTED TO DECREASE. — DISEASE ATTRIBUTED TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE STAR CANOPUS. — FESTIVAL OF EED-UL-KOURBAUN. — SUPERSTITIOUS DELAY AS TO MARCHING. — DISEASE CEASES. — ESTIMATE OF MORTALITY IN BUSHIRE AND BUSSORA.

THE town and population of Bushire have been so often described, as to leave nothing for further remark. To those who have been accustomed to the comparative richness and verdure of India, it would be difficult to convey an adequate idea of the parched and disgusting barrenness of the country around this place, and of the whole Dushtistan * of Persia; still less can they who are familiar only with the cultivated and varied beauties of Europe conceive a just impression of the aspect of this miserable land. Brown sand, or grey clay and rock, are the only varieties, unenlivened by any kind of vegetation. The towns and villages, built of the materials afforded by the soil, are scarcely to be discerned from its surface, at any distance, and resemble rather irregularities thereon, than habitations for man; and the misery and dirt in which the wretched huts are

* Dushtistan means the level country, from "Dusht," *a plain;* and it is particularly applied to the low country extending along part of the shores of the Persian Gulf, in this quarter.

smothered present a picture of discomfort quite depressing to the spirits. If we required additional proofs of the force of local attachments, a strong one might here be found in the fondness which the Arab evinces for this country of wretchedness; where not one advantage, hardly the power of procuring the necessaries of life, can be adduced, to counterbalance its great natural disabilities; where scarcely a drop of sweet water is to be had, and the heat is so insupportable, that few, except the natives, can endure it, even with every alleviation that can be contrived.

The British factory was certainly but ill calculated to afford these alleviations. It was a native building, the apartments of which, chiefly opening to a court-yard, were for the most part small, comfortless, and ill-aired. A house had at one time been built, at some distance from the town, in a situation to command the only good water near it, and the fresh sea breeze; but the jealousy of the Persian government was awakened, and an order was sent from court to have it destroyed. Thus the British resident was forced to re-occupy his uncomfortable quarters in the town.

During the time we remained at the factory, the heat at sunrise was usually about 87°; from 11 till four o'clock at 96° to 98°; and throughout the greater part of the night about 90°. We were forced to adopt the custom, here universal, of sleeping upon the terraces, or the roofs, in the open air; and the dew was often so heavy, that in the morning the mattrass and sheets were found to be soaked, and the water standing in large drops on all the clothes; yet, unless the practice be continued too late in the season, this is not supposed to be injurious to health; but, after the weather begins to cool, it is frequently known to produce fevers, as well as colds. The fall of the year is, in fact, considered the unhealthy season; probably because the seeds of illness which have been sown during the previous hot months do not begin to develope themselves until that period. When the weather is intensely hot, all the coolness that can be produced by the co-operation of dew and perspiration may be no more than necessary to preserve the body in a tolerable temperature; but when the cool weather commences, evaporation is neither so rapid

nor so needful; and the dew, which may continue hanging about the person, will chill it to a dangerous degree; so that sleeping exposed to its effects must be then unsafe.

The first ten days after our arrival were passed in preparing for our journey to Tehrān. On the 19th August, his Majesty's ship Liverpool, of 50 guns, commanded by Captain F. A. Collier, anchored in the roads. This vessel had suffered severely from the extreme heat of the weather, on her passage from Muscat. They had not been much incommoded until they entered the Gulf; but the moment they passed the Quoins* there was an alteration in the state of the atmosphere hardly to be accounted for by mere change of temperature. The thermometer only indicated 103° to 106°; but the stifling closeness, and absence of any breeze, made it almost insupportable; and its effects were lamentable. In one day they lost three of her Lieutenants by a species of coup-de-soleil. The officer who read the funeral service over the first of his dead companions in the morning, was himself committed to the deep before the night. Several others were attacked; but speedy and decided measures saved and restored them to health. The same effects were observed among the men, although the mortality was not in the same proportion. They fell down in all parts of the ship, senseless, struck with vertigo, and sometimes foaming at the mouth. Exposure to the sun, even for a moment, infallibly was followed by these consequences. The instant that a man moved from under the shade of the awning, he dropped down giddy, or deprived of sense; and, in such cases as terminated fatally, sensation never returned. The means of relief most generally resorted to, and most effectual, were prompt and copious bleedings, and bathing in tepid water; and for some time the lower deck of the ship resembled a slaughter-house, from the number of persons constantly undergoing the operation of venesection, in every part of it.

All possible precautions were taken to provide against the ill effects of this violent heat. Double awnings were spread, all duty by day

* The Quoins are islands at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

was put a stop to. No sail ever was shifted, except those that could be worked from the deck; but all was insufficient to combat the evil. The degree of exhaustion that prevailed was beyond precedent; the spirits of all were completely depressed, and exertion seemed impossible, even had life been at stake. To add to their annoyance, the same cause produced so violent an attack of prickly heat on most of the crew, as well as officers, as to render it almost impossible to bear the lightest clothes. This extreme degree of heat continued for several days, but diminished as they approached Bushire; and at their anchorage the temperature was quite tolerable.

The crew of this ship were not singular in their sufferings. A gentleman who attempted, about the same time, to make the voyage down the Gulf, in a ship loaded with horses, and having on board a number of passengers, returned some days after, giving a similar account of the heat they had experienced, and its effects. Many of the horses and several of the people had died, and the sufferings of the survivors were very great. He gladly availed himself of the opportunity afforded, by speaking a cruizer, of returning to Bushire, and escaping from a situation which he believed would have cost him his life. By this cruizer we received further and most deplorable accounts of the garrison at Kishmee. Two more officers and seventeen Europeans had died since the time we left the island. Of the four officers who had gone to sea for the recovery of their health, *three* had fallen lingering victims to their diseases: and both the young officers who had accompanied us from Bombay to that island had fallen sick, although hopes were entertained of their recovery. Such is the Persian Gulf in the month of August.

About this time, a rumour for the first time prevailed, that a case or two of the epidemic cholera had made their appearance in Bushire. For some days nothing more was said about it, probably because such reports were discouaged in order to prevent alarm from spreading; but on the 20th or 21st the fact was placed beyond dispute by the death of an Armenian child, confessedly of that disorder. This was followed by the illness and death of its parents, and of several others in rapid succession. The disorder, however, in

its commencement, assumed a form comparatively mild; several who were attacked being restored to health by the use of brandy; and hopes were entertained that the visitation would be gentle.

On the 23d we removed from the town to our tents, which were pitched close to some wells of tolerable water, about two miles south of the town, and near a few date trees and cotton bushes, comprising nearly all the verdure around Bushire.

On the 24th we understood that the epidemic had increased in town; and one case occurred in our own camp. In the morning, too, while walking towards the wells, I observed a woman lying on the ground, near to one of them, covered up with a cloth, and others throwing cold water over her from skins. It was a case of cholera, and they had recourse to this operation, under an idea that it would cure her. The woman had been taken ill just before sunrise, vomited violently, and fell into convulsions. At the time I saw her the extremities were cold and clammy; the hands and feet contracted with spasm; the teeth fast set, and the whole countenance pale and sunken, exhibiting the peculiar death-like look that belongs to the disease. The water had completely drenched her, and in the occasional approaches towards sensibility that occurred, she shivered all over with cold. I proposed to her companions to send her some medicine, to which they joyfully assented at first, with every appearance of gratitude; but when it came they enquired whether there was any brandy in it, and being told that there probably was, they positively rejected it on her part, and would not permit it to be given. I explained that it offered the only hope of saving her life; that the mode they were adopting would destroy her; adding, that I could have no motive in urging them as I did, but the wish of saving a fellow-creature. They again expressed gratitude, bid God bless me, but would have nothing to do with my medicine, and continued drenching the poor patient, who soon was evidently dying, and did expire at about eleven o'clock. This was a violent case, the attack proving fatal in five or six hours.

It appears that the natives have imbibed a notion that the disease is of a *hot* nature, and must be counteracted by *cold* remedies;

it is therefore that they drench those who are taken ill with cold water, and give them of that and of a sort of verjuice to drink; means which, according to our theory, are calculated rather to accelerate death, than to promote recovery. But with all the respect they have in general for European science in medicine, we could not persuade them of the danger of their practice, or induce them to change it.

During the next ten or twelve days the disease increased in violence and extent, from ten to twelve persons dying daily in the town, and many in the small villages around. A very general alarm was excited, and many persons fled from the town. The natives continuedtheir practice of cold affusion and verjuice, with no happier effect than before; but it must be owned that the European practice succeeded little, if any, better, as several persons attended by the surgeon of the Residency, died. In our camp, the only death hitherto was that of a soldier of the Arab guard, appointed to attend the mission.

On the 29th we had confirmation of the reports that had reached us from the interior, regarding the progress of the disease, by the arrival of an English gentleman from Sheerauz. It had reached Cauzeroon, where, however, it was as yet mild; but at several of the intermediate villagaes between that place and Bushire, particularly at Dālākee, it was then raging with considerable violence. Even on the high road he had seen several bodies of those who had been taken ill, probably in flying from the disease, and who had perished just where they fell. The alarm taken was very great, particularly by the muleteers who ply between Bushire and Sheerauz, four of whom had died on their way to the latter place. Those who had engaged with our informant positively refused to procced past Cauzeroon, the moment they learnt the state of matters at Bushire.

No caravan of mules had for some time past arrived at this place; and although we had already engaged a Kātir Bashee, or head muleteer, and eighty mules, we still wanted sixty or seventy of the requisite number, which neither our own exertions nor those of our muleteers could procure; as their owners could by no means be in-

duced to trust themselves in the infected country. Thus the progress of the mission was likely to experience material delay; and it became, in truth, a question how far it might be politic, or conducive to the public service, to proceed under present circumstances. It was clear that the disease was making rapid progress along the high road, and that it would probably soon reach Sheerauz. Should this take place about the time of the arrival of the mission, there was but too much reason to dread that the ignorant and superstitious Persians, making no nice enquiry into the causes and effects of this evil, might connect the two events, in a manner very prejudicial to the objects of government. Should the disease precede our march, this impression could not so easily be received; and this consideration, with others of minor importance, brought us to acquiecse with a better grace in the delay which we could not avoid, and to decide on remaining where we were, until some further information should reach us from the capital of Fars; and, at all events, until the Mehmaudar* appointed to attend us should arrive from Cauzeroon, where he lay arrested by the same cause that detained ourselves, the want of baggage cattle.

There was, at this time, no lessening of the disease in town. Some of our party riding in the morning up to the walls saw seven or eight bodies, the accumulation of the preceding night, carried from one of the gates towards the burying ground; and in our camp two more cases occurred, neither of which were early reported to any European, so fearful were they of the medicines proposed by them.

On the 30th two fresh cases occurred in camp, in the persons of two Indian (Portuguese) servants, our cook and his mate; and about the same time two Arabs, a muleteer and furosh†, also at-

* Mehmandar, from the Persian word "mehman" a guest, is the term applied to a person appointed on the part of government in Persia to attend upon, and supply the wants of strangers, while travelling through the country.

† Furosh is the designation for a class of menial servants in Persia employed in low laborious offices, such as sweeping out the apartments, pitching tents, &c. &c.

tached to the camp, being similarly attacked, we had a fair opportunity of contrasting the effects of the European and native modes of practice; for, as our own servants were treated after the former method, so the Arabs persisted in taking their own way with their own companions. The cook's mate, a poor-looking spare man, had been out of order during the preceding night, vomiting, though not violently; he did not, however, complain until the morning, when the usual stimulating medicines, as laudanum, ammonia, peppermint and brandy, were exhibited, and relieved him; but he continued throughout the day to have uneasiness in his bowels. The cook, slightly indisposed, applied for assistance about ten o'clock the same morning; but violent retching soon came on: the medicine was administered, but the first dose was rejected by the stomach. Cramps and coldness of the extremities soon made their appearance; another dose was given, and although he continued in considerable pain, still no immediate danger was apprehended, nor was the case deemed particularly violent. About two in the afternoon, however, he got worse, his countenance became sunk and ghastly, his pulse was gone, and all his limbs were cold; he had great uneasiness at stomach, with a sensation of burning heat, which he continually called for cold water to allay. During the rest of the day and the succeeding night, these symptoms increased in violence, with but occasional intermissions; and at one o'clock on the next day he breathed his last, in spite of all the assistance that could be afforded him. In this case, the whole violent and painful nature of the disease was exhibited with dreadful force, for the patient was a powerful, muscular man, and struggled hard with death. The burning internal heat and insatiable thirst, the clammy skin, the cold sweats, and violent cramps, all were strongly marked; and were succeeded by the changed features, shrunk from the retreat of the fluids to the interior, and sharp as those of one already dead.

The first-mentioned case continued doubtful for some time: slight cramps occasionally appeared, and there was great prostration of strength. Towards the evening of the 30th he refused a further dose of medicine to allay these symptoms; but he rallied during the

night, and next day, by the time the other died, he was considered out of danger.

The two Arabs were drenched with cold water, and cold vinegar and water was given them in plenty to drink. The case of the furosh did not, at first, assume a violent character; but after being kept continually drenched for two days, he died. The muleteer was subjected to the same process, though, I think, less severely; and whether the attack had been less violent, or that his constitution was stronger than that of the other, it is not easy to determine; but he struggled through his illness, and finally recovered.

I have dwelt on these cases, the whole course of which I witnessed myself, attending the patients night and day, with some minuteness, as well for the sake of the contrast they afford, as because every fact or hint upon a subject so much involved in difficulty and doubt, as the nature and history of this disease, may be deemed interesting, even though from an unscientific pen. The result cannot be said to prove any thing, except the inefficiency of every mode of treatment yet discovered, to combat its attack successfully: if that has been slight, the patient will probably recover, whether he takes or rejects the usual remedies. When it has been violent, as it commonly is during the full sway of the disease, no remedy will prove effectual.

It did not unfrequently happen, as we had good reason to know, that during the height of the distemper many persons merely affected by the great heat, and seized with vertigo, have been supposed to be affected with the reigning malady, and treated accordingly with the cold affusion, and cooling medicines internally. These having recovered, under this regimen, the public confidence in its use became increased, and cold water and vinegar became specifics. A case in point occurred in the tent where we were seated, on the same day in which the cook died: a favourite servant of Dr. Jukes's, while presenting the kalleeoon*, suddenly turned pale, and before he could regain the door, fell down on his face. On being raised, his

* Kalleeoon, or Persian pipe, in which the smoke is drawn through water, by means of a stalk about two feet long, instead of a pipe or snake of twelve or fourteen, as in the Indian Hookah.

countenance was ghastly, his limbs perfectly powerless, and no one doubted that it was an attack of the epidemic. A little water being sprinkled on his face he recovered; and after the exhibition of a little medicine in the course of the day, he became perfectly well. The case certainly resembled very strongly one of those sudden attacks by which the cholera does its work, suspending the powers of life as by a stroke of lightning; and there can be no doubt that had it occurred in town it would have been set down as a case, and recovery, from the prevailing epidemic.

On the 1st of September, the Mehmandar Feridoon Khan came into camp, and pitched his tent near us. He represented the alarm on the road to be very great; that many villages were totally deserted, particularly about Dalakee and Konār Tukht, where in some instances they had set fire to their huts, and fled to the mountains. At Cauzeroon, the deaths were seven or eight daily; and they had been firing guns, and making a great noise, to drive away the distemper. The inhabitants had commenced the same at Sheerauz, with a view to prevent its arrival there; but the prince, on hearing the noise, sent to put a stop to it, declaring they were fools to act in such a manner before the enemy reached them; and finally assuring them, that he would cut off the ears of any one who should continue such folly. The deaths in Bushire had by this time increased to between twenty and thirty daily: on this day, in particular, twenty-five bodies were stated to have been carried out of the gates.

On the 3d of September, Captain Wright, of the Hon. Company's cruiser Vestal, was taken ill, and the following day he died. This was the first case of the epidemic among the European community here, and it threw some damp upon the party. Captain Wright was, however, a man of very enfeebled constitution, and little able to struggle with so formidable an enemy. The chief meerza* of the

* Meerza, Persian secretary. Meerza, when placed *after* the name signifies a prince, as, Mahomed allee *meerza*; Hussun allee *meerza*; and it is derived from the Persian compound word "ameerzadeh," born of a chief or prince. When *prefixed* to the name, as *meerza* Moossa, *meerza* Hussun, &c. it signifies a man of learning, or of the pen. I never heard from whence it is derived.

mission was also attacked, and several other cases occurred in camp, and under our own immediate observation: the suddenness of the attack, the immediate prostration of strength in the victim, with the momentary bustle and interest which the blow creates in those immediately around, remind one of the casualties that take place in the trenches, or in the works of a besieged place; where men not just in action are often struck down by the sharpshooters of their enemy.

The natives, we heard, with their usual superstitious belief in the powers of the celestial bodies*, attributed the ravages of this disease to the influence of the star Canopus†, which became visible at this time above the horizon, a little before sun-rise. This star, according to the astrologers, possesses very extraordinary powers; which may be propitious, or otherwise, according to circumstances. In the present case, unfortunately, they have a malignant operation; but as an instance of their possible utility, they assert that were its rays to penetrate *into* a well, in which skins had been laid to soak previous to tanning, they would not only complete at once the tedious operation, but would convert them all into bhul khal, or what we term Russian leather.

On the 6th of September abundance of mules arrived, and the accounts received of the state of the roads in regard to the disease, were more encouraging. It was certain that the daily number of deaths had begun to decrease, and that few new cases had of late occurred.

The 8th was the Mahometan festival of the Eide ul Kourbaun,

* The faith of the Persians, and indeed of every Eastern people, in astrology, and the power of the celestial bodies over the fate of human beings, is too well known to require much notice or illustration. The business of an astrologer is a very common and profitable one; for no one will commence any undertaking, however trifling, without consulting their oracle for a fortunate day or hour. Several amusing instances of Persian credulity, and its effects, are related by Sir John Malcolm in his History of Persia, vol. ii.; and among them, not the least striking is that of the Persian ambassador Abdool Nubbee Khan, who, on his way to India, when about to embark, was forced by the instances of his astrologers, to have several walls broken down, that he might leave the town without facing m o st malignant, but *invisible* constellation, which would, in such case, have marred his good fortune during the whole expedition.

† Canopus, called by the Persians and Arabians, Zoheil.

in commemoration of the sacrifice of Isaac consented to by Abraham. Sheep and goats are at this time slain in abundance; but men of consequence, princes and governors of the land, slay a camel. Such is the case at Tehrān, Sheerauz, Tabreez, and the other courts and governments. All guests of rank, and the principal attendants, are presented with pieces of the flesh roasted on the spot, which they eat with avidity. It is affirmed that the quantity of animals sacrificed is so great, that the inhabitants cannot consume them before the flesh spoils; and that some of the wilder mountain tribes come down, carry away the carcases, and dry them in the sun for future consumption.

Arrangements were now commenced for our departure; but the Persians are so superstitious, particularly when they have any undertaking of consequence in view, that it is difficult to bring them to commence it. The length of time we had already been detained was highly detrimental to the muleteers, as their hire was not to commence until we should have moved; but not even the force of interest could prevail against that of superstition. We could not be ready to march the next day, and they strongly objected to that following, which was the 13th of their month, a most unlucky one for commencing a journey; and our servants, in corroboration of this, reminded us, that it was on a 13th of the month we had commenced our unprosperous voyage from Bombay; that the same unpropitious day had been that of our departure from Muscat: and that the ill success of these two attempts was conclusive against breaking ground again under such unlucky auspices. So it was at length settled that our first march should be made upon the 11th of September, and the 14th of their month.

The disease was on this day stated to have so far ceased in town, that no deaths had occurred. From the most authentic accounts we could obtain, it appeared that the total number of deaths by cholera in Bushire during the prevalence of the epidemic, did not much exceed four hundred, being an average of thirteen or fourteen daily. At the period of the greatest mortality, however, the deaths amounted to thirty and forty, and once even to forty-three in one day. The

population of Bushire does not exceed ten thousand souls, but a considerable proportion of these left the town on the first alarm; so that in calculating the fatal effects of the distemper, the aggregate of deaths must be divided among a greatly diminished number; and even with this qualification, comparatively speaking, the result will not appear very calamitous.

The city of Bussora did not escape so well; the effects of the epidemic there were dreadful. The population of that place is calculated not to exceed fifty thousand persons, and in spite of desertions to the country, twelve thousand of these, we were informed, had fallen its victims. Even admitting great exaggerations in this statement, the number swept away must have been very great; for both at this time, and subsequently, we received accounts from its English inhabitants that authorised the most gloomy conclusions. The deadly and rapid effects of the disease had created so uncontrolable an alarm, that the nearest ties of kindred were unheeded; and all who had strength and money fled from the town, regardless of the state of those they left behind, and abandoning their sick relatives, without remorse or pity, to their fate. The dead were left where they fell, in the streets, or in the houses, until they became a greater source of horror and alarm than the disease; when such as were able, had those bodies which would bear it, carried to the burying grounds. Those in a more offensive state were interred where they lay, without respect or ceremony. The authorities had all fled, without taking any precaution for preserving the internal peace of the city, or making a single attempt to check the progress of the distemper, still less to administer assistance or comfort to those who were afflicted by it. At last the disease had flagged for want of food, and gradually died away: the people then slowly and fearfully returned to learn their losses, and few there were who had not suffered sorely. Some families were totally swept away; others had but few of their members left. One instance in particular was related of a house that had contained thirty-two persons; it was attacked, andtwenty-nine victims perished. The gentleman who sent us this account was then himself just recovering from

a severe fit of the disease, which, he said, had affected him less than the scenes of horror he had necessarily been witness to. It was added, that the distemper was in full progress up the Tigris, and had nearly reached Bagdad, where there was every reason to fear that its ravages would be dreadful.

This day, also, we learnt by report, for the first time, that the disease had reached Sheerauz, but had considerably abated all along the road to that city.

The weather, from the period of our arrival here, was intensely hot. The thermometer ranged during the heat of the day, in my tent, from 103° to 109°, but the distress occasioned by this heat was various, according to the quarter from whence the wind blew. A southerly wind produced a suffocating dampness, which was more disagreeable than the northwesters, though they too sometimes blew hot and parching enough. During the first days of August, in the mornings, the mercury seldom fell below 86° or 87°; but about the end of that month, and the beginning of September, the nights became cooler, and the thermometer fell sometimes to from 75° to 70° before sunrise. The wind was not only unpleasant from its parching quality, but because it often was loaded with a quantity of fine sand, which, covering ourselves and every thing about us with dust, quite banished all personal comfort; indeed those who set a high value upon that possession, will do well to avoid encamping on the sands of Bushire in the months of July, August, or September.

CHAP. IV.

THE MISSION LEAVES BUSHIRE. — PERSIAN MODE OF TRAVELLING, EQUIPMENT, AND COSTUME. — ASPECT OF THE DUSHTISTAN, STERILE AND DREARY. — RAPACITY OF THE OFFICERS OF GOVERNMENT. — INSTANCES. — MODES OF ASSESSING PRODUCE OF LAND. — TAX ON IRRIGATION. — TEMPERATURE OF A SPRING AT DALAKEE. — VALUE OF DATE GARDENS. — STATE OF ROADS. — ASCENT OF COTHUL-E-MULLOO. — COTHUL-E-KUMAU-RIDGE. — CHANGE OF TEMPERATURE. — KAUZEROON. — CANNAUTS. — PRODUCTS OF THE VALLEY. — HORSES. — WRESTLERS. — BIRD-CATCHERS. — MAHMOOD SUNNIE ROBBERS. — SHAHPORE. — INTELLIGENCE OF CHOLERA AT SHEERAUZ TO AN ALARMING AND FATAL EXTENT. — THE PRINCE'S HAREM AFFECTED. — SEVERAL LADIES DIE. — THE PRINCE'S MOTHER DIES. — HE FLIES FROM THE CITY. — HIS MINISTERS AND CHIEF OFFICERS FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE. — THE CITY IS DESERTED. — THE MISSION BECOMES STATIONARY AGAIN. — MULETEERS AND SERVANTS UNWILLING TO PROCEED. — THE AUTHOR, ON FULL DELIBERATION, DETERMINES TO ATTEMPT PROCEEDING ALONE. — PERSIAN AND INDIAN SERVANTS COMPARED. — THE AUTHOR LEAVES THE MISSION AND SETS OUT. — DOOCHTER AND PEERAZUN PASSES. — SHEERAUZ WINE AND VINEYARDS. — MEET PARTIES OF ARMED EELS, AND PERSONS FLYING FROM THE EPIDEMIC. — REACH THE DEPOPULATED CITY, AND JOIN AN ENGLISH PARTY IN THE GARDENS OF THE JEHAN NUMAH.

On the 11th of September, at three o'clock in the afternoon, we made our first movement, by striking and loading the tents. The first march of a journey in this, as in most countries, is always marked with something of uproar and confusion; things have not found their proper places; people do not understand one another, or draw together; loads have not been well arranged, nor baggage properly packed; servants are noisy, unreasonable, and discontented; the muleteers ill-humoured, brutal, and violent. There can be no more unpleasant office than that of marshalling the movements of a large travelling party in Persia, particularly composed of such heterogeneous materials as ours; neither can a more picturesque spectacle, on a small scale, be seen than that of such a caravan getting into motion. The variety and richness of costume may not be so great as that displayed on a similar occasion in India; yet the grotesque

of the figures, and the variety in character and expression, almost compensate for the lesser prevalence of magnificence and splendid colouring.

The Persian equips himself for riding in a pair of very wide trowsers, of any colour, but frequently of red cloth, which envelope in their folds a large proportion of his under garments, and which, tied around the ancles by a band for the purpose, become capable of being thrust into a very wide and clumsy pair of boots, made of a reddish leather, or, if the owner can afford it, of bhulkhal * or Russian leather. These give to his nether-man a peculiar bunch-like appearance, to which he adds, by cramming into the wide reservoir they form, as into pockets, all such things as he may require about his person, or may become possessed of upon the road. His kabba (the outer garment of his ordinary dress) is tucked up before, so as to display this bulky concern, and leave his movements as free as possible; and over all is worn a barounee, or oeema; the former, confined to men of some rank, is an ample cloak, with large sleeves, that shrouds the whole person, and is made according to the fancy and means of the wearer, of coarse or fine broad-cloth, of shawl, or even of velvet, lined with every kind of material, from the richest firs down to the coarsest chintz, and embroidered, often very richly, with silk, gold, or silver. The latter is more commonly used, and is more exclusively calculated for riding. It somewhat resembles a lady's riding habit, fitting tight to the shape, from the neck to the waist; where it is gathered into plaits, and swells out above the girdle, falling in ample folds to the feet. It is generally made of broad-cloth, varying in quality, as well as in the richness of the embroidery with which it is ornamented, according to the ability of its owner. Those who cannot afford these more suitable and expensive habiliments, protect themselves from the cold by cloaks of felt, or coarse woollen fabrics, or sheepskin pelisses, which reach but to the thighs; and, occasionally, by ample wrappers made of the same ma-

* I rather believe that this word is a corruption from Bulghar, the name by which the place in Russia, from whence this leather reaches Persia, is known.

terial having the leathery side worn outwards, (called poosteens *) which envelope the person, and effectually protect it against every thing but the severest cold. Such as are peaceful content themselves with this array, in all its varieties; but the majority, being martially disposed, accoutre themselves not only with a sword, gun, pistols, and dagger, but hang about their girdle, shoulders, and other parts of their apparel, powder-horns, cartridge-boxes, and sundry anomalous receptacles for ammunition. The pistols are sometimes bestowed in holsters, and sometimes are twisted in the girdle. The gun, a most truculent looking weapon, is slung at the back. The black sheep-skin cap stuck upon the head, in various attitudes, and of all dimensions, is admirably calculated to set off the fierce looks of the bearded and whiskered owner; and the Persian, mounted on his lofty saddle, whatever be the steed it presses, seems to consider himself as lord of the universe, and assumes an air of insolence only to be curbed by the authority of his master.

About seven in the evening, by the light of a brilliant moon, our party, accoutred in all the variety of this wild costume, commenced their march; the muleteers hallooing, swearing, and quarrelling about their loads, the furoshes and other servants complaining, and remonstrating in just as loud a tone; the mule bells jingling; the horses frightened with the uproar, neighing, breaking loose, kicking and fighting; figures already mounted, worthy of the pencil of Salvator Rosa, spurring here and there, endeavouring to restore order with their whips, and to silence the brawlers; every thing in motion, glancing, sparkling in the bright moonlight, composed a scene of animation and barbarous bustle highly interesting. After much delay the cavalcade moved off the ground, and, soon after, the European party, with their immediate attendants, mounted and followed.

Journies at this season in Persia are always made in the night, the beasts of burthen, as well as their owners, thus avoiding the heats of the day, during which the former feed quietly; and the muleteers, who generally mount upon the lightest-loaded beasts, and

* From poost, a skin.

fall asleep, or quietly smoke their calleeoons *, are always desirous to get in motion as early as possible in the evening, that they may enjoy themselves, and avoid being forced into rapid motion; their only object being to arrive at their ground about sunrise the next morning. Thus it is found comfortable, for those who can afford to travel with the necessary apparatus, to remain for some time on the ground, after the baggage has quitted it; by which means they may proceed at a quicker and less wearisome pace than that of the cattle, and halt at some convenient spot on the road, where a dish of coffee may be prepared, and a nap, if required, be taken, both excellent preventives against the very painful propensity to sleep that so often assails the traveller, when moving slowly along, so powerfully as hardly to be resisted. During the time thus employed, his servants arrive at the halting place, and the master finds all ready for his accommodation when he reaches it.

Nothing can have a more uninteresting, and even depressing effect, than the appearance of that part of the province of Fars, through which the road leads from Bushire to Dalakee, called the Dushtistān, or flat country. At this season it was peculiarly so, every vegetable production being burnt up, and nothing green meeting the eye, save an occasional grove of date trees, or a few tamarisk or caper-bushes, half smothered in dust. The road passes through a succession of low sand-hills, and patches of clayey soil; the latter being sufficiently fertile, and yielding good crops, when water for irrigation can be procured; although where that is not the case, it is as sterile and barren as the sand itself. Every thing is directly the contrary of that which would be sought for the fit habitation of man; yet, in this desolate region, where the intensity of heat seems calculated to curdle and destroy his faculties, he is found brave and independent, like his great ancestor; his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. Even the power of the most absolute of kings exercised but questionable and imperfect authority over the tribes of the Dushtistān. Villages are to be found wherever there is water; poor and wretched, but con-

* Calleeoons, or calleeāns, the Persian pipe. Vide note, p. 62.

taining semibarbarous inhabitants in considerable abundance; their food a few dates, and a bit of barley bread. Milk, indeed, is abundant, and they possess flocks of sheep, reared chiefly for sale, and breed a number of horses, which, though not so celebrated as those of Nejed, or Bahrein, are nevertheless very highly esteemed. To the traveller, however, on this route, nothing of an enlivening description presents itself; the villages are rarely in view, and are at best but collections of date-tree huts, so small and wretched as to be scarcely discernible from the inequalities of the ground; the roofless remains, too, and broken walls of such as have been destroyed by the tyranny of their rulers, here and there occur; or the ancient burying-grounds, pointing out where man had been. Every thing we saw and heard strongly indicated that the government is even a more bitter enemy to the people's prosperity than their churlish soil.

A trait, illustrative of the rapacity of the princes and governors of the country, came to our knowledge at Boorauzgoon (or Brauzejoon), a considerable town on the road. We were deisrous to purchase horses; and the sheikh of the place brought, among others of his own, as well for sale as for show, an uncommonly beautiful and perfect white Arabian, of the best blood. We admired his make and proportions, but observing that he bore marks of firing on both his fore legs, expressed to his master our regret that so fine an animal should be unsound. The sheikh smiled, and made no reply; but one of our own people, who knew the truth, told us that the horse was not only young and sound, but that the owner would not part with him on any terms, and had only made these marks to save his property from the rapacity of the prince, who, should he hear of so beautiful an animal without blemish, would certainly get possession of him, on some pretence or other. In following up the subject, they gave an amusing account of the tricks and finesses to which great men will have recourse, in order to obtain their ends. A person skilled in such jobs may be dispatched, on the part of the prince, to the owner of the coveted animal, with a complimentary message, declaring how high a sense is entertained of his zeal and services; or he may present himself as a private friend, desirous of informing

him of the favourable sentiments of his prince towards him. In the course of conversation he artfully introduces the subject of horses; and if the master be off his guard, this probably leads him to produce the animal he takes pride in; but should he be aware of the snare, and hold off, the other takes care to let him understand that he is informed of the treasure he possesses, and expresses a desire to see him: he praises him, and hints how much his interests might be advanced by making a present of so fine an animal to his master. If this bait will not take, he declares that the prince has heard of his horse, and wishes to purchase him at the owner's own price; so that the poor man is compelled to part with his property, either as a present, for which he has no return, or, what is equivalent, for a price which is never paid. Should he prefer braving the prince's displeasure, and retaining his favourite, oppression and loss of favour, place, and probably of property, would be the consequence. Or if the owner was too powerful to be thus treated, an experienced thief would be sent, who sooner or later would succeed in purloining the animal; and his former master, at his next attendance at court, might see the prince mounted on what had been his property, without daring to claim, or in any way to notice the circumstance. The only safety lies in feeing high, and coming to an understanding with the messenger, who may then give to his master a false report: but this will not always succeed; for the prince, distrusting his servant, would, in all probability, send another, who in his turn would require to be bribed, till the tax became so oppressive that the unfortunate owner would be glad to part with his property on any terms. Perfect concealment is the only real security; or inflicting, as in the present case, a blemish, to deform what nature has made perfect. I myself remember a case, where a man who had taken to Sheerauz a fine Arabian horse, which would have sold for more than a thousand rupees, was so beset by the prince's myrmidons, on the part of their master, that he was glad at last to smuggle his horse beyond the walls, and accept the sum of three hundred rupees from an English officer on the spot, who happened to require one.

At the village of Dalakee we made some enquiry regarding the local modes of assessing the produce of the land. Dates being, as in Arabia, a very principal produce, an average value is placed upon the return of each tree, and according to this the tax is collected. Each full grown tree is calculated to yield a hashmee* maund of fruit which is worth to the proprietor two or two and a half rupees; and on this the duty is one mahomedee†, or eight pool-e-siahs; one eighth of which goes to the registrar, or village accountant, and the rest to the governor of the district for the crown.

Wheat and barley are most commonly assessed according to the number of animals employed in the cultivation; thus, for so much ground as can be tilled by the labour of a single ass, the farmer pays eight rupees, and for a mule or horse, 16 rupees: they calculate, that in common seasons, and tolerable soil the labour of an ass should produce sixty hashmee maunds of wheat or barley; the first worth two rupees, the second worth one rupee‡ per maund. The tax on this is collected in various ways, dependent on local circumstances

* A hashmee maund is equal to sixteen tabreez maunds of 7¼ lbs. each, or about 116 lbs. English.

† The tomaun of the Dushtistān is equal to 16 Persian rupees, and one mahomedee; each rupee 7 mahomedees; each of which in turn contains 8 pool-e-siahs (black money, a certain copper coin); consequently a tomaun contains 904 pool-e-siahs.

‡ It may be well to say a few words upon the currency of Persia. The coins chiefly used in circulation are tomauns, ducats, rupees (or reals), abbassees or shahees, and pool-e-siahs. It is not easy to state the exact value of these coins, because it is disturbed by the state of exchange between India and Europe. Taking the former, however, as a point to start from, we may calculate as follows.

The exchange with India varies, but may be quoted at 132 *a* 134 Persian rupees, for 100 rupees of Bengal. Therefore, as the Bengal sicca rupee is intrinsically worth about two shillings and a penny sterling, the Persian may be taken at sixteen pence half-penny.

1 Tomaun = 8 Persian reals, or rupees (they are the same) = £00 11*s.* 00*d.*
1 Ducat (called by the Persians bujaolee) = 6 reals or rupees = 00 8 3

The number of abbassees in a real differ in different provinces, but are in general from five to six, and there are about as many pool-e-siahs in each abbassee; the former, when found, for it is not current every where, is of silver; the latter are lumps of copper, heavy and shapeless, with a few letters stamped upon one side. The above mode of valuing the silver coinage depreciates the gold too much to agree with European exchange, since the real value of a ducat is about nine shillings and three-pence.

and the mode of cultivation. At Dalakee the cultivation of the village is irrigated from a large spring the property of government, and each date tree or field is assessed at so much for the use of the water. I afterwards observed considerable variations in the modes of collection, affecting different parts of the country, but the rate of government dues were every where pretty much the same.

The price of date trees here appears from our information to bear no due proportion to the value of their yearly produce. A garden of an hundred date trees, we were assured, might be purchased for five hundred rupees, being not more than two year's purchase: if there be truth in this, it would be interesting to ascertain the cause of so great a depreciation, which we had not opportunity to do; *in*security of property can hardly be deemed sufficient to account for it.

The dates of Dalakee have the preference, in point of richness and flavour, over all in the Dushtistān. The spring whence they are irrigated issues from a hollow ravine in the mountains, close to the village, in a full stream of perhaps five inches square flowing rapidly; it bears a temperature of 87°, on its first appearance, at all seasons; and in winter is termed a warm spring. It is perfectly limpid, but possesses a slightly alkaline taste, acquired, perhaps, from the calcareous rock through which it forces its way.

The range of the thermometer in the Dushtistān, during the day, was from 103° to 105°; at night it was considerably lower, but we could not observe it accurately, because we were travelling. Leslie's hygrometer sunk at Brauzejoon to 180°. Dalakee is, indeed, proverbially hot, even in the Dushtistān, being situated under the hills, from the bare rocks of which the rays of the cloudless sun are powerfully reverberated; the suffocating heat thus produced with its fine supply of water, are supposed to be the principal causes of the excellence of its dates, which require a very high temperature for their perfect maturation.

The greatest portion of the road between Dalakee and Cauzeroon is of so extraordinary a character, that I am surprized it has not attracted in a greater degree the observation of travellers, and

called forth more particular descriptions. When it is remembered, that this is the high road from the principal sea-port of an extensive empire, through one of its most important provinces, to all its principal towns, as well as to its capital, it is more than astonishing that government, or even that the individuals most interested in its safety and facility should have permitted it to remain in so impracticable and dangerous a state, as we now find it to be. It is true, that during the rule of the Suffavean dynasty, the most prosperous period of the Persian empire, and that of nearly all the most useful and ornamental works to be found within its boundaries, this road was not in use. The chief sea-ports being then Bunderabbassee, and Congoon; the road led through another line; but I cannot learn, that it is much better, or bears the marks of human assistance; and had a disposition to such improvement existed, it would have appeared singular that Kurreem Khan when he embellished Sheerauz, and constructed many works of utility, for the benefit of his favourite capital and province, should not have ameliorated the condition of one of its most important roads; or that, among the individuals who have expended large sums on the erection of caravanserais for the accommodation of travellers, none should have been found disposed to lessen their danger and difficulties, by improving, in some degree, this, as well as many other painful and hazardous passes in the Persian empire. Mr. Scott Waring tells us, that the losses in cattle and merchandize, sustained by Hadjee Mahomed Hoossain, a great merchant, whose caravans passed continually along this road, induced him to build a bridge over a torrent in the Cothul-e-Mulloo, and to repair the road in the pass of the Doochter; and, after travelling the road, one becomes less surprized at the Hadjee's liberality, than astonished that he, or other merchants, should have permitted the remainder of this road to remain in its present state. This, and every thing else of the kind, shows the extreme reluctance of government as well as of individuals, to lay out money in this country in undertakings, unproductive of immediate return. The insecurity of property, which gives rise to this reluctance, is the bane of this wretched land.

From the moment the traveller quits the plains, and enters on the ascent of Cothul-e-Mulloo, a mile from Dalakee, he begins to wind up the side of a steep mountain, amongst huge fragments of rock; or in the angle formed by the projection of strata from the cliff, upon an inclined plane, polished to dangerous smoothness, by the continual passage of caravans; on which his horse often slips and stumbles. Sometimes the path ascends and descends in the most capricious undulations; winding among chaotic masses hurled from the peaks above, which seem to forbid a passage to either man or beast. It is impossible to conceive wilder forms than those assumed by this mountainous chain, and the masses that compose it; whole angles of a mountain have crumbled into fragments, and fallen into the deep ravine below, forming promontories of ruins; and the harder strata, defying the weather that has washed all softer substances away, might be seen projecting at various angles, in gigantic ledges, under which armies might find shelter; and stretching in continued lines across ridges and ravines, as far as the view extended; only broken by the violent action of the mountain torrents — a massive peak, in another quarter, was seen cleft as if it were freshly done, giving to view its very bowels, and the huge features of its internal formation; while the dismembered portion hung still in air, threatening destruction to all below. No soil covers these rocks, no verdure enlivens them; a few bushes of the melancholy and leafless wild almond, that twist their roots among the fissures, comprize almost the whole of the vegetable world to be found here at this season. The pass ends in a sharp ascent up the breast of one of the highest masses, among the rocks that have mouldered from its brow; from one to another of which our horses had frequently to step, at the hazard of slipping into the chasm between. It was wonderful to observe the progress of our mules up this difficult pass; they claimed no assistance from their drivers, but on the contrary seemed to reject it, as worse than useless; they picked their path with care, pushing up places almost perpendicular, and stepping with great quickness and perfect certainty from one fragment to another, until they reached a spot where they might stop to breathe; and have such loads as had shifted in the

exertion re-adjusted; and the sagacity with which they discovered whether a narrow pass, between the rocks, or round a point, afforded sufficient room for their loads, was truly astonishing. When it is recollected that most of these animals had a weight of full three hundred pounds upon the back, some idea may be formed of their strength and powers of endurance. Camels also go up and down these passes, but they carry small loads, or none, and are often disabled on the way, and left to perish; a fact proved by several carcases which lay by the road as we passed. It was, perhaps, little less worthy of notice, to see with what fearless unconcern the Persian riders urged their horses over this rough ground; many of them never dismounted at all, but rode with perfect composure across the most dangerous places, where a false step would have been destruction; and well did their wild figures harmonize with the scene. It was one altogether so different from any thing European, that no adequate idea of it can be conveyed by mere description.

The approach to Cothul-e-Kumauridge, lies through a long tract of bad road, but neither so dangerous or difficult as that last described. When we reached it by a bright moonlight, the immediate entrance to the pass, although differing widely in character from that of Mulloo, was extremely imposing and grand — the mountains were not so lofty, but they were cleft into more confused yet separate masses, the strata of which were often very clearly defined, the rock was of a more destructible nature, and soil was more abundant; and as the mountain sides along which the path ascended were very precipitous, the debris from their summits lay less on the road; but their fantastic shapes, thrown into broad and powerful masses of light and shadow, gave a visionary majesty to the scene, that made it infinitely impressive. The path arose from this grand confusion, sharp and abrupt, winding along the edges of most awful precipices, where one would not have imagined that a goat would have found footing: and while admiring the courage of the man who first ventured along its dangerous tract with loaded beasts, it was curious to speculate upon the chance which must first have led to its discovery; even now, that many years have proved its safety, one cannot but shudder, to

mark the animals treading their rapid but careful way among fragments or steps worn in the rock, along the verge of a horrid abyss. The latter part is particularly rugged; and, upon the whole, although I have seen much of mountainous scenery, and passes, I can remember none deemed practible for beasts of burthen, that, considering their great extent, exceed in roughness and difficulty, the cothuls of Mulloo and Kumauridge.

The temperature, after ascending these cothuls, was found to have undergone a great alteration: the thermometer, at two in the morning, stood at 73°. — at half-past five, at 64°.

The traveller will, I think, be disappointed both in the city and plains of Kauzeroon; the former is little more than a heap of ruins, without one object of curiosity or interest; the latter, at this time, looked parched and arid; but there is great deal of wheat and barley cultivated in their season, the irrigation of which is principally carried on by means of cannauts, there being little or no natural water in the valley. These cannauts or subterraneous canals have frequently been described, and constitute almost the only species of improvement requiring outlay, still occasionally carried on in Persia; because the property thus acquired is protected, and the profit considerable, and not very remote; indeed they are most commonly constructed by persons in authority, who dispose of the water thus brought to the surface, at very high rates. Several new ones have been lately made in the Kauzeroon valley; and some notion may be formed of the value of such property, when it is understood that the small stream at Dalakee brings in a revenue of four thousand rupees a year; and that one cannaut lately opened by Kulb Allee Khan, governor of Kauzeroon, affords a stream at least five or six times more considerable. Among other uses, it serves to irrigate a garden, which contains some of the finest orange trees both bitter and sweet, shaddock, lime, and pomegranate trees, that can be found in the country. Oranges do not come to perfection upon the elevated table land of Persia, any further north than this; but they are found in abundance on the banks of the Caspian.

Kauzeroon is a considerable mart for horses, which are bred in the vicinity; and which having a considerable share of Arab blood, are well esteemed: but at this time, the place had been drained of its best, by purchases made for mounting our cavalry in India.

Kauzeroon is likewise celebrated for its pehlewans, or wrestlers; and for a class of bird-catchers who practise a curious mode of taking sparrows and other small birds. The feats of the first have often been described; and to those who have seen the wrestlers of India, they will not appear very extraordinary. The mode of catching sparrows is ingenious; and, if taken merely from description, would appear to depend on a species of fascination, which the persons practising it exercise, *commanding*, as it is said, the birds to enter their nets. The fact, however, is simply as follows: observation has shown, that the birds return in flocks from their feeding places to roost, at a certain hour, and in certain directions; and a net so contrived as to be raised on end by a person concealed, is placed in this line: a number of stakes are planted also along the line, in two rows, but they do not appear to be of any further use than to assist the deception. When the flight of sparrows approach, another person, also concealed, flings over them a clod or stone, uttering at the same moment a shrill cry like that of a hawk, on which the little animals immediately sink, and fly close to the ground through the opening where the net is placed; this is tilted up, and sometimes one, sometimes a number of sparrows are taken. But they do not always succeed well; and on the occasion when they exhibited for our amusement, they assuredly were not eminently successful.

In the vicinity of this place, and of Shapore, are to be found the principal haunts of the tribe of robbers called mahmood sunnies, who for a long time have been very troublesome, committing great depredations upon travellers; and I made some enquiries as to their history, though without much success. They are divided, I was informed, into four separate *teers*, or smaller tribes; the Dushman-Zeearees, the Iowees, the Pehwendeh, and the Roostumees. Mahomed Reza Khan is chief of the whole, and Wullee Khan is the next in importance. The former resides in Faaleeoon, near Ardacoon, the

latter at, or in the close vicinity of the Quilla Suffeed. A bloody feud exists between them and the Kauzeroonees, of which tribe Kulb Allee Khan, the governor, is chief: and this has lately been aggravated by the murther of Shums-u-Deen, a person of importance in the latter tribe, who was treacherously shot by Moolla Mahmood, a Mahmood sunnie, not far from Kauzeroon, because he was obnoxious to that tribe on account of the activity he had shewn in repressing their disposition to plunder. The murtherer fled to Sheerauz, where he was followed and slain in the same manner, at the entrance of a mosque, by Mahomed Allee, a servant of Shums-u-Deen. This man was seized and brought before the prince, who, upon questioning him, and learning the particulars of his late master's murther, with his motives for what he had done, permitted him, in the first place to depart unharmed; but the brother of the deceased having gone to Sheerauz, and thrown himself at the prince's feet, beseeching him to give up to his vengeance the murtherer of his brother; the prince, either careless about the event, or disliking to oppose the tribe, yielded; and the Mahmood sunnies put him to death upon the spot. This unrevenged blood has placed between the tribes a deadly and exasperated feud; and thus one murther entails a sequel of bloodshed, beyond what the most clearsighted can predict. The Kauzeroonees view their enemies with a fearful as well as a jealous eye; for a predatory tribe like theirs have it in their power to inflict upon their more settled neighbours much serious loss; and at all events to keep them most disagreeably on the alert. Of late, however, these plunderers have been under more control. A murther and robbery of some consequence, committed a little while before our arrival, had so far roused the government of Sheerauz, that the prince sent out a party to seize the perpetrators; and they fortunately succeeded in making prisoners three of them, with a number of their wives and children. This soon brought them to terms; some cattle that had been stolen from Kulb Allee Khan, were instantly restored, with a request that he would intercede with the prince for them: a kind of agreement was in consequence entered into with them, by which they pledged themselves to abstain from plunder on the road; and

there is now less danger from them than before. The expedient of capturing the women and children has always been found one of the most effectual for bringing barbarous tribes to terms. It was successfully resorted to in India with the Bheels and Meres; and as being the most humane as well as most efficient means, deserves the utmost attention wherever it may be practicable.

Although the road be pretty secure from these banditti, it is not considered by any means safe to wander about the neighbourhood of Kauzeroon, unguarded; and, on a visit which we made to the ruins of Shahpore, and the sculptures near it, we were not only forced to carry a considerable party of the people belonging to Meer Allee Khān, a chief of Eels*, friendly to the Kauzeroonees; but even with their protection were admonished to dispatch our operations with all possible celerity, for fear of attracting the notice of such Mahmood sunnie parties as might be lurking in the neighbourhood.

Of Shahpore, sufficient accounts have been given by Mr. Morier, Colonel Johnstone, and others; and as no new discoveries have been made, I shall say nothing on the subject. There can be little doubt that the great valley, fertilized by the Shahpore river, was at one time widely and highly cultivated. The numerous water courses that have formerly been fed by its waters, though now choked up, sufficiently attest this; and there was still a considerable extent of rice cultivation, beautifully green, bordering the river, but not a village could be seen; and although there was far more vegetation and herbage about the place than we had hitherto seen in Persia, it wore an air of extreme desolation. It is matter of surprise, that the city and population, which this valley once undoubtedly contained, should have been removed, as appears to have been the case, to the comparatively barren plain, and unfavourable situation of Kauzeroon. That place indeed is fast following the fate of its greater predecessor; although

* Eels, Eelhaut, or Illeyaut, for it is written in all these ways, is the term which designates the wandering tribes of Persia. *Eel*, in Persian, is the singular, *Eelhaut* is plural. Eelhauts therefore in English would be incorrect. I have thought it the most unexceptionable way to adopt the Persian singular, and to use the English termination of *s* to make it plural.

from being upon the direct road to Sheerauz, it will probably always retain a certain limited population.

Whilst we were preparing to proceed on our journey, authentic intelligence was brought to camp that the epidemic cholera had now certainly appeared at Sheerauz, and in a very violent manner, having first broken out in the prince's harem; and that the prince had been so much alarmed at this, that he had fled from the city, and taken up his quarters in tents at some distance; intending thus to remain, until the disorder should abate. This information afforded sufficient ground for delaying our departure, until the arrival of further intelligence; the more particularly, as the business of the mission having originated with the court of Sheerauz, it would have been indecorous, if not impossible, to proceed without an interview with the prince. Each succeeding day confirmed the truth of the news, and the propriety of our determination to continue where we were.

The disease had in fact, appeared first in the royal harem, where its first victim was one of the prince's wives, who died soon after she was attacked. Two eunuchs, and first one, afterwards two more Georgian ladies rapidly succeeded. Several others of lesser note were also taken ill; and the deaths speedily amounted to thirteen. The alarm became so great that the prince ordered a general move, sending several of his women to the gardens about town, and preparing himself with others of his family to quit the place. While these preparations were on foot, the prince's mother herself was seized with the complaint, and almost immediately expired. Her son was so much alarmed and shocked at this, that while she was yet in agony, he mounted his horse, and quitting the palace, fled to the country; leaving the rest to follow as they might. The ministers and chiefs rapidly followed his example, and the town and its inhabitants were left to their fate.

Had all Sheerauz, with its inhabitants, been swallowed up or swept from the face of the earth, the sensation produced would not have been more overwhelming, than that which the death of this princess created. She had been the favourite wife of the king. Her character and talents were of the first order, and had procured her

the esteem and respect of all classes. It was she, in fact, who had governed the province of Fars for the last twelve years; and who had in some degree counteracted the baneful effects of ministerial mismanagement. It was therefore no wonder that the death of such an individual, at a period of fear and doubt should make a strong impression upon the public mind.

The disease was not long confined to the palace; it soon spread through the city; and we were assured, that eighty of the inhabitants fell its victims the first day; certainly, deaths increased in frequency very rapidly, for we were informed on the authority of a messenger sent to the governor of Kauzeroon, that on the third day after the first appearance of the distemper in the city, two hundred corpses had been carried out of the gates, and many had been interred in the cemeteries within its walls. When it is recollected, that the population of Sheerauz does not exceed five and thirty or forty thousand souls, the violence of the disease may be conceived from this mortality, even after allowing considerably for exaggeration. The whole city now took the alarm, and every one who could procure the means of carriage, fled to the country, to the villages, or mountains around: most of the nobles in attendance on the court, and all the authorities, except the governor of the place, were among the first to follow their prince's example. The city was thus left in a very awkward situation, without the means of maintaining its police, and excesses began to be committed. The epidemic had not as yet attacked the quarters inhabited by the Jews, and Armenians; and as these people are in the habit of drinking strong liquors, many were disposed to attribute their exemption from disease to this practice, and accordingly got furiously drunk. Several, under the joint operation of the brandy and their fears, ran raving about the streets in paroxysms of terror; while others, rendered bold by their potations, imagined to themselves a tangible foe, and called wildly aloud "where is this disease, this "dreadful malady, let him shew himself, that I may fight and kill "him." All was consternation, confusion, and uproar.

On the 22d September, a person belonging to our Mehmandar, with a native of credit and respectability, arrived in camp, and confirmed in its fullest extent, the account we had received of the ravages

committed by the distemper. A dreadful calm had succeeded the tumult that had reigned at first, the city had now become almost deserted, the bazars were shut, and not a soul was to be seen in the streets; but the avenues to the town were crowded with fugitives, carrying with them such of their families and property as they could snatch from the scene of death. Several quarters of the city were totally deserted, and in others, the inhabitants who could not fly, had locked themselves up in their houses, and gloomily awaited their fate. In the ark *, or palace, not a soul was left; and you might have walked through the deserted apartments of the harem unquestioned. Many of the dead were interred in the town without form, and by the hands of their friends, because none other could be procured to perform the rites of sepulture. The relater had seen two women employed in burying a corpse, a thing unheard of before.

Under these circumstances, the progress of the mission was, for the time, in every way impracticable. The prince and his ministers were too much distracted to attend to business, so that there was not a chance of an audience; and had it been even decided on, to pass by Sheerauz, and leave the business of the mission to be transacted entirely at Tehrān, it was by no means certain, that the necessary steps for securing to it supplies and protection on the way, could be taken by government. Had these obstacles not existed, the state of feeling among our own servants, who were much alarmed at the idea of encountering the contagion, would alone have rendered it impossible to move; for, though nothing was openly said, it was sufficiently apparent, that the least demonstration of marching towards Sheerauz, would occasion the desertion of great part of our suite; while situated as we were, the means of compulsion were slenderly, if at all in our power. On the other hand, some of our principal muleteers had their families in Sheerauz; and they would never have consented to pass that place, without a halt. The chief of these men plainly told Dr. Jukes, " *I* cannot proceed without entering Sheerauz, and ascer- " taining the situation of my family; if they are well, I will ride on,

* The word *Ark* means citadel, and as princes in the East generally live in fortified places or citadels, the word from thence often comes to be applied to a palace.

" and join you; if not, if I find any of them gone, you have my mules " and property, take, and do what you please with them, but you see " me no more. I will not return to you; I cannot; I care not what " then becomes of me."

Thus, there was no remedy, but that the mission should remain where it was, until the minds of men, as well as the country, should become more settled. With regard to myself, I was not precisely in the same situation; the delay proposed would be to me a serious evil. I had already lost too much valuable time, and I began seriously to consider, how far it might be practicable, even under present circumstances, to leave the mission, and continue my journey alone. There were, indeed, many considerations that might render the step imprudent, and unadvisable. The unsettled state of the country, the roads crowded with fugitives, under no constraint, and likely to take such a moment for acting a lawless part, from the certainty of escaping detection. The irritable state of the public mind, always intolerant and bigoted at Sheerauz, and confessedly ill-disposed to Christians. This too was the season, when the Eels or wandering tribes were in motion, and considerable bodies were known to be upon the road to Sheerauz; and these were still more likely to take advantage of the times, to attack and plunder such as they could master. Indeed, reports of such robberies and murders had already begun to prevail.

All these considerations were anxiously represented to me by many of the party; and by none more zealously than the old gheber, Moolla Feridoon, who was attached to the mission in a situation of confidence he deserved; and it may be conceived that they had their full effect upon the minds of my servants, from whom I foresaw great difficulty, in case I should decide on moving forward. Upon this step, however, after much deliberation, I determined. The uncertainty of the envoy's operations, dependant as they were upon a timid and fickle government, and the probability, that the disease would precede the party on its road to Tehrān, as it had to Sheerauz, embarrassing every movement, and not to be outstript in its progress; all threatened so fatal a loss of time, that I preferred every risk that might be to be encountered, to the pro-

bable delay; and accordingly commenced my preparations for departure. On this occasion, I, for the first time, experienced the difficulty of dealing with Persian servants. To those indeed who have been accustomed to Indian servants, the contrast will be very striking; for the characters of the two are widely opposed. The Indian is humble, submissive, and most respectful; he takes no liberty, will not even speak loud in your hearing, and avoids the most distant approach to familiarity. The Persian, on the contrary, is only to be kept within bounds by a decided tone, and grave demeanour in his master; the least relaxation in which is apt to occasion presumption and troublesome familiarity: or he may continue respectful in his master's presence, but forgets all restraint when his back is turned; and while yet within his hearing, will laugh, joke, and romp with his fellows, with the most noisy turbulence. He will make free with his master's things, drink out of his water vessel, and use his coffee and tobacco, as if they were his, by right; nor is he easily checked, even by remonstrance. All this is so much at variance with the strict discipline of Indian attendance, that it is very revolting at first to those who come from thence. Many who have lived in the country, will, I doubt not, in some measure dissent from these charges against Persian servants, but those in high situations, whether Europeans, or natives, shrouded as they are from observation by the pomp that surrounds them, and guarantied from insolence or familiarity by the awe of their authority, are not aware of the excesses of their own or the servants of others; and cannot, in fact, see so much of the manners of the people, as those who have moved in a more humble walk of life. Fear restrains their dependants from trespassing in the immediate presence of the great. Nothing can be more humble and submissive than the demeanor of their servants before them; nothing more insolent and overbearing than their conduct in their absence.

It is not perhaps to be wondered at, if strangers and infidels as we were, in the estimation of the country, we should not be able to command the best of servants; or that those we did procure, knowing their service to be but temporary, should endeavour to make the

most of us while it lasted. In truth, those who reside at Bushire, and who make a practice of hiring themselves to strangers, are, as may easily be conceived, from the nature of their service, the very worst of their class to be found in the country. Such gentlemen as have made it their residence, no doubt have generally been able to attach domestics of a more respectable character, but I believe there are few who will not allow that a greedy sharpsightedness after his own interest, and a pretty barefaced disposition to make the most of his master, even in the hour of need, are striking characteristics of even the best of Persian servants. On a journey there is no satisfying them; they must have increased wages, additional cloathing, and if they have not a separate animal, must at all events be mounted, from the highest to the lowest; and not contented with this, and the contingent emolument arising from the receipt and delivery of presents, they will often insist on food being furnished them, when soorsaut*

* It is the custom in Persia, founded, no doubt, upon ancient munificence and hospitality, to consider every stranger of consequence, who visits the kingdom or its sovereign, as the guest of that sovereign; and to furnish him, and all his attendants, with lodgings and provisions, at the expence of his host. For this purpose, a mehmandar (literally an attendant on a guest) is appointed to attend upon and provide the things required; and this custom is most particularly observed towards all embassadors from foreign powers. The provision thus furnished is called soorsaut, and it forms one of the most grievous parts of the saaderaut, or irregular taxes; for it is claimed not only by strangers, but by all great men, or messengers travelling on the part of the king, and is levied with extreme severity. Those who claim soorsaut, whether mehmandars or others, not contented with demanding a supply of provisions sufficient for those who should consume them, make their situation a cloak for demanding three or four times as much as can possibly be required. A great part of this they compromise for a present in cash to themselves. And yet it frequently happens, that the guests on whose account the demand is made come very poorly off. I have myself seen frequent instances where the soorsaut furnished has not been sufficient for the party. Still, however, it is all set down to the account of the government; but they, caring little for the loss of the unfortunate ryots, on whom it falls, and perhaps aware that great part of the charge is extravagant, admit but little or no part of it in account against the annual assessments of the districts where the transaction has taken place. Thus, what with the demands for actual provisions, for cash, and for presents which arise out of soorsaut, the oppressions it occasions are so great that villages have been totally abandoned in the line of its operation, and districts have gone gradually to decay.

With the praise-worthy purpose of breaking off so disgraceful a custom, or at least of discountenancing it, by a refusal on the part of his government to inflict so severe a burthen upon the people, Dr. Jukes determined to refuse the soorsaut, and purchase the

is not received; they know their importance, particularly to a stranger, on a journey, and there is no end to their demands.

In the present case, I found the greatest reluctance on the part of my servants to proceed alone; a species of undefined dread was attached to the idea of leaving the mission, and the difficulty I experienced in making arrangements, was extreme. Several people after engaging to go, left me, and it was only by promising every indulgence, with horses to carry each individual, and giving them enormous wages, besides a present of clothes, that I at last succeeded in engaging four men, in the capacities of jeloodar*, furosh, groom, and muleteer; even then it required all the authority of the mehmander, who furnished me with one of his own people as far as Sheerauz, and who knew and could keep in view their families, to hold them to their engagements, under threats of the severest punishment to defaulters.

On the evening of the 23d, attended by my negroe servant, and four Persians, well armed, with my baggage upon four mules, purchased for the purpose, I took leave of my friends, not with the

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requisite provisions for his party in the public bazar. But, though he persevered for a few stages in this conduct, it was opposed so violently by our mehmandar, that he was forced to give up the point. The mehmandar declared that if the envoy persisted, the prince would infallibly disgrace him, to whose care was committed the progress of the mission; and that he never should be able to shew his face in his master's presence again. Both he and the governors of districts prohibited the merchants and villagers to *sell* to the envoy's servants what might be required, but to *give* what they wanted without taking money. The governor at Konar Kuht sent a large present of sweetmeats and fruit to the envoy, which was declined politely on the same principle: but he complained so bitterly of the indignity, that, as it was impossible to explain to his satisfaction the grounds of rejection, the point was given up, and the present accepted. Several other attempts of the same nature were made, but at length Dr. Jukes was forced to yield; and he did this with the less regret, as he became convinced that if even he could have succeeded, the people for whom he felt would not have gained a jot; for whether consumed or not, the soorsaut would have been equally levied upon the villagers, and charged to government. In truth it was so decidedly against the interest of the mehmandar and governors of villages, that this mode of providing for the wants of an ambassador or other stranger should be given up, that it is no wonder they so stoutly opposed it; it would have been striking at the root of some of their most valuable privileges.

* Jeloodar, literally a servant who holds the rein, from *jelow*, a rein. It is applied to the person who has chief charge of the horses.

lightest of hearts, and took the road to Sheerauz. We made forced marches, passed the difficult cothuls of the Doochter and Peera Zun during the first night, and reached Dusht-e-Arjun the next morning. It is in the vicinity of this place that the vine is cultivated, which supplies the greater part of the celebrated Sheerauz wine. The plants are set with some attention to regularity, from eight to ten feet asunder, and are trained as standard bushes, without support. They are pruned at the No-Roze (about the latter end of March), and the fruit ripens about the time of year that we passed. They are neither manured nor irrigated, the moisture which falls from heaven in the season being sufficient to mature the fruit. The soil, where I remarked it, on the tops of the lower hillocks, was of a reddish hue, apparently the same with those of greater elevation.

There is a small reedy lake in this valley, fed by several very fine springs, and bordered by a considerable extent of meadow land, which pastures a number of cattle and horses; and it is remarkable, that this lake has no outlet for its waters; the people of the country, however, believe that there is a subterraneous connection between this and the water at Pool-ab-guine, near Kauzeroon; perhaps because the two marshy lakes sympathize in losing the greatest part of their waters at one and the same season by evaporation.

This village, containing about 300 houses, has suffered so severely from the oppression inflicted by its superior, Ibrahim Khan, a Kadjer, related to the reigning family, that the number of its inhabitants scarcely exceed that of its houses; they assured me, that 2,600 tomauns, a sum greatly exceeding the government dues, is raised from the village and its dependencies, let the season be good or bad; and as of late years the harvest has been so bad in several instances, as hardly to return the seed, it may be inferred, that their distress was great.

At eleven o'clock at night we pursued our way, passing Khoneh-Zenioon about three in the morning. A fire burned invitingly in its caravanserai, and our weary beasts would fain have turned in, but we held on for Sheerauz, anxious to pass unnoticed, if possible, through the tribes of Eels who were encamped, as we were informed, in num-

bers upon the banks of the stream near this place. The night passed without alarm; but we met with many parties, flying bag and baggage from Sheerauz, too much occcupied with their own concerns to mind us. In the grey of the morning, while riding over a wild heathy track, a party of men suddenly made their appearance from a hollow, rapidly increasing their numbers from two or three to fourteen, armed with clubs, swords, and matchlocks. They carried so suspicious an appearance, that we halted till our party and baggage closed up, and examined our arms to receive them, while they, on their side, seemed equally undecided, and eyed us askance, without advancing. At last the mehmandar's man spurred forward to enquire their business. They replied, that they were a party of Eels, looking for some horses and asses that had been stolen from the tribe the night before; and, after a little more explanation, they passed on, and we continued our way; but our guide observed that they were certainly on a plundering expedition, and probably considered our party as too strong for an attack. "However that may be," added he, "they will not return bootless home; if they do not find their own "cattle, they will find that of others, for they dare not go home to "their wives empty handed."

The country around had a wild heathy aspect, being principally irregular hills of gravel, covered with tufts of dry prickly herbage, and withered aromatic plants, together with a great proportion of the camels' thorn*, and a plant which resembled stunted juniper, among which hundreds of red legged partridges were running about. As the day wore on, we met the advance of a large tribe of Eels, migrating from one pasture to another, and by degrees we encountered their main body. The appearance of these people was truly picturesque; they drove before them large quantities of cattle, sheep, horses, and asses; on the latter animals, which were most

* Khar-e-Shuter, or camels thorn, a prickly bush on which the camels browze, called *Jowassa* in the upper provinces of India, and often used to make tatties, or screens placed at the windows, and wetted for cooling the apartments by evaporation, in the hot winds.

abundant, as well as on several rough yaboos*, were stowed the goods of the community; tents and clothes, pots and boilers, with utensils of sundry descriptions, bound together in most heterogeneous loads. On some of these children were mounted, and employed in driving along the rest, and the young men and women hurried and bustled about, restraining, with the assistance of their huge and fierce dogs, the larger and more lively animals from straying too far. The elder women, themselves loaded with the younger children, either patiently trudged on foot, watching the progress of their domestic equipage, or sat mounted on the least laden animals, suckling their infants. Perched on some of these loads, might be seen a little urchin not able to speak, but quite at home, neither receiving nor requiring the least attention, holding on with his little claws most manfully, as his patient but surefooted beast wound cautiously down the steep and slippery way. On others were placed the superannuated of the tribe, many in second childhood, bent double with age, and hardly distinguishable from the mass of rags that formed their seat. The men of the tribe, with a sober and thoughtful demeanor, walked steadily along with their arms in readiness, upon the flanks and rear of the rest; guarding and controlling the movements of the column, as it slowly advanced on its route. All was in wild and excellent harmony with the scenery around, very gypsy like, but far more savage and romantic.

Their features were strongly marked, as well as their costume. The complexion appears originally to have been fair, for when a young child is seen naked, it is nearly as white as an European infant; but exposure to the sun and weather turns their skin to a deep mahogany hue, often approaching to black. The men have well made, powerful frames, piercing black eyes, noses generally inclined to aquiline, frequently overhanging their thick mustachios, which united with their black bushy beards, almost entirely conceal their mouth. A deep ruddy hue glows through their dark brown skins, and their appearance is altogether strongly characteristic of health, hardihood,

* *Yaboo*, is the term employed in Persia and India for the strong, small, rough horses of the country, used for baggage and other such coarse work.

and independence; while their wild and unchecked stare, marks their total want of polish, courtesy, or civilization. Their dress consists of a coarse blue shirt and trowsers, with heavy cloaks of felt, thrown over the shoulders, the sleeves being left unoccupied; a conical cap of white or grey felt, with flaps for the ears, covers their heads: they usually carry one, and sometimes two guns slung at the back, and a large knife or dagger at the girdle; a sword or a clubbed stick completes their equipment.

The young women have quite the gypsy character of countenance, and are often handsome. A sweet nut brown hue warmed with vivid crimson, the effects of exercise and exposure, forms their usual complexion; their eyes like those of the men, are dark and expressive; the nose is well formed and delicate; the mouth small, and set off with beautiful teeth; a lurking smile not lessened by their consciousness of the observation they attracted, often lighted up their countenances, of which the expression was full of good humour. In spite of the rags that hung about them, the contour of a beautiful and slender shape might be detected, and the unconstrained freedom of their step gave even grace to their motions. They certainly owed little to their costume, for nothing could be more ungraceful. A ragged and patched pair of trowsers, often very tight, with a loose shift of blue or dirty white cotton, the skirts of which do not nearly reach the knee; and a species of mantle thrown over the head and shoulders, crossing the forehead like a band, and flowing a certain way down the back, comprised the principal part of the women's apparel. They wrap also around the head an handkerchief or bunch of cloth in place of a turban; and this costume varied by frequent repairs and degrees of imperfection, is common to all the females of these tribes. The women soon lose what beauty they may have possessed; and although they retain the piercing eyes and marked features, their skins become parched and withered, and their complexion changes to a darker brown, a coarse sunburnt red, or a sallow tawny brown. When aged, they become the most shrivelled wrinkled hags, it is possible to imagine; and no living creatures can better represent all that is imagined of witches, than the hooked nosed, skinny, grand-dames of the Eels.

Nothing can be imagined less like the environs of a capital city than the aspect of the country on this, or, indeed, on every side of Sheerauz. For many miles the traveller passes over a barren desert of the heathlike hillocks above described, without a village or human form to enliven it; and when at the end of a winding pass, the town and its valley burst upon the view, it is with any thing but pleasing effect. An extensive brown dusty plain, stretches along for many miles, ending in a hazy undulation which arises from the saline efflorescence around the lake Baktegān. No verdure, except one or two gardens, which resemble black spots on the desert, can be detected in its whole expanse, and almost under the hills on the opposite side, a few uncertain appearances of domes and walls, hardly to be distinguished from the dust on which they stand, are all that directs the attention to the celebrated city of Sheerauz. Nor does a nearer view of its environs remove this unfavourable impression. The plain exhibits little but sterility and abandonment. The greater portion, indeed, being mere gravel, is unfit for cultivation, and the richer and irrigated spots were now burnt up as the rest. At the time we traversed the whole plain the air on its surface was undulating with heated vapour, and thousands of little whirlwinds bearing up the dust to the skies, were rapidly driven across it by the wind. In its whole breadth, for more than twelve miles, we hardly saw a living thing. Even at its gates the town looked like some city of the olden time, long deserted by man. The aspect of its mud walls surrounded with ruins and broken ground, can, indeed, at no time give rise to any cheerful impression; but unenlivened by the buz of population, they seemed shrouded in ten-fold gloom. The first human beings we saw, were a party of mourners on their return from depositing one of the victims of the epidemic, in a cemetery close by the quarters we were to occupy.

These quarters were in the gardens of the Jehau Numāh, the usual place for accommodating English travellers; and we reached them about noon of the 25th, after a march of thirteen hours, rendered painful by the weariness of our cattle, and the ill conduct of our servants; and I gladly availed myself of the hospitality of the English gentlemen, already in possession of the garden.

CHAP. V.

ENGLISH PARTY AT SHEERAUZ. — MR. RICH RESIDENT OF BAGDAD, MR. TODD, MAJOR LITCHFIELD. — VISITED BY THE GOVERNOR, AGA BABA KHAN, ON THE 2D. OCT. — HIS REPORT OF DEATHS AT SHEERAUZ, AND OF THE STATE OF THAT CITY FROM CHOLERA.— MAJOR LITCHFIELD LEAVES US. — THE AUTHOR, THOUGH DESIROUS SO TO DO, FINDS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PROCEED ALONE, AND DETERMINES TO AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF THE ENVOY. — MR. RICH ATTACKED BY THE EPIDEMIC. — DIES. — DR. JUKES ARRIVES UNEXPECTEDLY AND OPPORTUNELY. — BURIAL OF MR. RICH. — THE EPIDEMIC CEASES AND THE PEOPLE RETURN. — THE PRINCE STILL AFRAID TO ENTER THE CITY. — INTRIGUES IN THE COURT. — THE ENVOY REQUESTS AN EARLY INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCE, WHO APPOINTS A MEETING AT SHEERAUZ ON THE 21ST. — THE ENVOY'S RECEPTION. — THE PRINCE'S CHARACTER AND DEMEANOR. — A FURTHER AND MORE SATISFACTORY AUDIENCE ON THE 22D. — THE ENVOY READY TO DEPART FROM SHEERAUZ ON THE EVENING OF THE 26TH. — MEANNESS AND CORRUPTION OF ALL RANKS AND AUTHORITIES. — DUPLICITY OF THEIR POLICY AND CARRIAGE TO THE ENVOY.

The English party at Sheerauz consisted of Mr. Rich, late British resident at Bagdad; Mr. James Todd, a surgeon of the company's establishment; and Major Litchfield. The first, forced by political events to quit the Turkish dominions, had come to Bushire, and from thence visited the ruins of Persepolis, and other antiquities in the neighbourhood of Sheerauz. Mr. Todd had accompanied him in this expedition; and Major Litchfield had already resided there for some time, as agent for the purchase of horses for the Indian cavalry. The comfort of meeting such a party, under such circumstances, it may be believed was very great; and the verdure and freshness of the garden was extremely grateful, after so long a privation of such enjoyments.

The accounts we had received of the rise and progress of the epidemic, proved to be essentially correct. It had commenced about the middle of the month in the town, but as only one or two cases occurred at first, the alarm was not immediately excited. The deaths, however, suddenly increasing to forty-five, fifty, and one hundred in a day, the panic spread rapidly, and every one fled. The prince, as

has been before stated, being the first. Aga Baba Khan, a man of some consequence, alone remained; he also had fled with the rest at first; but seeing the city so totally abandoned, and struck with a sense of duty, he returned to it, and took a general charge of affairs, Comforting those who had lost friends, re-assuring those who had become a prey to terror, and restraining by authority such excesses as came to his knowledge, he maintained a certain degree of order, and prevented many from wildly flying from the place, to the ruin of their families, and the hazard of spreading the disease. By this conduct he gained general applause, and the assurances of his prince's favour, a reward of very questionable character, and far inferior to the gratification he must have felt from the performance of so humane a duty: for though I should not be too apt to give the Persians credit for disinterested benevolence, such feelings must, in this case, have possessed considerable sway, to conquer the impulse of terror, and produce the line of conduct that Aga Baba Khan adopted.

The deaths had however progressively increased; and although the greater part of the population had deserted the town, Aga Baba Khan, during a visit to Mr. Rich, on the 2d of October, assured us, that according to the best information he could collect, the deaths had then amounted to five thousand six hundred. The population of Sheerauz is not estimated at more than forty thousand souls, and and as a great proportion of that number had certainly quitted the city, the mortality will doubtless appear exceedingly great: yet no motive could be conceived for exaggerating the misfortune to us; and therefore we were inclined to take this report as not differing very far from the truth.

It was remarkable that the Jews and Armenians, had suffered little or nothing in comparison with the Mahometans; and it was said, that they administered to the sick, doses of brandy and opium, with good effect. The Mahometans here, as at Bushire, made use of the cold affusion, and verjuice, as remedies; but the numerous and rapid deaths that followed this mode of treatment, occasioned some doubts as to its efficacy, and these remedies were at length prohibited by proclamation.

Very soon after its appearance, the disease assumed a violent character, and did its work rapidly. Many instances occurred of persons dying in the streets, on the spot where they dropt; and these sudden cases of death caused so much dismay, that all feelings of sympathy and pity were lost in anxiety for self-preservation. Here, as in other places, the claims of kindred were insufficient to ensure attention; and victims were left to their fate, on the spot where they were attacked, unaided, and almost unheeded by their nearest relatives. Whole houses were swept off. In one instance which came under our knowledge, out of a family consisting of nine males, and five females, the whole of the former were attacked nearly at the same time. The females, panic struck, fled from the house, and halting only for a short time behind the gardens of the Jehan Numāh (our quarters) for a few necessaries, took refuge in the mountains: some days after, they took courage, and sent to know the fate of those left behind. The *whole nine* were found dead in the house, just where they had severally fallen. Towards the end of its career, the disease greatly relaxed in the severity of its attack, and the daily number of deaths decreased; but there were several fluctuations in the state of the mortality before it could be positively affirmed, that the epidemic was on the decline. The windows of our lodgings commanded a view of several burying grounds, and the numbers we saw daily carried to their graves, strongly corroborated the extent of the reported mortality.

Our situation was, in truth, not the most comfortable. The population of Sheerauz has in all times been notorious for its bigotry and fanaticism: they never look on Europeans or Christians with feelings of kindness; and during the progress of this disorder, these dispositions were not likely to improve, particularly as we occupied a garden which might have otherwise accommodated many of those who fled from its effects. Reports of a nature dangerous to the English party had been whispered about. The little stream of Rōknabād, which partly supplies the town of Sheerauz with water, passes through the garden occupied by us; and hints had been thrown out, that the malady which raged was, in some degree, occasioned,

or exasperated, by practices of ours. Had a suspicion of this sort once gained ground, or had religious fanaticism once been aroused against the party, the consequences would probably have been fatal. Instances of a less serious complexion had already occurred in our view. Some of the moolahs and priests inveighing, against the sinfulness of the people, as the great cause of the misfortunes they were then suffering, and particularly against the iniquity, so prevalent in Sheerauz, of making use of strong liquors, so expressly forbidden by the prophet; their audience, fired with holy indignation, sallied forth, headed by some fanatics, and forcing their way into the houses of almost every Jew and Armenian in the place, broke all the vessels of wine or brandy they could find. These poor people had suffered considerably on the occasion; and one Armenian merchant of eminence assured us, he had lost thirty thousand rupees' worth of wine.

I should willingly have bid adieu to my friends, and left this uncomfortable station, after a very short residence, had that been practicable; but I had almost insuperable obstacles to contend with, in the reluctance I found in my servants to proceed whenever I hinted at quitting Sheerauz. It was not indeed surprizing that these men should be unwilling to move further from their homes and families, under the anxieties of the times; and I found that the hazard I ran of being abandoned, with my cattle and baggage on the road, was so great, that I came to the resolution of awaiting the arrival of Dr. Jukes (who, as he informed me by letter, had dismissed his establishment, and intended to proceed express from Kauzeroon), and proceeding along with him, as far as might be mutually convenient. How far I acted wisely in this matter, it is not easy to decide. The degree of delay which it entailed on me proved far beyond calculation; and was probably the cause of the disappointments I subsequently met with, in some of the chief objects of my journey: but though it was likewise the means of placing me in situations of peculiar delicacy and distress, I cannot on that account regret it, as it enabled me to afford consolation and assistance to some valued and lamented friends; and to give their families the

satisfaction of knowing, that in their last hours they were not quite abandoned to the neglect of strangers.

One of these occasions was but too near; the epidemic had almost disappeared in the town*, when Mr. Rich was unfortunately attacked, almost its last victim. His health had been indifferent for some time before, but by no means remarkably so, just previous to the attack. He had taken the warm bath in the forenoon, and felt languid, but no ill consequence was apprehended. In the evening after dinner, he complained of being faint and low, and this feeling increased so much, that about nine o'clock he abruptly left the room, and was found by Dr. Tod, who followed him, vomiting violently; as this seemed but an effort of nature to throw off a quantity of bile, little apprehension was entertained, until about half past ten, when the vomiting recurred, accompanied with other symptoms of the disease. The proper medicines were then administered, and every precaution taken to arrest its course; spasms however came on, attended with the usual and melancholy cold clamminess of the extremities, but they were once or twice checked, and the night passed on in great anxiety. About seven in the morning better hopes were entertained; for the pulse, which had for some time been imperceptible, returned, along with some little warmth of skin, and a disposition to sleep prevailed. These flattering symptoms, however, soon disappeared, and gave way to coldness and exhaustion. The countenance sunk, the pulse was again lost, and about half past nine in the morning the scene closed for ever.

There are occasions when a single instance of death will speak more to the heart than the heaviest general calamity, and such did we feel that to be which we had just witnessed. Each of us had been familiar with death in various forms, but neither, I believe, were ever more painfully affected than now. The fervid hopes, the fine talents, the high promise that so few hours before had excited our admiration, all gone, passed away, as if they had never been. The

* Major Litchfield had for some time previous to this, left Sheerauz; leaving Mr. Rich, Dr. Tod, and myself, at that place.

friend and companion with whom our days in this dreary place had passed so pleasantly, with whom but the day before we had "taken sweet counsel," forming plans, and projecting sanguine schemes for promoting, to the extent of our humble means, the ends of literature and science, now lay at our feet, a piece of lifeless clay: — a striking change in twelve hours; and it need not be denied that we felt it deeply. To those who knew him who had thus departed, no apology will be required for having dwelt awhile on the catastrophe that deprived his country of a zealous and active servant, society of a most pleasing member, and which inflicted on his family and friends an irreparable loss. To us who survived, it was not only the bereavement of a dear friend, but the loss of our best counsellor; and in the latter view, strangers as we were in the land, without a soul to apply to for advice or assistance, it was a grave misfortune.

It was not however a time for giving way to depression, it was necessary to act. Application was instantly made to Aga Baba Khan, the only authority in Sheerauz, for permission to inter the body in the Armenian burying ground, within the walls of the town: but this, we were informed, could not be admitted of, as it was against the rules and customs of the country, to permit any corpse to be brought *into* the city; and these had been upheld even in the case of the queen-mother, who having died at one of the gardens close to the town, was not permitted to be brought within the gates, but was deposited in the mosque at the tomb of Shah Meer Humza, near them, until a caravan should depart for Kerbela, where it was intended the body should be interred. It was therefore useless to urge the matter further, and after a good deal of deliberation, it was decided, if permission could be obtained, to inter the remains in the garden itself: the ceremony would be less likely to attract attention, and the place less liable to be disturbed by fanaticism or brutality, than in any situation that could be devised. Upon representation, this permission was granted, and the needful preparations were made, every thing being performed by ourselves; for it is a melancholy trait, but too characteristic of the servants in this part of the world, that those who had long served Mr. Rich, and thriven on his bounty, would

hardly pay the slightest attention to his remains. These arrangements occupied the whole day, and Dr. Tod and myself retired to our couches harassed, anxious, and exhausted.

About three in the morning of the 6th October, a noise upon the terrace before the garden gate, made me start up; and I shall never forget the delight with which I heard the people below shouting out that "the elchee" was come. It was, indeed, Dr. Jukes, who, having completed his arrangements at Kauzeroon even sooner than he had anticipated, had arrived thus far on his way to Tehrān, and so opportunely for us. The relief afforded to us by this event can only be comprehended by such as may have been placed in circumstances of a similar description. It was not that we were diffident of our own resources, or that we could not or would not have performed our duty to the utmost of our power at all hazards: but Dr. Jukes was well acquainted with, and well known to the people, and, independent of the authority which he bore, and which would be our best protection, he was better qualified than we were to deal with them. Above all, our minds were relieved by his presence from an oppressive sense of loneliness, for we felt that we had acquired a friend in a land of strangers, almost of enemies, at the moment we most needed such a blessing.

That same morning we committed to the tomb the mortal remains of our poor friend. The ceremony was attended by the Armenian clergy of Sheerauz, but we read the service of the church of England over the grave. A small oblong square of solid masonry was erected over it, and on the top we placed a slab of Tabreez marble, on which was engraved his name, and the date of his decease.

During the next few days various reports prevailed regarding the decline of the epidemic, and the movements of the prince. The former had certainly diminished almost to nothing, and the inhabitants were returning to the city. It was the general opinion, on the best authority, that the deaths from first to last amounted to full six thousand. The prince's motions were very uncertain, as his panic was undoubtedly great. Those who were desirous of protect-

ing his character from the charge of cowardice, asserted that his ministers prevented him from re-entering the town. Mahomed Zekey Khan, his chief minister, came in upon the 12th to visit Dr. Jukes, and to concert with him a time and place for meeting the prince; but nothing was decided upon. The minister was, in fact, the ruling power of Fars, particularly since the death of the queen mother; the prince, a person of weak and debauched character, being unfit for command. The minister was said to countenance and promote his excesses as much as possible, that he might retain the reins of government in his own hand. A report was, however, at this time prevalent, not only that Zekey Khan had rendered himself obnoxious at court, but even that his life was in serious danger from the intrigues of his enemies. It was alleged that Kaussim Khan, a Kadjer, married to a daughter of the king, who long had borne a deep grudge against Zekey Khan, had represented to his majesty that the province of Fars was suffering serious injury from the mal-administration of this minister; and that he, Kaussim Khan, was the very person to place matters upon the proper footing. He accordingly solicited the king's commands to assume the administration of Fars, in lieu of Zekey Khan, and to deal with that minister as might seem expedient to him. This overture, backed with the offer of 100,000 tomauns, it was said, had been favourably entertained; and Zekey Khan would thus have been sold for that price, into the hands of his enemy, who could easily have indemnified himself from the province, if once under his rule. Whether the intrigue did or did not proceed the length reported to us, we had not the means of knowing. It is one of a nature too common at the Persian court to excite any surprize, had it been successful: but Zekey Khan was, perhaps, too firm in his seat at the moment to be easily displaced; or had the means of convincing his majesty that it would be more for his interest were he continued in his office; and the plot accordingly failed.

While we remained at Sheerauz, waiting the Prince's arrival, I seized the opportunity to visit Persepolis, Nackshee, Rustum, the Bundameer, and other antiquities in the neighbourhood; but there are so many accounts of them already before the public, that it is

unnecessary for me to add to these any observations of mine. It may, however, be remarked, as a melancholy proof of the diminished prosperity of Persia, that the extensive and once fertile plain of Merdusht, which in the time of Le Brun could boast of eight hundred fine villages, now contains but fifty five half deserted and wretched hamlets. The plain is every where intersected by water courses, and canals, choked up or destroyed; all indicating the fallen state of agriculture and prosperity in the country.

The movements of the Prince continued so uncertain, that the envoy deemed it proper to inform the minister, that unless an early day were appointed for an audience of his Royal Highness, either in his camp or at Sheerauz, he should be under the necessity of proceeding to Tehrān without delay. This intimation had the effect of bringing the Prince into the city on the 20th, his want of state and pomp so essential to the gratification of Persian vanity, having been conclusive against granting an audience in camp.

On the next forenoon the envoy was received at the palace in the city, where every contrivance was resorted to for the purpose of rendering the occasion brilliant and imposing. Endless etiquettes, and ceremonies were observed, and crowds of cringing slaves and ragged troops were summoned from their peaceable occupations, to stand in mock array in the courts of the royal residence.* The tinsel tawdriness of the show, thus got up, evidently "for this occasion only," was beneath contempt. The performance was so awkward, that it was evident the actors were seldom required for such duty: it was too miserable even to move laughter. About the Prince himself all was plain and decent, and had it not been for the previous unnecessary affectation of state, he would at all events have commanded respect.

His countenance is gracious, of an expression rather mild than commanding, the intemperance of his habits have given a sallow and

* This is a very common expedient for getting up a scene of state and pomp for any particular occasion. It is not unfrequent, too, when Europeans of rank, to whom they are desirous of giving a favourable impression of the country, visit the bazars, to summon the population together in these public resorts, and to force the shopkeepers to dress out their shops gaily for the occasion.

sickly hue to his complexion; but he has, like almost all the royal family, fine eyes, a handsome lofty nose, and a good beard. His address was prepossessing, and had he not conceived himself bound to speak in a loud affected tone (a common expedient of those in command to enforce respect), he would have been considered a well bred and agreeable person. He was plainly dressed in dark clothes without ornaments, in respect to the memory of his mother, as well as in observance of the season of the year, the mohurrum.*

Nothing beyond general conversation passed at this visit. The Prince adverted to the visitation of disease that had desolated his capital, in a tone of levity ill suited to the subject, or to the pusillanimity of his own conduct; and still more lightly did he treat the amount of the mortality, as a trifle having no effect upon the general prosperity of his happy government. After a few more indifferent topics had been touched upon, he gave some vague assurances of his good will to the envoy and his government, and we received leave to depart.

The next day, (22d) in a more private audience with the Prince and his minister, all points of business were discussed, in a manner highly satisfactory, as far as related to this court; and promises were given that, as far as its influence extended, every necessary measure should be taken for securing the same facility at Tehrān: every thing now proceeded smoothly, but it was the evening of the 26th ere we were ready to commence our journey.

Several occurrences took place during our stay at this place, strongly illustrative of the character of the Persian government and nobles, and proving the meanness to which the highest of these will stoop, to gratify his avarice: some of them deserve to be noticed.

It is customary to give the mehmandar appointed to attend upon strangers at the time he takes leave of his charge, a present proportioned to the rank of the guests. Feridoon Khan, our mehmandar, a few days previous to our departure, caused it to be indirectly intimated to Dr. Jukes, that whatever might be the present he

* The season of mourning observed by the Sheah sect of Mahomedans for the death of Hussun and Hoossein, the two sons of Allee.

intended to bestow upon him, he entreated that part might be given to him in public, part in private; for, said his friend, "he will be "forced to give up to the Prince, or his more immediate superior, "every thing he is *known* to have received; but he may be able to "preserve for himself a little of what he is *not known* to have re-"ceived." It would not do, he added, to receive the whole in private, for then they would suspect him of retaining something, even after all might have been surrendered; and he might get ill-usage into the bargain, upon this suspicion. Dr. Jukes observed to all this, that he, as a public man, could do nothing privately. All he should present him with, must be carried in the customary manner to the khan's house; and however well disposed he might feel towards Feridoon Khan, he could do no more. It soon appeared, that the cause of this particular application was as follows:—When the establishment at Kauzeroon was dismissed, there was a small distribution of presents to various persons, and among these, Feridoon Khan had received some broad cloth for coats and barounies. His immediate superior, Allee Akbar Khan, the commander of the Prince's gholaums*, had some how got wind of this, and spared no pains to ascertain the real amount of the present. He even directed the females of his house to worm it out from those of Meerza Allee Akbar, the English agent at Sheerauz, whom he presumed to be acquainted with the transaction; and, in the end, the poor man was forced not only to give up all he had got, but to continue under the suspicion of his greedy master, who would not believe that he had retained nothing for himself.

We afterwards learnt, that when the presents were sent, with thirty tomauns in addition, to be distributed among the Mehmandar's people, the disputes in dividing the spoil ran so high, that they came to drawn swords, and several of the myrmidons got broken heads,

* Called in Persia Kooleragassee, the superior of the slaves. Each of the princes, as well as the king, has a certain number of confidential troops, who act as guards, or agents, on all important occasions, and who are called "gholaums," or *slaves;* probably because they originally were selected out of the slaves purchased by such great men. The nature and character of these gholaums will be more particularly spoken of hereafter.

but not one of them received any of the money. Feridoon Khan himself fought, not only well, but successfully; for he was supported by his master, Allee Akbar Khan, who well knew that the reversion would be his; and accordingly he soon after settled the matter by appropriating every article he could find. This trait came first to our ears by the complaints of one of the sufferers, who accompanied us to Ispahan, and it was fully confirmed by letters from Sheerauz afterwards received.

The situation of Mehmandar is sought after with great avidity on such occasions. It was much too valuable in the present instance, for any one person to enjoy the whole way to Ispahan. Feridoon Khan was to go no further than Sheerauz; and when this was known, there was great competition for the reversion of the situation. Ibrahim Beg, a man who had held several respectable offices in former times, now tendered to the minister 200 tomauns for it. This offer, compared with the ostensible emoluments, may serve as a gage for the peculation and tyranny practised by such persons in the name of government. Feridoon Khan, although he had been fully six weeks in attendance, received but 200 tomauns in all; and Ibrahim Beg, as he would in all probability be a much shorter time in office, and was a man of less rank, could scarcely have expected so much; so that he could only hope to make his own money by squeezing from the unfortunate inhabitants on the road. The amount of soorsaut * to be provided for our party could not fairly exceed three tomauns daily. The journey would occupy ten days; so that were even double the amount required to be levied, the Mehmandar could not, in that case, expect to make more than thirty tomauns by the trip; a sum which never would have induced him to undertake it. The inference is clear, that he proposed a far more extensive scheme of exaction, than even that which we have supposed. The minister is not only aware of this intended peculation, at the time he makes the appointment, but makes use of it as an expedient for ridding himself of a troublesome suitor, or for providing for one of his numerous needy

* Soorsaut, vide note page 88.

dependants; the exaction itself forms part of that extra taxation authorized by government, under the term *saaderaut* *; the whole of which is nearly equally grievous and intolerable. A myrmidon of government is thus sent upon a mission of this sort with implied leave to fleece the inhabitants of a particular district, as much as he can, provided he accounts with his employer for half or two thirds of the plunder. In fact, there is nothing that a Persian minister or governor will not do for money. The most heinous crimes, robbery, or murther, have all their price; and the defaulter has but to tell his story his own way, supported with a present of from 50 to 5,000 tomauns, and he may obtain from the minister a rukum †, stating that he has examined into the matter, and found all as it should be: he therefore approves of the act (if it be murther for instance) and feels obliged to the perpetrator, who is on no account to be molested.

Meanness is, indeed, a prevailing characteristic in this empire, from the highest to the lowest. Should the prince, or minister, send you a present, it is expected that you shall return the value, at least, often a great deal more, to the servant who carries it. But it must not be supposed that this return remains with the servant. No; his master takes care to learn the value of your gift, and transfers the whole (leaving, perhaps, a twentieth to his agent) into his coffers. Among each other, all being equally keen, and the custom well understood, this species of tax is equalized by its reciprocity: but with Europeans, who do not act in this manner with their servants, it is different: they are the sole losers; nor do the others think of making adequate returns, either to servants or masters.

Dr. Jukes had presented the minister, Zekey Khan, with a very fine gold Macabe's watch; and, soon after, a person was sent to sound the Persian secretary of the mission as to what return might be expected, if the Prince should send the envoy a present of a fine horse. The result was, in all probability, not encouraging, for no

* Saaderaut, this branch of the ravine, which is beyond that authorized by the customary law, will be explained hereafter in speaking of the revenue of the country.

† A Rukum, an order or declaration.

such a horse came; but Zekey Khan sent an animal, on his own part, so wretched, lean, sore-backed, lame and old, that we could hardly have believed he would have had the effrontery to offer it to any respectable person, far less to one he chose to dignify with the title of friend; yet this jade, with certain trays of sweetmeats and sherbets, arrived under charge of his confidential secretary. That it was a barefaced and impudent solicitation for more money was evident, from the whole circumstances of the case; but a certain return was to be made; and the cash-keeper being from home at the moment, the secretary was informed that, upon his return, a suitable present should be sent to him; and orders to that effect were given to the English agent in his presence. Nevertheless, upon his return to his master, being questioned as to the present he had received, he replied that nothing *had been given*, suppressing the promise that had been made. The minister, astonished and disappointed, took care that this reply should come to Dr. Jukes's ears. An order had already been made out for thirty tomauns for the secretary, and ten to the furoshes who carried the sweetmeats; but Dr. Jukes caused it to be intimated to the secretary, that, as he had told his master that which he knew to be a *lie*, he should consider it his duty to inform the minister of the exact truth. The minister was, however, before them both; he had the earliest information of the order being issued, possessed himself of it, and appropriated the *whole* cash to himself.

The nature of the government, and particularly the characters of the two last sovereigns of Persia, have had a lamentable effect upon the morals of the people. The increased insecurity of property, and consequent jealousy, has been fatal to candour and common honesty. While the business of each individual is to amass money by every possible expedient, and particularly by the obvious one of plundering all those unfortunately subjected to his power, no amelioration in these points can take place. Poverty, real or affected, with its accompaniment of abject meanness, barefaced avarice, and shameless beggary, from the highest to the lowest, will continue to be ruling features in the Persian character.

One amusing instance of this unblushing beggary and want of candour came to our notice when just quitting Sheerauz. A person, formerly a slight acquaintance of Dr. Jukes, came to our quarters; he had once been governor of a district, and became rich; but was ruined by the usual process; — the sponge, when well saturated, had been squeezed dry, and thrown aside. This man had been observed hanging about, and assiduous in his offers of service, until he attracted notice, and was asked what he wanted: he said he was poor, and unemployed, and wanted service. This, the envoy told him, was impossible; the establishment was full: still he hung on, and the next day, contriving once more to attract the envoy's notice, he told him that he possessed a right to a house in town, of which he had been unjustly deprived by the Sheerauz government; but that if he could obtain permission to accompany the mission to Tehrān, he had no doubt that the respectability this would give him would render his petitions at court, for its restoration, effectual. "Very well," said Dr. Jukes, "you shall have that degree of countenance, and may accompany me." "Ah," said he, "but I am so poor, that I have not the means of maintaining myself on the journey." "Well," said Dr. Jukes, "we shall manage that too; you shall eat and live with my people, free of all expence." He expressed great gratitude, and went his way; but returned the next day, saying he was very much distressed, for not having a beast of any sort, he should not be able to keep up, unless he could be furnished with the means of so doing. "Ah," said Dr. Jukes, "that is impossible; I have no spare cattle, and cannot purchase another horse for you." An arrangement was however made, by which the man was to be provided with the use of a horse; and the next day Dr. Jukes told him this, adding, "you must, however, be ready to-night, as I start from hence this night without fail. Are you not yet content?" — "No," said the man, "not quite." "What's the matter?" "Why, I am much distressed; I am a very poor fellow; I have been obliged to pawn all my clothes, and have not wherewithal to keep me decent in your company." "Why, how much do you require to relieve them? what may be the amount of your debt upon them?" "Twenty or

twenty-five tomauns," said he. "O! ho! my friend, and do you really expect me to pay your debts, and carry you free to Tehrān into the bargain?" "By the favour of my lord, who is all goodness!" "No! no! my friend, this is too much, you must now really shift for yourself." Had this mony been advanced, fresh debts would have appeared, and the more that was done, the more would have appeared to do, until the case became hopeless. It is a perfect specimen of the encroaching character of a Persian.

A similar duplicity and double dealing marked the character of their policy, and modes of conducting business. Various instances might be quoted of this, even in the short negociation at Sheerauz. Although the highest respect was professed for the envoy, and every facility for the amicable adjustment of business repeatedly volunteered, yet, even in the first interview with the Prince, encroachments in etiquette, and failures in respect, were observed, which as they are ever of importance in Persia, and ever have a powerful effect in matters of real business, it was necessary to repress in their outset. It was almost ludicrous to mark the effect that a gentle but firm hint, given through the medium of the Mehmandar, produced on the minister; he called heaven and the prophets to witness his profound regard for the envoy; observed that it was too much his interest*, as well as his inclination, to conciliate the English, for him to fail in proper attentions to their representative, and his old friend. He eagerly demanded the subjects of discontent, and bitterly abused the *dog* of a master of ceremonies for his stupid incivility, as the cause of them; yet we had the best reasons to know that every thing complained of originated with the minister himself. All, however, was remedied, and every attention in future was scrupulously paid. Letters were sent for the king and ministers at Tehrān, which, as the envoy was assured, conveyed the most favourable sentiments of

* In fact, he afterwards plainly said to Dr. Jukes, "Why should I seek to displease you? is it not, on the contrary, my best interest to keep the English my friends? — the time will soon come, when I shall be pursued for my money; and then where can I have a safe retreat, except among the English?"

the Prince and his minister, regarding the principal objects of the mission; and every encouragement was given to the belief, that it would be fully successful in all of them: yet after all this, will it be credited, that these very letters bore a purport diametrically opposite to their assurances; opposing in the strongest terms all the British views, neutralizing even the concessions made to the envoy, and were one great cause of the failure which took place in certain points of the negociation.

CHAP. VI.

LEAVE SHEERAUZ ON THE 26th OCTOBER UNDER CONVOY OF TWO MEHMANDARS, FOR ISPAHAN — PLAIN OF OOJĀN. — COLD SEVERELY FELT. — VILLAGE OF DEHGHIRDOO. — DESOLATE EVIDENCES OF FORMER POPULATION. — EFFECTS OF OPPRESSION. — GOOMBUZ-E-LOLLAH, A NOTED PASS FOR THE BUCHTIAREE PLUNDERERS. — YEZIDKHAUST. — REMARKABLE RAVINE THERE. — VEGETATION ON THE PLAIN. — GUM AMMONIAC PLANT. — PLAIN OF KOMAISHAH. — ONCE FERTILE AND WELL CULTIVATED, NOW DESOLATE. — RUINOUS STATE OF KOMAISHAH. — 3d. NOVEMBER, DR. JUKES TAKEN ILL OF A FEVER — WE PROCEED TO THE CARAVANSERAI OF MAYĀR. — 5th, A TUCHT-E-ROWAN, BEING SENT FROM ISPAHAN, HE IS CARRIED TO THAT PLACE AND LODGED IN THE ANGOORISTAN PALACE. — 6th, A FRESH ACCESS OF FEVER. — A PERSIAN PHYSICIAN SENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, PRESCRIBES FOR HIM. — 7th, HE IS BETTER. — 8th, A RELAPSE. — 10th, HE DIES. — THE FUNERAL. — THE AUTHOR OF NECESSITY TAKES CHARGE OF THE LATE ENVOY'S PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONCERNS, AD INTERIM. — AND DEMANDS OF THE MINISTER THE CONTINUANCE OF THE SAME ATTENTIONS TO THE MISSION AS WERE PAID PREVIOUS TO THE ENVOY'S DEATH. — REASONS FOR THIS ASSUMPTION. — 14th, INTERVIEW WITH THE MINISTER BY INVITATION. — 15th, DR. MACNIEL ARRIVES FROM TEHRĀN WITH EXTRAORDINARY SPEED. — 16th, THE MINISTER RETURNS THE AUTHOR'S VISITS. — 18th, TAKES LEAVE OF THE MINISTER AND RECEIVES HIS DISPATCHES. — THE PUBLIC PROPERTY AND SERVANTS ARE SENT TO BUSHIRE. — 21st, DEPART FOR TEHRĀN. — VISIT FATIMA'S TOMB AT KOOM. — LEAVE KOOM THE 28th, — SEVERE STORM OF SNOW AND WIND. — COLD EXCESSIVE DURING A NIGHT OF WIND AND DEEP DARKNESS. — ONE OF THE SERVANTS NEARLY FROZEN ON HIS HORSE. — A SERVANT OF PRINCE HYDER KOOLEE MIRZA FROZEN TO DEATH, AND CARRIED BY HIS HORSE STILL SITTING ON THE SADDLE INTO THE CARAVANSERAI AT KINARAGIRD. — ARRIVE AT TEHRĀN.

We left Sheerauz on the evening of the 26th October, sincerely happy to quit a scene of so much mortification and distress; disgusted with its inhabitants, sick of its barren plains, and so far from echoing the prayer of its poet Hafiz, for the protection of Sheerauz and its "charming environs," that we should have heard of their utter desolation with little emotion.

Nothing worthy of remark occurred, till we reached the valley of Oojān, in which, at a small village of the same name, it was intended we should halt for the night. This valley is an extensive grazing, where the Prince occasionally sends his brood mares and

their produce; and where there are no villages, besides the one in question; which formerly was situated close to the road, near a ruined caravanserai, the common halting place of travellers. The villagers were, however, so oppressed by the exactions of government, and travellers of consequence, for soorsaut*, that they removed some time previous to this period, about five miles further up the valley, to a situation on a small hillock, which they surrounded with a wall strong enough to bid defiance to horse or foot, unprovided with the means of battery or escalade.

We had with us at this time two Mehmandars, one sent by Zekey Khan, to see us safe out of Fars; the other provided by the Sudr Ameen, or prime minister of Persia, to bring us on to Ispahan.—Both were furnished with letters on the part of the King and his ministers, authorising them to levy such supplies or aids, as might be needed for the mission under their convoy; yet, when we reached this little village, the inhabitants of which could not have exceeded sixty or seventy in number, they shut their gates against us, swore that we should have nothing from them, and maltreated those of the Mehmandar's men who were sent to require the soorsaut. The Mehmandar himself, enraged at this ill usage of his servants, spurred across a deep and muddy watercourse, that lay between us and the village; but after having passed with great difficulty, and then narrowly escaping a very severe handling himself, he was glad to regain the banks, where we stood quietly looking on, though almost expecting to hear the matchlock balls whistle about our ears. Dr. Jukes when he saw them fairly baffled, interfered, requesting that he might for that day stand Mehmandar, and that we might be permitted to go quietly on to the ruined caravanserai. When we had all fairly turned our backs, he sent a single man to the village on his own part, to say, that he should send mules and money to procure and carry back such things as we required; and an answer was returned, that the articles required should be furnished, but not a man should be permitted to enter the place.

* Vide note, page 88.

This occurrence may give a good idea of the state of this country, and the loose nature of the relations existing between the government and people. A monarch considered absolute, was here insulted in the persons of two of his servants, by a petty village, not an hundred miles from one of his capital cities; and a parcel of peasants in a petty fort, not in any way tenable against a ten days' attack of five hundred men, defied a power, which, had they reflected at all, they must have known could, and perhaps would, crush them for their insolence.

The plain of Oojan, although quite devoid of cultivation, possesses more moisture, consequently more verdure, and is capable of more extended agriculture, than any we had yet seen in Persia: but it is very much elevated, and cold; in the morning, before day dawned, the thermometer fell to 28°, and we all suffered greatly, in spite of the warmest clothing we could put on. The whole tract we were now crossing was of great elevation, and the weather correspondingly sharp. Next morning, on the road to Deh-Girdoo, the thermometer sunk to 20°, the whole party complained much; our beards and mustachios were congealed by our breath into a mass of ice.

The village of Deh-Girdoo* is a miserable place, situated in a scene as desolate as can well be imagined, at the head of a gloomy valley, surrounded by dreary hills; it is defended against the attacks of freebooters by a wall, beyond which several burying grounds give their melancholy testimony to a former state of greater population. One or two willow trees marking the course of a little stream that furnishes the place with water, comprize all the verdure to be seen near it; all bespeaks misery and distrust, and the latter not without reason; for these hills are the haunt of the Bootwunidees and Bucktiarees, who are among the worst of the predatory tribes. The latter have, however, of late contracted to keep the road safe from robberies; and, it is affirmed, that hitherto they have effectually performed their engagement.

* Deh-Girdoo signifies the village of walnuts, from Deh a village, and Girdoo a walnut, or rather walnut-tree; it would seem to have been named in mockery, for there is not a tree, besides the two willow bushes, far less a walnut-tree, within many miles of it.

Such plunderers are not however the only, or worst enemies, which these wretched villagers have to dread; other modes of pillage may be more fatal in their effects, and less to be resisted. Only a few months ago, Kaussim Khan Kadjer, the King's son-in-law, a turbulent and insolent noble, passed this way to Sheerauz, with about a hundred and fifty attendants; and intending to halt at this village, dispatched a messenger before him, to demand soorsaut, of a nature and to an extent which these poor creatures could not possibly provide; sherbets, sweetmeats, and delicacies of a like nature formed part of this demand; the intention of which, as in all similar cases, was but to raise a sum of money, by offering a compromise of part, for a payment in cash. The villagers declared that they had no such things, never had even heard of them; but so far was the excuse from being admitted, that the demand was aggravated by a requisition on the part of the shātir* himself, who carried it, for ten tomauns as service money; the nazir or steward of the household, insisted upon ten more, and other officers in the same proportion. The people appalled at demands they had neither the means of satisfying or resisting, fled in terror from the village; and Kaussim Khan, in a fury, sent his people into the place, pillaged it, destroying by fire or water all the corn he could find, burnt several of the houses, and otherwise ravaged it, as if it had been the town of an enemy given up to plunder.

The people who fled upon that occasion, had not all returned, even at the time we halted there, and the village bore full evidence of the truth of the tale. Since that disaster, a numerous marriage party conducting a lady, an intended wife for the prince of Sheerauz, passed through the village, and made demands of a similar nature, far beyond the ability of the inhabitants to comply with, and put them to great distress. When we enquired how they were paid for such demands, they replied, that the amount is understood to be written off against the dues of government; but that if in any case, half of the acknowledged soorsaut is allowed, independent of more

* Shātir, a running footman, or messenger.

irregular demands, they think themselves well off; but that much oftener little or nothing is remitted them on such score.

When a country is subjected to such acts of tyranny, the matter of surprise is, not that it becomes greatly depopulated, but that a single individual should remain within the sphere of its action. The truth is, that no family can move to any distance without permission from government; and to fly with their wives and children is impossible: bad as the government is, there is a species of police kept up, and any fugitives would be detained at the first post of Rah-Dars *, or even by the first party belonging to any chief they might meet, and they would be turned back to their homes; perhaps, too, severely punished: so that they have no remedy, but to remain, defeating the avarice and tyranny of their oppressors by cunning and duplicity.

Between this village and Yezid-Khaust, the road lies through a pass celebrated as the resort of plunderers, and at one place called Goombuz-e-Lollah (from a small tomb, roofed with blue tiles), a troop of Bucktiarees, not many years ago, came down from the hills, and carried off a number of the Prince's mules, on their way to Sheeraz. Mr. Bruce, the English resident at Bushire, who was upon the road at the same time, had taken alarm at the sight of some suspicious looking persons hanging about, and pushing rapidly on, passed safely with his baggage, not two hundred yards a head of the party that were captured.

The singular situation of the town or village of Yezid-Khaust has often attracted observation, as well as the remarkable ravine, on the brink of which it is built; but this last has been less examined than it seems to merit. It has all the appearance of having once

* Rah-Dars, or "keepers of the road," a species of police or troops stationed at particular posts on the road; either to keep it clear of banditti, and protect travellers, or to collect tribute when an impost is levied; how imperfectly their first-mentioned duty is performed may be inferred from the generally dangerous state of the roads in Persia; at least to travellers of the common orders who are unable to protect themselves. It is true, they are sufficiently on the alert to receive more wealthy travellers, with what they intend as high honor, firing guns, and frightening his cavalry, in the hope of a solid reward. Their second duty is more strictly performed when they have it in their power to enforce their demands, which are often just proportioned to the supposed ability or power of resistance of the passengers.

been the bed of a mighty river; its depth, about 150 feet, is considerable, and it may be two hundred yards in breadth. I learnt that the road to Yezid lies for three days in the same hollow, running eastward; and that it can be traced for a great way further in the same direction across the salt desert. A ravine thus cut in the alluvial soil of a great valley certainly suggests the agency of water; yet at present, although a petty rill does run in a smaller hollow in its bottom, it is so far from being equal to a work like this, or even to overflow its banks in the time of floods, that the present cultivation of the village is entirely upon them, and consequently in the bottom of the great ravine. I was informed of a tradition which exists in the country, that a great river, navigable for boats, once did occupy this ravine, taking its rise in the Bucktiaree mountains, and running eastward, till it joined the lesser Jeyhoon. Like all traditional stories of the sort, it is connected with miraculous agency; in this case, Solomon and the Deeves are pressed into the service, and nothing further can be gathered on the subject: it is, however, one of some interest, for appearances strongly support the idea, that this was once the channel of a river; yet what can have become of it? how have its sources disappeared? how, in a course not exceeding seventy or eighty miles at most, could it have attained a size (*navigable for boats*) which no river in any other part of Persia can boast of? Travellers passing through a country so rapidly as we were forced to do, cannot investigate on a sufficient scale to enable them to offer conjectures on such a subject; but as it is a curious one, it seems well, at all events, to point it out for the benefit of those who may have their time more at command.

A change was observed in the scanty and now dry vegetation of the vallies, after passing the heights of Khooshkeezurd, and Deh-Girdoo. The liquorice plant, which covers the plains of Merdusht, and the vicinity of Sheerauz; the gez (or tamarisk), near the water-courses, and several of the thorny plants that sprinkle the mountains in the same districts, had given way to various aromatic herbs, among which a species of very fragrant rue was most abundant. A peculiar sort of thistle, and certain papilionaceous plants (known as

such by their seed vessels), some dwarfish black thorn, and a few lesser herbs, were to be found not only on the plains, but even on the rocky and splintered sides of the hills. The most interesting of the vegetable world, however, was the plant which yields the gum ammoniac. It is of the Pentandria class, resembling fennel, or hemlock, as might even now be seen by its withered stalks and branches, which arose in great numbers from the plain to the height of from three to six feet, far overtopping the rest of the withered herbage. I was told that in its season it is remarkable for its rich dark-green verdure; and it is then so full of juice, that it runs in streams to the ground, from the slightest scratch, drying in long rods and tears upon the stalk, as wax on a candlestick. It is thus gathered for sale. The taste is bitter, and the drops within are of a pearly white colour. The plant grows in great abundance on the plains of Yezid-Khaust, but is confined to this and a few other parts of Persia. A more particular description than I can furnish has been given of this plant by Colonel Johnson, in his journey through Persia, who saw it at a more favourable season.

The plain of Yezid-Khaust, which extends in the line of our route all the way to Komaishah, presented, towards the latter place, a truly lamentable picture of the general decline of prosperity in Persia. Ruins of large villages thickly scattered about, with the skeleton-like walls of caravanserais and gardens, all telling of better times, stood like *memento moris* to kingdoms and governments; and the whole plain was dotted over with the small mounds which indicate the course of cannauts, once the sources of riches and fertility, now all choked up and dry; for there is neither man nor cultivation to require their aid.

The town of Komaishah was formerly of great extent, and thickly peopled. It is difficult to conceive any thing more complete than the desolation which now reigns there: we were led through narrow lanes of ruined and fallen houses, and long-deserted bazars, that seemed endless, all of mud, it is true, but which once must have sheltered numerous inhabitants. When here and there a shop or house was occupied, the people crawled about like spectres intruded

upon in their tombs, gazed on us as we passed with a vacant listless air, and then slunk back into their dens. Our conductors seemed to take a pride in parading these relics of departed prosperity before us, for we thought they never would have brought us to the spot still occupied by human beings. The extent, indeed, is very great; and Dr. Jukes remembered, on a former occasion, having unadvisedly gone without a guide to view the ruins, that he lost himself for a long time among their intricacies. We were at last conducted to a good lodging, in part of the governor's house, where, after the usual compliments, we were left to repose.

The date of the greatest prosperity of this place, may, perhaps, be considerably removed, and is probably connected with that of the earliest and greatest * of the Suffavean kings; for even in the time of Chardin, its ruins were extensive, and he speaks of it as little more than a large village; but he dwells upon the fertility of its plains with a delight not now easily to be understood, for, however greater may have been the extent of cultivation, the nature of the soil and the face of the uncultivated parts of the country must always have been arid and unpleasing. "When we had made three leagues," says he, "from Mayar, and turned to the right at the corner of the "mountain, we entered on these vast and beautiful plains, from five "to six leagues broad, the most fertile that can be seen. I have "traversed these plains nine times in my life, having five times "travelled from Ispahan to the Persian Gulf; and I have always taken "the greatest pleasure in the sixteen leagues, which lead through "these plains to the frontiers of Fars. They are covered, from the "middle of March to the middle of November, with flowers, flocks, "corn, vegetables, fruit, and the other good things of the earth. "My day's march finished at Komaishah, which is a village very "large indeed, being three miles in circuit; but which more resembles "a village than a town," &c. From this state of fertility and plenty, however, true or exaggerated, Komaishah and its circumjacent plains, have undoubtedly declined in a miserable degree. Much is no

* Shah Ismael or Shah Tahmaseb.

doubt, justly laid to the account of the Affghāns, during their last inhuman visit to this devoted land; but much is openly declared to have been occasioned by the rapacity of its present rulers. Some years ago the present Sudr Ameen, under whose charge the province of Irāk is more particularly placed; and who has paid considerable attention to the improvement of Ispahan and its vicinity, took pains to restore population to the town and dependencies of Komaishah; and he succeeded so far, that about three thousand souls were re-established in the city; and cultivation revived in the district around. The assessment had been raised by him according to circumstances; and fixed at seven thousand tomauns a year. But the king assigned this unfortunate district to Kaussim Khan his son-in-law (the same who burnt Deh-Girdoo), in lieu of salary (a common expedient for for settling the claims of government officers). This tyrant no sooner obtained possession, than he set about increasing the assessment, and in the course of ten months he raised it to twenty-three thousand tomauns. The consequence, as might have been foreseen, was, that the growing prosperity of the place was checked, and the people driven to despair; representations of their misery were sent to the King, and petitions to have the district restored to the charge of the Sudr Ameen. Whether these will or will not be attended to, will probably depend on the temper of the monarch at the moment; but still more on the presents the petitioners carry along with them, and their abilities to outbribe the tyrant. If he can in any way retain the place, its inhabitants will fare worse than ever from their fruitless attempt; and war will be declared between them, which must always be to the disadvantage of the dependent party.

In the morning of the 3d November, as we were setting off for Mayar, Dr. Jukes complained of langour and illness, pains in his head and limbs, and the usual symptoms of fever. He however reached Mayar without difficulty, and we took up our abode in the excellent caravanserai of that place; which, however, does not appear to have existed in the time of Chardin, and therefore was certainly *not* built (as I was informed), by Shah Abbas the Great, to whom the Persians are fond of attributing every work of beauty and solidity:

like all those works in the country, however, emblems of the empire itself, it is going to decay, although a trifle would put it into its original and comfortable state. The village, with its numerous gardens, although surrounded with a large proportion of ruins, bore an appearance of more comfort and prosperity than most of those we had seen.

During the afternoon, as Dr. Jukes got no better, a messenger was sent to the Sudr Ameen, at Ispahan, acquainting him with the circumstance of his illness, and requesting that a tucht-e-rowān or litter might be sent, to convey him to Ispahan, in case of need.

Towards the afternoon of the next day his illness increased, and he took medicine, which however did not prevent great uneasiness throughout the whole evening, and night; during which time I did not quit him. The tucht-e-rowān arrived in the afternoon, but no use could be made of it, till the next morning; when after a few hours sleep, Dr. Jukes awoke free of fever; and then, being sensible how important it was, whatever turn the disease might take, to get into more comfortable lodgings, and nearer to such assistance as was to be had, he was easily persuaded to enter the litter, and proceed towards Ispahan.

He bore the journey perfectly well, — in fact, his health and spirits improved as he advanced; and he would have reached the quarters prepared for his reception, in great comfort, had it not been for the noise and dust of the *Istackball**; and the ill-timed attentions of the persons sent by the Sudr, to welcome his arrival at Ispahan; these however at last ceased, and he was left to repose.

On the morning of the 6th, while walking in the gardens of the Chehel Sittoon†, I was called to Dr. Jukes, and found him just under

* Istackball is the deputation usually sent forward to meet, welcome, and conduct to the lodgings prepared for him, any stranger or guest to whom it is designed to pay high respect; and the more numerous and higher in rank the persons of whom this deputation is composed, the greater is the honor conferred.

† All the royal palaces, both those of the Suffee Sovereigns, and of the present monarch, are close together, surrounded by a lofty enclosure. — In one of these, the

the commencement of another attack of fever; a shivering fit was succeeded by considerable heat of skin, and great uneasiness of stomach; and his tongue was covered with a brown fur, dry and parched. He took some calomel and James's powder, but passed a most distressing day, suffering under a degree of painful restlessness and anxiety such as I have seldom witnessed. A Persian physician was sent by the Sudr in the evening, who, after talking much in an unintelligible jargon, feeling the pulse first in one arm and then in the other, looking at the eyes, and going through a great deal of similar grimace, ordered some trifling medicines, (which Dr. Jukes, who was in perfect possession of his faculties, knew to be innocent,) and took his leave, telling his patient with an air of superiority and protection, not to be alarmed, for he would soon be well.

Dr. Jukes took the remedies sent by the physician, observing that the experience of these people often serves as effectually as our deeper science in indicating a judicious mode of treatment for particular diseases. Curious, though melancholy and humiliating it is, to mark the prostrating effects of disease upon the human mind; to see how the man who, in the pride of health and strength, mocks the aid even of acknowledged science and skill, will in the hour of pain and sickness cling to the slenderest hope, and joyfully hail the slightest chance of assistance. No man possessed a firmer mind than my poor friend; none could be better prepared to meet death, or endure sickness; and no one, more than he, would have despised the quackery that now offered its aid; yet, enfeebled by sickness and clinging to the faintest hope of relief, he listened with patience, and even anxiety, to the grave nonsense; and answered the impertinent and inapplicable questions of a man, whose ignorance he must have known and despised.

Had it not been for the painful anxiety I now began to feel as to the result of my friend's illness, I should have enjoyed the

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Ungooristan (or palace of grapes), we had our apartments; the Chehel Sittoon, (or palace of forty pillars) is close to this; — ample descriptions of these palaces in their former and present states, are to be found in the pages of Chardin, Morier, Johnstone, &c.

absurdity of this man's behaviour: no European quack could have assumed a graver carriage, or more solemn deportment; even his dress was peculiar, and not ill adapted to give effect to the rest of the farce. He wore a large turban, instead of the Persian cap; a sober-coloured and warmly lined robe, nor did he want a cane, though it was not gold-headed; his questions and directions were uttered in a deep and solemn tone, well calculated to impose upon the vulgar mind.

The fever continued till late in the night; and towards the latter part of it a degree of wandering was remarked, but it might have proceeded from occasional dozing; as always, when roused, the judgment and intelligence appeared to be perfect. My fears were, however, by this time considerably excited; and as the nature of the attack was likely, even in the most favourable event, to prevent the possibility of quickly resuming our journey, I proposed to Dr. Jukes, and he instantly agreed, that a messenger should be dispatched to Mr. Willock, the British chargé d'affaires, at Tehrān, to account for our detention, and make him acquainted with our situation. To this I added a few lines to Dr. J. MacNiel, the medical gentleman attached to the Residency, explaining my own opinion, and the fears I entertained for the issue of the envoy's illness. This was dispatched by the head muleteer, an active man, upon one of the best horses belonging to the mission.

On the morning of the 7th the fever and anxiety had once more disappeared; but the state of the patient was by no means such as to indicate returning health, or to dispel alarm. Being, however, a medical man himself, and in full possession of his faculties, I could not feel authorized to offer any opinion, as to the proper precautions for preventing another attack: some were taken; whether all that should have been adopted I cannot venture to determine. The day passed without fever, and a good night revived hope; for in the morning he was cool and tranquil. But as the forenoon advanced, unfavourable symptoms reappeared; the eye became heavy, the head slightly confused, the pulse quickened, and by one o'clock on the 8th it was but too evident that another and severe access of fever had

commenced. The senses were, notwithstanding, for some time retained, and he conversed regarding his own state with clearness; nor did the fever appear to be violent during the whole of the succeeding night. Towards the morning of the ninth he awoke after a sound sleep, declaring himself free of disease; and although low, he was clearly in possession of his senses, answering very fully and judiciously to my enquiries as to his fitness for taking bark; but about eleven o'clock of the forenoon I perceived the powers of body and mind beginning to fail, and a stupor coming on, which prepared me to expect the worst, in spite of occasional gleams of better hope arising from favourable appearances of a temporary nature.

I had not for some time previous to this, left the room either night or day, except occasionally for a moment, to relieve the oppressive feeling of anxiety and loneliness, that, in spite of reason and resolution, would weigh upon the mind, by breathing the fresh air, and listening to the sound of living things without. But now, throughout the ensuing day, and long painful night, I never left the couch on which my poor friend lay, waiting for death, the stillness only broken by his moans and heavy breathing. At eight in the morning of the 10th of November all was over; and I closed the eyes of my remaining friend and companion; there was no other witness; all the servants had left me; and I performed the offices immediately required, alone.

Thus died, in the execution of his duty, far from his family and home, almost deprived of the common offices of friendship, a man whose amiable dispositions had endeared him to all who knew him; as his talents had secured him the respect and esteem of the government he served. I would not obtrude on the public the expression of my private feelings; and the memory of such a man merits a better tribute than I am competent to bestow: it will be enshrined in the hearts of those who were intimate with his virtues, and these too may appreciate the loss I had now to deplore, embittered by the painful circumstances under which it had taken place.

But, however grieved at the event, or exhausted by watching, it was no time to indulge in painful reflections. My own servant was

called to watch the body, while I collected the papers and valuables under lock and key; and, sending for the mehmandar, I desired not only that the Sudr should be made acquainted with what had occurred, but that he should be reminded, that the British government would expect the interment of its envoy's remains to be ordered in a manner consistent with his rank, and the friendship subsisting between the two nations; and particularly, that it should take place in a spot where they might repose free from the chance of future insult. It was suggested that the Armenian burying ground at Julfa was the most proper place, as it held the remains of such Europeans as had died from time to time at Ispahan; and as I was totally ignorant of all localities about the city, I could only acquiesce, cautioning the mehmandar, that if the place was found ineligible, *he* would not only be the immediate sufferer, but that the British government would not fail to notice the slightest want of respect offered to the remains of its officer. I further observed, that I thought not only the Armenian bishop and clergy should attend, but a proper number of the most respectable inhabitants should be appointed to follow the procession, and pay the same honours that would be observed towards an officer of their own of equal rank. The answer returned was, that all these things should be particularly attended to, and I proceeded to the other arrangements rendered necessary by the event.

It would have been very desirable to have delayed the funeral at least till the following day; but this, I found would have been attended with inconveniences by no means to be counterbalanced by the good to be obtained. It was contrary to all etiquette that a dead body should remain for any time in one of the royal palaces; and the removal to any other place would have been attended with much inconvenience; particularly in abstracting my own attention from several points of consequence to the establishment thus unhappily deprived of its head. Every thing was therefore arranged as quickly as practicable, and about four o'clock in the afternoon we moved from the palace.

The body placed upon a bier, and covered with cloth of gold, was preceded by the Armenian archbishop and clergy in their rich robes of ceremony, and followed by all the respectable merchants of that nation and the servants of the mission; myself and my Christian servant going as chief mourners. But I observed no Mahomedan of respectability, except the mehmandar and Meer Saduck, the darogha of the buildings, and immediately remarked the omission to the mehmandar; but there was now nothing to be done, and we passed on to the place of interment. I was no better pleased with their choice in this, but being assured that there was no other spot to be had, and being indeed quite unable to suggest any better myself, objections would have been to no purpose, and the ceremony proceeded. The Armenian clergy chaunted their service over the grave: I then read that of the church of England, and "gave dust to dust."

Slowly and sadly we returned to our quarters, where my reflections were gloomy enough. It had fallen to my lot to pay the last duties to two of my companions, and looking forward to the long course that was before me, I could not but muse as to who might perform these offices to me. There is an exhaustion and forlornness that *will* press upon the mind in the pause succeeding much exertion and disappointment, and I cannot deny that I felt its influence now.

It perhaps was fortunate for me, that the urgent calls for immediate and constant action forbad my giving much way to such sensations. It was important that some course should be decided upon without delay, to protect the interests of the mission, thus unexpectedly thrown on the hands of strangers. There was a considerable amount of public property left by the event with servants, of whose honesty and zeal I had too much cause to doubt; and the large expence already incurred by government was likely to be rendered fruitless, unless the objects of the mission were followed up with promptitude and perseverance.

Under existing circumstances, and after the best consideration, I could bestow on the subject, there appeared to me but one eligible course to follow. I sent for the mehmandar, and told him, that

although the envoy was unhappily no more, yet the mission remained in full force; that with us, in such cases, while a British subject remained on the spot, he was bound to consider himself as representing the British nation, and to act for its interests and honor; that therefore I should take charge of, and become responsible for, the public business, as well as its property; that I desired he would communicate this to the minister, and say, that after having made the necessary arrangements with regard to the effects of the deceased, I should wait upon him at his convenience, to deliver the letters with which the late envoy had been charged for him, and should be ready to enter upon such points of business as required to be transacted with his excellency at Ispahan; and that, as a matter of course, it was to be understood, that the same attentions should be continued to the mission now, as would have been paid in the lifetime of the late envoy.

I was led to the adoption of a line of conduct that may appear assuming, by various considerations. With a government loosely constituted as that of Persia, where appearance is every thing, the *show* of strength and consequence may be equivalent to power, as the reverse is to weakness; and, where the former is revered as much as the latter is despised and oppressed, he that would compass his ends must not take the tone of humility.

That all the points and concessions gained by the late envoy should be lost, as they surely would be, were the advantage not followed up without any breach in the chain by which the business was to reach the higher powers, seemed so much a matter for regret, that it was worth a strenuous effort to preserve them. If the court of Sheerauz had any object in its former mode of conduct, which they had, by the representations of Dr. Jukes been induced to abandon, the false and crafty character of the Persian politicians were too well known, to doubt their availing themselves of an opportunity like the present to retract what they had conceded. It so happened, that accidental circumstances had contributed, with my intimacy with the late Dr. Jukes, to give me a pretty correct knowledge of the chief objects of his mission; which were indeed of no

very intricate or mysterious nature; and, in the course of our long and familiar intercourse, I became well acquainted with his own opinions, and intended line of conduct, in the negotiations that had commenced. Thus, as the business to be discussed with the Sudr was but of a preparatory nature, I conceived it would be right to strike the iron promptly, and prevent the idea from prevailing, that the object or business of the mission could cease in consequence of the accident that had occurred.

Again, with regard to the public property, had I merely inventoried and sent it back, under charge of the servants of the mission, to the British residency at Bushire, without appearing to take a decided charge myself, there was every probability of its being subjected to pillage and loss; for men in whom I had seen the strongest disposition to fraud and depredation, would hardly have let slip an opportunity where they might have screened their own guilt by what falsehoods they chose, with little chance of detection. In taking the lead thus, as a matter of course, I not only held these servants more under command, by convincing them that they would be made responsible, in case of fraud or negligence, but I proved a right to call on the government of the country for the most efficient protection to the British property, so long as it should be within the Persian dominions. I was confirmed in these opinions by a remark which had forced itself upon me, that great want of attention had existed on the part of the Persian authorities in points of etiquette, and even of hospitality, almost from the commencement of Dr. Jukes's illness; and there could be little doubt that this would rather increase than diminish, if no decided steps were taken to put a stop to its progress.

It may appear strange that I should not have thought of referring all matters of business to Mr. Willock, His Majesty's chargé d'affaires at Tehrān; but the distance of that place, the uncertainty of intercourse, even granting that Mr. Willock should be there, and, above all, the effect of any interruption in the course of business, both on the final event of the negociations and the behaviour of the people, may be deemed, by the candid, sufficient considerations to fix

me in the line of conduct I adopted. With regard to the consequences to myself, I did not feel much alarm. All communications would necessarily go to the government of Bombay in the first place, wherever they might finally rest; and I was assured of the indulgence and candid consideration of that government, and persuaded that my conduct would there be rather judged by its motives than by its success, whatever that might be.

Thus decided, I employed the first night and great part of the ensuing day, in preparing for the approaching interview with the sudr. Inventories were taken, and our necessary articles packed up for the journey; the servants were cautioned to be strict in their duty; and every thing was placed on the same footing, in point of etiquette, as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

In the forenoon of this day Mahomed Raheēm Khan, a brother of the minister, came to pay a visit of condolence; and, observing in the importance of this nobleman's demeanor something of the same haughty inattention I had remarked on other occasions, I took an opportunity, in the subsequent conversation, to hint that nothing of this sort would be patiently endured, and that every circumstance that occurred to the mission should be reported faithfully to the government that had sent it. The value of this hint was evident in the sequel; for it clearly appeared that this person was sent for the double duty of paying a customary visit, and for reporting upon the conduct and bearing of those who remained to receive him. He made very particular enquiry of the servants as to my rank, and the degree of respect it would be necessary to pay me; and the answers he received from one of the people (an Indian Moonshee I had taken into service at Sheerauz), in whom I at that time placed some confidence, had a proper effect on the future conduct of all the authorities towards the mission.

To this person I thought it proper to express the disappointment I had felt at the several instances of neglect that had occurred towards the person and memory of the late envoy; and particularly in the want of sufficient attention and ceremony at his funeral, no part of which was consistent with the goodwill they professed to bear

to the British nation. The excuses and explanations which these observations produced were neither satisfactory nor consistent; but it was rather the object to show that such things had been remarked, with the view to prevent their recurrence, than, by urging too strongly what was irremediable, to create obstacles that might affect the more important points of the mission. Preliminaries were therefore discussed for an early visit to the sudr; but this was a point of too much consequence for a Persian to arrange without delay; and I was forced to send the most confidential servant I had, to treat farther regarding it.

Of him the minister made enquiries, of the same nature as his brother had done, about me; and these being answered to his satisfaction, the more particularly as he found I was in possession of letters from the Bombay government for the King and for himself, he agreed to a conference, which was fixed for the morning of the fourteenth; on which day he invited me to breakfast. The intermediate time was fully occupied in writing, and various needful arrangements.

It would have been amusing, under other circumstances, to mark the shifts and expedients by which these people endeavour to gain even a single point in matters of etiquette and precedence; but I had acquired some experience in these matters while living with Dr. Jukes, and my Indian Moonshee was an adept in this department of Persian intrigue, so that we were qualified to meet them in their own way.

On the morning of the 14th I went, according to invitation, to breakfast with the sudr. After threading an uninterminable extent of bazars, and most suspicious-looking alleys, we reached a parcel of mud walls, through a gate in which we entered a series of long passages and courts. In one of these Allee Mahomed Khan (who had been mehmandar to some of the former British embassies), met me, and marshalled our way to a small room, well covered with numuds, where the minister was seated in a corner, upon a piece of woollen rug, the only distinction he assumed. I found him to be an old man, greatly broken, with a countenance

shrunk and shrivelled, and very protuberant eyes, the whites of which, large and sickly, indicated bad health A beard white with age, but dyed red, contrasted strongly with thick black eye-brows, sprinkled with a few long white hairs. His general expression was grave and severe, but without any particular claim to dignity. His dress, although composed of shawls and furs, had nothing in it either ostentatious or very expensive; and the whole of his establishment, except the dress of some of his secretaries and servants, was plain almost to affectation. The cases of his coffee-cups were of brass, instead of silver, and his calleeoons were quite unadorned. The only thing of considerable value about his person was a fine diamond, which he wore upon his finger.

Whatever may be the real state of the minister's affairs, it is his policy to affect great poverty. His object is, to make it appear that he is a perfectly disinterested servant of the King, devoting himself to the increase of his revenue and the prosperity of the country, without view to his private benefit; and the circumstances in which he is placed, with the general history of his life, are the best pledges for the sincerity, at least to a certain extent, of these professions.

Hadjee Mahomed Hoorsain Khan, the sudr ameen, is a man of low origin. It is said, and I have not heard it contradicted, that he was a petty trader in greens and vegetables, selling also chopped straw and corn, in an obscure part of Ispahan; and his first rise in fortune is said to have taken place in the following manner:—When his present majesty, upon a certain occasion, was approaching the city with a large body of troops and attendants, and, according to custom, requisitions were made for a corresponding portion of soorsaut, the merchants, particularly those who dealt in corn and articles of consumption, alarmed at the exactions they anticipated, shutting up their warehouses, and carrying with them their most valuable property, fled from Ispahan; so that, when the court and the troops arrived, no provisions for them were to be obtained. The King, enraged at this conduct, was about to order vengeance of a very severe nature to be taken on the city, when Hadjee Mahomed Hoorsain, who had never quitted the place, presented

himself before his majesty, besought him to suspend his wrath, and offered, if he were permitted, and furnished with such assistance as he might require, to provide soorsaut for the whole camp. This being granted, he proceeded to the different ambarras (or cellars,) of corn, the situations of which he was perfectly acquainted with; and, taking from each such portions as he required, he left receipts for the amount in its stead. Thus, he who had not, perhaps, an hundred mauns of corn in the world, supplied the wants of a whole camp.

The King, greatly pleased at his conduct, made Hadjee, darogha, or supervisor of the bazars in Ispahan; and the wisdom of his regulations was so great, and his energy so conspicuous, that his majesty, thinking his talents suited to a better situation, constituted him soorsautchee, or collector of soorsaut to the camp (equivalent to commissary for the troops). From this, he rose gradually to the high situation he now holds; partly by his talents for finance, which are considerable, and partly by the means of purchase and high bribes. He is governor of Ispahan, and of the province of Irāk, which he manages with ability; rendering himself very useful, in all matters of finance to the King, who extracts money from him upon all pretences, and which he pays with most dutiful obedience, without any attempt at remonstrance. In fact he is well aware that a mistake of that kind would probably cost him his place; as it is well known that he he is by no means remarkable for political or general talent, and that his place in these respects would easily be supplied; accordingly it is asserted by many, that he has spent almost all his money, as well as credit, in presents to the King. He is considered generally as a kind, good-natured man; with intentions, for the most part well-meaning, though never great in design; he nevertheless lies under the imputation of having poisoned several people (a thing very little against a man's character in Persia); and among others, he has been suspected, although very unjustly, of thus occasioning the death of Meerza Abdool Kurreem, the son of Meerza Abdool Wahāb, the Moatimud-u-Doulut; in consequence of which, the meerza and he are on bad terms.

The minister received me politely, condoled in the customary

manner, on the misfortune that had occurred, and the conversation soon after turned on business. I did not omit to bring to his excellency's notice the instances which had occurred of slight in regard to the late envoy, during his illness, and at his funeral; all of which were generally disavowed and explained away. It is not, however, my intention to exhaust the reader's patience by a further account of this interview. It passed very satisfactorily upon the whole; and whatever neglect there might have been on former occasions, there was nothing now but attention and respect; and in all that related to business, the tone assumed, and the assurances given, were as gratifying as could be expected. The minister proposed to return my visit on the 16th, and I took my leave.

During the remainder of this day, and the whole succeeding night, I continued very closely occupied in writing dispatches, bringing up accounts, and putting into order the affairs of the mission; and on the morning of the 15th, while preparing to breakfast with the minister's brother, I was surprized by seeing a gentleman in the European dress walk into the room; nor was the surprise or the pleasure decreased when he announced himself as Dr. Mac Niel, from Tehrān. If the distressing nature of the scenes in which I had been engaged be remembered, and the dreary solitude of my situation, without a creature near me in whom I could place any real confidence, to assist me in dispatching the mass of business that had fallen into my hands, some idea may be formed of the delight with which I welcomed this gentleman's arrival. He that would learn to appreciate the value of society, and the comfort to be derived from the mutual support of our countrymen, let him travel into foreign lands, where he neither hears a familiar sound, nor sees a face that has one sympathy with him; let him have his spirits lowered by a succession of depressing and melancholy events; and then should he be happy enough to meet with a friend who can share his toils, and sympathize in his vexations, let him, if he can, describe his relief and comfort. How different is the meeting of countrymen, even of friends, in the crowded city, in the ease and safety of their own land, compared with such a meeting in the far distant solitary desert.

Surely it is good for the heart to feel these things; for he that has once so felt, must for ever after experience a benevolence and affection for his fellows, which those whose feelings have not been thus powerfully called forth can hardly know. Each man he meets seems to him as a brother, whom to injure, nay, not to love, would be a sin, for it ever recurs to his memory, how would I have cherished that being, could I have met with him in those hours of distress and abandonment!

Dr. MacNiel had ridden from Tehrān to Ispahan, upon the same horse, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles, in somewhat less than four days, or at the rate of rather more than sixty miles a-day. Our messenger, Baba Yussuf, had reached that place in about the same time. Dr. MacNiel had only taken time to put up a few medicines, and make certain arrangements, and then set off, attended only by two servants; never stopping night or day, except to feed his horse, and never sleeping or resting himself the whole way. He had been informed of the fatal result the night before, which, the time for hope being past, made him less eager to press his horses. The latter part of this day passed in a manner very different from many that had preceded it; and arrangements were projected for proceeding to Tehrān, the moment that business should have been brought to a close.

About three o'clock on the 16th, the minister arrived, and a further discussion regarding the objects of the mission took place, in which the old man appeared quite willing to be conciliatory, without committing himself, by giving any assurance beyond those of general good will. The truth was, that he had for some time begun to find his interest, particularly in what regarded the department for foreign affairs, superseded in great measure by the rising influence of Meerza Abdool Wahāb, the Moatimud-u-Doulut, or chief chancellor and minister for foreign affairs, who is, as before observed, his enemy. When, therefore, he was pressed upon points relating to external policy, he felt unable to reply with ease, and was considerably embarrassed. I had received some intimation of this, and therefore ceased to urge such subjects.

It was decided, that Dr. MacNiel and I should dine with the minister on the 18th, and then receive his dispatches, and take leave for Tehrān, attended by a mehmandar appointed by himself. And that the servants and property of the mission should set off for Bushire at the same time, under the care of one of his own people, who should be responsible for the safe delivery of every thing. These arrangements duly took place; but though our mehmandar was appointed, various matters of business prevented our departure, until the evening of the 21st.

During the whole time of my residence at Ispahan, I was too much occupied to pay due attention to this celebrated capital; indeed, except once or twice, I never went out. The accounts of the mission had fallen so much into arrear during Dr. Jukes's illness, that their management with the numerous other details connected with public business, and copying and making out the various advices and dispatches, all pressed so hard upon me, that for the first eight days, except for an hour or two, as weariness overpowered me. I never slept either night or day, and although much exhausted and worn out at last, I am convinced the exertion was salutary upon the whole. In the course of these duties, and particularly in settling accounts with the late mehmandar, and the servants, several curious traits of Persian character came under notice, and some of them, as such, it may be useful to relate.

The mehmandar appointed at Sheerauz, Mahomed Shereef Khan, who after the appointment of one from higher authority, needed not to have come with us at all, nor at all events further than the borders of Fars; and who had not been altogether more than twelve days with the mission, was presented on its arrival at Ispahan, with one hundred tomauns for himself and people; to which were added a watch, some cloth, and other articles to the value of about fifty tomauns more. It appeared that he had been sounding the meerza, who had these matters in charge, regarding the value the of present he was likely to receive; and when it was intimated to him, he had spurned it as beneath his acceptance, adding as a bravado, that it was quite unnecessary to offer him any thing. When, therefore,

the meerza took him the money and goods, he rejected the whole in the same tone, in the hopes of extorting something in addition. He was totally disappointed, for Dr. Jukes replied, " Very well, if he does " not choose gratefully to accept, what I *gratuitously* bestow, for he " has no claims *whatever*, he shall have nothing; and I will retain " the letter I had written in his favour to the minister at Sheerauz." This unexpected measure produced a sudden change in the other's demeanor; and it was immediately signified by one of his friends, that Mahomed Shereef Khan would be but too happy to receive what had been offered him; much humility and great contrition for his folly was professed, and Dr. Jukes at last gave him the intended present. A day or two afterwards, the Khan was observed lingering about our quarters; and although he had before taken formal leave, he called again to ask whether there was any further commands for Sheerauz, as he was, he said, just about to set out. This, as was calculated on, led to enquiries as to the cause of his delay; and then one of his attendants took up the speech, and told us that he *had* set out on his return to Fars, but had been attacked on the first day's march, and robbed of the money, watch, and goods, he had received, and was now without a penny!! The trick, however, was too palpable, and he was permitted to depart; the envoy merely directing him to be informed, that he had no *further* commands. This was a *nobleman*, and the near relative of Allee Akber Khan, of Sheerauz.

A scene of a similar description took place with the second mehmandar; a meerza high in the service and confidence of the sudr, and to whom, chiefly in compliment to that minister, it was judged proper to present 200 tomauns; and who caused his dissatisfaction to be intimated to us, in no measured terms; and I can say with truth that the same greedy grasping disposition showed itself in all the Persians, from the highest to the lowest, with whom we had to transact business. *

* Although I had so many grounds of discontent against almost all the servants of the mission, particularly for their bad conduct during the illness of Dr. Jukes, that I should have felt perfectly justified in barely paying them their wages up to the period of their arrival at Bushire, yet I thought, that for the credit of British liberality, it would be proper to consider the disappointment they had sustained; and *all* were rewarded in a man-

Nor, I regret to say, were the Armenian clergy (who had been ordered by the minister to attend at the ceremony of interment) found at all more liberal or conscientious. Several persons were charged to suggest to me their opinions of what was *usual* on such occasions; what would be *right*, and *expected*. I conceived that in this, as in several other matters relating to the mission, it was proper to act on a more liberal scale than would have been necessary in the case of an individual; and therefore took an opportunity, at a collation given us in the Armenian bishop's house, to say, that seventy tomauns was the sum judged right to distribute among the priesthood. I soon saw that this was very inadequate to their expectations; but the affair admitted of no remonstrance, and the clergymen present taking another tone, disclaimed all intention of receiving anything: the pontiff, however, took an opportunity of entreating that whatever it might be our inclination to bestow, we should be silent as to its amount, for if the sudr should hear of it, he would send and take from them every penny of it. Yet this nobleman is considered one of the most liberal in Persia, and very friendly towards the Armenians! He pays the church a yearly visit, but this compliment is costly: he was here a short time before we came, and when we inquired whether he came to *give* or to *take*, the pontiff in a low tone and with a significant smile pronounced the word "Peshcush." *

An incident occurred during our stay at this place, which proves how lightly these people hold the crime of shedding human blood, compared with the gratification of their ruling passion. One of the

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ner conceived by Dr. MacNiel and myself to be munificent; subject only to the good report of the Persian secretary who accompanied them, regarding their conduct on the route: yet these men all murmured in the most ungrateful manner, and some of them very unreservedly taxed me with illiberality. The truth is, that British prodigality has quite spoilt these people; they have experienced so much munificence from the individuals, and particularly the public functionaries of that nation, that they expect the same as a matter of course, or of right, from all who follow them; and so far from expressing admiration or gratitude for whatever share of their bounty they may partake, they set no bounds to their dissatisfaction, if it does not fulfil their extravagant expectations.

* Peshcush signifies a gift or offering, generally by an inferior to a superior.

servants, an insolent and self-sufficient little person, had wandered to Julfa*, probably for the purpose of getting drunk on Armenian brandy; and staggering homewards he met some young girls coming out of a public bath, and most wantonly and unprovokedly he struck his dagger into the body of one of them, who fell apparently dead. The assassin was instantly seized, and dragged away to have summary justice inflicted upon him. In the first place, however, they carried him before the sudr, who learning that he was attached to the British mission, sent him to our quarters, to be held in custody until it should be known whether the wounded person should live or die; adding, that it would be an indelible shame on him, should the servant of his guest be put to death under his roof. I declined receiving charge, observing that we would not in any way interfere with the course of justice; and he was remanded to prison. The question was decided the next day by the death of the poor girl, who proved to be the daughter of a seyed, whose mother only was alive, and she along with the other relatives, demanded the blood of the murderer. It was, however, soon intimated that a sum of money would be received in exchange, and 200 tomauns were, I think, demanded as the price of blood. I was quite aware that the Persians concerned, knowing the usual inconsiderate prodigality of Europeans, would use every means in their power to raise the price of our servant's life, by working on our feelings. I knew, however, that the culprit, independent of the act he had committed, was a bad character, and therefore repeated that I did not intend to interfere with the course of justice, and that they might deal with him according as appeared right to them. In fact, the atrocity of the act was so disgusting, that I should have deemed any active interference in his favour a positive outrage against humanity. The sudr, however, took some trouble in the matter, out of compliment to the mission, and offered himself to advance 20 tomauns in part of his ransom, whatever that might be; and at last, as I saw that my impartiality might be misunderstood, for the honour of the British name, though utterly against my own

* Julfa, the Armenian suburb of Ispahan.

conscience, I agreed to give 20 tomauns more, making 40 in all, provided they brought a properly-attested paper to secure him after I should have quitted the place; and stipulating that he should have a very severe beating as some punishment for his atrocious conduct. This was agreed to; the relations of the deceased, though by no means in want, were quite contented to take what they could get, rather than the worthless blood of their intended victim.

Gladly now did I part with all my former servants, who returned with the mission to Bushire, and took one upon chance, who turned out by far the best creature I have seen in Persia; and who followed me during the whole of my travels in that country; a hard-working, zealous, and, as far as I had the means of knowing, an honest servant.

The weather, during our residence at Ispahan, was rather cold, and the atmosphere more dense than usual in Persia; heavy clouds lying above our heads threatened snow, which fell on all the mountain tops around. The air was raw and cold, but occasionally very dry. The thermometer in the open air varied from 28° to 40° on different days, at sun-rise, but was seldom so low as the former of these extremes: in the daytime it rose to 50° and 56°. Hoar frost was common, and once the ice that covered the pools of water remained the whole day unthawed.

On the afternoon of the 21st November, we gladly bade adieu to Ispahan, and arrived without any occurrence worth noting at Koom. From that place Dr. MacNiel being desirous of reaching Tehrān without delay, rode onwards to that capital, after a very short halt, expecting to find fresh horses on the way. As I could not have that advantage, I resolved on giving my cattle the night's rest, and starting in the morning with one servant, leaving the rest to follow at leisure with the baggage.

Meantime I took an opportunity in the dusk of the evening to visit the interior of the tomb of Fatima, sister of Imaun Reza, interred at this place. I had ascertained that not even a bribe could obtain permission for an infidel to visit this holy shrine, and, therefore assuming the Persian dress, I went along with the Indian

Moonshee, who being a seyed, and having frequently visited the shrine before, had great facilities for introducing me.

We passed through a mean gateway into a small court, around which are cells, or chambers, for the use of the khadums, or servants of the shrine; from thence a more respectable gateway, ornamented with blue tiles, led to a larger court, around which were lodgings of a neater and better description, for the higher ministers. In this there is a long tank of water for performing ablutions, with a paved pathway up each side, and the whole is laid out like a garden, with trees and walks. From this a communication leads to the court, in which the mosque is situated, and which is smaller than the preceding, but very neatly kept, and here also there is a tank for ablution. Here we deposited our slippers, and entered. It was the hour of evening prayer, and the place was rather full; but we walked round, and visited every thing remarkable. The gates leading to the mosque are adorned with blue and white lacquered tiles; and the front of the mosque, which as usual comprehends three archways, is faced with tiles in mosaic work of various colours and patterns. The inside of the centre compartment under which is the tomb, as well as its floor, are similarly adorned; on the latter is spread a rich carpet; the interior of the dome itself is divided into compartments of arch work, lessening as they rise upwards; a common and often an elegant mode of finishing such parts of a building in Persia.

The tomb itself is inclosed in a sandal wood box, about twelve feet long by eight broad, and seven or eight high, a green canopy is spread above it, and it is surrounded by a silver grate of massy cross bars, placed there by the mother of the present king; within this, is suspended the sword of the great Abbas, which, however, my view was too cursory to remark; as I did not wish to attract notice by paying too much attention to any thing. The two side compartments are fitted up with strips of carpet, merely as places of prayer. The tomb, with its covering, is as old as the time of Fatima's death, but the dome and mosque are the work of the present king, built upon the ruins of a smaller building erected and richly endowed by Shah

Abbas: all the race of Suffavean kings added to its riches, and previous to the present æra they were great. The mother of his present majesty gave the gilded coating to the dome, which consists of brass plates so thinly gilt, that the whole value of the precious metal employed, according to my information, does not exceed two thousand tomauns. Its value as an ornament is at least questionable, for it has rather a gaudy than a rich appearance raising its head among the ruins around: the form, too, of the dome is bad, and the long neck that supports it is extremely ugly. I do not, indeed, think that the forms of the Persian domes in general are in good taste, and the green tiled ones which we see at Sheerauz, and various other places, stuck upon their long necks, have not been unaptly compared to heads of asparagus.

Although the revenues of religious institutions have neither been ameliorated or entirely respected during the late reigns, this shrine still enjoys a good income; there are several villages attached to it, and a considerable sum is derived from the presents of pilgrims who resort to it, amounting it is said one year with another, to four or five thousand tomauns. Eight or nine khadums attached to the shrine receive payment, and there are also a number of moollahs, who however depend for subsistence on the money they obtain for educating pupils.

After a rapid glance at the place, and its contents, I sat down with the seyed, as if accompanying him at prayers, and while thus employed, I observed first one and then another of the moollahs come and look at me: then came others holding lighted candles in their hands (for it was dark), who after gazing awhile, spoke to the seyed; and I could easily see that there was much altercation between them, of which I was the object. Some retired as if satisfied, but others continued to remonstrate, and were joined by fresh parties, till the agitation increased so much, that I began to fear something serious would happen; when the Mehmandar came in, and caused a diversion, under favor of which I left the place with my conductor, as I was particularly desirous to avoid any thing like a tumult. The

seyed told me, that he had quieted and satisfied the moollahs by an assurance, that I was a person very much inclined towards the Mahometan creed; but probably the tale was not credited by those who had caused the altercation I had witnessed. I should add, that their demeanor, although evidently hostile to me, was grave, decent, and far from uncivil.

Koom is indeed what Morier describes it to be, a wretched mass of ruins. The population is stated to consist of two thousand houses, or ten thousand souls, a great exaggeration if we may judge by appearances. The chief part of it consists of those attached to the various shrines in the place; but sanctity does not seem to thrive here so well as in India, or even in other parts of Persia. Though the intolerance it too often assumes is not wanting; indeed, the place has been remarked for its inhospitality and impertinence, particularly to Christian travellers; even the very children are taught to lisp abuse. While I was attempting to make a sketch of the place from the top of the caravanserai, certain young urchins, encouraged by their mothers, insulted us in the grossest language; until they saw us bestow charity on some beggars, who came by, when their tone was changed, and they began to beg also, adding their prayers for our welfare; but finding this ineffectual, they resumed their violent abuse, until silenced by the interference of the Mehmandar.

Leaving Koom about eight in the morning of the 28th, I set off with two attendants to ride to Tehrān. It was a dull cold morning, and a few flakes of snow fell; but we had no serious storm until we had passed Sudrabād, and were crossing a tract of salt desert, about twenty miles in breadth, which intervenes between that place and Kinaragird: — the clouds which had been brooding heavily all day, then broke in severe rain and sleet A piercing north wind blew in our faces, and froze us in spite of all the clothes we could muster; and the night set in with utter darkness, and a storm that made our horses snort with fear, and seek to turn their backs to its fury. I never remember a more dismal appearance than when we passed the deserted caravanserai of Hause-e-sultoon, a little after night-

fall, and plunged among the low range of hills before us, covered with driving mist and cloud, which when for a moment it cleared from their sides, showed that it had left on them its tribute of snow. We all suffered severely, for the wind was so strong and keen that nothing could withstand it; and one of my servants who had not a sufficiency of warm clothing, was so much affected by it, that I was induced to turn for a little, about midnight, into the caravanserai of Kinaragird, where some fire was after much delay procured, and the man taken almost senseless from his horse; nor was it an easy matter to restore animation to the lower extremities, which were frozen and stiff up to the mid-thigh. In about half an hour being a little refreshed, we resumed our way, although sorely unwilling to face the fierce blast, which howled without with unremitting fury, and hardly allowed us to sit our horses. The darkness too was so great, that although one of my attendants was an experienced guide, being in truth, an old freebooter in these parts, his sagacity got completely at fault, and we wandered for two hours amongst ground so rugged, that it was matter of surprize how we escaped the precipices; but we were forced to proceed at all hazard, for the cold was too fierce to admit of our remaining still. Some time afterwards we heard voices and saw lights, which proceeded from a party of muleteers, who although perfect guides in the country, had gone equally astray with ourselves. The clouds had by this time cleared from the sky, and a keen frosty morning broke; but as the same searching wind continued, our sufferings did not abate, until descending from the last heights of Kinaragird, and advancing along the plains now covered with snow, towards Tehrān, the sun arose and gradually moderated the cold.

At eight o'clock, on nearing the town, we were met by Mr. Willock, who I believe was not without apprehensions about our safety, and we gladly took refuge in his hospitable and comfortable house.

The night was not severe on us alone, it had no doubt many victims, but one only came to our knowledge; a man belonging to

the Prince Hyder Koolee Meerza, who was journeying not far from the line of our march, was carried by his horse into the caravanserai Kinaragird, where we halted, frozen to death *; but still sitting on the animal, which had made the best of its way to a place where it had probably frequently halted before. Some idea of the cold may be formed from this circumstance alone.

* *Khoosk*, *crisp*, *dry*, is the expressive Persian term.

CHAP. VII.

ON ARRIVING AT TEHRĀN, THE AUTHOR DEPOSITS THE PUBLIC CONCERNS OF THE MISSION WITH MR. WILLOCK, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES FOR THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN. — PREPARES FOR FURTHER JOURNEY. — DEATH OF MAHOMED ALLEE MEERZA, THE KING'S SECOND SON, WITH REFLECTIONS ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT EVENT. — HIS CHARACTER. — 3d DECEMBER, VISITS SEVERAL PERSONS OF THE COURT. — CHARACTER OF THE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MEERZA ABDOOL WAHĀB. — OF THE AMEEN-U-DOULUT, THE HIGH TREASURER. — VISITS THE LATE AMBASSADOR TO BRITAIN, MEERZA ABOOL HASSAN KHAN. — HIS CHARACTER. — 4th, VISITS THE POET LAUREATE FUTEH ALLEE KHAN. — HIS CHARACTER AND AMIABLE QUALITIES. — HE PROMISES INTRODUCTIONS AT KHORASAN. — VISITS A NEPHEW OF THE LATE KING, LIVING IN INDEPENDENT POVERTY. — ACCOUNT OF DEMAWUND, FROM A CHIEF, RESIDENT NEAR THAT MOUNTAIN. — VISITS TWO OF THE PRINCES, GOVERNORS OF TEHRĀN AND CASVEEN. — RECEIVES AN INTERESTING VISIT FROM FUTEH ALLEE KHAN — HIS ADVICE AS TO INTENDED JOURNEY. — FATE OF OTHER TRAVELLERS.

HAVING thus reached the capital, on the 29th November, I took the earliest opportunity of laying down my unwillingly assumed character of *acting envoy*, and delivering into the hands of Mr. Willock, his Britannic Majesty's chargé d'affaires, all the accounts, inventories, and papers relative to the mission, of which I had taken charge.

It was necessary to remain sometime at Tehrān, to prepare for the journey I meditated; and after the painful scenes I had lately witnessed, I was by no means indifferent to the comfort to be derived from the kind and pleasant society I now enjoyed, while I endeavoured to render the time thus spent as available as possible to the objects of information and enquiry, of which I never lost sight.

The day after our arrival, intelligence reached the court of the death of Mahomed Allee Meerza, the eldest and worthiest of the king of Persia's numerous sons. This prince had long held the important government of Kermanshah; and it was the general opinion, that in the contest for the crown which every one anticipates after

the King's death, he had rather the best chance for success, although his majesty had announced his intention, that it should descend to his second son, Abbas Meerza.

This was an event of the deepest interest to Persia; for it terminated the hopes of one party, and therefore was likely to prevent much sanguinary strife; but from the character of Mahomed Allee Meerza, it was universally thought that the glory and prosperity of the country depended upon his succeeding to its throne. His gallantry, enterprize, and generosity, had attached his adherents and all who knew him, so firmly to his cause, that there is every reason to think that if he could have secured a portion of his father's treasure, he would have borne down all the *native* opposition that could have been made to his mounting the throne. If, as some persons anticipated, the Russians should have interfered, and thrown their weight into the scale of Abbas Meerza, the second son, the cause of that prince would doubtless have been greatly strengthened, although success, if secured, might have been purchased at the expence of some of his finest provinces. Now, his claim will be universally recognized; the intrigues of the disaffected will be prevented; and the bloody struggles that must have taken place between the principal rivals will not occur: but the state of that land is melancholy indeed, where the death of its bravest and most accomplished prince can be hailed as a blessing, the only means to preserve it from the horrors of a civil war.

Among many anecdotes that are related of the gallantry and decision of Mahomed Allee Meerza, the following is highly characteristic. Assad Khan, chief of a considerable clan, in consequence of some disgust at the conduct of his sovereign, had abandoned his service, and retiring to certain fastnesses not far from Kermanshah, had taken to general plundering. The prince determined to put a stop to this, after having in vain tried various methods to bring the rebel to his duty, at last headed an expedition against him; and having reached the place where the khan lay with his retainers, the prince, in person, without saying a word to his followers, rode straight to the khan's quarters, entered his presence, announced himself,

and sitting down, addressed him on the folly of his conduct in resisting a power that must at last overwhelm him; assured him that he had a high opinion of his merit, and was disposed to grant every indulgence to a brave, and perhaps unfortunate man; invited him to return to his duty and enter his service; but warned him against longer pursuing his present lawless and dishonourable course. The khan, struck with respect at the presence of the prince, and with admiration at his spirited conduct, was readily brought to terms; and the prince, soon after, conferring upon him the government of a district, had the satisfaction of transforming a desperate plunderer into a brave and attached servant.

It was strange, however, to see how little sensation the loss of such a prince produced in any but a few of those more particularly connected with the court. The mass of society appeared totally unconcerned about the matter; or, if it were mentioned at all, it was with the gaping curiosity of idleness untinctured with any interest, as to consequences; and I could not help reflecting on how differently a similar event would have been received in England, or in any European country.

December 3d, I accompanied Mr. Willock on a visit to some of the principal persons about the Persian court. We first paid our respects to Meerza Abdool Wahāb, the moatimud-u-doulut, privy counsellor, and secretary for foreign affairs, and beyond all comparison the most eminent man at court for talents, probity, general popularity, and attachment to his master's interest: raised by his own merits to the distinguished station he holds, his manners are simple and unassuming, averse from all display, parade, or ostentation. With the most powerful means of acquiring riches he remains poor; and his poverty may be traced even in the plainness of equipage and appearance; nor is there any affectation in this; it seems to spring from what is rare in Persia, principle. His talents for public business are very great; and it is remarkable that the simplicity of his character is equally apparent in official intercourse as in his private life. He has no political shifts or reserves; his answers are always to the point; he is ever prepared to support what

he has said; and what he says may be trusted, a rare virtue in Persia. But let his antagonist beware of leaving himself open; for he is quick as lightning to observe a weak point in argument, and though it may not appear to be remarked at the moment, the advantage is sure to be brought forward at the very moment it is most required. He is the only man fit to be employed by the King to meet an European diplomatist; for the defects of his education are compensated by his strong, penetrating judgment; and his downright plain dealing is calculated to confound and render useless a far superior degree of political experience. His views, indeed, of all matters, political or other, are extended and liberal; and it is wonderful how he can have acquired them, in a country where they are scarcely to be found save with himself. It is he, and he alone, can venture openly to address the King in disapprobation of the conduct of the princes; and the influence which his talents and independence have procured him, has enabled him to do this without reserve, and with great effect. In his private life he is amiable, kind-hearted, and possessed of fine feelings of attachment. He is one of the most learned men of his time, without the least pedantry. In short, he would be a remarkable person in any country, but in Persia he stands without a competitor.

The moatimud received us (without keeping us waiting, after the fashion of the great) in a very small and rather meanly-furnished room. His dress was a plain green cotton robe, over which, the weather being very cold, he wore a common sheep-skin pelisse. The calleeoons and coffee-cups were of the plainest sort, and every thing corresponded with his own demeanor, to impress us with the idea of unaffected humility. The conversation turned principally on the death of Mahomed Allee Meerza, who is the first son the king has lost; and he informed us, that though considerably affected, his majesty conceives it dignified to conceal his feelings from public view. "God," he says, "has given me many sons; it has been his "pleasure to take one away, and I have nothing to complain of. "Had it happened by treachery, or in battle, I should have been "distressed." In all probability the king does not feel much real

pain; the bonds of family love can never be strong in Persia; and when, as in the case of his majesty, the heart is intensely occupied with other cares, and the portion left for affection is itself subdivided among so many objects, rapidly succeeding each other, no particular one can fix that affection powerfully. It has, moreover, been said, that Mahomed Allee Meerza was rather an object of jealousy to the King; and this, if true, will go far to account for his philosophy. The Prince's death, we understand, was caused by injudicious treatment of a bowel complaint, which he was too anxious to remove, in order that he might proceed in his operations against the Turks.

From the house of the moatimud we went to that of the ameen-u-doulut, or lord of the treasury and minister for the home department, a man of a very different character from him whom we had just left. He is son to the prime minister, or sudr ameen, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, and is said to possess considerable influence at court, though it is not very easy to understand how he has acquired it, for he has little to recommend him, either to the King or to the people. He is haughty, overbearing, and bigoted; his talents by no means above mediocrity, and his manners, taking colour from his character, are quite the contrary of conciliating. He is far from popular, and does not deserve to be so. He probably rose at first on his father's credit, but is now said to possess more influence than he; and this is the more extraordinary, as, though reputed to be very wealthy, he gives no presents of consequence to the King, who, perhaps, keeps him as a *bonne bouche* to be last squeezed. This gentleman kept us so long waiting that we lost patience, and went away disgusted, without seeing him; nor did I afterwards make any attempt at forming his acquaintance.

Our next visit was to Meerza Abool Hussein Khān, late ambassador to England, a man whose character widely differs from those of the noblemen above mentioned. He is the descendant of an old but decayed family, which resided sometimes at Sheerauz, sometimes at Ispahan. In his youth he was in very low circumstances, and was known first as a very beautiful and very abandoned boy, much

sought after by the great men of the city, and who sometimes even exhibited as a dancer in women's attire. He subsequently engaged in trade, in which he was successful, and, by degrees, rose so much in rank and importance, that when the King required a person to send as ambassador to England, a service esteemed so disagreeable, and even so alarming to them, that no noble of respectability would undertake it, the offer was made to Abool Hussein, who accepted it from motives of interest; and the knowledge of European languages and manners which he acquired on this occasion, joined to the continued dislike of others to such services, rendered him a convenient person for filling similar situations, which he has since continued to do.

There is no man of rank about the court less respected, or less deserving of being so, than Meerza Abool Hussein Khan. He is so mean and dishonest, in all his dealings, that none who can avoid it will have any thing to do with him; and so proverbially false, that no one believes a word he says. The dissolute and abandoned habits of his youth he maintains in his advanced years to such a degree, that, though there is little attention paid to morals in Persia, he is spoken of with contempt and disgust by every respectable person at court. Nor are his manners much superior to his character. It is true, he is plausible; and his constantly-sustained laugh gives him an appearance of good-humour, which is only for those whom he desires to conciliate. But his flattery is gross, and without tact; and his ignorance even of what regards his own country, and more particular department, is extraordinary. How he took so much in Europe, and particularly in England, is quite unaccountable; for in his own country he is considered as a man unpossessed of any one good or pleasing quality, and his conversation is liable to become so gross and disgusting, that it must have been dangerous for any female of delicacy to discourse with him. Certainly he has but ill repaid the kindness and hospitality he met with in England. Although he has for a long time past, and I believe still receives a considerable annuity from the English government, and has returned to Persia loaded with its presents, he constantly opposes its interests, and talks of

it before his countrymen generally in very slighting terms. He carried a number of handsome shawls with him to England, which he boasts to have bartered there for the favours of the first women of the land; and talks openly by name of the ladies of rank, *duchesses* and others, with whom he has had affairs of gallantry, and a whole host of minor females, some of whose letters he produces in Persian parties, and reads out, to vouch for the truth of his statements, which are doubted more from his notorious falsity than from any confidence in the virtue of our fair countrywomen. He produces, too, a miniature picture, which has been shown to the King as that of his mistress, without concealing the name; which, I regret to say, is that of a lady highly connected, and, I believe, considered respectable. It is to be hoped that this return for the kindness, no doubt innocently shown to a stranger by our countrywomen, will serve as a lesson of caution in future; and that every English woman will recollect how such kindness may be misconstrued, when lavished on a person of whose real character they may be ignorant. It perhaps may matter little to them what opinion may be entertained of them in a distant semibarbarous land like Persia; but it severely shocks the few of their countrymen who may wander there, to hear those lightly and irreverently spoken of, whose society they so much languish to enjoy.

On his last return from England, Meerza Abool Hussein Khan came laden not only with presents he had received but with an immense quantity of merchandize, purchased in Europe, which he availed himself of his ambassador's privilege to pass free of duty: but when he reached Persia, desiring to obtain the carriage of it to Tehrān also free, he managed to secure beasts of burthen for his own goods, among those provided for the conveyance of presents for the king. His majesty, however, who is quite alive to what affects his own interest, suspected, or was informed of the truth; and when the ambassador approached Tehrān, he took care to be absent on a hunting party, to which the former was ordered to repair, while the baggage went on to the capital; and, according to orders previously given, was, without exception, lodged in one of the royal warehouses

as *presents for his majesty*, the denómination under which the whole had travelled. The unhappy diplomatist never received back, or dared to claim a single package; aware, no doubt, of the inutility of such a step, had he even been guiltless of intended fraud. Mirrors, chandeliers, glass-ware, clocks, toys, pictures, cloths, silks, &c. &c. all went to the use of his royal master. The only part he saved of his accumulated European property was a few trunks of cloths, which had entered the city as belonging to the British chargé d'affaires, and which, consequently, were held sacred.

Meerza Abool Hussein Khan now acts as a master of the ceremonies in presenting Europeans to the king, beyond which he has little to do: he has been very desirous to take upon himself the duties of minister for foreign affairs, but has been entirely confined to the arrangements with England, in which even he is controled by Meerza Abdool Wahāb. He receives no salary.

This person received us in a sort of boudoir, highly ornamented with English prints and mirrors, French clocks, and other gimcracks, among which was placed, in a conspicuous situation, a picture of himself, by a Russian artist: a comfortable carpet with numuds as usual, covered the floor, but there was also an excellent fire blazing in an European grate; and the whole had much more of comfort, than is usually to be met with in Persian apartments. He talked incessantly, and it was amusing to hear him interlarding his Persian with snatches of English, among which, the ejaculation of "God bless me!" "'Pon my honour!" and others of a similar description were very frequent. He showed us his whole menage, and by its arrangement, it was sufficiently apparent that he had picked up some idea of convenience, as well as other good things in England; he did not however approve completely of the plan of our English houses; he thought them deficient in ground space, and that the rooms were much too small.

The day following we paid a visit to Futeh Allee Khan, the shah-ul-shaer, or malek-ul-shaer, poet laureate of the kingdom. This very interesting old man, who is descended of an ancient family, for several successive generations governors of Cashān, possesses much

genius, a lively imagination, and good taste; he is singularly well informed in, and has a great taste for, mechanics; having constructed several complicated pieces of machinery of his own invention, in a very ingenious manner, and even succeeded in making a printing press, from the plates in the Encyclopædia Britannica. His manners are mild, and his disposition amiable, but he possesses a sufficient share of independence, and some of his satires are said to be very pointed and witty. His conversation is highly agreeable, displaying much erudition as well as genius; but he is so fond of speaking, that he occasionally becomes tedious. He is generally liberal in his views, except upon religious subjects, and on these he is somewhat bigoted. He is, like all Persians, vain of his own merits; but not like them, too often, given to detraction. He is a great admirer of Europeans, and fond of every thing from their country; and, upon the whole, is one of the most enlightened and pleasing men about the court. His knowledge of his own language is supposed to be more perfect than that of any man now alive, and his acquirements in general knowledge are very considerable. His verses are, by his countrymen, rated as next in merit to those of Ferdousee; by some, even before that great man's productions. Nor is the fertility of his genius less wonderful than its power; for, besides minor pieces, he has already produced 160,000 couplets, relative chiefly to the acts of the present king; for he is historian as well as poet to the court, and keeps in high favour with the monarch, as well as with most of the princes; but he takes no share in public business, nor any interest in politics.

The old gentleman received us very cordially, and conversed for a long time, sustaining the principal share himself; among other topics was introduced my intended journey into Khorasan, in which undertaking he promised me his best aid, and letters to his son-in-law, Meerza Moossa, the chief minister of Hussun Allee Meerza, governor of the province.

We also visited a nephew of the late, and cousin of the present king, whose name I forget; but who has displayed in his conduct a spirit of independence very rare in this country. He was in the

service of the Prince of Casveen; but left it in consequence of seeing two infamous boys, without any merit except their beauty, raised over his head to places of honor and trust. Though extremely poor, he would not stoop to serve unworthy masters, or to solicit assistance from the royal family; and he is now reduced to dispose of his property piece-meal in the bazar, for the support of himself and his family. It was but the day before we called that he had sent a large pillow of Caspian down for sale, to purchase common necessaries. He received us in an apartment barely covered with moth-eaten numuds; the windows papered instead of glazed, and exhibiting altogether a degree of very distressing wretchedness. He was the only person I saw, that seemed sincerely distressed at the death of Mahomed Allee Meerza, of whom he spoke as the only one of his tribe worthy of the smallest estimation.

December 10th. A chief residing in the neighbourhood of Demawund breakfasted with us, and, among other subjects, informed us of many particulars regarding this lofty and interesting peak of the Elburz range. He had ascended it lately, in company with several other persons; and, from his account, I gathered, that it is formed of pumice stone and scoriæ, chiefly metallic. On the summit, he says, there is a large hollow, as if a mine had been worked; with several smaller excavations in different directions. The whole mountain abounds in sulphur, quantities of which are every year collected for sale; and sulphurous exhalations may be perceived all over the cone; but there is neither fire nor smoke. Not a blade of grass, or vestige of vegetation is to be found on any part of the surface, nor a spring of water. All the snow that falls is absorbed, as it melts, into the substance of the hill, and does not, as far as can be perceived, give rise to the smallest rill. The road to the summit is represented as very laborious, and steep. There can be but little doubt, if this account be correct, that this remarkable mountainous cone is of volcanic origin.

A quantity of fish caught in its vicinity were sent to Mr. Willock, perfectly resembling, and being, I believe, in reality, of the same species as the common river trout of Britain.

December 11. Paid a visit to two of the princes, governors of Tehrān and of Casveen; the former, a sallow, sickly-looking solemn person, having very much the aspect of a fool, with the huge beard and aquiline nose of the Kadjers, received us civilly, but with much stateliness. The latter a florid, fine-looking, good-humoured, affable man, welcomed us much more frankly. Although neither of these princes, while they live at Tehrān, can keep up the state of their provincial courts, yet the royal etiquette is strictly adhered to with regard to visitors; seats were given us about the middle of the room, but the calleeoon* was presented to the prince alone. Both were very plain in their attire, neither having on him a single ornament. A very strong likeness pervades the whole royal family; no one seeing these princes, or another brother who entered the room while we were seated, could doubt for a moment that they were Kadjers, and sons to the king.

These princes live in the inclosure of the palace, which is fortified strongly with a lofty wall, well flanked with towers, a fosse braye, and deep dry ditch. In the maidān or court within, there were a few old brass guns, on rotten carriages, that probably at one time belonged to the Portuguese; a few English six-pounder gallopers, and one or two brass mortars, of what country I could not guess: in the centre, and elevated on a platform, was a large brass gun, made by order of Lootf Allee Khan Zund, whose name, however, was scraped out, by order of the present monarch, and his own engraved in its stead; pitiful and short-sighted jealousy!

We had this day a visit from Futeh Allee Khan, the old poet laureate, who came to see the drawings I had made, and to show me his own; which, considering the models he had to imitate, were wonderful; he had copied some English prints with a pen, in a very surprizing manner; and it was curious to see the collection he had formed of these, and drawings of every country and style: — among

* No one is permitted to smoke in the presence of a prince of the blood; in the course of a visit, the prince himself generally calls for a pipe twice; the last time just before he gives his visitor his dismissal; all inferior ranks tender the calleeoon to their guests.

the former, I recognized several engravings from the portraits of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and of the works of Bartolozzi and Cipriani; I added to them one of my own drawings, with which he had been much taken; and his observations were just, and well placed, to a degree I did not expect to have heard from any native of Asia. He perfectly comprehended the nature of perspective; and made his remarks upon the reflections represented in the water, the buildings, the trees, and particularly on the substance and colour of the clouds, in a way that not only showed that he comprehended what was meant to be represented, but could judge fairly of the execution. I gave him also some English pencils, and a few drawing materials, with which he was highly gratified.

We resumed the subject of my intended journey to Khorasan, on which the old gentleman appeared very willing to furnish me with his best advice. It seems that the King is extremely jealous of permitting any European to explore the country to the eastward of the usual line of road between Sheerauz and Tehrān; an unwillingness that any stranger should see the nakedness and disaffection of the land; and a vague alarm at the supposed nature of our views on Persia, imbibed from the knowledge of our career in India, are said to be the causes of this jealousy, which has been evinced on several occasions, and, on some, fatally proved. There is little doubt that the murder of Mr. Brown, the celebrated traveller, who was put to death by banditti (as it was given out) near the bridge over the Kiz-zel-o-Zun, was perpetrated at his majesty's instigation. Most natives with whom I have conversed on the subject asserted this as a fact; and it is stated, that the gold chronometer, carried by the unfortunate traveller, found its way into the possession of the shah. My informants related some other obscure tales of a similar nature, regarding certain Europeans who had penetrated to Mushed, but who were there poisoned * by order of government. All this was told me, not

* I learnt afterwards, while at Mushed, from Meerza Abdool Jawat, the chief priest there, of whom mention will hereafter be made, that there was some foundation for this report, as either one or two Europeans had died in Mushed some years before, but of what country he could not say; he denied, however, that they were poisoned, and asserted that they died natural deaths.

with a view to discourage me from making the attempt, but with design to warn me against saying any thing about it to the king; and I determined, with the advice of my friends, to set off with the first caravan, wearing a native dress, and with an equipage too small to attract observation; but without any intention of deceiving the authorities on the way, if it should be necessary to communicate with them, which was rather to be avoided. The credentials I should carry along with me were to be, a letter from the British chargé d'affaires, stating the bearer to be an English gentleman, travelling for his amusement, and calling on all governors to assist me in case of need, and the letters promised by Futeh Allee Khan to his son-in-law, Meerza Moossa; which, however, I determined not to use, except in case of need, as it was agreed on all sides that the less I affected the great man, the greater were likely to be my opportunities for observation, and the less my personal risk.

It fortunately happened that the king, who, for the first week or ten days after he had learnt the death of his son, had shut himself up in private, determined, after that time had expired, to leave Tehrān on a hunting expedition; so that I was prevented from waiting on his Majesty, as would otherwise have been indispensable, and thus escaped all inquiries regarding the route I meant to pursue; as well as from the necessity of asking a permission, which, in all probability, would have been refused, or, if granted, would have been rendered unavailing by conditions or precautions that would have placed me completely in trammels.

CHAP. VIII.

ON THE FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY, STATE OF SOCIETY, NATIONAL CHARACTER AND RESOURCES OF PERSIA. — FALSE IMPRESSIONS ANCIENT AND HERETOFORE OF ITS FERTILITY, WEALTH, AND STRENGTH. — ITS STERILITY GENERAL, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS. — ITS EXTENT AND SURFACE. — MOUNTAINS AND PLAINS. — ELEVATION OF BOTH. — THEIR RELATIVE EXTENT. — THEIR ASPECT. — RIVERS AND RIVULETS FEW AND SCANTY. — WATER AND WOOD RARE. —LANDSCAPES DREARY AND DEVOID OF MARKS OF SOCIETY, COMFORT, OR SECURITY. — EXCEPTIONS OF MAZUNDERAN AND GHEELAN, &c. ON THE CASPIAN, AND PART OF AZERBIJAN AND ARMENIA, WHICH ARE RICH IN THE MORE INTERESTING FEATURES OF LANDSCAPE. — OF THE MIRAGE. — ON THE VIEWS AND INTERIORS OF CITIES, TOWNS, AND VILLAGES. — BAZARS. — SCANTINESS AND DEMORALIZATION AND MISERY OF ALL CLASSES OF THE POPULATION. — SHOCKING STATE OF SOCIETY AND SOCIAL TIES. — THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, PERVADED BY VICE AND CORRUPTION. — ON THE SUPPOSED POLITENESS AND HOSPITALITY OF THE PERSIANS.

During the time I remained at Tehrān, I endeavoured, as much as possible, to improve my knowledge of the character and resources of the country. I had for some time believed, that the value of Persia in the scale of nations has been greatly overrated in public estimation, not only in modern, but in more remote times; and that her riches, her magnificence, her population, her fertility, even her power individually as a nation, and her general resources, have been estimated at an extent far beyond the truth. I was led to this opinion chiefly, by recollecting the ideas entertained regarding this country, by most persons with whom I had conversed on the subject, and the impressions I had myself imbibed from the perusal of works that treat of it; and it was largely confirmed by every observation I made during my travels.

It appears not very difficult to account for these false impressions regarding Persia; which, like all that are received of remote objects, are for the most part vague and indistinct. The East has at all times been described as the land of wealth, luxury, and magnificence. At a time when Europe was comparatively poor and rude, with little

of commerce, or manufactures to boast of; it was from the East that all rich commodities were received; from thence came jewels, spices, and rare fabrics. The earliest travellers have borne testimony to the magnificence of Oriental sovereigns, sumptuously adorned with gold and gems, surrounded by their brilliant courts, and armed with absolute power. The Eastern tales that delighted our youth, describing scenes of wonder, voluptuousness, and inexhaustible riches in the florid and hyperbolical style of Asiatic authors, have added their influence, to throw over this quarter of the globe an illusion of magic and magnificence, that can hardly fail to envelope it for ever, unless dispelled by cold and accurate realities.

It is also remarkable, that these impressions have been particularly applied to Persia, the country of all others, perhaps, in the East, if we except Arabia, and the wilder parts of Tartary, that can least realize them. They may be traced to the effects of our early classical reading, and the accounts given by various authors of Cyrus, Xerxes, Darius, and other Persian sovereigns, with their troops in myriads, blazing in purple and gold. The allusions, too, in holy writ, to the power and riches of the Median and Assyrian kings have greatly contributed to them. And they have been very much confirmed by the accounts given by those Europeans who visited the courts of the Suffavean Kings in the days of their splendour. Nor has the spell been completely broken by more modern travellers; although no longer held up as a land of wonders, I cannot think that sufficient pains have been taken, in any modern account of Persia, to destroy the illusion that existed, and to impress the reader with the true and full extent of its desert state, its misery and weakness. It is in these works spoken of with more respect than it deserves, and the reader thus continues to assign to it an importance, which it was probably not the writers intention to convey.

The cause of this may probably be traced to the situation in which most of these travellers have been placed. The majority of Europeans* who have made their observations public, were either

* It is true that the older travellers were chiefly traders, and from them we have the most valuable accounts we possess of the manners and customs of their day; but to these

attached to missions of considerable importance and splendour, or passed rapidly through the country in returning to their own. In the first case, the circumstances attending the progress of any person of importance through the country, renders it difficult for those attached to his suite to view and estimate the true condition of it or its inhabitants; every difficulty is smoothed for such travellers, and all possible pains are taken to impress them with ideas of the most favourable nature, regarding the power and wealth of the sovereign, and the prosperity of his country. Its face and form may, indeed, be seen, but the dazzling bustle of meetings and departures, of visits and ceremonies, the presence of richly-dressed nobles, with their numerous attendants, are calculated to shut out all disagreeable impressions of poverty and misery, and to substitute for them those of population and riches. The mere passenger, on the other hand, who only traverses the country in his way to another, with little or no knowledge of the language, attended but by his own servants, and halting in his career only to visit spots of notorious celebrity, such a person may be qualified to give a diary of the journey, and to relate his own impressions; but he can hardly be deemed competent to convey just ideas of the country or people at large.

One great source of error appears generally to have arisen from European impressions concerning Persia having been imbibed from descriptions, which, whether fabulous or historic, refer chiefly to one situation of life, that of the sovereign and his immediate attendants, the rich and powerful of the land. We hear little or nothing of the state of the people, or the face of the country; these may have been poor, wretched, and desert as now; while the king and his court were dazzling strangers by their magnificence and ostentation, these were probably supported as at present, by grinding his unfortunate subjects to the bones; the population may have been as scanty, the

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also the observations of the text in great measure apply. It were tedious and perhaps unprofitable to enter into a strict enquiry, as to the correctness of the impressions conveyed by the accounts of the older travellers, of the general appearance and condition of the countries they visited.

cultivation as rare as at this day. That in the long duration of the Persian monarchy, or, rather, that in the history of that portion of the world, in which Persia forms a prominent point, many changes * have occurred affecting it with a greater or lesser degree of prosperity, is not intended to be denied or questioned; it is only meant to say, that an estimate of the condition of any country formed from descriptions of scenes in which kings, nobles, and rich men are almost the only actors, would be as fallacious, as a judgment of the real state of England or France, founded on accounts of the transactions at Carleton House, or the Louvre.

If there be any truth in these observations, and if false impressions regarding this country are really entertained by a large portion of the European public, it is surely the duty of every one, however humble his means, to endeavour so far as he can to correct them; and if Persia be an object of interest, I may perhaps look for indulgence, if I insert here a few remarks relative to the condition of that country, calculated, as I hope, for that purpose.

The natural boundaries commonly assigned to the Persian empire have often, and sufficiently, been described. The political limits have at all times fluctuated with the power of the existing sovereign. The appearance and nature of the soil, of the vast tract it comprises, varies, as may be supposed, greatly in different parts; but with the exception of the provinces of Mazunderān, Gheelān, and perhaps a few lesser instances, the general impression it conveys is that of sterility and barrenness. Persia has been termed a country of mountains, and certainly a very large part of the whole surface is mountainous; but their proportion to that of the plain country varies ex-

* It may be observed, and with truth, that Ancient Persia did not owe the splendour it may have possessed to present Persia only, but to Asiatic Turkey, to Bactriana, to Egypt, and to the sole trade with India, China, &c., all of which at one time or other it possessed or commanded. The government, too, was probably not so bad as now; the different provinces appear to have had more the regulation of their own concerns; the Greek cities in Asia Minor were left to their own laws; and the country in general was most likely less oppressed and better cultivated. But all these circumstances do not alter the large view of the case, they form but exceptions to a general rule, part of the changes alluded to in the text.

ceedingly in different quarters. The greater part of country may be described as a table land rising from a lower region. The latter, under the name of the Dushtistān (or level country) stretches along great part of the coast of the Persian Gulf and the river Tigris on the south; and under various other appellations, along the Caspian sea, to the feet of the Elburz mountains, meeting with the plains of Tartary on the north; the former occupies the whole space contained between these two lines, extending east and west as far as the limits of the empire. The height of this plateau above the level of the sea, is probably not much short of 3,500 feet*, and from the surface of this, the mountainous ranges which divide the country, arise to various heights; sometimes including between them vallies of different dimensions: in other cases, rather seeming to island the plain, which far exceeds them in superficial extent.

The appearance of these mountains is almost every where bare, arid, and forbidding: in most parts they present to the eye, nothing but huge masses of grey rock, piled in strata on each other; or they start in a rugged ridge abruptly from the plain, which reaches their feet with no other undulation than that which has been occasioned by the washing down of detritus from their sides. In some places they may be less denuded of soil, but this being chiefly formed of mouldering rock adds little to their beauty; they are unenlivened by wood or shrubs. For about two months in the spring a scanty ver-

* In thus hazarding a conjecture respecting the height of a great part of Persia above the sea, it is proper to state the grounds I have for so doing. I could not procure barometers calculated for a journey, and therefore was forced, as the only means of approximating rudely to an estimate of the altitudes we attained, to have recourse to boiling water, and remarking the boiling point on a thermometer of large dimensions. A few of the principal results may be found in the Appendix, by which it will be observed, that after ascending the mountains to Kauzeroon, the boiling point at the principal stations, situated in extensive plains, varied from 207° to 203°, which allowing five hundred feet to each degree, gives an elevation of from 2,500 to 4,500 feet for these plains. The heights of the mountains above these, by the same calculation, sometimes exceeded 7000 feet. I am perfectly aware of the great degree of inaccuracy to which so rude a method of calculation must be liable, and have no apology to offer for inserting its results here, but that being desirous to give the best description of the country in my power I was unwilling to omit the only means I had of computing the comparative elevation of its different regions.

dure tinges their brown sides with an emerald hue; but the heats of summer soon scorch it up, and the original colour is gradually resumed; not a tuft remaining of that herbage which so rapidly sprung and withered. The appearance of the plains is for the most part not more promising; the largest proportion of them consists of gravel washed down from the mountains, or the accumulation of some former revolution of nature deposited in deep and extensive beds; or of a hard clay, which, without the advantage of water, natural or artificial, is barren and desert as the rest. The livery of the whole land is constantly brown or grey, except during the two months of April and May.

Water renders these plains in many places fertile, but water is the most scanty boon of nature in Persia; its rivers are small and few; and rivulets, by no means common, can only be applied to a very limited quantity of cultivation. In the best districts, the small proportion of cultivated land resembles an Oasis in the desert, serving, by contrast, to make all around it more dreary. Plains and mountains are equally destitute of wood; the only trees to be seen are in the gardens of villages, or on the banks of streams, where they are planted for the purpose of affording the little timber used in building; they chiefly consist of fruit-trees, the noble chinar or oriental plane, the tall poplar, and the cypress; and the effect which a garden of these trees produces, spotting with its dark green the grey and dusty plain, is rather melancholy than cheering. In picturing, therefore, to the imagination, the aspect of a Persian landscape, or, indeed, of a landscape in any of the contiguous countries to the north and east of it, the mind must endeavour to divest itself of every image that gives beauty or interest to an European scene:— there are no beautiful or majestic woods, no verdant plains or grassy mountains, no winding rivers or babbling streams, no parks or inclosures, no castles or gentlemen's seats, no sweet retired cottages, with their white walls glimmering through foliage; nothing, in short, that speaks of peace, security, or comfort; every thing, on the contrary, declares, that man dreads his fellows, that he lives but for himself

and for the day, neither caring nor providing for posterity: that he is uncultivated, abject, and debased.

When the traveller, after toiling over the rocky mountains that separate the plains, looks down from the pass he has won with toil and difficulty upon the country below, his eye wonders unchecked and unrested over an uniform brown expanse, losing itself in distance *, or bounded by blue mountains resembling those he has laboured to cross; should cultivation exist within his ken, it can hardly be distinguished from the plain on which it is sprinkled, except in the months of spring; is there a town or villages upon this plain, all that can be seen of them is a line or spot upon its surface, chiefly remarkable from the gardens which usually surround them, and not otherwise to be distinguished from the ruins, which are generally in far greater abundance than the abodes of man. Such is the scene which, day after day, and march after march, presents itself to the traveller in Persia.

The extensive deserts that occur in several parts of the empire form objects certainly striking; yet so dreary is the general aspect of the country, that it is only when the traveller skirts them closely, or crosses over them, that their difference from it is much remarked; then, indeed, the saline efflorescence glistening and baking in the rays of a fierce sun, extending into immense space, with here and there a mass of black rock protruding from its surface, its image con-

* The deception of distance in these plains is even more remarkable than it is upon water, there are so few objects wherewith to measure space, that the eye is bewildered, and quite put to fault. I remember upon looking from the caravanserai at Morchacoor, from whence points in the vicinity of the next stage (Soo) are to be seen, I should have judged a small water reservoir on the road to be but two miles distant; it was twelve in reality: and a small knob upon the shoulder of a hill somewhat further, (four miles I should have said,) turned out to be twenty. On leaving the caravanserai at Muxoodbeggee, we clearly discerned the walls of Komaishah, elevated by refraction; and though the real distance was full twenty-five miles, it did not appear to be five: instances even more remarkable, particularly when looking from an height, might be quoted. This deception has a more unpleasant effect than can be conceived; for the weariness of the body and mind, harassed by the dull unvarying scene, is exasperated by prolonged disappointment; as the same objects never altering in size, or propinquity, seem to the jaded traveller to recede rather than advance as he slowly winds along.

torted by the effect of refraction* into a thousand wild and varying shapes, tells impressively the total desolation that reigns there.

The provinces of Mazunderān and Gheelān on the banks of the Caspian, with the district of Astrabad and Goorgaun, and parts of Azerbijān and Armenia, form exceptions to the above description; the former three districts are as beautiful as wood, water, and mountain, in their most varied forms, can make them; the forests are magnificent, and, for the greatest part of the year, a luxuriant verdure delights the eye: these will be more particularly described in the sequel. The latter are not so beautiful; but in many parts are rich and fertile; and neither devoid of verdure or wood; but the more finely wooded parts of Armenia, those at least which fell under my observation, are now in the hands of the Russians.

If the European traveller be totally disappointed by the face of the country, he will not certainly be less so by the appearance of the towns of the east. Accustomed to the names of Ispahan, Bagdad, Sheerauz, Bussora, and other cities rendered famous in eastern story as well as history; and forming his ideas of these, in some degree upon models of towns in Europe, or at least clothing them in his imagination with the oriental costume of columns, minarets, and

* The wonderful effects of the mirage, and the phænomena it produces, have frequently been the theme of admiration with travellers; but it is almost impossible to conceive the extent to which these prevail upon the wide and level plains of these countries, when the air, in a state of rapid undulation, causes every object near the surface to tremble into forms as uncertain and evanescent as the eddies that produce them. A distant mountain, in the space of a minute, will assume first, perhaps, the form of a lofty peak; this after rising to what appears a prodigious elevation, will thicken at the top, and spread into that of a large mushroom, with a slender stalk: — the top will then split into several spires, and then all will join into a solid table shape. This is extremely puzzling to a surveyor, who depends upon the peaks of mountains as objects from which to form his triangles; for he may be thrown many degrees out of the true line, by trusting to an observation under such circumstances. — In other instances, a mud-bank furrowed by the rain, will exhibit the appearance of a magnificent city, with columns, domes, minarets, and pyramids, all of which flit as you approach; till, to your utter confusion, they dwindle into a heap of earth, perhaps not ten feet high. Numberless have been the mistakes made of asses with boys on them, for elephants and giants, or well mounted troops of cavalry; sheep and goats for camels and dromedaries; and the smallest bushes for fine forest trees; there is sometimes great beauty, and much that is amusing, in the variety of phænomena produced, but they not unfrequently involve the weary traveller in great disappointment.

cupolas; how can he be prepared for the mass of misery, filth, and ruins, which the best of these cities present to his gaze? He looks in vain for those well known and grateful proofs of vicinity to the hum of men, which never fail to cheer the heart, and raise the spirits of those who approach an European city. Instead of the well conditioned road crowded with various traffic, bordered with hedge-rows and green inclosures, thickly interspersed with rows and groups of gay habitations, which end at last in the proud and thronged street of lofty and substantial edifices; he that enters an eastern town must thread the narrow and dirty lane, rugged and neglected as the torrent's bed, bordered by ruins of mud-walls, or inclosures that conceal from his view the only verdure the place can boast; among heights and hollows, the rubbish of old buildings, and the clay-pits that yield bricks for new ones; till at last he reaches the dilapidated wall of the city; and entering the gateway, where lounge a few squalid guards, he finds himself perhaps in a sorry bazar, but just as probably in a confusion of mean rubbish, as hopeless as that which he has passed through without the walls. He looks in vain for streets; he can scarcely see a house. The mass of mud that surrounds him is burrowed into holes, that more resemble a gigantic ants' nest, or rabbit warren, than the abode of man; for it is the dwellings of the poor alone that present themselves to his view; the houses of the great, whatever may be their internal construction, are carefully shrouded from public view, by high walls of mud or raw bricks, of very unseemly appearance; and round these, concealing them almost to the very entrance, and with the most perfect contempt of order, are clustered the hovels of the poor. Narrow passages, through which a loaded ass can scarcely pass, wind among these, and give access to the dwellings of all classes; no attempt is ever made to level these paths, they mount indifferently over all impediments, diving into hollows, reducing the passenger to the necessity of scrambling among ruins, stumbling over grave-stones *, and

* Mahometans have no sort of objection to graves being trampled on; on the contrary they frequently place them in a street, or on the highway; in hopes that the silent tenant below may benefit by the prayers of pious passengers, who are thus reminded to

risking his neck by falling into holes, particularly at night; as no arrangement for lighting a town by night exists in any of these countries. The bazars are the only thoroughfares that deserve the name of streets; some of these have met with merited praise from travellers; such are the Bazar-e-Wukeel of Sheerauz, the long continuous bazars of Ispahan*, some of those at Tehrān, Tabreez, &c. all of which are comparatively spacious, lofty, and built of materials more or less solid; but the majority of Persian bazars are very wretched. The construction is commonly as follows: — a path of from eight to sixteen feet wide separates two rows of cells, before which are constructed raised booths; upon which the venders of commodities sit, having their goods displayed on the platforms beside them; the cells serve to contain the rest of their stock. The whole is arched over, either by well-constructed brick-work, or clay, or, in very inferior bazars, with branches of trees that serve to intercept the sun's rays. Here, as in India, it is common for the different trades to keep together; the smiths, the braziers, the shoemakers, the saddlers, the cloth and chintz-sellers, &c. &c. generally may be found, each in their own quarter; but confectioners, cooks, apothecaries, bakers, and fruiterers' shops are dispersed in various places; and sometimes are set out with a disposition of their wares that makes no unpleasing show; though quite unlike the appearance of European shops. Attached to these bazars, in the larger towns there are generally several caravanserais which serve for the reception of goods and travelling merchants; the chambers of these are constantly occupied as offices for the transaction of business, as well as for shops; and the comparatively gay scene they present, with the

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utter their holy ejaculations while they stumble or step over them. Paths are constantly found passing through burying grounds, and these are as frequently situated by the side of highways.

* The bazars of Ispahan extend for miles in almost endless succession; they are not, it is true, so fully occupied, or so richly filled, as in the days of Herbert and Chardin, but a great concourse of people is still to be met with in them, and a considerable traffic is carried on. Many of these bazars are well and solidly built; though few can compare with the Bazar-e-Wukeel in Sheerauz.

bustle which constantly goes on in the space before them, and in the more public bazars, with the costume, manners, and language, all so opposite to every thing the European can have ever seen, presents a spectacle of which, I think, none can form any just idea, who has not witnessed it.

Viewed from a commanding situation, the appearance of a Persian town is most uninteresting: the houses, all of mud, differ in no respect from the earth in colour, and, from the irregularity of their construction, resemble inequalities on its surface, rather than human dwellings. The houses, even of the great, seldom exceed one story; and the lofty walls which shroud them from view, without a window to enliven them, have a most monotonous effect. There are few domes or minarets, and still fewer of those that exist are either splendid or elegant. There are no public buildings but the mosques and medressas; and these are often as mean as the rest, or perfectly excluded from view by ruins. The general *coup d'œil* presents a succession of flat roofs, and long walls of mud, thickly interspersed with ruins; and the only relief to its monotony is found in the gardens, adorned with chinār*, poplars, and cypress, with which the towns and villages are often surrounded and intermingled.

If the barren aspect of the conntry strike the stranger, he will not be less painfully impressed with the scantiness, demoralization, and misery of its inhabitants. The allusions continually made in history to the multitudes that composed the armies of eastern monarchs have, I think, given rise to erroneous ideas regarding the population of Asia. If we except certain portions of Hindostan and China, it will, I believe, be found that no part of Asia can be considered as by any means thickly inhabited, in proportion to its superficial extent; and it is very questionable, how far these excepted parts could bear comparison with the more populous districts of Europe. Persia is, perhaps, the worst peopled of all, if we except those countries which principally consist of desert tracts. To attempt forming an estimate from any data we possess, of her population,

* Oriental plane.

would be folly; but by reasoning from the known number of her principal towns, and the closeness or frequency of the villages observed in travelling through the country, with the extent of cultivation attached to each, a tolerably just idea may be gathered, which would lead to a very low conclusion. The province of Fars and the districts about Ispahan are reckoned among the finest and most prosperous in Persia. Let that portion of these through which the road passes from Bushire to Ispahan be taken as an example, in proof of the above observations. The annexed rough estimate* will

	Souls.
* Bushire may contain.....	10,000
Brauzejoon.....	10,000
Dalakee.....	1,000
Kauzeroon.....	3,000
Sheerauz.....	40,000
Villages not named, between Bushire and Sheerauż, upon the road, and for 25 miles on each side, — say 100, of 300 souls each....	30,000
Zergoon may contain.....	2,000
Mayen.....	1,000
	97,000

	Souls.
Brought forward,	97,000
Yezid Khaust	600
Isferjoon	3,000
Komaishah.....	3,000
Mayar.....	600
Villages on the road between Sheerauz and Ispahan, and for 25 miles on each side thereof, — say 200, of 300 souls each	60,000
	164,200

In the course of the mountains between Sheerauz and Bushire, which separate the low country from the more elevated lands, population is but thinly sprinkled; and I believe that the number of villages allowed to this part of the tract in question is quite enough. Between Sheerauz and Ispahan there are several comparatively well-inhabited plains; but when it is stated that, as far as my information extended, I could not learn that there were contained in the very extensive and once fertile plain of Merdusht, and its dependencies, not more than fifty-five villages, great and small, and that there are in this road, as in all other districts in Persia, extensive tracts of mountain, and barren vallies, not inhabited at all, I think the number of villages allowed to this space is as much as the truth.

In regard to the breadth of the estimated space, I may observe that in travelling, particularly when looking down from elevated points, and when proceeding along the extensive plains, our view frequently reached to an extent greater than 25 miles on either side the road, and generally commanded a wide sweep on one side or other, which, in a country so free from intervening objects, enabled us to count every village to a great distance around us. It is true that, from the oppression inflicted upon the inhabitants, villages are often banished altogether from the vicinity of high roads that lead from one principal town to another; but I think the extent taken into account fairly meets this possible objection.

show that in a space of about 21,000 square miles, including two principal cities, the largest calculation cannot give more than a population of 164,000 souls. But it is to be remembered that in the provinces of Khorasan, Kerman, Mekran, &c. there are deserts of immense extent, almost entirely without inhabitants; and in various parts whole districts occur, which if not so barren, are from other causes equally deserted by human beings; and these must tend greatly to reduce the general proportion of population to surface. Of the western parts of the empire I cannot speak from experience; but such information as I possess appears to declare, that they differ not materially in these respects from the rest. Some districts on the other hand present happy exceptions to the rest of the country; such as fortunately enjoy the protection of powerful or independent chiefs; and thus avoid the fatal effects of that rapacity, which desolates the greater part of the kingdom; or such as are by nature more highly gifted, and which therefore flourish more than others in spite of misrule. Of the latter, the principal are Astrabad, Mazunderān, and Gheelān; certainly the best peopled parts of the kingdom: the land is rich and fertile, water abounds, so that the means of life are easily procured, and the inaccessibility of the country proves some protection to individual property. If there be any truth in these observations, it must appear that the stationary population of Persia cannot be great; that of the wandering tribes or Eels, is no doubt considerable in the abstract; but from the very nature of their lives and habits, it is clear that they can hold but a small proportion to the ground they occupy; and though hardy, bold, and useful as soldiers, they cannot by any means be considered as a class of inhabitants profitable to the state.

The bulk of the Persian people may be divided into four distinct classes: 1st, those who are attached to the various courts, and live in service with great men, including the military, and various functionaries; 2d, those who live in towns, comprehending merchants, shopkeepers, mechanics, &c.; 3d, those engaged in agriculture; and 4th, the wandering tribes or Eels.

That the first mentioned class should be found void of virtue

or principle is by no means to be wondered at. The character of the government to which they are attached, despotic, insolent and treacherous, naturally forms that of its servants. The nobles and superior officers of court, subjected absolutely to the caprice of a tyrant who can neither endure opposition nor disappointment, though they may continue cringing and abject to him, become in their turn, cruel, haughty, and imperious to their inferiors; and these again are delighted, when they can exercise the same petty tyranny upon such as may be unhappily subjected to their power. The greatest noble in Persia is never for a moment secure either in his person or property; if a fit of rage, jealousy, or avarice, of which he is the object, happens to seize his sovereign, a word, a look from the despot subjects him to the cruellest insults; he may be beat, maimed, disgraced like the lowest groom; his person violated in a way degrading to humanity, his wives and daughters delivered to the lust of muleteers, and the little family honor a Persian can possess may be scattered to the winds, without the unhappy sufferer having the least hope of remedy; without even the event creating the least sensation: it is the shah's pleasure; and if *he* be firm on his seat, the lives and properties of his subjects are less than the dust beneath his feet.

How can any feeling of patriotism, any sentiments of attachment to the sovereign, or government, exist under such circumstances? or how can that monarch expect to be faithfully served, whose servants, instead of meeting with reward for their fidelity, may be disgraced or destroyed in a moment of spleen or anger? The consequences are easily foreseen; the favour which they enjoy, and which is their only guarantee for life and property, they strive to preserve by flattery and fawning; while their whole souls are bent on deceiving, or pillaging, and, if they can with safety and advantage, on betraying their tyrant. Such is the natural effect of this wretched system, and it may be traced through all ranks of the same class, down to the lowest menial; they are with few exceptions arrogant and overbearing, unprincipled, treacherous and abandoned in the greatest degree; they stand, indeed, continually on the brink of a dangerous precipice,

and would be to be pitied, were it not, that the barefaced and hardened character of their vice changes that milder feeling into contempt and detestation.

The class of merchants, shopkeepers, and mechanics, are less constantly exposed than others to the tyranny of their superiors; their habits are more industrious, their time more fully occupied; and although much cannot be said in praise of their morals, they are far from being so actively vicious, as those of whom we have spoken above. They are possessed of much low cunning, strongly disposed to deceit and falsehood, eager after gain, cautious and penurious; all natural consequences of the circumstances in which they are placed; for they are liable to heavy exactions*, from which they cannot defend themselves, and often suffer extensively by those attached to the court, who contract debts they have no means of paying, so that they are forced in self-defence to disingenuous practices.

When the habits of the Eels are considered, an estimate of their character and nature may be readily formed. Constantly changing place, their local attachments are weak; rude, wild, and subjected to none but patriarchal authority, they are intolerant of restraint; unfettered by moral restrictions, always more or less at variance with neighbouring tribes, committing mutual depredations, they are addicted to plunder and robbery without deeming them crimes. They are little affected by the despotism of their sovereign, or his satellites;

* Curious examples might be related of the expedients fallen on by the people to defeat the keen scent and unfeeling rapacity of their tyrants. Meerza Abdool Rezāk told me, that during the time he lodged in a certain town, he was alarmed by the periodical cries of some person who appeared to be undergoing daily a violent beating, and who during the blows called out "Amaun!" Amaun!" (mercy! mercy!) "I have none," "I have nothing!" "Heaven is my witness, I have nothing!" and such like exclamations. He found that the sufferer was an eminent merchant, reputed to be very rich, and who some time afterwards confessed that he understood the prince or governor had heard of his wealth and was determined to have a share; but that he, as he well knew that torture would be applied to extort it from him, had determined to habituate himself to endure pain, that he might be able to resist the threatened unjust demands, even if inforced by blows. He had, now, he said, brought himself to bear a thousand blows of a stick, and as he was also able to counterfeit great exhaustion, he hoped to be able to bear as many blows as they would venture to give him short of occasioning his death, without conceding any of his money to them.

and consequently rude and independent beyond all other classes of society; good stuff for soldiers, but very impatient of discipline.

There is no class of men whose situation presents a more melancholy picture of oppression and tyranny, than the farmers and cultivators of the ground in Persia. They live continually under a system of extortion and injustice, from which they have no means of escape; and which is the more distressing, because it is indefinite, both in form and extent, for no man can tell when, how, or to what amount, demands upon him may, without warning, be made. It is upon the farmers and peasantry that the whole extortion practised in the country finally alights. The king wrings from his ministers and governors; they must procure the sums required from the heads of districts; who in their turn demand it from the zabuts, or ket khodahs of villages; and these must at last squeeze it from the ryots; each of these intermediate agents must also have their profits, so that the sum received by the king bears small proportion to that which is paid by the ryots. Every tax, every present, every fine, every bribe, from whomsoever received, or demanded in the first instance, ultimately falls on them; and such is the character of their rulers, that the only measure of these demands, is the power to extort on the one hand, and the ability to give or to retain on the other.*

* In describing the actual condition of the Persian peasantry, however, it is but fair to state, that when an opportunity occurs of viewing them closely in their domestic establishments, they often appear to enjoy a degree of plenty and comparative comfort, very incompatible with the tale of misery and ruin you almost always receive in answer to enquiries regarding their situation; evidences of expenditure are perceived, which prove that, in spite of oppression, they find means to retain enough to procure at least the necessaries of life. Most peasants can always produce a good supply of wheaten cakes, some mās, or sour milk, with a bit of hard cheese, and such like food. They, as well as their wives and children, generally are sufficiently, though coarsely clad; and have for the most part a a few numuds or carpets, with which they fit up a room for the reception of guests, and for great occasions. Provisions are indeed extremely cheap, so that a little money will procure enough for a large family; but articles of clothing are expensive, a comfortable suit cannot cost less than forty reals, and it will not last very long; so that they must actually receive, and retain, considerable earnings. Wages are high in Persia; a man receives a real a day, if he ploughs what is called day and night, that is a considerable part of each; and half of that sum, if he works in the day only. Labourers also earn large wages by job work, sometimes amounting, it is said, to three reals a day: thus the profits of agriculture must be large. I do not mean by any means to assert that the major part of

This pernicious system, originating in the oppression and injustice of their superiors, have produced the worst moral effect on the Persian peasantry. They are devoid of truth and all its attributes, candor, frankness, and honesty. They are treacherous and deceitful, deficient in gratitude, and all the more amiable dispositions of the mind. To protect themselves from extortion, theyresort to fraud and untruths. Unchecked by any principle inculcated in youth, nay, encouraged by the example of their superiors, they possess themselves unscrupulously of the property of others. They are, perhaps, not naturally cruel, but the little value set upon human life, and the acts of cruelty so frequently committed before their eyes, by their rulers, have familiarized them with bloodshed; they are but too apt to draw the knife on slight occasions; and were it not for the fear of consequences, their frays would often be fatal. The valuable qualities of the Persian peasantry are confined, it is to be feared, to their activity and intelligence, and these they certainly possess. In some situations, where they are further removed from the malign influence and tyranny of their rulers, they are said to possess more independence and blunt honesty; and this I hope and believe to be the case, although I am little able to confirm it on the strength of experience.

After what has been said, it is almost unnecessary, as it is ungrateful, to dwell at any length upon the Persian character in general; its prominent features certainly are falsehood and treachery in all

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the peasantry are possessed of the comforts here alluded to. The greatest proportion of families in a village will generally be found extremely poor. I only wish it to be understood that there are exceptions to this general rule, which strikes a traveller more forcibly, as it seems almost unaccountable that any should exist under the prevailing system. The people are, in truth, forced to every shift of cunning and duplicity, to baffle the avarice of their masters; and some succeed so well, or perhaps render themselves so useful, that they are permitted to enjoy a greater portion of their gains than the rest; and it is those whom we see in possession of so much more comfort. Extortion and tyranny, like other things, when pushed to extremes become checked by their own violence, or for want of food, and the limit of its operation on the Persian peasantry is probably but a little short of extermination and driving them to despair.

their shapes, cunning and versatility, selfishness, avarice and cowardice: there is no deceit, degradation, or crime, to which they will not stoop for gain, and their habits of falsehood are so inveterate, that untruths flow, as it were, spontaneously from their tongue, even where no apparent motive exists. To those who have never had the means of enquiring into this subject, or of viewing mankind under circumstances so pernicious to his moral and intellectual nature, the character here given may appear overcharged, dictated perhaps by disgust or spleen; but I feel assured that upon investigation it will not be found so; let reference be made to other authorities, to the page of former travellers; let the facts and anecdotes recorded by Herbert, Chardin, Hanway, and others be examined, and the records of the reigns of Nadir Shah, Aga Mahomed Khan, and their successors; and then let it be judged whether the picture be just or otherwise. Exceptions are doubtless to be met with, and for the honour of human nature let us hope that they are numerous. Under a more auspicious system, the Persians, without question, would be a very different and far more estimable people; but the traveller must relate things as he sees them, and under the present regime a different result could hardly be contemplated.

With the national character, the condition of society has been equally deteriorated and disturbed: the best relations of life are quite dissolved; there are here none of these venerable customs and sympathies of attachment that bind men together, and keep each rank in its proper sphere; all order seems on the point of suspension, and a disposition to anarchy obtains, which certainly would end in some revolution, were it not for certain counterpoises connected with the religion and peculiar political situation of the country, that tend to preserve things as they are, and to resist every natural effort at improvement. The insecurity of life, limb, or property, even for the passing day, produces a corresponding mistrust among individuals; each lives but for himself, and for the hour; man fears man; the servant distrusts his master, the master his servant; mutual necessity may keep them together while there is no inducement to separate, but the slightest prospect of increased advantage would dissolve the

strongest ties. This jealousy penetrates and destroys what to man should be his most sacred blessing, the circle of his family; the sweet domestic charities are scared away by suspicion and terror: the father and son dread, and often hate each other; even the wife, uncertain of her husband's life and of her children's affection, feels a separate and selfish interest, and grasps what she can secure and secrete of his property to provide for the evil day.* The worst is, that there is no rational prospect of amelioration, no point from which to look forward to a happier state of society, for there is no hope of any change in the system of government.

It has often been said, that the Persians are the politest people in the East. I should be loth to question their pretensions to this distinction; but I never have been able to discover good grounds for them. If by politeness be merely understood, a courteous manner to superiors and equals, a ready application of complimentary terms in conversation, and a strict adherence to forms and ceremonies, the Persians may in that case lay some claim to that accomplishment. If by that term be implied, that urbanity and easy affability not only towards one another, but towards strangers of all conditions, that puts them at ease at once; which flows from goodness of heart, and smooths the rougher paths of life; which prompts a continued exercise of kind attentions towards friends, of good-natured and disinterested offices towards indifferent persons, of forbearance from needless offence towards inferiors, and even enemies; in short, a want of selfishness, and a considerate feeling towards all men; if by politeness any thing like this be understood, the Persians, of whatever rank in life, possess it in small degree.

A certain measure of urbanity will doubtless be found among the higher ranks of every civilized nation; but I believe that the greatest proportion of Asiatic gentlemen, of whatever country, will be found equally polite with those of Persia. Those of Hindostan,

* Were it intended to enter into details, much might be said upon the baneful consequences of that monstrous abuse of nature's law, polygamy, and the evils and dissensions it introduces among families; but there are considerations that must occur to every reflecting reader, and need not to be dwelt upon in this place.

who yet remain, are so, I am sure; and such Arab chiefs as I have seen, are not less so, although their manners are somewhat different; and the Turks, if I am rightly informed, are not destitute of an austere civility. I believe, that in truth, the Persian owes his character for politeness more to the nature and phraseology of his language, than any other source; it is even more replete with hyperbole and metaphor than other eastern tongues; and the common forms of conversation, if taken literally, would be little better than senseless bombast. The least a Persian says, when he receives you, is that he is your slave, that his house and all it contains, nay the town and country, are all yours, to dispose of at your pleasure. Every thing you accidentally notice, his calleeoons, his horse, equipage, clothes, are all "*Peshcush-e-Sahib*," a present for your acceptance; but no one considers this, or any thing of the sort, as one bit more sincere than "your most obedient servant" at the bottom of an English letter. Nor is this flood of language used indiscriminately to all; it is like their holiday dress, put on only to appear before those whom they respect and fear. Let the relative situations be changed, and the truth will appear; then, the slight salutation, the loud authoritative voice, and the little measured, or even gross observations, will convince the stranger how little the former consideration he enjoyed was sincere or genuine in its nature. I speak from experience, for I have been in both situations.

If it be meant that the lower as well as the higher classes of the Persians are polite, I do not think the observation at all more just. Something of the charm of his language will tinge the conversation of the lowest groom; and you will see him as punctilious in the observance of ceremonies with his friend, as the khan, his master; but follow him one step farther into the common course of life, and you will find him not at all superior to the peasant of other countries; in fact, some of the lower orders, as camel-drivers, muleteers, grooms, &c., exceed, if possible, in brutality of action and language, the corresponding orders of all other countries I am acquainted with. The Persians are certainly lighter hearted, better humoured, and less grave or austere than most of other Asiatics; they are more easily

moved to gaiety, and have more lively imaginations than the Arabs, Turks, or Indians, the Affghauns or Tartars; and from this lively and careless disposition they have not inaptly been termed the *French* of Asia; but if the comparison is meant to imply a similitude in politeness and manners to that refined nation of Europe, I cannot for my part acquiesce in its justness.

Of a like empty and unreal description may be considered the claim which the Persians assert to the character of an hospitable people: — it seems chiefly to rest upon the boast they make of considering every stranger as a guest of the state, while he remains within its boundaries. This, as has been remarked (in note, p. 88.) is confined to strangers of rank and distinction; and in many cases, the duties of an host are very poorly discharged. * The same is generally found to be the case, when a private person receives a guest — what it may be among one another I cannot so well declare, although I have reason to believe that no great disposition to reciprocity of such offices exists among them; but certainly, when their guest is not of a rank from which they can hope for either much credit or profit, their hospitality is sufficiently cold and narrow. Of this I can speak from experience, and although exceptions will appear, those who have patience to follow the narrative of my journey through the country to its end, will agree with me in thinking that I have little reason to eulogize Persian hospitality.

* In many instances I have found the provision for a party so inadequate to its wants, that it was necessary to purchase a supply to eke it out. — Even during the illness of Dr. Jukes this occurred to such a degree, as to induce me to call the mehmandar and declare, that I should refuse the soorsaut, and purchase for the mission what it required. This brought to light a most disgraceful scene of petty peculation. The governor of the town did not disburse the whole which he charged on this account to government: the mehmandar again retained a portion of what he received, and his executive ministers took their profit from what he gave them to provide for our wants from the bazar; while the trades-people supplied inferior articles, because *our* servants tampered with them, that they might have also their little profit, and then complained both of quality and quantity as furnished by them.

CHAP. IX.

ON THE RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT OF PERSIA. — THEIR UNION REPRESSIVE OF THE PROGRESS OF IMPROVEMENT. — REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE MAHOMETAN SCHEME OF RELIGION. — ON THE BIGOTRY AND INTOLERANCE OF THE PERSIANS — OF FREETHINKERS — SOOFFEEISM AND SECTARIES. — MAHOMETANISM RAPIDLY DECLINING — ON THE PROBABLE DESTRUCTION OF IT BY CONQUEST OR BY REVOLUTION. — CAUSES, REGARDING GREAT BRITAIN AND RUSSIA THAT MAY ACCELERATE IT. — NATURE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PERSIA — DESPOTIC, UNSTEADY, AND CORRUPT IN THE EXTREME. — THE PEOPLE WITHOUT ATTACHMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OR THEIR COUNTRY — NO CONFIDENCE IN ANY RANKS, OR IN EACH OTHER. — CHARACTER OF THE PRESENT KING — HIS MEAN AVARICE — DEFICIENT IN COURAGE OR MAGNANIMITY — IN GOOD FAITH OR HONOUR — HIS NARROW POLICY — HIS CHOICE OF MINISTERS AND GOVERNORS — HIS NUMEROUS PROGENY AND FAMILY — THEIR APPOINTMENTS AND PROVISIONS.

THE religion and government of a nation have too direct an influence on its character, not to attract particular attention in an enquiry of this kind; and I think it will be admitted by those who know any thing of the matter, that no combination could be contrived, better calculated to repress the energies and destroy the faculties of man, than that formed by the religion and government of Persia.

Whatever may have originally been the moral or theological nature of the Mahometan religion, there cannot be a doubt that it has tended greatly to check the progress of knowledge and general improvement, wherever it is professed. One of the first acts of its earliest conquerors, was the destruction of all the books and records they could find. The Korān, they affirmed, contained all useful knowledge; they required and would tolerate none other; and, as if the deed had brought down an appropriate judgment, the literature of their descendants has ever since been circumscribed and imperfect. Many men of learning, historians, poets, philosophers, have appeared, but their works cannot compare with those of European

writers; the objects of science have not been consecutively pursued by each successive sage, with the zealous and indefatigable perseverance that has advanced its cause in the west; nor has the stream of improvement rolled on with the gradual but powerful current, which has fertilized and enriched the literary fields of Christendom. Zealous and enthusiastic, the sword was their only argument; it was heresy and death to doubt, or even to examine; reason was useless, and they ceased to employ it. Their religion, intolerant and ruthless, demanded the destruction of all who would not accept its doctrines, or purchase their lives by an arbitrary ransom; and it long was disgraceful to think of any occupation, other than that of extending the limits and power of the faith. Even in later times, when the value of literature became acknowledged, and its professors were more encouraged, the bigotry and superstition of the day checked its growth, and prevented its fruits from coming to maturity. In truth neither security nor encouragement ever lasted for a period long enough to admit of any very great progress being made in science. Ignorance and darkness continued to prevail, and soon invaded even the better parts of the religion itself. Explanations and commentaries multiplied, but truth became more obscure; schisms took place, sects arose, and the ministers of each led their ignorant followers as they pleased. Islamism became little more than a set of forms and ceremonies, which still continue to be studiously observed, and which mingle in all the most common affairs of life; the solemn act of prayer has degenerated into a customary routine, which may be practised under any circumstances, however awkward. The name of God in various forms is called upon on the most trivial, as well as the most important occasions; however men may be occupied when the set hour of prayer arrives, those who choose to observe it, merely turn aside from the rest, still laughing perhaps at the last ribald jest, and commence their invocation to God. During the intervals they continue the conversation, scold or give orders to their servants, comb their beards and adjust their persons, frequently interrupting their expressions of praise or of devotion, to give vent to the most trifling, or perhaps the most obscene remarks.

The consequences of thus mingling with every common act that which should be held sacred and mysterious, nor approached without a shrinking awe; this meeting and rubbing shoulders with the holiest things, in the common paths of life, has the direct contrary effect of what probably was intended, but just that which might have been expected. The religion, instead of being revered for its divine or moral doctrine, has (as has already been observed) dwindled into a mass of forms, adhered to from custom and law, and because no one dares, or attempts, to examine into their efficacy. The religion of Mahomet was never addressed either to the head or to the heart: it originated in an union of fanaticism and bigotry. The enthusiasm it was calculated to inspire was kindled by an appeal to the grossest of human passions, by flattering the sensuality of men too easily attracted by the promise of such enjoyments; and all that might lead to intellectual improvement was carefully excluded, because such would have been incompatible with its existence. A blind belief in the grossest absurdities was essential to the support of its doctrines; and the mind required to be plunged in the most profound ignorance, to fit it for receiving and obeying its impious, inhuman, and ungodly precepts.

Formed, in a certain degree, upon the model of the Christian religion, the compiler of the Mahometan code appears carefully to have rejected the most simple and reasonable, the most beautiful and divine doctrines of its prototype; and, with curious ingenuity, to have altered its whole spirit so as to suit his gloomy plan of a faith that should plunge mankind back into their former ignorance, and bind the whole world in the chains of prejudice, bigotry, and superstition. Not that the evil consequences likely to result from the full success of his plan were, perhaps, quite in the view of that singular man, while maturing his designs, and forming a code for his adherents; but, deeply imbued with a gloomy fanaticism, and immersed in ignorance himself, his powerful mind only thought of the advancement of his schemes, and neither saw nor calculated their effects upon mankind, except, as he fervently hoped, that all would be bowed to the yoke he was preparing for them.

The paralyzing effects of this religion upon the human mind, and the check it has given to all mental and moral improvement, has been to the full as great in Persia as in the surrounding Mahometan states, although varied in its operations by shades of national character. It is a common remark, that the Persians are less bigoted, and more liberal in matters that regard religion, than their neighbours, the Turks and Arabians, for instance; but I cannot say that this accords with my own observation; and probably the opinion has taken rise from certain peculiarities of character. The Persians being a lighter, more lively people than their neighbours, afford more numerous and more public instances of neglect in their religious observances. Many of them will converse with greater ease and less austerity on such subjects; and, perhaps, from the nature of their character, they do not so uniformly and systematically affix a bloody seal to their abhorrence of real or supposed pollutions of their sacred places. Indeed, the restraint exercised in this last respect is more owing to the increase of intercourse, so advantageous to them, which they have had of late with European Christians, towards whom they do not dare to exercise that violence they would use towards their own countrymen of that persuasion. In all other matters they are as deeply prejudiced as either Arabs or Turks; in some they are even more so. If an Arab, or a Turk, admit a Christian as his guest, he will eat with him from the same dish, and makes no distinction between him and a Mahometan. * A Persian will admit the Christian to his house, but takes care to separate his establishment from the rest of the house; if his guest should eat with him, a separate tray is provided, and all contact avoided as much as possible. Jews and Christians are not generally admitted in Persia into the public baths. Even when European gentlemen go to these, it is usual to give notice, that they may be made private; and this is tolerated more because government find it their interest to be civil to them than as a right. Were an European to travel without a mehmandar, and in

* Although I have not travelled in Turkey, I have the strongest reason to believe, from all accounts, that this is the case. It is so in Arabia, and it was so with those Turks in whose company I have occasionally been.

humble guise, out of the common tract, he would find strong objections made to his frequenting the Mahometan baths. It is death for a Christian or Jew to enter into any of the principal mosques or places of holy pilgrimage in Persia, as it is in Turkey; none of these religions, except Europeans, ever dream of attempting such a thing; and even when the high respect held for European gentlemen, joined to the liberal reward they are ever too ready to offer, induces them to waive this prejudice in their favour, they are only admitted in disguise, or, at all events, in secret. A poor Armenian, or Jew, would as certainly be put to death, were he found within the sepulchre of Imaun Reza, or Fatima, or the great mosque at Sheerauz, as in the mosques of Constantinople or Damascus.

These observations apply to the nation in general; but it is also true that a freethinking and irreligious spirit reigns to a considerable extent in Persia, among several classes of society. I have met with instances of it among the nobility, among the merchants, and men who had travelled much; and I have known several even among the priesthood, of high reputation, that were only *tolerant* on the score of religion, but who, after some length of acquaintance, used little caution in betraying themselves to be by no means strongly attached to that which they professed. Freethinkers in religious matters, and those who choose to depart from prescribed doctrines and forms, are commonly called *sooffees*, or *derwishes;* and it is certain, that this class of enthusiasts have not only increased much of late years in Persia, but have in a great measure occasioned the increase of scepticsm, which is complained of by the orthodox in that country: but it would be an abuse of the term to call all these sceptics sooffees. Some, by the operation of minds stronger than common, have been led to reject a part of the more extravagant doctrines of their creed; but still adhere to that part of it which they deem reasonable: others deny all but the unity of God; and some go so far as to refuse belief to the existence of a future state. Opinions and sects are thus infinitely varied, but in sooffeeism there is something yet more than all this; the sooffee is by no means the cold, calculating, and reasoning philosopher; he is much more of the enthusiast and fanatic;

more so even than the true mussulman; but the objects that inspire him are very different. What these objects are, it is very difficult to define; we are told that they relate to the abstract study of the nature both of God and man, unconnected with any religion but that of nature; and the enthusiast becomes often so rapt in these sublime speculations, that reason gives way under a task to which she is so unequal; and his meditations are changed to visions of the most incoherent wildness. It is not however intended to describe the nature of sooffeeism here*; those who have any curiosity on the subject, may see it ably and largely treated in the general account of the Mahometan religion, as practised in Persia, given by Sir John Malcolm in his history of that kingdom; a work, the ability and labor of which can only be justly estimated by those who know the difficulty of collecting the necessary materials, in a country where truth is so industriously and almost systematically concealed from view.

The religion of Mahomet seems now every where on the decline; in its earlier times, as in those of most new sects, persecution gave energy to its zeal, and raised the spark, which might otherwise have decayed of itself, into a destructive and overwhelming blaze; but it has long since seized and consumed the matter within its reach fittest to maintain it, and unsupported by principles of native strength, it has abated its fury, and declined; its conquests are at an end; there are neither countries nor minds for it now to subjugate, and the strength and the zeal of its princes have withered. Supported as they were by fanaticism, when poor and comparatively few, ease and luxury have so changed the descendants of those Mahometans who conquered Asia, and their energies have been so weakened by success and inaction, that they seem with difficulty to hold their own; there is no real power in any Mahometan state; and the Korān, instead of gaining fresh proselytes, is likely to see the number of its present adherents rapidly diminish. Their rivals of the Christian faith have made such mighty strides in real and useful knowledge, that those who were once opponents so formidable as to threaten

* A few further remarks upon sooffeeism will be found incidentally introduced toward the latter part of this narrative, in the course of the author's stay at Kabooshan.

their complete extinction, would now, were the attempt made in good earnest, fall almost without a struggle. The two chief Mahometan powers, Turkey and Persia, weak to a degree scarcely credible to those who have not seen them, would fall to the first attacking power, and every one knows that it is European jealousies alone, that still ward off the blow: but the impulse towards a crisis is strong; weakness on the one hand, and power on the other, cannot fail to bring it on. The march of improvement and knowledge is rapid, and whether the great end is to be accomplished by conquest or revolution, the puny efforts of a short-sighted policy cannot long delay it. The north, as of old, begins to teem with numbers beyond its power to support; and although the superfluity may flow for a time into other channels, it is perhaps not too bold to imagine that the tide of emigration which now sets towards America and New Holland, may some day be diverted towards Asia; and were the impulse once given, the Mahometan states could never withstand its shock. The more intangible inhabitants of the deserts, woods, and mountains, would find means to continue in the religion of their fathers for a time; but the more accessible and valuable districts would fall into the hands of the invaders, and the fiercer and remoter tribes, by occasional intercourse with these, would, as they did in the progress of Mahometanism, turn by degrees to the prevailing religion of the conquerors.

The mighty influence which Great Britain has acquired in India, the rapid revolutions that have there taken place, with the progress of colonization, which, in the absence of any (not very probable) catastrophe to her power, must follow; and the determination of Russia to extend her dominions on the side of Persia*, will all have

* This object of Russia is so earnestly desired, and so steadily pursued, that it is difficult to conceive how its accomplishment to a greater or less degree can be long postponed. Great Britain may remonstrate, but the perseverance of the imperial agents and emissaries operating in various points, over which there can be little controul, will, most probably, baffle such vigilance as may be employed in a matter, perhaps, not considered of vital importance; and if acquisitions be not made on the side of Armenia and Azerbijan, or Gheelan, they will sooner or later be made on the east and south-east of the Caspian. The late missions to Khyvah and Bockhara point clearly at this;

a tendency to accelerate such events: for these will probably end by forcing other European powers into operations, of which Asia will be the theatre; even the supposed, though perhaps visionary danger of our Indian empire, may give rise to movements of a like nature; and the Mahometan powers would thus be divided, and squeezed to death by the struggles of strangers.

It is probable that many will reject such speculations altogether, and that others may contemn them as wild and visionary; doubtless the period for changes such as these may be still far distant; but let those who thus object, examine into the relative situations of the countries in question; let them then look into the history of nations; and after pondering upon the revolutions which are there recorded, let them say, whether the above suggestions can be pronounced extravagant; let them reflect on the profound ignorance, the abject weakness, joined to the intolerable insolence and presumption of the Mahometan nations, and then declare, whether they can refuse their assent to the possibility of such a consummation.*

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and although, as yet, the Russians have had little in the way of success to boast of, in these quarters, perseverance and power may do much in time. Whether it be or be not a matter of much consequence to the interests of Britain, that Russia should weaken and attempt to intrench upon Persia, is a matter that may admit of considerable diversity of opinion, but if this *be* believed at variance with these interests, it may perhaps be worth enquiry, whether any encroachment on the eastern bank of the Caspian may not be yet more dangerous than that on the nearer point of Azerbijan.

* The rise and progress of the various creeds and superstitions that have swayed mankind, form certainly very curious subjects of contemplation: but how much more interesting is it to trace the divine religion we profess, and which, we are assured on the highest authority, shall one day possess the earth, gradually extending its benign influence, and narrowing the limits of superstition and darkness; and although the progress of the Christian religion may not have been very rapid or considerable in some quarters, it is yet comfortable to know, that of the four principal persuasions that divide the globe (that of Christ, that of Mahomet, of Boodh, and of Brahmah,) it alone continues to extend the number of its votaries; and from the nature of its doctrines so favourable to the diffusion of truth and knowledge, it cannot fail to do so, more and more. The religion of Mahomet (as has been observed in the text), is evidently on the decline; and there is no saying how easily some accidental impulse might occasion its downfall in its principal seats.

The quiet and unpretending faiths of Boodh and of Brahma, amalgamated as they are by most peculiar institutions with the very existence of the nations which profess them, and strengthened by gross ignorance and superstition, are better calculated for long

Let us now enquire a little into the nature and effects of the government upon the people of Persia. It is well known that this is a most absolute monarchy; when therefore the term Government is

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endurance than those that depend more upon the effects of enthusiasm and zeal. We have seen how the Brahminical religion has resisted the effects of every political revolution to which the country has been subjected: invaded and conquered by Mahometan armies, headed by monarchs whose zeal and bigotry nothing could exceed, and who in their fury against Paganism sacrificed millions of these mild and suffering people; held for ages under a sway of all others the most earnest to make proselytes, and unsparing of either persuasion or blood to increase their number; we find the religion, the manners, and customs of this people, continued unchanged; and although there is a considerable number of Mahometans in the mass of the Indian population, they have continued perfectly distinct from the Hindoos in every respect.

The Portuguese carried to India a zeal not less ardent, a sword hardly less bloody, than the Mahometans; and the influence they acquired on the Indian continent was very considerable; yet they have not been more successful in effecting any radical change in the religion or manners of the people. After using persuasion, and guile, in every shape to gain converts, they have left behind them a class of beings who have not the good qualities of any religion; separated from Mahometans and Hindoos, but totally ignorant of the faith they profess, the native Christians of the Malabar coast of India are at the lowest ebb of moral degradation, objects of contempt or disgust to all.

It is to the credit of the British name that the injurious and ineffectual expedients of force or guile have never been resorted to, although reasoning and persuasion have hitherto proved unavailing in the process of conversion; and unless the quiet and unalarming influence of education, and the progress of useful knowledge, shall have more powerful effects, it is hardly probable, that Christianity will very soon receive many proselytes from the influence of that nation in India.

If such be the power of resistance in conquered countries, what can be reasonably expected from those, which have hitherto successfully repelled all overtures towards intimacy with Christian nations, and over which there is no likelihood of any influence being acquired? It has been estimated that the religion of Boodh is at present professed by a greater portion of the population of the world than any other; these quietly follow the customs and faith of their fathers, without seeking to know whether they are right or wrong; inquiry or doubt upon the subject would, in their eyes be crime. They are no zealots, however, beyond the exercise of their religion; — they want no proselytes, they maintain no religious wars; but they spurn at all attempts, either by force or persuasion, at inducing them to change their faith. Were an European power even to gain an influence in any of these countries, it would in all likelihood be of the same description as that which the British now possess in India; chiefly political, and quite unconnected with religion. That changes will, one day or other, occur in these countries, the experience of ages may lead us to anticipate; but as far as present appearances give us the means of judging, there is little reason to expect their early occurrence. From the march of general knowledge, so rapid of late years, much doubtless may be expected, if the progress of improvement continue undisturbed by any of these storms, to which the nations are subject; and

used, it is synonymous with *the King*, or his servants acting under his immediate orders. These servants he not only chooses from the highest to the lowest himself; but they, as well as the whole of his subjects are entirely at his disposal; he may exalt or degrade them, fine, imprison, maim, or put them to death, according to his will and caprice, without being in any way answerable for such act; and the exercise of this power is only limited by the degree of security he feels on his throne, and the danger there may be at the time, in provoking the people, or individuals, by acts of cruelty or injustice. A sovereign of Persia, secure upon his throne, and possessing ability enough to guard against the effect of sudden insurrection, not only guides the whole empire at his pleasure, but furnishes the spirit that pervades every part of it; his servants all take their tone from him; and be the King cruel or merciful, peaceful or warlike, liberal or grasping, his disposition is reflected and multiplied throughout the whole land, down to the lowest ranks of society. It is, therefore, clear that the character of the government, or, in other words, of the soverign, must totally influence, or rather form that of the people. But as it not unfrequently occurred, that the reigning Prince, instead of enjoying in his own person the power usually possessed by sovereigns of the country, was under the influence of some bold controlling noble; or that the land was thrown into a state of anarchy, by numerous malcontent or rebellious chiefs, struggling to preserve and increase their power, the people in the first case received the tone of the controlling power; and in the second case, the increased disorder of the times superadded to the constant bad effects of despotism, rendered the national character worse than in less turbulent periods.

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we have, at all events, the assurance, that the clouds of error shall one day be dispelled, and all mankind be collected into the same fold. It is vain and unprofitable to speculate on the means, by which this shall be effected; but a mighty change must of necessity be worked, before the many jarring opinions of mankind can be reconciled, and the world be brought back to the simple and beautiful principles inculcated in the Gospel; charity, love, humility, peace, and good-will to all men.

When a country possesses a constitution so far firm and solid, as not to be altogether dependent on the individuals who succeed each other on the throne, the national character and prosperity acquire a character and value proportioned to the goodness of that constitution: but where the objects and policy of a state are liable to be totally changed every few years by the varying views of the sovereigns who may occupy its throne, neither permanent success nor general prosperity can reasonably be looked for.

It may be admitted, generally, that no form of government can be so favourable to the rapid increase of an empire, and to its attainment of grandeur and power, as that of an absolute monarchy, when it falls into the hands of a sovereign eminently endowed with genius, talents, and valor. Without the least control, even upon his wildest wishes, without any constituted authorities to restrain his ambitious views, he plans and executes his schemes of conquest; his spirit animates the hearts of all his servants, the strength of his powerful mind pervades and supports the remotest parts of his realms, and he passes over the dominions of his weaker neighbours, like the blast of the desert, subduing, and too often destroying, until his force becomes expended by extension, and the empire he acquired becomes too unwieldy to be swayed by a single arm. The converse of the proposition must be equally true; in the hands of a weak, even though well meaning sovereign, the greatest and most powerful monarchies are those which soonest crumble to pieces; the discontented and ambitious raise factions, throw off their allegiance, and contend for power; the remoter provinces soon retire to their former masters, or pass into the hands of more powerful chiefs: and after a contention that tears the country to pieces, another despot mounts a narrowed throne, or many arise, and maintain themselves, until some superior tyrant, like the serpent of Aaron, swallows up all the rest. Thus has it always been; the prosperity of those countries whose governments are absolute monarchies, never has been of much permanence; and as it seldom happens that many able sovereigns succeed each other, so no one dynasty ever endures very long; each in succession, as an eloquent author

observes, " follows the common law; the unceasing round of valor, greatness, discord, degeneracy, and decay."

No country on earth offers a stronger illustration of these remarks than Persia; none has witnessed greater or more sudden revolutions; none has been more glorious and prosperous; none more debased, desolate, and wretched; and none has had a more rapid succession of sovereigns, or more various in their characters. A few instances have occurred where a remarkable succession of able monarchs has given permanence to a dynasty, and an uncommon degree of tranquillity and prosperity to their country; but the imbecility of their successors has constantly caused their fall, dragging along with them the kingdom into misery and ruin.

The principal direct check to improvement and prosperity in Persia is the insecurity of life, limb, and property, arising from the nature of the government, as well as from the revolutions to which that government is constantly liable. This must always repress the efforts of industry; for no man will work to produce what he may be deprived of the next hour.* It may be suggested, that although there is no code of laws with proper means of enforcement to protect the subject, yet that the customary law is respected, and prevents great abuses; and this is to a certain degree true; or complete anarchy and

* It is not long ago, since a native of Fars succeeded in making certain improvements in pottery, so far as to manufacture a species of porcelain, resembling tolerable china ware. His fame quickly spread, and soon reached the court; when the king heard it, he dispatched an order for the man to repair directly to Tehrān, to make china for the *Shah*. The poor fellow was seized with consternation at this order, for he knew that not only should he have to work for the Shah, but for all his officers and courtiers; while so far from being paid, he would probably not receive enough to keep body and soul together. He accordingly went to court, not to make china, but mustering every thing he could raise for a bribe to the minister, he besought him to report to the king that he was not the man that made the china; that the real potter had run away nobody knew where, and that *he* himself was thus erroneously placed in restraint, and prayed that he might obtain his release. The minister soon sent him his discharge, and the man left the capital for his own country, fervently vowing never to make a bit of china, or attempt improvement of any sort as long as he lived. It is a common practice thus to kidnap the best workmen in all trades, for the use of the court and great men of the provinces, who seldom or never pay for such matters. Thus every one rather avoids the reputation of excellence, in any but the commonest trades; and thus the conduct of the government and its officers strikes directly at the root of all improvement and useful invention.

confusion would ensue: but it is also true that the chief security of the subject has always been in the good dispositions of his sovereign or governing chiefs; or in their dread of risking popularity or life by tyranny. In proof of this, it is but necessary to refer to the pages of all writers on Persia, both ancient and modern; numerous instances will there be seen of the arbitrary and cruel acts of its kings. We may see the great Shah Abbas putting to death, with his own hand, an innocent traveller, while asleep, because his horse startled at him; and cutting off a man's nose, and forcing him to eat it, for some equally trivial offence; Aga Mahomed Khan putting out the eyes of those who ventured to look upon his hideous countenance; and maiming or destroying numbers for slight or imaginary faults. Nadir Shah breaking all bounds of humanity, and shedding seas of blood, with a sweeping disregard to every impulse but those of his own dark and savage disposition: and chiefs and governors every where beating, maiming, and rending their property from those ryots unfortunately placed in their power. It is true, that but few of the lower orders, particularly of the cultivators of the earth, ever come within the sphere of the king's tyranny or favour; but if it be true that the conduct of the servant takes it character from that of the master, they are hardly better off; and may be worse, as they have but small means of appeal from their petty tyrants.

The consequence of this state of things is melancholy; the people at large have no attachment to the goverment, and but little to their country. They are reckless and indifferent to all but the passing hour; living from day to day, uncertain whether they may have property or life on the morrow. They are eager to accumulate money, to furnish the means of support, or to purchase those of safety in the day of trouble: and this desire too often becomes an insatiable avarice, but little nice as to the means of satisfying itself. None, however, will risk the outlay of a penny on any improvement or speculation, however flattering the prospect of advantage, because he can never be certain of reaping the fruits of his adventure; no provision is made for more than the immediate demand of any article, even in that of food. A year of scarcity, if such were to occur, would

be a year of famine; for the grain raised in any one district seldom much exceeds the consumption of its inhabitants*, and that required for ascertained and customary demands. Thus, no trees are planted, no extensive improvement on the face of the ground takes place; no public buildings of solid materials are erected, for no one thinks of posterity, but only to accommodate himself. Distrust and anxiety prevail, and, penetrating into the most sacred haunts of man, ruin his peace, and paralyze his energies.

The nature of the present government, however, as the principal cause of the present state of Persia, is the matter chiefly in question, and of this subject the character of the reigning monarch forms a prominent point.

Futeh Allee Shah succeeded his uncle, Aga Mahomed Khan, on the throne of Persia in the year 1798. He was then about forty years of age: the preceding twenty years had been passed under the shadow and protection of his powerful uncle, with whom he always was on the best terms; and his earlier youth, through the mildness and tolerance of Kurreen Khan, was passed in tolerable ease, chiefly, I believe, in Mazunderan, his native province.† His character therefore has not been formed in the school of trial and adversity, and it was not naturally of a very marked description. For one brought

* Such is the difficulty of procuring supplies in many parts of Persia, and so nearly balanced is the demand and supply of necessaries, that it is considered prudent, if not absolutely necessary, for large parties to send notice before them on the road, that the supplies they require may be collected for them ere they approach. Even on the road from Bushire to Sheerauz, it was considered necessary, in order to prevent disappointment and inconvenience, to give intimation of the approach of the mission, although it did not consist of more than 150 mules, and a somewhat smaller number of men, lest supplies should be found scanty. This we were not only assured of by our mehmandar, but his report was confirmed by several respectable persons in Sheerauz. Certainly in some districts this scarcity does not exist; and in some parts of the kingdom the trade in corn is considerable.

† It is related of Kurreem Khan, that when after his successful struggle for the throne, hostages from the families of his opponents were brought him from all quarters; and among others from the Kadjer tribe; Baba Khan, the present king of Persia then quite a child, being one, the king looked at him once or twice with great interest, and at length exclaimed, "Why have you brought that boy? I have no business with him; his head is made for a crown; send him home to his mother." He presented him with a khelaut, horses, and attendants, and dismissed him back to Mazunderan with honour.

up with the exercise of uncontrolled power, his dispositions are by no means bad: for a Persian monarch he is neither considered cruel, nor disposed to injustice; he is sincere in his religious professions, a good father, temperate in his habits, seldom tasting wine or spirituous liquors*, and his life is, I believe, unstained with the more disgusting debaucheries that disgrace too many of his subjects. He has no title to courage; on the contrary he is reported to have behaved in a very questionable manner on the few occasions where he was required to face danger; neither can he lay claim to generosity. In fact, he is a man possessed of very little talent, and no strength of mind; sufficiently calculated to live as a respectable private character, but quite unfit to be the king of such a country; and he could neither have succeeded to the throne, nor kept his seat there had not his powerful and crafty uncle worked for him, removing by force or guile every individual likely to give him trouble†, and had not the surrounding countries been so circumstanced that no danger could reach him from abroad.

But the ruling passion and besetting sin of Futeh Allee Shah, which has proved more injurious to his country and his power than all the efforts of his enemies, is avarice, an insatiable desire of accumulating wealth. This disposition, so characteristic of a Persian king, he probably owes to the education he received from his uncle, Aga Mahomed Khan. Early observing the importance of

* The king indulges moderately in English beer, the use of which has been recommended to his majesty by his medical advisers.

† This was the excuse made by Aga Mahomed Khan, for many of his bloody and atrocious deeds. After he had inveigled his brave and generous brother, Jaffer Koolee Khan to Tehrān, and treacherously murdered him, he wept over the body with all the appearance of the most frantic grief; and calling his nephew (the present king, whom he always called *Baba Khan*), then quite a youth, to approach, he bade him observe the corpse of the bravest of men, and the best of brothers. Then loading the young prince with abuse, he exclaimed, "It is for you I have done this! the gallant spirit that lately ani-
"mated that body would never have permitted my crown to rest upon your head!
"Persia would have been distracted with internal wars. To avoid these consequences,
"I have acted with shameful ingratitude, and have sinned deeply against God and man!"
(Vid. Malcolm's History, vol. ii. page 278.) And in this way he did indeed cut off thebest and bravest of the land, until hardly the chance of competition with the present monarch remained.

wealth in a country like Persia, where every thing is mercenary, the natural impulse was flattered and increased with the means of gratification, till it became overwhelming and paramount to all other feelings. The king will stoop for gain to the meanest and most ludicrous shifts, or perpetrate the greatest crimes; and as every one about him well know the monarch's passion, they, in their turn, use every means for accumulation, that they may be prepared to purchase favour or avert persecution by adequate presents. The king, not only desires to possess treasures himself, but aims at being the sole depository of the kingdom's wealth. He has, however, a motive for this beyond the mere love of accumulation; he knows that the surest way to repress the turbulent dispositions of the Persian nobles is to keep them poor, and, in truth, he acts pretty well up to this rule; for as he possesses the best information of the pecuniary situation of most of his subjects, so, when he learns of any considerable hoard, he takes care to cause it to change masters in the shape of present, fine, or quit-money.

The king's avarice is the common jest, as well as the bane of the country, and numberless amusing instances are related of this his ruling passion. They tell, that one day as he was walking with the late minister, Meerza Sheffea, he found a rupee lying on the ground, which picking up and showing to the minister, he said "What think you, Meerza; you are a man of learning; do you "think you could in any way increase this rupee to a thousand "tomauns?" The meerza replied that it passed his poor comprehension; but the king, ah! to be sure the king was all powerful; and no doubt it could be done if his majesty said so. The king calling a pesh-khidmut*, enquired what fruit had lately come in season and that being informed that apples had just come in, he desired that the worth of the rupee in that fruit might be instantly procured. It produced fifty or sixty apples; of these he sent three or four

* A *Pesh-khidmut* is a servant constantly in attendance about the person of his master, particularly while he dresses and takes his meals: he nearly answers to the *Khidmutgar* of India.

a-piece to several of the noblemen and highest officers at court, not excepting the minister himself, and each of these were forced by etiquette to send in return a considerable offering for the king, with another for the royal messenger: fifteen hundred tomauns were collected in this way, and three hundred for the messengers, *all* of which his majesty pocketed, distributing only ten tomauns among his envoys. On another occasion, being on a hunting excursion at Kaud, a village not far from Tehrān, celebrated for its fine pomegranates, he set to work, and made with his own hands, a considerable quantity of the *Rob*, or inspissated juice. It is said he never quitted the operation (in which he was assisted by one of the princes) till it was completed; and then he made the same use of it as related above of the apples; receiving an adequate return for so signal a favour as a gift the work of the royal hands. But it is now rather a stale expedient, as he constantly renders some trifling article, fish, game, &c. subservient to this species of royal beggary.

The king is a good shot, and delights to shoot at a mark, but he also loves to make his amusement profitable; the mark commonly made use of is a live sheep, near which stands a furosh, ready to tell the success of the shot, and to dispatch the animal if only wounded. When his majesty is ready to shoot he challenges the courtiers about him to bet with him upon the shot; and it would be the height of rudeness and impolicy to refuse; but the king's game is sure, for whether he strikes the animal or not, the furosh, who has his lesson, and whose property the carcass becomes, rushes upon it the moment the shot parts, with a "mash allah!" (bravo) knocks it down, and cuts its throat, and none of course can question the author of its fate. These sheep, which are always the property of some village or proprietor near the place, are never paid for by his majesty.

While I was at Tehrān, Meerza Assad Oolla, a man who held an office of trust at court, and who was a near relative of Mahomed Zekey Khan, the minister at Sheerauz, fell under the king's displeasure; perhaps it was this relationship, and the ill-will of the ameen-u-doulut, who was said to owe him a grudge, which led to his

disgrace; for the king, equally desirous to humble the pride of Zekey Khan's family, and to get hold of some of the meerza's hoarded cash, ordered him to be dragged before him, under an accusation of embezzling public money: unfortunately some expressions escaped him during his examination, which roused the anger of the king, who immediately ordered the furoshes * to bind and beat him; as the blows fell on the meerza, the king's anger waxed hot; he abused him grossly, and at last, in a transport of rage, he ordered them to strangle him: a cord was put round his neck, and he was thrown on the ground, when the king began to exclaim, "What will you give for your life, "you villain? will you give me 100,000 tomauns? the shah knows you have got them — what does he say?" The cord being relaxed, the meerza half choked exclaimed, that he would give all he had; but this was too equivocal a reply: the cord was tightened, the blows rained thick, and the questions were loudly reiterated: at last, the ameen-u-doulut, who had his own ends in view, bending towards the culprit, as if to hear something he was saying, exclaimed, "Sire, the meerza promises the 100,000 tomauns; I will pledge myself for him." On this the king gave the signal, the cord once more relaxed, the unhappy meerza was released, and permitted to return to his home; and the next day some thousand ducats were sent to the king, with his humble apologies; and matters had been so far arranged, that these were accepted as a pledge for the rest, which were kept hanging *in terrorem* over the unhappy wretch for a future occasion. The ameen-u-doulut, by his interference, got his enemy entirely in his power, being at any time able to stir the king against his life, in case of need; so that the poor man will lead a miserable existence, and in all probability will soon be deprived of life, or sight.

It has been asserted, and I believe on very good authority, that the king has reversed the usual order of affairs in gallantry; and in

* Furoshes are menials employed for inferior offices, as pitching tents, sweeping out houses, &c., and they are always in attendance to execute their master's pleasure. When he wishes to punish a servant, it is generally performed by the Turoshes; one or two hold the culprit, while another lays on him with sticks as long as his master wishes, without the least remorse.

his own harem turned his favours to a source of profit, imparting them but to those fair ones, who are able and willing to pay exorbitantly for them. In his thirst for money, his majesty has had recourse to expedients hitherto, I believe, unknown to any monarch of Persia or the East. He has disposed not only of his daughters, but of his wives, to individuals of the nobility, but of unusually inferior rank, for large considerations in money; and not always with the consent of either party. By the Mahometan law, a man may repudiate his wife in case of misconduct, or at her own desire; but to divorce a wife for the purpose of selling her, cannot but be regarded as an infringement of the law; yet the king has committed this infringement in more than one instance, fastening his cast-off spouse upon some miserable rich individual, from whom he wished to wring a considerable sum, for all expences, as well as a very heavy dower, are paid by the husband. It should be added, that such connections are sometimes formed very willingly, for the sake of political influence and protection.

The king himself now confesses, that his desire for accumulating is unappeasable; and that, on days when he has not received a large sum by irregular means, as fines, bribes, presents, confiscations, he feels melancholy and unhappy. One of his great delights of late, has been to have large trays of golden coins set before him, which he sits counting over, and contemplating. The "Auri sacra fames" must have reached a great height, when it has come to this.

The reign of Futeh Allee Shah has been far from remarkable for its military splendor, and the nation at large has but a poor opinion of their monarch's courage, or warlike abilities; indeed the few remaining veterans of his uncle's armies talk of their king with bitter contempt. He has rarely been exposed to danger in action, but, early in his reign, when his uncle Saduck Khan attempted to dispute with him the throne, it became necessary for him to encourage his troops by his presence, and he appeared in the field along with his valuable old minister, Hadjee Ibrahim; but although they kept at a very sufficient distance, the king, as it is affirmed, betrayed considerable uneasiness, till, at last, one or two shots from

Zumboorucks* dropping among them, he fell from his horse in a swoon of terror, and was picked up in no comfortable condition by the meerza, who immediately dismounted to his assistance, exclaiming, "Kibleh allum Ghyze furmōodust." "What a terrible passion the father of the world has fallen into!"

His conduct to that uncle, as well as to the venerable Hadjee Ibrahim, whose exertions were certainly the means of confirming him upon the throne in the disturbances consequent upon the death of Aga Mahomed Khan, do not speak highly either for his good faith or magnanimity. When Saduck Khan found he could no longer struggle with any hope of success for the throne, he threw himself on his nephew's mercy, trusting to his sacred oath that he would not put him to death. The king, having thus got possession of his person, shut him up in a room, closed up the doors and windows, and left the wretched man to die by inches:—thus he kept his oath of using no violence. When the room was afterwards opened, it was discovered that the miserable wretch had dug deep into the earth with his hands, and swallowed the clay to assuage the pangs of hunger.

For some time after he had begun to reign in peace, Hadjee Ibrahim, to whom that security was chiefly due, continued to hold the office of prime minister; but jealousy of his power, or thirst for his supposed wealth, were stronger in the king's breast than either gratitude or honour; a pretence was formed to seize and degrade him, and he was condemned to lose his eyes; some expressions reflecting on the king's injustice and ingratitude, added, it is said, (and no wonder) to some words of abuse, escaped the old man during the execution of the sentence, and were officiously reported to his majesty, who instantly ordered his tongue to be cut out. He died under the tortures and persecutions that were inflicted on him, and thus was saved from a more public death.

The King's generosity is not more conspicuous than his magnanimity; the presents he makes, and the khilauts he bestows, are contemptibly miserable. If he orders a shawl to be presented, it is

* Zumboorucks are small pieces of artillery, or rather wall-pieces on swivels, mounted on camels; almost the only species of artillery used in the field in Persia.

generally old, coarse and shabby; if a dress, it is found to consist of the poorest trash, superficially covered with a flimsy coat of gold or silver, of no intrinsic value. When he can prevail on himself to part with money, he does it in sums inadequate to the most reasonable expectation. This penurious meanness has greatly tended to alienate the affections of his servants, sufficiently mercenary themselves, and to destroy every spark of zeal for his service. Early in his reign, in some of the affairs his army had with the Russians, a brave Bucktiaree chief, Assad Khan, mounted on a magnificent horse, which had cost him eighty khorassanee tomauns (near 150*l.* sterling), charged certain pieces of artillery at the head of his people, cut down several of the gunners, and brought off their heads; but his horse was killed in the charge. He laid the heads at the king's feet, who gave him high praise, and ordered him a present of *five tomauns*. Disgusted at this paltry treatment, after risking and suffering so much, the chief scornfully rejected the money, quitted the camp with his party, and took to the hills, where he continued, plundering caravans, and committing other depredations, until Mahomed Allee Meerza, as has elsewhere been related, by an act as bold and generous as his father's was mean, succeeded in appeasing his resentment, and convincing him that his best policy would be to enter his service, and become a peaceable subject.

The king's personal character exactly describes that of his government: the policy he observes is narrow, short-sighted, and contemptible. He views Persia, not as his country, which he should love, protect, and improve, but as a property of which he has a lease, uncertain in its duration, and of which it behoves him to make the most he can while in his power. The throne having come into the hands of his family by conquest, he treats the whole country (except, perhaps, the seat of his own tribe in Mazunderan) like a conquered nation; and his only concern is how to extort from them the greatest possible amount of money. So long as he thinks he succeeds in this, he cares little about laws, regulations, police, &c. He leaves these, for the most part, to the governors he appoints; and it is not until the revenue fails, or till the cry of distress becomes

too great to be suppressed, that the state of a province is ever enquired into. The great object being to gather in as much, and expend as little as possible, the principle is carried to a length that often defeats itself. There are many ways in which a small sum of money, judiciously applied, might produce a large additional revenue; but this would imply a far greater spirit of speculation and forecast than exists in Persia. Should a mine be discovered, or a canal be required to fertilize a district, the king will do nothing; individuals must run the risk, or the matter must lie dormant. And thus many rich veins of metals are left unworked, many tracts that might be cultivated remain waste, because no individual dares do what the king will not undertake or encourage. There are no roads nor bridges made by government; no public establishments, caravanserais, nor medressas built. Should the king desire to render his name popular, or well regarded on any particular occasion, he *gives orders* that a certain sum shall be sent to such a mosque, or shrine, or he *directs* such a caravanserai, or medressa, to be repaired; but the expence seldom lights ultimately on himself; repairs, in particular, are for the most part effected by the joint labour of the district, for which the labourers seldom receive much pay. Upon the same principle all the old palaces and royal gardens, in various parts of the kingdom, are suffered to fall into decay, for want of an allowance for their maintenance and repairs. Nothing of this sort is allowed, except in those instances where his majesty makes an occasional visit, and even then nothing beyond a superficial patching is ever performed.

The only species of speculation involving outlay which still continues to be practised in Persia is that of commercial adventure. The wants of men must be reciprocally supplied, and merchants experience a certain degree of protection every where. In these adventures, the nobles of the country not unfrequently engage, and the king himself, it is said, trades largely. But it is a mistake to suppose that merchants are entirely exempt from the arbitrary exactions to which all others are exposed, as will be proved by examples in the course of this narrative; but the wealth of a merchant may

generally be more easily concealed; and thus many, doubtless, do escape extortion, to which they would otherwise have been forced to submit.

The common system for regulation of the empire is to appoint a governor in each province, or large department, for the collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the regulation of its police, and all other duties of the station, who corresponds with the chief minister of the crown; while the monarch himself, surrounded by his officers, resides at the capital, and attends to the larger details, and all more important matters of foreign policy; or he goes on expeditions, makes war, or takes journies around his dominions, to see that every thing is as it should be.

In a state blessed with a well organized constitution, the increasing wealth of all classes of society is looked upon as evidence of its prosperity, and is hailed by the government with satisfaction, as confirming its power and stability. The government and community mutually support each other, because they know that their best security lies in so doing. But the case is very different in a country without any constitution, where the people have no rights, and the fate of all rests upon the will of a despot, who, raised to the throne, not by their consent, but by the power of his party, conquers by their means each province and district of his native land, from the competing tyrants that hold them; or who, if he succeed unopposed to the throne of his father, does so because there happens to be no other party powerful enough to offer opposition, and not through the voice of the people. In such a state there can be no community of feeling or interest between the despot and his slaves, the people: *he* mounts the throne to enjoy the delights of power, of riches, or conquest; *they* submit, not from any confidence in his paternal care, but because they have no choice, and must wear the chains of some such despot: *he* assesses them to the utmost extent he can contrive to wring from them, not that he may be enabled to protect and dispense to them happiness and justice, but to gratify his own inclinations; and *they* comply with these requisitions to the least possible extent, not with the willing spirit of

those who feel that they ought to contribute to the public security, but because they are unable to resist them. Such are the natural, but most painful consequences of their relative situations.

Whatever bright exceptions may be found in the history of Persia, it will hardly be denied, that the above is too true a sketch of the conditions of absolute sway. The sovereign is every thing, the people nothing; and it is particularly the case with the reigning family of Persia. They waded to the throne through the blood or defeat, of contending aspirants: and it is not surprizing that their policy should be to repress as much as possible the power of all who now, or at a future period, might be likely to give them trouble. The late king, Aga Mahomed Khan, both while struggling for the throne, and afterwards when firmly seated on it, made it a principle to let no one live who could be dangerous; and he left little for his nephew to do in thus securing himself. "How much blood," used he to exclaim with an hypocritical sigh, "how much blood "have I shed, that this boy (Baba Khan, the present king) may "reign in peace!" And his nephew has followed his footsteps so far as was left for him to do; and so completely, that he has not left in any of those parts of Persia to which his power extends, a single dangerous noble; nor, on the other hand, has he left a man with ability sufficient to command an army, in case of need, or fit to yield the aid of gallantry united with conduct in the day of trouble. When he has not been able quite to break the power of particular chiefs, he endeavours to obtain such hostages as may prove sufficient security for their allegiance. It was also the policy of Persian sovereigns to form a kind of opposition to the power of the old nobility, by excluding them from the chief civil offices of state, and appointing to these, individuals from a class whose birth and connections were too low to render them independent of the power that raised them, however great might be their talents. The reigning sovereign has adopted this policy also; all his ministers, and many of his chief officers were men of this description, who have raised themselves by their own talents. The same precaution has been taken in other departments of state; no noble unconnected with the royal

family, is to be found at the head of any of the more considerable governments; and all the principal of these, with many of inferior importance, are filled by the sons and grandsons of the king*; thus Azerbijan, Kermānshah, Fars, Khorasan, Mazunderan, and Gheelān, are all governed by the elder sons of his majesty. Great part of Irak, it is true, is left in the hands of the Sudr Ameen, because he is found to render this important province far more productive, than any other person; but several parts of it form governments for princes of the blood; and they are thickly scattered over every part of the kingdom that owns the royal authority. Kerman alone is in the hands of Ibrahim Khan, who has married a daughter of the king, and who is therefore allowed to assume all the attributes of a prince of the blood.

This system is undoubtedly well calculated to ensure peace and tranquillity to the kingdom and its sovereign, during his lifetime; for it is highly improbable that any of the princes will make an open attempt either on his province, or on the crown, while his father lives; but it clearly must sow the seed of future disturbances and civil wars beyond calculation; for there is not one of these princes

* The family of Futeh Allee Shah, if we may believe the most accredited accounts, (for, strange as it may appear, even those constantly resident at court have failed to attain certainty on the subject) consists of about fifty sons, and at least an hundred daughters. Many of the sons have families of twenty and thirty children; and some of these are of an age to have wives and husbands; so that when the number of the king's progeny is stated at more than a thousand, it will not appear incredible. The following is a list of the disposition of part of his sons, with the governments they respectively hold.

Azerbijan	Abbas Meerza.	Kerman	Ibrahim Khan (son in law).
Gheelān	Mahomed Reza Meerza.	Kermanshah	Son of Mahomed Allee Meerza.
Mazunderan	Mahomed Koolee Meerza.	Toorsheez	uncertain.
Khorasan	Hussun Allee Meerza.	Nishapore	Son of Hussun Allee Meerza.
Fars	Hoossain Allee Meerza.	Astrabad	Budiazemān Meerza, son of Mahomed Koolee Meerza.
Casveen	Allee Muckee Meerza.	Amob	Timour Meerza, son of Mahomed Koolee Meerza.
Yezd	Mahomed Wullee Meerza.	Hamadan	Son of Mahomed Allee Meerza.
Tehrān	Allee Shah Meerza.		
Booroojeerd	Sheikh Allee Meerza.		
Khoonsar	name uncertain.		
Nehawund	Hyder Koolee Meerza.		
Zunjāu	Abdoolla Meerza.		
Cashan	name uncertain.		

who would scruple at wading through the blood of all his brothers, and plunging the whole nation into misery, to have but a chance of the crown. Personal risk, and the want of a party to commence the struggle, will alone prevent the attempt in many; but those who have the power will no doubt exert it. Family bonds have unhappily been ever found a weak fence against the efforts of ambition; and in Persia, that barrier, weak as it is, hardly exists. The blood of relatives is the first to flow in such a struggle; for there is no enemy like an uncle or brother, whose right to the succession is as great or superior to that of the tyrant he opposes; and it is highly probable, that in ten years after the king's death, of the offspring he now boasts, amounting by some accounts to more than a thousand, in children and grandchildren, not ten may be found alive. Indeed, without imagining any cruelty extraordinary for Asia, the principle of self-preservation alone would prompt such measures, for each competitor well knows that in such severity alone would rest his own security. An English gentleman, attached to the court of Abbass Meerza, was witness to a curious and melancholy illustration of this feeling; he went to visit one of the princes, then a young lad, and found him strangely employed. Seated on his cushion, and with his eyes shut, he was feeling with both hands, like a blind person, for his calleeoon, which his servant was presenting to him. After a moment, the gentleman asked, "What are you doing, prince? is there any thing the matter with your eyes?" "Oh no," said the boy "nothing; but I "am practising blindness; you know that when my father dies we "shall all be put to death, or have our eyes put out, and I am "trying how I shall be able to manage without them."

Each of these princes has a wuzzeer appointed to assist him in his government; and when he is young the king generally sends some person on whom he can depend (for the most part a meerza from his own court) to instruct the novice, and, in truth, to govern the province, for he transacts all business, and is made responsible for every thing. Indeed these princes are so often but dissolute young men attached to their pleasures, to whom the situation is given as a provision, that their ministers are almost always the operative and

responsible governors. A sum is fixed by the king and his ministers, for the province to yield to his treasury clear of all expences, except sometimes a provision for the prince, whose income is thus intended to be limited: in addition to this, all expences of collection, of police, military establishment, payment of salaries, and other expences incidental to government, are provided from the province; beyond which the prince and his ministers make what they can. Now, as the desire of every prince is to accumulate a full treasury, for the impending struggle, and that of every minister or other officer to feather his own nest against a stormy day, without any regard to honesty or principle, some idea may be formed of the degree to which the wretched people are fleeced.

CHAP. X.

ON THE RESOURCES OF PERSIA. — THE AMOUNT OF ITS REVENUES MOST DIFFICULT TO BE ASCERTAINED. — THE SOURCES, REGULAR AND IRREGULAR. — THE LAND-TAX. — TENURES OF LAND. — CROWN LANDS. — INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY. — CHARITABLE AND RELIGIOUS PROPERTY. — PROPERTY ASSIGNED IN TEEOOL OR FIEF. — FOR MILITARY SERVICE, SALARIES OR ANNUITIES. — LAND CULTIVABLE ALONE ESTEEMED PROPERTY. — FORMS BUT A SMALL PROPORTION OF GENERAL SURFACE. — IMPROVEMENT OF COMMON BY IRRIGATION GIVES A RIGHT OF PROPERTY. — AS DO INHERITANCE, PURCHASE, OR GIFT FROM THE CROWN. — PROPRIETORS RIGHTS. — TERMS OF SERVANTS' OR LABOURERS' SERVICE. — CUSTOMARY LAW OF THE LAND NULLIFIED BY THE AVARICE OF THE KING AND NOBLES. — SUBJECTS OF TAXATION. — DUTIES ON EXPORTS, IMPORTS, AND TRANSITS. — PRESENTS, FINES, CONFISCATIONS VERY GREAT. — VIEW OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FROM THE BEST INFORMATION OBTAINABLE. — THE ARMY, PRINCES, AND CHIEFS. — ENGLISH OFFICERS, CAVALRY, MILITIA. — WANT OF MILITARY GENIUS AND SPIRIT IN THE KING. — LITTLE VALUE OF PERSIAN FRIENDSHIP TO GREAT BRITAIN.

To form an estimate approaching to correctness, of the revenue received by the sovereign from the realms of Persia, has, I believe, been found impossible by all who have attempted it; the sources from which it is derived are too little understood by Europeans; and the habitual vagueness and inaccuracy of those from whom alone information on the subject can be sought, renders all that can be collected unsatisfactory, and often contradictory. The amount received must have necessarily varied under each successive sovereign, as he lost or extended his dominions; and fluctuations must have frequently taken place, even in the same reign, from the effect of disturbances or rebellions. Even with regard to the present reign, under which affairs have remained long stationary, it is almost beyond hope to attain even a very wide approximation; for there are no data by which to estimate the amount of land-taxes, or that which may be collected on the trade of the country.

The chief sources of revenue are, the regular taxes or Māleyāt;

the irregular, or saādurāut; the annual presents, fines, confiscations, &c.; and the rents arising from crown lands and buildings.

In the first, are comprised the taxes upon land and cattle; capitation taxes, transit, and town duties on merchandize.

In the second, are all impositions of an uncertain, occasional, or irregular description, not authorized by the customary law of the land.

The other two explain themselves.

Before proceeding with the subject, it will be proper to say a few words, comprizing such information as could be procured, regarding the tenures of land, and of the respective situations in reference to it, of the proprietors, farmers, and villagers, from whom the collections are levied.

It appears that the tenure of land is of four descriptions.

1st. The crown lands (called Khalissa).

2d. Those that are the property of individuals.

3d. Those belonging to charitable or religious institutions.

4th. Those granted by the king, for military service, or the payment of salaries and annuities.

It must be held in recollection, that in Persia, where land is in few cases valuable, except where the means of irrigation exist, in speaking of landed property, reference is made only to such portions of the surface as are thus rendered cultivable, and which form an exceedingly small portion of the whole; the rest is not considered property, but is common to all. Every individual, however, who by making one of those subterraneous canals called Cannauts, or who, bringing by any other means water to the surface that was not there before, fertilizes any particular spot of land, formerly waste, becomes proprietor of that land as fully as if it had been his by inheritance or by purchase.

The lands of individuals are held by inheritance, by purchase, by gift from the crown, or in right of having been reclaimed from waste, by procuring the means of irrigation; and their rights in such lands are at all times, and in all circumstances, held sacred.

The rights of a proprietor in the land he owns under the three first conditions, amount to *one-tenth part* of its yearly produce, and *no more;* this may be levied in various ways, by valuing and renting out the natural water by which it is irrigated; by measurement of the surface before sowing; or by that of the crop when standing when ripe, &c. &c. In cases of land fertilized by water artificially procured by the proprietor, in addition to his one-tenth of the produce, he has a right to the sale of the water thus produced, which varies in value according to the season; or a fixed average may be put upon it.

A proprietor sometimes increases his interest in the soil, by private arrangements with his farmers, by which he may furnish seed, labour, cattle; in which case he receives a portion of that profit otherwise due to the farmer: but he not only has no right to this, but the customary law is so far from encouraging a proprietor to cultivate his own land, that he is prohibited, in some cases, from residing on the estate, and a stranger is sent as governor to collect the rents; and this has been ordained expressly to prevent him from tyrannizing over his ryots, a practice too common in many forms; for if extra payments be not exacted, severe demands of service are made, and assistance in various shapes indirectly required, by those proprietors who farm their own lands.

The original customary law regarding landed property, clearly provided with much consideration for the security of the ryot. The rights of the villager were guarded at least as carefully as those of his lord: his title to cultivate his portion of land descends to him from the original commencement of the village to which he belongs, and can neither be disputed nor refused him; nor can he forfeit it, nor can the lord of the village eject any ryot, while he conducts himself well, and pays his portion of the rent. In fact, the proprietor has nothing to do with the individuals of his property; he has to treat with each village collectively, and none can forfeit his right to cultivate his share, save by general consent in an assembly of the whole, headed by the *Reish suffeed**, which is the only paramount

* *Reish suffeed* (literally, white beard) the elder or superior of the village.

authority in such a case. The ryot, however, if he dislikes his terms, his service, or desires it on other accounts, has a right to remove from any village, unless he be liable for a portion of the māleyāt or taxes; in which case he cannot move unless the rest of the villagers take on themselves the payment of his portion; but this right of removal is now often tyrannously refused, in despite of their anxiety to quit; and it is almost needless, after what has already been said throughout this work, to add, that the whole of the customary law is rendered nugatory by the encroachments and arbitrary character of the government and its officers.

The ryot cannot increase the amount of his own particular cultivation at will, to the prejudice or exclusion of his fellow villagers. The land having been divided in portions among the community at the commencement, or fresh arrangements having been made as circumstances demanded, from time to time by common consent, no individual can contravene these; but if he can procure water, he may take in waste lands, or he may purchase from those who are willing to sell their right of cultivation, for such term as may be agreed upon. It is not unfrequent for a ryot to purchase a small field in the village ground, from the proprietor, and this property is disposeable like any other.

The cultivation of the village is carried on in various ways; there are a certain number of ploughs, and yokes of oxen, belonging to the villages, and each man, as he requires his ground to be ploughed, borrows those of his neighbours, or takes them at a fixed rate per day, and returns or receives the like number of days' labour, as the case may be, in compensation. These arrangements having no reference to any but the villagers themselves, are made among them, and may vary in every different community: the reish-suffeed settles all disputes.

A proprietor sometimes agrees with his ryots to furnish seed for the harvest; in which case the seed corn, with a tenth more, is returned, before any other dues are taken. Sometimes he supplies cattle, as well as seed, and then he receives two-thirds of the produce, or even more, satisfying the claims of government, and leav-

ing the remainder for the ryot. It is said, that the sudr-ameen, (Hadjee Mahomed Hoorsain Khan) farmed a great part of Irak, the province under his immediate care, in this way; but the concern became too extensive, and he was forced to abandon it.

The proprietor sometimes employs servants to cultivate for him; in which case, they remain always ready at call, and receive wages, a part of which is always paid in corn, and part in money. The ryots themselves practise this mode, and in either case, after the proprietor and government have received their dues, the remainder becomes the property of the cultivators.

It was difficult to learn the terms of labouring service; a man might earn from one to three rupees per day by the job, but this applied principally to mechanics, and appeared disproportioned to the cheapness of living: but it was said, in answer to this objection, that the uncertainty of constant employment enhanced the price of a job. The lower description of menial servants were to be had, as I had occasion to know, at from ten to twelve reals a month; and I have little doubt that regular labourers do not stand their employers in more than from ten to twelve tomauns a year.

The grounds belonging to the different ryots are separated from each other by head riggs or marks, as in other parts; but the boundaries of villages are not marked, being usually surrounded by the sāhra, or desert, and seldom too near each other, it is not required; but even where the grounds of two villages approach and meet there can be no dispute, because land fertilized by irrigation always remains the property of the first person or village which cultivated it, and this must always be known.

These observations apply chiefly to Azerbijan: — variations may doubtless be found throughout the kingdom; but these affect the subject more in manner than in matter; and the principle of the customary law regarding the tenure of lands, and the relative condition of lord and ryot, however imperfectly observed, from the uncertain nature of the government, and the grasping character of both king and nobles, will, I believe, be found nearly the same all over Persia.

The rights of the crown, in the lands of which it is proprietor, are precisely the same as those of a private proprietor; viz. one-tenth part of the produce, with the price of water brought out by Cannauts. The only difference is, that the renter, besides his one-tenth of the corn, is obliged to give also one-tenth of the straw produced on the farm; the conditions of all bargains with farmers are the same in this case as those with any other proprietor.

The lands belonging to religious or charitable institutions, pay, like others, their assessment to government; and like those of individuals, yield only a tenth of their produce to the proprietor.

Lands held in Teeool, or fief, or for payment of military or other service, pay nothing to government; the assignee takes three-tenths, which includes the proprietors' rights, and all government dues, with what else he can get from the farmers, when the lands belong to government; but when the assignment is given upon the estate of another, the grant then only extends to the government dues, or two-tenths of the produce.

In former times, the land-tax levied by government was one-tenth part of the gross produce; which, there is reason to believe, was considered to be equal to the seed sown; and no other claim was made upon the ryot. But the expences of government, or, more properly to speak, the avarice of the sovereign, increasing, the saadu-rāut or irregular taxes were instituted to supply the exigency, and each proprietor was called upon to furnish a share proportioned to his estate. The cattle were at first the chief objects of this impost; but as it was by no means adequate to the purpose, other duties were levied, till they increased so much, that at last they were compounded, for an additional one-tenth of the produce. This occurred not long ago, and the regular government dues are now one-fifth: but faith was ill kept on the part of government, for the saadurāut, although not in their original form, continue to be levied in shapes so capricious and arbitrary, that they form one of the ryot's heaviest grievances.

It is highly probable that the mode, and even the rate of taxation, may vary somewhat in certain districts, and under peculiar cir-

cumstances, particularly such as have reference to the facilities of irrigation. As an instance, land, the crop of which is brought forward by rain alone, and the produce of which is consequently very uncertain, only pays half the tax levied on lands irrigated regularly by a running stream; but there is every reason to believe that the above principle regulates the land tax all over the kingdom.

There are various methods of ascertaining the amount of government dues; that most commonly adopted is, to measure the corn when ripe, upon the ground, before it is cut, and from that they form an estimate; but the officers of government sometimes take charge of it until cut, and separated from the straw, when they receive their due by measurement.

Gardens in, or close to villages, pay an impost of one-fifth of their produce in kind. Melon grounds, tobacco, cotton, and such like fields, on the contrary, pay it in money, assessed on a valuation of the produce.

In all cases, government looks to the cultivator for its dues; but the proprietor may make his agreement with the farmer, so as to pay them himself, or *vice versa*.

Cattle belonging to villagers, as has already been observed, originally paid no tax; and on them it was, that the saadurāut were first imposed. They are now, however, an article regularly dutiable, and it is highly probable, that the cattle of the Eels at all times paid such a duty as could be exacted, as these tribes have little property of any other description. The present rates are,

For Mares and horses per annum, a head, one real.

Asses and cows - - -	four-fifths.
Sheep and goats - - -	one-third.
Bees, per hive - - -	one-sixth.

oxen and buffaloes used in agriculture are not separately taxed, as the land tax includes them.

There is no branches of the revenue respecting which it is more difficult to gain accurate information, than those of the capitation and door taxes. That such taxes do exist, and pretty generally, is,

I believe, beyond a doubt; but whether from the variation in their amount, or from the mode of collection, or from some other cause, it was impossible to obtain any consistent account of their operation. It is certain, that Armenians, Jews, and Ghebres * pay a capitation tax, and sometimes heavily; and in some places I have heard the Mussulmans complain. The rate was three reals five shahees, in some cases, in others four reals per family; in others, again, one real a head. I have heard it asserted in some places, that they paid eight reals per family. Cities, it is said, are subject to neither poll or door tax.

Shops and bazars pay a duty to the crown, which is proportioned to the size and employment of each; it is levied on the proprietor, and varies from two to twenty reals a year. The tenant also pays according to the nature of his business and ascertained profits, from ten to fifty tomauns per annum.

All merchandize, on arriving either by sea or land, pays an entering duty at the first Persian town; which, though it varies in some instances, may be taken at 5 per cent (Bis-yek †) generally. But this is not the only duty to which goods are liable: there are numerous Goomrook Khanehs, or custom houses, which levy a duty even on that which has paid before, at a rate in some places of one, in others of two, and two and a half per cent; nor does it appear that any system is followed now in establishing these, whatever may have been originally intended, save that every governor of a district endeavours to get all he can from the trader. By a calculation made to ascertain the expense of bringing goods from Trebizonde to Ispahan, it appeared that, according to the present arrangement, an investment of goods would be forced to pay *ten Persian* duties, before it could come to sale at the latter city. The customs are usually let out to farm: smuggling is neither difficult nor rare.

It is impossible to speak with any tolerable precision either as to the nature or amount of the saadurāut. Every extraordinary expense incurred by order of government is included under this

* Fire worshippers. † *Bis-yek*, one in twenty.

head. The expenses of all travellers and strangers, members of the royal family, or messengers on government business, for which the king is supposed to provide; those incurred in the transport of baggage, royal equipage or presents, labour for the repairs of roads and bridges, or erecting buildings of whatsoever description; furnishing troops for service; and every species of outlay, from that made by the governor of a province, down to the Ketkhoda of a village, all are placed against the amount which that province or village should pay to the king's treasury, and should be admitted in the settlement of accounts; but this is very seldom done, for although it may in truth be deducted from the amount remitted to the treasury, it hardly ever is allowed in favour of the ryots, on whom the whole weight ultimately falls; but finds its way into the coffers of governors and ministers. The king's order is indeed grievously abused by those who travel through the country, and soorsaut * furnished these is one of the most vexatious parts of this distressing tax.

Nor is it less difficult to arrive at any estimate of the amount realized from the third mentioned source of revenue; presents, fines, confiscations, &c. but it must be very great indeed. There are periodical occasions in Persia, at which all who are admitted to stand in the presence of its monarch are expected to appear before him with a present. Of these, the chief is the Nō-Rōze or new year, which occurs about the end of March or beginning of April, and is one of the principal festivals in the Persian kalendar. On this day alone, it has been calculated on pretty sufficient grounds, that the king receives from one million to 1,200,000 tomauns; and when it is known, that the present which has for some years been made regularly by one man, the sudr-ameen, amounts to 100,000 tomauns, † the above sum will not appear incredible; every one who has the least dependance on court favour, (and who are they that have not?) strive to make up a purse for this occasion; and those who cannot

* Vide note page 88.

† I have however heard it asserted, that this present forms a portion of the revenues of Irak, when calculated at 500,000 tomauns a year. — I do not know the truth.

make their offering in cash (by far the most acceptable shape,) make it in goods, shawls, horses, jewels, merchandize; nothing is ungrateful.* This, although by far the most splendid, is by no means the

* An account of the ceremonies observed at court upon the Eede-e-no-Roze for which the author is indebted to the kindness of a friend who was an eye witness, will probably be acceptable to the reader.

"The new year was ushered in by the discharge of cannon: and the people from that time commenced their rejoicings, the preparations for which had been going on for some days. The shops in the bazar had for two days previous displayed an unusual brilliancy and variety of colour, gilded fruits, painted eggs, and coloured sweetmeats were every where to be seen mingled with the usual contents of each booth. — Hardly an old cap or coat was to be seen, every one having dressed himself in the new suits which all classes make up at the time of this Eede, or festival. Earthenware vessels adorned by plentiful crops of growing wheat or barley, which had been watered and made to sprout; baskets with narcissus's in bloom, and nosegays of violets were to be seen in every apartment; large trays of sweetmeats, fruits, comfits, and sherbets were presented to every visitor; and the children, with boys of all classes released from the confinement of schools or other occupations, were holding holyday with noisy mirth and gambol in the streets. Large parties of bearded old men and beardless youths were seen in every direction kissing each other on both sides of the face; and *Eede-e-shumah Moobaric bashud* (may the festival be propitious to you), was heard from every mouth. This was the first day."

"On the second, about two hours before mid-day, the persons who were expected to attend at court, began to collect in the square before the royal palace, each attired in the khilut, or dress of honor which he had received from the king. As the season was not so warm as usual, almost every one came muffled up in cloaks lined with fur; but the glittering of the gaudy brocade, or spangled dresses, was continually visible, when the cloak was allowed to open in front, or was blown aside by the wind. — Groups of persons who had not met on the day previous were going through the ceremony of kissing and congratulations, and each gentleman was attended by a host of hangers-on who clustered around him when he happened to sit, and followed him when he walked. Many of these mighty personages, for whom in their own houses the most magnificent felt or costly shawl is scarcely good enough to sit upon, here took their seats without reserve upon the bare stones of the platform in front of the palace. Servants went and came, and went again between the parties, and some who had made their appearance in their plain black caps, were attended by domestics bearing their court head dresess or turban caps on silver trays, covered with a cloth of rich brocade.

"When the time approached when the king was to make his appearance, the cloaks were thrown aside; and the high turban caps hastily put on; the masters of the ceremonies bustled about to arrange the people according to their ranks, which was done without any trouble or confusion, and the furoshes of the king commenced turning out of the square all those who had no right to the honor of remaining there; their long rods were not idle, the loud strokes on the ill-defended backs of those who were reluctant or obstreperous, the abuse of the furoshes and the remonstrances of the abused and beaten among the crowd, formed a strong contrast to the orderly and silent deportment of those who had been ar-

only day for this sort of harvest, and there are few which pass without some windfall; there are always suitors for favour, or for pardon, coming to the foot of the throne; and no one dare approach it empty

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ranged in their ranks by the masters of the ceremonies. All was now one long continued range of glittering brocade, spangles, and jewels.

"In front of the open hall of the palace, in which the throne stood, was a fine artificial basin of clear water, with many small fountains playing into it: immediately beyond the basin, on the same level, was laid out a long carpet of brocade, on which were placed gold and china bowls, filled with sherbet; in front of these, and on the carpet of brocade, were ranged the principal moollahs, in a close double line, directly fronting the throne. On each side the basin, and at right angles to the line of moollahs, was a range of princes of the royal family, stretching almost to the pillars of the hall: these were all the persons who occupied the raised platform or terrace nearest the throne; in the square beneath were ranged all the other persons of the court, and the nobles and chief men of the land.

"Three vollies from all the swivels of the camel corps announced the king's approach. He entered from the back part of the hall, and ascending the steps of the throne with great caution, seated himself with much affected dignity. He was gorgeously dressed, in clothes fitted tight to his shape (which is rather slight and elegant), and covered with pearls and diamonds and other sparkling gems. His waistbelt, about two and a half inches broad, was one sheet of brilliants, and the lower edge was adorned by a range of pendant emeralds. His breast, shoulders, and back, were mailed in pearls and jewels, and he wore a crown, such as is represented in his portraits, completely covered with pearls and jewels, and surmounted by several sprigs of diamonds and other precious stones.

"When he was first seen, and again when he took his seat, he was greeted by an obeisance from all the people, who bowed almost to the ground, at the same time that "God save the King," was struck up by half a dozen fifers and drummers. Soon after having seated himself he called aloud, "*Eede moobaric bashud!*" (*Let the Eede be propitious*), which was returned by those whose duty it was, by, *Eede-e-shah in shah moobaric bashud! in shallah!* (*Let the festival be propitious to the king of kings, please God.*) He held some trifling conversation about the weather with some of the persons present; a prayer was then read in front of the moollahs, praising rather than praying for him, and this was followed by a laureate address, spoken at the further end of the garden. When the kings calleeoon was brought, a distribution of money was made to the moollahs, after which they filed off, some bowing, others without bowing at all.

"Sherbet was now handed round to every one present, and three elephants, miserably clad and gaudily painted, were brought up to make their obeisance to his majesty. Several little princes were standing near the foot of the throne, within the hall, and one little girl a great favourite of his majesty, dressed as a boy, was taken out in the arms of an attendant to see the elephants, and one of the ministers was called to converse with her, and tell the king what she said. He put several questions to know what she thought of the animals, and seemed much pleased to hear that she was desirous of mounting on one of them.

"A handful of small silver pennies, with a few little gold coins in each, was now bestowed on each person present, and here the ceremonies of the Salaum usually terminate; but on this occasion, a firmaun investing one of the young princes with his government of

handed. Without any positive grounds on which to found a calculation, it would be vain to hazard a conjecture as to the amount thus received, but we may be tolerably certain that in assigning 500,000 tomauns for such contingencies we shall not overshoot the mark.

There are still less means for estimating the amount received from crown lands and buildings. In the reign of Nadir Shah, many of the estates assigned for the support of religious and charitable institutions by former sovereigns, particularly those of the Suffavean race, were resumed or seized; and the amount at this time may be considerable; but it is impossible to form any judgment of it; neither am I at all certain that the amount of such income may not be included in the nett revenues received from the provinces.

The following is the result of the best information I could procure concerning the nett amounts received from the provinces, and various governments of the kingdom:—

	Tomauns.
From the province of Fars is collected, at least, 300,000 tomauns, of which one half are disbursed for the expences of the province and princes - 150,000	
Sent to the Royal treasury -	150,000
From the province of Kerman, under Ibrahim Khan, a small sum, say - - - - -	50,000
From Mekrān, little or nothing.	
From Khorasan, nothing: the maintenance of it costs money.	
Carried forward	200,000

Cashan, was read aloud and the young prince came forward to make his obeisance. The ameen-u-doulut was called for by his majesty, and directed to attend to the affairs of the young prince and to take care of him, on which he was enjoined to kneel down and kiss his foot, a ceremony which he immediately performed. His majesty then rose from his seat, and descending the steps with even more caution than he ascended, disappeared through the door by which he entered.

	Tomauns.
Brought forward	200,000
From the petty governments of Booroogird, Khoonsar, Nehawund, Khorrumabād, little or nothing is received.	
From Senna, in Coordistaun, a little, say - - -	30,000
From the governments of Cashān, Casveen, and Zunjān, a little, say, - - - - - -	30,000
From the government of Yezd about - - -	54,000
From Azerbijan, nothing: it costs money.	
From Mazunderan, little, because it furnishes the greater part of the army, for which purpose the revenue is applied, say - - - - - - -	15,000
From Gheelān are collected 200,000 tomauns, of which 40,000 are allowed the prince.	
Amount received in the royal treasury -	160,000
From that portion of Irāk under the sudr-ameen's government - - - - - - -	500,000
From the government of Kermanshah, nothing.	
Tomauns of Irāk	989,000

This is probably not far from the real amount of the land revenue of Persia; and if we take the rough guess made of that derived from contingent receipts, we shall have

	Tomauns.
Land revenues - - - - - - -	989,000
Assumed amount of presents, fines, contingencies -	1,500,000
Irākee tomauns	2,489,000

or nearly two millions and a half of Irākee tomauns*, for the whole cash receipts of the royal treasury of Persia,

Against this must be placed the expenditure from that treasury: and here, again, although I took great pains in attempting to procure authentic documents, it was impossible to obtain any; and

* Not greatly exceeding 1,500,000*l.* sterling.

it only remains to make use of such grounds as we have, in forming a judgment on thc subject. The chief sources of expence are, the maintenance of the royal family; the cost of providing khilauts and presents; the payment of the salaries of such officers about his person as are not provided for in the expenditure of any government; and the payment of his gholaums, or household troops.

The first item must be one of very large amount. The king has three hundred married wives; and although a few of these live with their sons at their governments, yet by far the greater part of them are maintained in the royal harem. To such a number of women there must be allowed a proportionate number of slaves and servants; besides which, every lady who has a family is allowed a separate establishment, more or less expensive; and these, with the eunuchs, and other officers, must form an aggregate that cannot, I should think, be estimated at less than fifteen hundred persons. There is, besides, the king's personal establishment, which is, I believe, numerous and respectable, although I am ignorant of its amount or arrangement. The royal stud is also very large and expensive; and the baggage camels and mules, with the immense detail of apparatus pertaining to the royal march; the expence of palace repairs and keep, with numberless items unnecessary to recapitulate, although every thing be done with all possible attention to economy, and even though much may be obtained free of cost, must, in the aggregate, form a very heavy drain upon the royal treasury. Besides, although many of the princes are provided for by appointments to governments, there are still a large number, many of whom are grown up and have families, that live entirely at the king's expence. There are several of these who, as I have been informed, receive from five to ten thousand tomauns a-year; and this forms another very heavy article of expence to be added to that of the royal family.

The expence of khilauts ought properly to be placed against the receipts of the like nature; but it is difficult, or rather impossible to estimate it: the Persians in office about the court declare it to be enormous; and several of them assured me that the expence of coarse chintz, for lining the dresses of honour, annually

given away, amounts to several hundred thousand tomauns. Without paying much attention to bravadoes, which have the glory of their sovereign, and of course, by reflection, their own for their object, we may safely believe that the expence of these honorary presents is very great; for not only is there an enormous quantity of gold and silver cloths used, but many cashmere shawls, of greater or less values, with numerous swords and daggers, more or less highly ornamented; and, occasionally, horses, with gold or silver-mounted harness, and expensive jewels. No khilaut presented to one of the princes, or nobleman of the first rank, can cost less than five or six hundred tomauns, and it may exceed as many thousands.

I have no means whatever of estimating the sums expended in salaries to officers of state, not otherwise incidentally provided for: assignments are often given to these upon particular villages, or districts; and the amount assigned is deducted from the net revenue paid into the treasury.

The expense of the gholaums, or household troops, are also extremely irregular, and difficult to be ascertained: they are also very frequently provided for in a way that renders them little chargeable to the treasury, as will hereafter be explained, therefore this item adds comparatively little to the royal expenditure.

With such vague information on either side, it would be useless to attempt to balance accounts, indeed the balance would be found to vary almost every year, for no allowance has been made in the above statement for various contingencies; such as the expense of journeys, expeditions, wars, all of which occasionally occur, and create expenditure; but from what has been said, it may be inferred, that the king of Persia, with all his desire for accumulation, cannot put any large sum yearly by, and that the idea of his possessing any very considerable amount in money can scarcely be well founded.

An account of the various methods adopted for the collection of the revenue of Persia, and of the shifts and pretexts on either side, would be a curious document: — for the most part, there is a continual struggle between the governor of a province and his myrmi-

dons on the one side, and the villagers with their Zabuts and Ketkhodas on the other — the former endeavouring to squeeze as much more as possible than their right, from the latter; who strive by every trick and invention, to avoid paying even that acknowledged right. As few villages or districts ever pay their assessment without requisition, it is customary for the most part to send messengers to collect it. These are either meerzas, or inferior officers attached to the governor's court, gholaums of the prince, or hangers-on of his own or his ministers, with no particular office, waiting for the turn up of some advantageous job. Where one of these is dispatched to collect in a district, his expences, which he takes care shall not be trifling, are defrayed by the people of the country through which he passes; and not satisfied with this, he insists on certain douceurs from every village at which he halts. When he reaches his destination, before a word passess on business, he arranges for his own demands, and the Zabut generally finds it his interest to satisfy him, though this is often no easy matter. The first demand is service money, which is especially for himself; then his attendants must be feed, and their various nameless douceurs are according to the nature of the service.* The consequence frequently is, that although the messenger returns with a full purse, the revenue suffers in proportion. It must not however be supposed, that the employers of these men are blind to their knavery; on the contrary they reckon upon it; and fully aware of the value of such jobs, they are given to persons whom it may be inconvenient to provide for otherwise; indeed it is a very common mode of paying the wages of a servant or inferior officer. The minister or governor, who in all probability has himself been frequently employed in the same way, and who is well acquainted with every district of his government, knows almost to a nicety how much his emissary may contrive to squeeze in any particular expedition; and he not only chooses his

* I have heard of some of these fellows coolly charging a sum of money for *the tear and wear of their teeth*, in eating the victuals provided for them free of cost, on such expeditions, particularly if they were such as did not quite meet their approbation.

man accordingly, but makes his bargain too; he claims for himself a share of the spoil, so large that only a moderate portion can remain with the other, who, on his part, endeavours, with all his address, to squeeze and retain the greatest possible amount. Thus, as in most cases, it is a constant struggle of cunning against rapacity.

In the payment of the superior officers of government, a modification of the same system is observed. Sometimes an assignment on a village or district is given, in other cases they receive a salary in cash: in either case the salary is but nominal, bearing little proportion to the real receipts of the office. In the first case, the assignee takes care to raise the assessment upon his village as high as he can in any way contrive to extort; often drawing more than three times the regulated amount. If, as in the second case, the salary is paid in cash, it is so trifling, as to be evidently but nominal; the salary of the prime minister of Persia is but a few hundred tomauns a year;* but in these cases, the office held is one in which a great deal of money may be made by indirect means, such as bribes, presents, fees, and speculations of a permitted description. Government is well aware of these undue modes of amassing money, and winks at them; probably, in the first place, because their servants could not be prevented from such proceedings, whatever salary were given; and secondly, because a tolerably accurate knowledge being possessed by the king and his ministers of the proceedings and accumulation of every individual of consequence in the kingdom, his majesty can, at any moment, find means of appropriating his hoard; so that they are, after all, but collectors of another description for the king's treasury.

The nobles, and particularly the officers of government, are in truth kept wretchedly poor, as well as the rest of the people; there is hardly one of them who is not deeply and ruinously in debt;

* I have however heard it stated at 70,000 tomauns a-year, but that the sudr-ameen, Hadjee Mahomed Hoossein Khan, had, with the appearance of disinterestedness, refused this great sum, contenting himself with what might seem a bare subsistence. The truth in such cases is hard to be discovered: at all events it is not to be supposed that the minister contents himself with what he nominally receives.

and thus they live recklessly on, the avenues to honesty and virtue closed, as it were, in every way against them. Our mehmandar from Bushire to Sheerauz, Feridoon Khan, complained bitterly of his own situation, and spoke very openly and sensibly of that of the country, and the miserable system of extortion and parsimony practised by the king and rulers of the land. Indeed he was far from being the only one who uttered these sentiments; they were in almost every mouth, and formed a very common subject of conversation. Poverty and misery, he declared, ran through every class of society in Persia, and that the nobles and employers about court were fully as badly off as others. "I myself," said he, "have nominally a salary "of 150 tomauns a year; but it is always ill paid, and oftener not "at all: even what I get is not received till it has been twelve "months due. But what can I do? my family must eat, and we must "borrow on the strength of future prospects; and often even more "than can possibly come, because I must keep up appearances. "Years pass on, debts accumulate; my property is all gone; and I "am a ruined man, like almost every one in my own, or in far higher "situations."

In attempting to take a view of the military resources of Persia, the reader must divest himself of every idea that can bring to his mind the existence and attributes of a regular army; the king possesses nothing of the sort. The establishment, if such it can be termed, is as irregular as the nature of the conflicts they usually have to sustain; very little controlled by any sort of discipline, and perfectly unattended by any thing that could impress a soldier of Europe with the ideas he attaches to the pomp and circumstance of military appearance. The only permanently embodied corps is that of the king's gholaums, or personal guards; and even they have no regular organization, nor do they assemble and parade together like troops on service. They amount to between three and four thousand men, and are chiefly distributed in, and around the residence of his majesty, when he resides in town, and attend him in camp, a certain number being always on duty; they are all mounted, their horses being found by government, and armed, as usual, with a matchlock or musket,

and sword; their pay is various according to their standing in the service, and tried value: but few have less than from twenty to thirty tomauns a year: and as they generally contrive to live at free quarters, for the greatest part of the year, their situation is considered enviable. Besides their duty as guards, these gholaums are dispatched on all errands, where expedition and fidelity are required; and are presumed to be ready at all times, to devote their lives for the interests of their master. Those who have been long in service, and are more confidential than the rest, are employed very frequently on affairs of great importance, in the conduct of which they make large sums by extortion: and a good deal of the revenue is collected by their means. These gholaums consider themselves as gentlemen, although in the rank of soldiers (something in the manner of the mousquetaires under the old regime in France); and indeed, I believe, many of them are sprung from younger branches of the nobility, whose descendants are glad to obtain so good a situation. They are for the most part, bold and insolent debauchees, often great swaggerers with but little courage; boisterously and capriciously tyrannizing over the weak, but demure and respectful to those in power; their name is a terror in the country, and the arrival of a *gholaum-e-shahee* is deprecated every where as a most serious misfortune. I have known instances when it has had the effect of nearly depopulating a village for the time.

Every province maintains, or ought to maintain, a certain number of men, armed and mounted, to take the field when duty calls; but the state of comparative peace which the kingdom has enjoyed for these few years past, has relaxed every part of the military system so much, that it would not be easy in most provinces to muster the smallest appearance of an army.

In Fars, an abatement of the revenue was solicited and obtained, from the king, upon the plea of keeping up a constant army of observation, to watch the movements of the British in the Gulf: at which the prince felt, or pretended to feel, alarm; but when we landed at Bushire, we could not discover that a single man had been raised, or a camp formed; so far from it, that whenever it was thought proper to make a display of troops under arms, it was clear

enough, that the few we saw were called hurriedly from their regular occupations, and trades, for the occasion.

The king kept up a small army in Khorasān, under the command of Mahomed Wullee Meerza, the governor; but the intrigues of Issaw Khan occasioned its dissolution, and there are now no troops there except a few horsemen in the personal service of the prince, who is forced to depend upon the chiefs of the country for such assistance as they may choose to afford in case of need.

Mahomed Allee Meerza kept up at Kermanshah the most effective military establishment in Persia; but of its extent or organization I am ignorant; it was sufficient, before he died, to overrun a large part of the Turkish territories, and to enable him to lay their city of Bagdad (then, indeed, weak and distracted) under heavy contribution.

Abbas Meerza, governor of Azerbijan, and heir apparent to the throne, is the only one of its rulers who has made an attempt in Persia of late years to organize a regular army; and while this was commanded and regularly disciplined by English officers, it promised well; but the most pressing occasion for its existence having ceased, by the conclusion of peace with Russia, the parsimony and improvidence of the government could not comprehend the use of keeping together, on regular pay, men who were not particularly required; the soldiers were, therefore, permitted to return to their homes, on an understanding that they were to re-assemble when required; and the officers remained almost useless appendages at court, never seeing, far less having an opportunity of drilling, their troops. On the commencement of the late war with Turkey, as English officers could not be permitted to serve against that nation, they were almost all dismissed; and there now remains in the service of the prince royal only a few English serjeants, who still command and maintain his horse artillery in a tolerably efficient state; and, excepting a corps of from seven to eight hundred Russian deserters, this is the only serviceable part of his establishment. The remainder of his regimented troops, although better armed, are not in other re-

spects one bit superior to the common serbauze (or foot soldiers) of the other provinces.

I procured from an authentic source a note of the present amount, and description of Abbas Meerza's army, which I insert here, as it will enable the reader to form an estimate of that prince's power; and as Azerbijan forms so important a part of the Persian empire, some idea may be gained from it of what the kingdom at large might, under equal efforts, be brought to effect.

Regular troops of Abbas Meerza.

Infantry.

One Russian, or grenadier battalion, varies from 800 to	1000	
Two Tabreez (1st & 2d) bats., should be 1000 each, about	1600	
One Moraund, battalion - - -	900	
One Khooee, ditto - - - -	800	
One Ooromea, ditto (formerly two battalions) -	1200	
One Naksheewan, ditto - - - -	500	
Two Shaghagees, ditto - - -	1200	
Two Kara Daghees, ditto - - - -	1600	
One Maragha, ditto (formerly 800) - -	600	
		9400

Cavalry.

One regiment, lancers (Affghauns) - - -	500	
Artillery - about - - -	640	
Camel corps, with Zumboorucks (small swivel artillery)	100	1240
Regular forces		10,640

Irregulars.

Tabreez can muster about 12,000 Toffunchees*, but		
he cannot take the field with more than -	10,000	
And of cavalry of the tribes - - -	12,000	
	22,000	22,000
Total force to be mustered -		32,640

* Toffunchees, as has elsewhere been observed, are foot soldiers who are armed with matchlocks, or firelocks, (from Toffung, in Persian, a gun.)

At Erivan.		
One battalion, regular troops - - -	1,000	
And a sort of reserve to this, but in fact, only common toffunchees in uniform - - - -	2,000	
Coordish horse, commanded by Hoosein Aga -	2,000	
	——	5,000
Inferior troops.		
Cavalry - - - - -	1,500	
Infantry - - - - -	3,500	
	——	5,000
Besides which, in an extreme case, men capable of bearing arms might be mustered, about - - - -		8,000
Total of armed men to be mustered in Azerbijan and Erivan		50,640

The command of the Sirdar of Erivan is, in fact, distinct from that of Abbas Meerza; he is a powerful chief, little less than independent, who has under his charge the important trust of the frontier district, bordering on the dominions of Russia in Armenia, their posts being close to each other.

Of the forces above enumerated, it is not to be supposed that the whole could be moved into the field; the numbers rather express the amount which the country could turn out upon emergency, to oppose an invading foe. The prince took the field in 1822 against the Turks, and could barely muster 35,000 men, among whom were a large portion of very inferior troops.

Abbas Meerza is the only chief in Persia who has any thing approaching to efficient artillery. Zumboorucks, or wall pieces mounton camels, are indeed common; but they could only be efficient against Asiatic troops, whom fear of risking their horses would keep at a distance from their range. Abbas Meerza's artillery is well-mounted and equipt; but in going through his arsenal one is apt to smile, when instead of the mighty stores of ammunition laid up for the supply of European warfare, scarcely enough of each article is

found, to form a sample of it. The whole is on a scale more suited to the shooting closet of a private gentleman, than the magazine of a state. The prince took the field with not more, I think, than twenty or twenty-five rounds for each gun, and the arsenal was nearly drained of ammunition, the manufacture of which was going on upon a scale ludicrously pitiful. Indeed matters are not likely to improve upon the present system, which the prince neither can afford, nor wishes to alter.

The most efficient troops in the king's command are those levies which the chiefs of tribes are bound to furnish at the call of their sovereign, consisting entirely of cavalry, and which, though still sufficently active and hardy, have greatly degenerated from their ancient character for courage and zeal. There is, likewise, a species of militia, consisting of men bound to serve on foot upon emergency; but the equipment of these is so bad, and their disposition so questionable, that there is little reliance placed upon them in general. Some provinces are, however, more famed for this irregular infantry than the rest, and are kept as nurseries for the army. Mazunderān pays the chief part of its assessment in this sort of military service: and, including Astrabad, keeps up 12,000 toffunchees and 4,000 horsemen, nominally ready at a call: I say nominally, because they are in fact quietly dispersed among their own villages, and many of the horsemen have not a horse to show. Indeed as eight tomauns a-year for a horseman, and a proportionally small sum for a foot soldier, is all that government allows (and the latter only, I believe, in case of actual service), it is hardly reasonable to expect great readiness of preparation. The toffunchees of Astrabad are considered as the best of Persia; and as that district and the province of Mazunderān were the original abodes, and continue to be the chief dwelling places of the king's tribe (the Kadjers), it is but natural that he should wish to keep a large portion of his military force in this quarter.

When the king takes the field, it is said that he generally makes up a force of a hundred thousand fighting men, which with camp followers is doubled, or even trebled. He had fully that number

along with him in his bootless expeditions into Khorasān, if we may believe report; but to judge of their efficiency by their success, it must have been small indeed; for his majesty did nothing beyond destroying the hopes of the farmers by wasting a great part of the country, retiring always when the forage became so exhausted that his gallant troops began to feel inconvenience.

In the days of Nadir Shah the troops of Persia were active, brave, and expert in the discipline of that prince: he endured no coward and his men dreaded his frown more than the enemy's sword.* Aga Mahomed Khan had likewise the talent of forming good and brave troops. His active and ambitious disposition kept his army constantly engaged; and they acquired a veteran hardihood and expertness, that rendered them superior to any any other Asiatic troops. When they were called on to oppose more disciplined legions, he well knew how powerful their efforts might be made, when directed to a harassing and desultory mode of warfare.† But it was the genius

* Many are the anecdotes related of this prince, illustrative of his admiration for courage, and his intolerance of cowardice. One day a dealer in arms brought for the king's inspection a parcel of swords (for which, if of fine quality, he was known to give almost any price). He took one, and after examining it, he observed that it was a good sword, but too short. "*Ek kudum peish,*" ("one step forward,") said a young man among his attendants, in a low tone: meaning that it needed but to advance one step further towards an enemy. Nadir bent upon him his stern eye, and after a while said, "and will you make that *one step?*" "If it please your majesty," said the youth. "Well, then, remember!" rejoined the king, and threw him the sword. Some time afterwards, in an engagement which was very hot, Nadir called for the young man, and said "Now, Ek kudum peish." "Be chushm," (*by my eyes*, touching them,) said the youth, and dashed into the thick of the conflict, from whence he soon reissued, bearing an enemy's head to Nadir's feet. A second time and a third time he thus plunged into the throng, and with a similar success. But he had not escaped without hurt, and in the fourth charge he was overpowered, and would have been slain, when Nadir, who had been quietly and silently looking on, called out, "Save that youth, he is a brave fellow." Rescue was timely sent, and the youth, bleeding and faint, was brought to Nadir, who ordered him to be taken care of, and advanced him in his service.

† When preparing to attack the Russians in Georgia, he assembled the leaders of his army, and told them that the Russians had presumed, during his absence in Khorasān, to invade the opposite frontier of his dominions: "But my valiant warriors," he added, "shall be led against them, and we will, by the blessing of God, charge their celebrated lines of infantry and batteries of cannon, and cut them to pieces with our conquering sabres." The chiefs applauded the heroic resolution of their sovereign, and

of these commanders that alone made their troops so powerful. Their continual wars kept alive the military spirit in full vigour: the system has changed with the sovereign. Not only is the present ruler of Persia unwarlike himself, but he has taken every possible step to break the martial spirit which he found in the country, and to destroy all he succeeded to of an army.

I have heard several of the old officers of his uncle speak of that monarch with enthusiasm, and compare his nephew with him in no very respectful terms; "Where," said one of these, "are now those "warriors, who raising their arms, with drawn sabres, and without "looking at the battery before them, would rush upon it, and cut the "gunners down at their guns?—This I have seen; I have seen men "rush, at the command of their chief, upon inevitable death, because "they feared their master more yet than it, and knew their reward "was certain if they succeeded; but now, this king, if a man risks "his horse and his life, he orders him a present of a tomaun! per-"haps not even that; indeed he takes good care never to go where "he can have an opportunity of witnessing courageous actions." These men speak the truth; there is no encouragement for devotion; on the contrary, any remarkable energy, particularly if accompanied with success, inevitably begets suspicion and jealousy, which ends in disgrace and ruin. No chief now ventures to be a conqueror, even if in his power; it would be the signal of his undoing, perhaps of his death. A chief near Astrabad, in talking of his expeditions past, and proposed, against the Toorkomans, declared this to be his own feeling,

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promised to support him with their lives. When they had gone, the monarch desiring his minister Hadjee Ibrahim to approach, asked him if he had heard what he had said to the military chiefs. The minister said he had. "And do you think," said he, "I will do as I told them?" "Undoubtedly, if it is your majesty's pleasure," was the reply. "Hadjee," said the king, half angry, "have I been mistaken? are you also a fool? Can a man of your wisdom believe I will ever run my head against their walls of steel, or expose my irregular army to be destroyed by their cannon and disciplined troops? I know better. Their shot shall never reach me; but they shall possess no country beyond its range. They shall not know sleep: and let them march where they choose, I will surround them with a desert."—Malcolm's History, vol. ii. page 297.

in very plain terms: "To what end," said he, "should I destroy these "people? what thanks should I receive from Futeh Allee Shah? "to have my eyes put out like ——— ! ! !" *

If there be any degree of credit allowed to the statements above offered, regarding the face of the country, population, government, and resources of Persia, it can hardly be denied, that the rank she holds among nations, in civilization and power, either positive or incidental, is low indeed; and yet, it is certain, that Great Britain has made greater efforts, and expended larger sums to win the friendship and alliance of this state, than would have sufficed, had such been her intention, to overrun half her dominions. It is well known, that the principal object of this alliance was to baffle the schemes of France (the ruler of which was understood to entertain the project of invading the Indian territories of Great Britain, by the route of Persia and Caubul), by interposing between Hindostan and Europe a nation friendly to its interests; and I have been induced to occupy so much space, in attempting to expose the internal situation of the Persian nation, principally in the hope of showing how little fitted she is for such a purpose. The progress of Russia on the north-western frontier, until arrested by British interference, may serve to prove how unable the Persian government is to withstand the attack of a powerful European nation; and could the French have made good their intention of demanding the friendship of their king, and a passage for their army through his territories, it may readily be conceived, that neither demand could have been resisted, even had his disposition towards the interests of Great Britain been the best possible. The truth, however is, that the king of Persia never felt any real friendship for Great Britain; insatiably avaricious, he was well pleased to sell his empty promises for the gold which was prodigally supplied to him; and when the French entered the lists,

* I have unfortunately lost the memorandum I made of this conversation, and therefore relate the anecdote from memory; which, however, has not served me to retain the names; and I do not choose to hazard committing an error by inserting them. The substance is however just what I heard, and the chief who lost his eyes was a well-known commander of the present king, who was *too successful*, and therefore considered dangerous.

and competed with the British for this coveted alliance, the king made the best of his market; nor was it his part to tell how valueless was the prize for which they offered so high.

So long as Great Britain chose to subsidize the king of Persia, so long did his professions of friendship continue; but had any other power outbid his old ally, on condition of dropping correspondence with her, he would incontinently have transferred the worthless boon to his new friend; or if that power had used force, the effect would have been the same; for the king could not long have resisted a foe of any strength. That the nature of the king of Persia's professed friendship is thus hollow and deceitful, is clearly proved by his conduct, when at any time it has been attempted to obtain from him a favour of the least consequence, or to carry a point not quite agreeable to his wishes *, and there is but little doubt that apprehension respecting our supposed views towards his country, has of late transformed his indifference into more positive dislike; were it not for this wholesome alarm, and the advantage he still reaps from British intercourse, he would in all probability evince this dislike in a more distinct way.

All that Persia could possibly do to forward British interests, she would effect, if she had never known the nation; the entry, or even the approach of an European force to her territories, upon any pretence, must be so dangerous and alarming to her, that she would make every effort in her power to prevent such a measure; more she could not do, were her king and nobles all satiated with British gold; and even if British troops could be sent to her assistance, it is very doubtful if she would accept their aid.

A change has already taken place in certain parts of the system hitherto adopted by this country towards Persia; the long paid subsidy has been put a stop to, but the arrogance of that proud and ignorant government would seem, if it were worth the while, to

* Witness his positive refusal to grant liberty to establish and keep up a military post on the island of Kishmee, when this was supposed to be a desirable object of the British government.

merit a still more decided check; they do not appear sensible of the high importance of British influence to their most vital interests, and the moderate and almost humble tone hitherto held with them in all official communications, has served to cherish their ideas of self-importance. Perhaps the most suitable and dignified conduct on the part of the nation may be the observance of calm neglect, but it would be very gratifying to the few British travellers who visit these remote regions, if they could see the value and power of their country more justly appreciated.

As the principal reason for the alliance thus sought for with Persia by the British nation, was the possibility, if not the dread of a serious attack upon our Indian dominions by an over-land invasion; a few observations upon the probability of succeeding in such an enterprize may perhaps not be deemed irrelevant here. During the period when the French empire was in the zenith of its power, the danger was apprehended from that nation; if anxiety be now entertained, it is from a different quarter, and the ambition of Russia is, perhaps with more reason, considered as the object to be guarded against.

It is by no means intended to enter into a minute consideration of all the obstacles which a European army would have to encounter on its march to the banks of the Indus, but merely to notice shortly a few of those which must have forced themselves on the observation of all who are acquainted with the country, or who have attended to the subject; and it is indeed not a little surprizing that these difficulties have in general been so much underrated: they resolve themselves into three chief heads; the great length of way, the difficulty of providing for the wants of an adequate force, and the opposition which this force must lay its account with meeting from the inhabitants, particularly from the wandering and more independent population of the country.

Without concerning ourselves with the increase of difficulties which a march through Asia Minor, and the western provinces of Persia, would involve, and which it may be presumed the nation in question would avoid by means of its command of the Caspian sea;

let us suppose Astrabad, at the south eastern corner of that sea, and the nearest point of its shores to the objects in view, to be made a depôt for all the military supplies which they must look for from their own country, and the point from which they are to start upon their enterprize. From thence to Caubul alone is a distance of from 13 to 1400 miles at least: the best and easiest route would be by ascending the Elburz through the pass leading to Bostam, by which, after a march of three or four days, through morasses and forests, and then ascending a steep defile, the army would find itself in an open country, and upon the road to Herāt, &c.; which, with the exception of a few rocky defiles, would be found tolerably good, and free from natural obstacles; but they would have to pass through much country entirely desert, and still more but scantily inhabited. The remainder of the route is of the same character, the major part being desert or nearly so, with occasional fertile spots, which, however, would hardly afford refreshments to any considerable force, still less could furnish them with a sufficient quantity of provisions.

I have elsewhere remarked that the Persians in their agricultural operations, look to little more than providing enough of grain for the wants of the district, and the demands for commerce or otherwise, which experience has taught them it may be required to supply: the consequence is, that when any sudden and unusual demand arises, there are but few districts able to supply it. It does indeed happen that in fertile districts, where they know that their hopes of an harvest may be cut off by accidents of common occurrence, as by invasion, the chiefs have encouraged the farmer to cultivate to a greater extent, by collecting depôts of grain *; but these instances of foresight are rare, and are rather to be found among independent chiefs, than among farmers or merchants; and the king of the country himself when he moves with a large force finds it difficult enough to provide for its wants for any length of time. It is even considered prudent to prepare beforehand for a large caravan, if it travels at an unusual time

* An instance of this will be found in the sequel, in the person of Reeza Koolee Khan, chief of Kabooshaum Koordistan.

through roads but little frequented, and several villages from a great distance are often laid under contribution to furnish the requisite supplies. Some idea may therefore be formed of the difficulty that would be found in providing for the wants not only of the invading force, but of the troops which would be required to keep up a communication in their rear, with the sea, and the host of camp followers and baggage cattle, supposing these to have been procured, and supposing even the whole inhabitants of the country to be favourable to the invaders.

But is it likely that these would be found so? When we consider the multitude of tribes, the many rude and narrow-minded, but proud and self-sufficient chieftains that lie in the track of such an expedition (not to talk of those who though further removed from its course, would certainly interfere), and the various jarring interests consequently to be reconciled, can we suppose that the majority of the inhabitants would be found friendly to the cause? It is indeed true, that many of these chieftains and their clans would be found inimical to the reigning family, and willing to lend their aid in depriving it of the throne; but each of these chiefs would likewise be discovered to have some private end in view, to further which alone he would be tempted to take an active part, and which would probably embarrass the great object, causing perpetual jealousies and discontents; nay, were it even granted that unanimity and energy might prevail for a time, still when the different chiefs perceived that their individual interests were not the principal objects held in view, and that they were to be made but instruments of conquest, or of establishing a control severer than that of their own government, they would certainly fall off from their alliance, and join in plundering or destroying the friends they had at first supported.

It has been presumed that the wandering tribes who furnish the clouds of cavalry that have in all times been the best defence of Persia, would be induced to join the cause of an invader by the prospect of plunder in India; but I think that those who reckon upon this deceive themselves greatly. Were a Mahometan prince to rise in power, and after subduing the whole of Persia, and the neigh-

bouring states, to attempt the invasion of India, there is no doubt that he would readily be joined by these troops, encouraged by such hopes: but it must be remembered, that difference of religion has at all times, and will continue, to operate strongly against an invading force, and even in negotiating would arm the opponents of the enterprise with a mighty power, by enlisting the priesthood on their side. The difficulty and uncertainty, or at best the tedious result of such an expedition, would also have a paralysing effect upon the volatile and timorous Persians: confidence would require to be established before any would enlist, and it is at the beginning of such an enterprise when that confidence could least be expected, that its effect would be most required. Even should such allies be procured in sufficient numbers, they would add greatly to the embarrassment and difficulty of providing supplies; and it is not improbable that long before they could reach the fertile and richer districts, they would melt away, and become predatory bands preying on their employers.

It may be objected to this reasoning that the same line of conduct was successfully pursued by former conquerors who have invaded India, but the objection will not fairly apply; for it should be held in remembrance, first, that these conquerors were either of the same religion as the people they invaded, or of one which yielded to, or coalesced with theirs, and which never entertained towards others the deadly animosity which exists between the Christian and Mahometan faiths. Secondly, with one exception, they all arose in *Asia*, not in *Europe*, consequently had less of distance to embarrass their march. Thirdly, before they attempted to invade India they made themselves masters not only of Persia, where they ruled, but of all the surrounding countries, and made their name a terror to the nations near them before they commenced a conquest so remote.

The expedition of Alexander the Great took place at a period so remote, and the accounts of it are so partial and obscure, that we can hardly form a judgment of the various circumstances that favoured his arms: we may gather from them, however, that the court and people of Persia were greatly enervated by luxury and inaction; that

the fame and power of the Grecian king, which had preceded him into Media, with the rapidity of his progress, the splendor of his victories, and the superiority of his troops, had struck a panic over all Asia, which was kept up by the continuance of his heroic exploits; and that his courtesy, munificence, and generally conciliatory policy reconciled the vanquished to the easy chains of their magnanimous conqueror. Yet, after all, he never did subdue, and hardly could be said to have reached India; and the small impression he did make upon its confines was quite transient.

The expedition of Nadir Shah is more within our reach, and a very little attention will suffice to show us how favourable to his success was the crisis at which he undertook his enterprise. Persia was disorganized, and in despair, when he stepped forth to save her. The surrounding countries on the east were quite unable to check or to resist his rising fortunes. The Affghauns, beaten out of Persia, had lost their prince, and were in a state of anarchy and weakness; and the Oozebeks of Bockhara and Khawrezm were under the rule of weak and inefficient sovereigns. Yet Nadir, before he thought of invading India, prepared the way for success, by reducing to obedience, if not perfectly subduing, the neighbouring countries. Balkh was conquered, and the king of Bockhara, beaten by his gallant son, was glad to accept of terms; and the march of the conqueror through Affghanistan, was almost unopposed, except at Kandahār. He thus commanded the resources of these countries; and it is worthy of remark, that the very arms and military equipment of such an army as Nadir's, might be recruited and replenished in the countries through which he passed. His troops, chiefly consisting of cavalry, were accustomed to the habits and resources of the country; they were not encumbered by such heavy trains of artillery and baggage as are necessary for the accommodation of European troops, who would be forced to depend for all their military supplies upon their depôt, and who would find it extremely difficult to muster the means of carriage that would be required for them.

India itself was in no situation to resist the invader. Supine and weak, the court of Dehlee never thought of opposing his pro-

gress till within less than an hundred miles of the capital; and their enervated troops were quite unable to withstand the hardy and practised veterans who had overcome the half of Asia. Yet, after all, Nadir Shah never subdued India; he proceeded no further than Delhee; and, sensible of the impossibility of retaining even this acquisition, he, with a show of liberality, restored the plundered city to its monarch, and, contenting himself with its spoils, marched back to his own country.

The above observations may serve to show that any attempt made to invade India, by the routes usually contemplated, would probably be unsuccessful, and end in the destruction of the invaders, by fatigue, famine, and the hostility of the people through whose country the march would lead. To make the attempt without having secured the assistance of the people would be madness: but it is beyond all reasonable calculation to suppose that even a majority of the various tribes interested in the measure could ever be brought to co-operate heartily with a European force; and, therefore, it could only be done by reducing the country completely to the state of a conquered kingdom, the possibility of doing which involves considerations far too important to enter upon in this place.

Having thus endeavoured to show the impossibility of successfully invading India by the route through Persia, I wish to offer a few remarks respecting another route, which appears to offer obstacles less insurmountable, and to which less attention has usually been paid.

In the geographical notices regarding Khawrezm and Mawer-a-ul-Nehr (which are to be found in the Appendix), I have observed that the distance between the bay of Mangushluc, on the Caspian sea, and Khyvah, the present capital of Khawrezm, is only ten days' journey of a caravan; and in another part of the same it will be found that the river *Amoo*, or *Oxus* (only one day's journey, with water carriage, from Khyvah), is navigable for boats the whole way from Balkh to Ourgunge; and as it flows through a level country, the channel is not likely to be much interrupted by rapids, or dangers of any kind. From Balkh, and from Khoondooz (a town

about two days' march from the river, higher up), there is a road to Caubul, which I have reason to believe is by no means very difficult. It must, indeed, lead through the Hindoo-Coosh, by Boot Baumian, and, consequently, over some lofty hills, but I could not procure any routes sufficiently distinct to give a good idea of its nature. As, however, this route to Caubul and India was constantly used in former times, and is so even now, it probably offers no serious obstacles, and the whole distance does not, I believe, exceed two hundred and fifty miles.

The great anxiety which the Russians have evinced to establish a secure footing at Mangushluc, and to entertain relations with Khyvah and Bockhara, will be adverted to in the sequel of this work, and particularly in the geographical notices already alluded to; and there can be little doubt entertained by those who have considered the policy of that ambitious state, that some enterprize like the above has been for a long time in its contemplation. The facilities it possesses, are doubtless, great: with Astracan for a grand depôt, and the Caspian behind them, they could easily establish a force at Mangushluc, which is not more than two or three days' sail from their own shores. The conquest of Khyvah, and all Khawrezm, I do not think would he a matter of great difficulty, if their attention was once seriously turned that way; and thus the navigation of the Oxus would be in their power. Wood is to be found, for the purpose of constructing boats, upon the banks of that river, or it would not be very difficult to transport boats, framed, and ready for putting together, from Astracan.

It is by no means intended to represent this route as divested of very serious difficulty; all that is meant is to show that, if the Russian government should think of engaging in such an enterprize, they would, by adopting this mode, save themselves upwards of a thousand miles of land journey, through a very ill-furnished or desert country, and enjoy the benefit of water carriage to within about two hundred and fifty miles of Caubul; and, instead of engaging in the conciliation, or conquest of numberless and faithless tribes, they would have only to subdue two insulated sovereigns, of very limited

powers, and overawe the scattered population of a few hundred miles. What they might have to contend with, after reaching Caubul, is another question, on which various opinions may be entertained.

In any point of view, the enterprise must be considered one of extreme difficulty and danger, certainly not to be achieved except after a long course of success, and a maturely organized system in the countries east of the Caspian, uninterrupted by the remonstrances or opposition of any European power; and it may probably be denounced as chimerical by the majority of opinions, under any circumstances. Be that as it may, it appears to be the duty of a traveller to point out such localities as he may have seen, and to record such impressions as may have been suggested by them, leaving higher authorities to judge of the danger, and to take such precautions against it as to them may seem expedient. *

* It was not until after the above observations were written that I had an opportunity of seeing what has been written on the same subject by Mr. Macdonald Kinneir, in his "Travels through Armenia and Koordistan," &c. I observe that he adverts to the same route which I have pointed out above, viz. that by the Oxus, Balkh, &c.; and although the opinions of that gentleman differ in some points from those which I have given, a general coincidence will be found in those that are most material. Mr. Macdonald Kinneir has treated the subject more at large; and those who may feel desirous of examining it further will do well to have recourse to his work.

CHAP. XI.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF KHORASĀN. — REFERENCE TO THE MAP AND APPENDIX. — VARIATION OF ITS BOUNDARIES AT DIFFERENT PERIODS. — VAST ANCIENT EXTENT AND CONSEQUENCE. — PRESENT CONTRACTED LIMITS. — ADJOINING DISTRICTS, AND CITIES OF DUBIOUS INCLUSION. — SURFACE GEOGRAPHICALLY DESCRIBED. — ELBURZ MOUNTAINS. — TABLE LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THEM. — STEPPE OF KHAUREZM, AND PLAIN OF DUSHT-E-KIPCHAUK SEA IN WHICH THE OXUS AND IAXARTES ARE LOST. — VALLIES AND SLOPES OF THE MOUNTAINS. — RUINED TOWNS THERE, OCCUPIED BY TOORKOMANS. — WANDERING TRIBES. — VARIOUS DISTRICTS. — SALT DESERTS. — NISHAPORE. — TOORQUOISE MINE. — VALLEY AND CITY OF MUSHED. — ROAD TO HERĀT. — KOHESTAN. — KOORDISH COLONIES. — STREAMS OF VARIOUS VALLIES FROM THE RIVERS ATTRUCK AND GOORGAUN, WHICH FALL INTO THE CASPIAN SEA. — THE GREAT SALT DESERT.

As the province of Khorasān is but very little known, it may be found of advantage towards understanding the following travels, if the reader should cast a glance over the map, which accompanies this work, and observe the relative positions of its chief places; and it appears proper, that before commencing the narrative of my journey from Tehrān, I should give a general geographical sketch of the countries; referring for all the more particular information I was enabled to collect regarding the province itself, and the surrounding countries, to that portion of the Appendix, which has been dedicated to this purpose.

The boundaries of that extensive tract, recognized under the appellation of Khorasān, have been differently described by the authors who have written on the subject at different periods; and no country has, in reality, varied more in its extent or in its circumstances; at times, the center of a great empire, it was the residence of mightymonarchs; at times, formed into a separate kingdom, it obeyed its own peculiar sovereigns; oftener a province loosely appended to a fallen state, it became the theatre of invasion, rebellion, and anarchy. Situated on the borders of the two great divisions of

the Asiatic world, Irān and Turān, and occupying a portion of both, it was continually a subject of dispute between the monarchs of each; and sometimes fell wholly into the power of the one, sometimes of the other. Whether in the more limited sense of its name, as a province, or in the more enlarged acceptation, as a state of no mean importance, it was the scene of mighty operations; and many of the greatest atrocities and severest contests Asia ever witnessed, were committed in its cities, and took place upon its plains. Thus circumstanced, its political boundaries were continually varying, and extending or diminishing on the one side or the other, with the fortunes of its own or the surrounding potentates.

The limits assigned to this country were at one time magnificent; for they comprehended on the north every thing to the Oxus, including the steppe of Khaurezm, Balkh, and all the intervening country to the east: on the south east, not only the city and dependencies of Herāt, but those of Subzawur, Furrah, Geereēsh, and even Candahar itself: on the south, it was always bounded by Kermān and Seieestān: on the west it included the district of Yezd, but its salt desert was bounded in that direction by the districts of Ispahān, Cashān, and Rhē, somewhere near Semnaun; beyond the Elburz mountains, the district of Astrabad and of Goorgaun were also considered as dependencies of this vast territory.

If Khorasān were to be considered merely as a province of Persia, and were the appellation limited to that portion of country east of Irāk, which obeys the Persian monarch, its extent would now be small indeed. But if political considerations and natural lines be taken into account in the assignment of its boundaries, the following arrangement may perhaps be accepted.

A line swerving but little from the meridian, and marked in its greatest extent by deserts, skirting the districts of Ispahān and Cashān, and meeting the Elburz mountains near Dehnimmuck, will divide Khorasān from Irāk on the west. If this line from its northern extremity be continued in an easterly direction, nearly to the meridian of Jahjerm, and thence crossing these mountains in a northerly course, to the plains of Goorgaun at their feet, it will enter the

desert on the eastern side of the Caspian sea, and touch the dominions of Mahomed Raheem Khan, in the steppe of Khaurezm. It is not easy, nor is it of much importance to decide, in what part of the great desert that occupies the whole space between the feet of the Elburz range and the Oxus, the northern limits of Khorasān should be placed; politically speaking, it does not at present extend beyond the feet of these mountains. To the eastward it may properly be allowed to include the districts of Serrukhs, Hāzārāh, and Balai Moorghaub; and a line running between these and the dependencies of Balkh, in a direction nearly south, including the district of Herāt and touching Seieestān, would circumscribe Khorasān on the east; Kerman and part of Fars upon the south, complete the boundaries.

The districts of Yezd on the south-west, Astrabad on the north-west, and Merve Shah Jehan on the north-east, are sometimes included in Khorasān; the first, although at present it is a separate government, appears naturally from position, to form a part of this extensive province. Astrabad also has been formed into a separate government, dependant upon Mazunderān, and to that it is often naturally attached. Merve, although once a royal city and capital of the country, situated as it is in the midst of a great desert, equally unconnected with this or any other of the surrounding states, however it may once have been attached *to*, can hardly be included *in* Khorasān. Herāt, so long its capital city, can never be disjoined from that country in a geographical description of it, however it may be dismembered from it by political circumstances, as has for a long time past been the case; but the above boundary leaves to themselves Candahar, Caubul, Balkh, Bockhara, or Mawur-a-ul-naher, and Khaurēzm; which however the dominion of the east may have been divided, in general have either been considered as distinct provinces, or have formed independent states.

The surface of this extensive country, like other parts of Persia, is much diversified by plains and mountains; a very large proportion is quite unfit for the habitation of man, consisting of arid rocks, destitute of vegetation or fresh water, and deserts either of salt land or sand, among which a few fertile oasises may be found like islands

in the sea. It seems practicable, from the mass of information that has by various means been obtained, to separate and arrange these inhabited and cultivable districts, so as to form in some degree a geographical description of the country, and such an arrangement has been attempted in the following pages.

That great range of mountains * which separates the provinces of Azerbijān and Irāk from those of Mazunderān and Gheelān, is known in some parts by the appellation of Kohe Caucasān, but more generally by that of Elburz; and is connected with the mountains of Armenia, and consequently with the great chain of Caucasus. Preserving an easterly course, it is continued through the northern part of Khorasān, sending various ramifications to the southward, till, passing north of Mushed, and branching out in the highlands of Hāzārāh and Balai Moorghaub, it extends to the southward of Balkh, into the remote province of Budukshān, and is lost in that great mountainous tract † north of Caubul, which is continuous with the ranges of Hindoo Coosh and Himālā, and in which the largest rivers of Asia take their rise.

The country to the south of this extensive range, at least in Persia and Khorasān, is a table land, upon a level greatly more elevated than that to the north. To the east of Mazunderān, and the limited but rich districts of Astrabad and Goorgaun, a desert of barren sand, chiefly level, and little elevated above the Caspian sea, stretches northward from the feet of these mountains to an immense extent, including the steppe of Khaurēzm, and forming a part of that mighty plain to which the natives have given the appellation of Dusht-e-Kipchauk. In this desert are to be found several fertile

* One very remarkable feature of this chain is, that in its whole vast extent it appears to form the boundary and rampart wall (as it were) of the elevated table land of Persia and Khorasān, all to the south, from Azerbijan to Balkh inclusive, being on a level from three to four thousand feet higher than the country north of it, viz. Gheelān, Mazunderān, Astrabad, and the desert to the east of the Caspian sea. Indeed the latter, in its whole extent from east to west, from the Caspian to the Oxus, or nearly so, if I may trust to the accounts given me by all with whom I conversed on the subject, comes suddenly, and without undulation or break, up to the foot of the mountains, as to a wall; so distinct (though perhaps deeply indented) is this boundary.

† Called by Mr. Elphinstone the Paropamisan range.

districts, and the latter part of the courses both of the Oxus and Iaxartes, with the sea in which these river are lost (whatever be its name), lie among its sands; but in that portion which is included in the limits now assigned to Khorasān, there is no cultivated spot, or permanent habitation, and the scanty sprinkling of population it possesses consists of a few tribes of wandering Toorkomans.

These mountains, although they present to the desert their loftiest face, still sweep down in a manner so gradual near their base, as to afford in the vallies and ravines they include, as well as at their feet, a quantity of rich land, watered by numerous rivulets, which once was well peopled and cultivated. This stripe of country has been termed by the natives the *Attock**, a word signifying a skirt (as of a garment), and it contained the considerable towns of Nissa Abiverd, Diroom, Mehineh, with their dependant villages, all of which are now in ruins, and totally deserted, in consequence of the continual attacks of the Toorkoman plunderers, who now have full possession of the whole tract, and pitch their tents among the remains of these ancient places. The only other place of consideration we find in the Attock, or northern division, is Serrukhs, a very ancient town, the remains of which are now inhabited by Toorkomans and Uzbecks, and which is about 120 miles distant from Mushed.

To the eastward, and a little to the southward of Serrukhs, about 280 or 300 miles from Mushed, is situate the district of Moorghaub, or *Balai*† Moorghaub, as it is called, from the mountainous nature of the country; and sometimes the mountains of Hāzārāh, because it is chiefly inhabited by the tribe of that name. The country through which the road to this district lies is entirely desert, more in consequence of its unsettled state than its want of capability, its only inhabitants being wandering Eels. The fort of Moorghaub, a place of but mean strength, situated upon, and surrounded by hills, is the chief village of this district: another called Kallah-nō, or the

* The Persians often call it "Dameen-e-Koh," which also means exactly, the *skirts* of the hills, a term commonly applied to plains or slopes in similar situations.

† Balai, in Persian, signifies above. *Upper Moorghaub* it will thus be, or more probably from its mountainous nature, the *Highlands* of Moorghaub.

new fort, is not far distant, and besides a few petty hamlets in the close vicinity of these, we are informed that there are no other places permanently occupied in or near the district of Moorghaub. The town or large village of Mymoona, can scarcely be considered as within the limits of Khorasān, being situate further to the north-east, upon the road to Balkh: it will be taken notice of in another place.

The road from Moorghaub to Herāt passes through a country quite uninhabited, except by a few Eels, and if we may trust to the accounts given of it, the greatest part of it is unfit for the abode of men, as it affords but little water, and that not of a good quality. Herāt and its dependencies will be spoken of at greater length hereafter.

About one hundred and twenty miles south-west of Herāt, the districts of Birjun and Kaen, sandy and ill-watered themselves, are found, surrounded by a sandy desert. I have little information of a nature to be relied upon respecting the most southern parts of the province; but there is every reason to believe, that between these last mentioned districts and that of Yezd, upon the west, and Tubbus to the north-west, there are no fertile or inhabited tracks of any consideration, the whole country, consisting of salt or sandy wastes, affording no means of sustaining life.

Tubbus is a considerable town and district, also situate in the salt desert. The old town of Toon lies from 130 to 140 miles east, and a little to the north of this place, the road for three days, or about sixty miles, passing through a well-inhabited and tolerably watered country, with many fine villages on either hand, the remaining space until close to Toon being nearly desert. Around that old city there is some inhabited country, but from thence to Goonahbād, a distance of eigty or ninety miles, there is little or none. Goonahbād is a considerable place, situate about seven days' journey, or about 150 miles to the south and east of Nishapore.

A high range of rocky hills and a portion of salt desert separates Tubbus on the north from the district of Toorsheez, the capital of which is a considerable town of the same name. This is circumscribed on the west by the salt desert, which intervenes broadly be-

tween it and the districts of Cashān and Tehrān, the first habitable districts of Irāk in that direction. To the east lies Toorbut Hyderee and its dependencies; whether in a continuation of the same plain with Toorsheez, or separated by mountains, I do not know; but that the latter is the case seems probable, both from the geographical and political positions of the countries. The plains of Toorbut communicate with that through which passes the road, from Mushed to Herāt, and with the mountainous districts of Hazārāh and Balai Moorghaub.

Leaving the central divisions, and, for the sake of arrangement, turning to the north-west corner of Khorasān, the first district that occurs is that of Semnāun (pronounced by the natives Semnoon), which is separated from Deh Nimmuck of Irāk by a small but deep ravine, that issues from the mountains, and is lost in the salt desert at no great distance. It is but a stripe, contained between the Elburz range on the north (including their southern face), and the salt desert on the south; its breadth from the latter, to the foot of the hills, in no place that I could see, exceeding from ten to twenty miles, and this is sparingly cultivated. To the south several ridges of rocks arise in the desert, which may give shelter to a few miserable hamlets, but there is in that quarter no place of consequence.

Damghān bounds with Semnāun upon the eastward, being like it, a stripe, stretching along, between the Elburz and the desert. Still further on, in the same line, we find the district of Shahrood and Bostām, resembling the two last; and though chains and promontories of very inhospitable hills may be seen striking into and varying the desert on the south, I could hear of no inhabited tracts of any consequence in that direction.

The district of Shahrood is bounded upon the east, or rather the south-east, by a valley of fifteen or twenty miles broad; which originating at an inlet of the salt desert (which in this place is a marsh), runs in a north-easterly direction between the hills of Shahrood, and a range of rocks called (from the chief village found among them) the hills of Meyomeid, for many miles; and communicates

by the valley of Bans Kellah, near Semulghan, with the passes in the Elburz mountains to the Attock.

The Meyomeid range has but an obscure connection with any of the greater chains of mountains; it forms a peninsula in the desert, the neck of which may be traced to its origin, in a mountain called the Jugghutai range, of which notice will be taken below. On this peninsula there are but few inhabitants. Meyomeid and two smaller hamlets upon its northern face; Bearjun with its few dependencies upon the southern exposure, and the wretched fort and village of Abbassabād on the eastern side of the Isthmus, being the only habitations of which I could hear. But both this district and the long valley above spoken of, are deserted rather in consequence of the continual ravages of the Toorkomans, than from want of fertility; even as things are, there are many parts of both that afford good pasture.

Another inlet of the salt desert, which after embracing the peninsula of Meyomeid, runs up to the north-east beyond Abbassabād, divides at a distance of twenty-five miles, that village from the district of Muzeenoon, which contains a number of large and populous villages; it occupies the western part of a very extensive plain, in which, at a distance of forty or fifty miles to the eastward, is situate the old and once important town of Subzawār. The weather was too hazy when we passed through this plain to admit of many observations, but there appeared to be on either hand a good succession of villages; among which those of Soodkhur, and Mehr, eighteen and twenty-four miles respectively from Muzeenoon, attracted our attention.

This great plain of Subzawār, which extends for more than an hundred miles from west north-west to east south-east, with a breadth varying from forty to sixty miles, is bounded on the south by a lofty range of hills running more nearly from east to west, which separate it from the district of Toorsheez; and on the north by a continuation of the Jugghetai mountains, which taking their origin from a spur or branch of the Elburz, extend to the east south-east for more

than forty miles beyond the city of Subzawār, where losing their great height, they sink into several low branches, that afford a passage nearly over level ground, into the valley of Nishapore.

The plain or valley of Nishapore extends for eighty or ninety miles in length, and forty to sixty in breadth, from about north-west by west to south-east by east. At one part of the north-western end, there is a low pass communicating with another large plain, that extends behind the Jugghetai range, towards the valley that separates Shahrood from Meyomeid.* This lofty range originating in the Elburz runs along with the plain upon its north-eastern side, and closing in with that of Toorsheez, bound the valley at its south-eastern extremity, leaving but a narrow entrance through a low pass into the valley of Mushed, at Sherreefabad.

The valley of Mushed is of great length; it may be described as taking its rise ten or twelve miles to the north-west of Sheerwan, and extending almost uninterruptedly for fifty miles beyond Mushed, in a direction varying little from north-west to south-east; and although there is a low rocky pass of about four miles in length near the village of Hedineh, the same valley probably continues for the greatest part of the way to Herāt. It varies greatly in breadth from twelve to thirty miles, and contains in its extent, besides the city of Mushed, the towns of Chinnarān, Radcan, Kabooshan (or Cochoon), Sheerwan, and their dependencies, with a great extent of cultivated land.

The road from Mushed to Herāt must also pass through several well-peopled and well-cultivated districts. Among these enumerated in the routes that have been obtained, we find the towns of Toorbut-e-Jāmee, and Ghoriān particularly mentioned. To the North-east of this road a district is taken notice of, so mountainous as to have obtained the name of *Kohistan*, or the *Highlands*, which either forms a part of, or is connected with the mountains of Hazārāh.

The extensive valley above spoken of contains a considerable portion of the district known by the appellation of Koordistan, be-

* The remainder of this extremity is closed by a spur from the hills on the north-east side, in which are situated the celebrated Toorquoise mines of Nishapore.

cause it is inhabited by Koordish colonies, of which mention will hereafter be made. * The large villages of Jajerm, Sooffeeabad and others, lie between the hills which confine it on the south-west, and the Jugghetai range; and further to the west are found those of Sooltaun Meydan, and its dependencies.

This valley originates beyond Sheerwan in the heart of the chief range of the Elburz, which continues upon its northern side, separating both it and the great table land of Khorasān from the desert and steppe of Khaurezm. That range, however, includes several inhabited districts, of which the chief are Dereguz, with the town of that name, and Kelaat †, the celebrated and favourite fortress of Nadir Shah, from both of which places there are passes leading to the Attock; the others are but dependencies upon Chinnarān, Kabooshān, and Boojnoord.

To the north-west of Sheerwan, a range of lofty hills, all ramifications of the Elburz, separate the last mentioned valley from that of Boojnoord; but there is an opening to the north-east by which a portion of the waters from Sheerwan flow into the Monah valley, which lies to the north of Boojnoord. This valley collecting the streams from several subordinate glens, conveys a large body of water in a westerly direction to the desert, which joined by several other streams, falls into the Caspian sea at Kooroo-soofee, forty or fifty miles to the north of Astrabad, under the name of the Attruck. There are between the Monah valley and the Attock more than one intervening range, but the streams from them all either flow into the Attruck, or are lost in the desert. To the south of the Monah valley a ridge called Peyghumber Koh, separates it from a glen called Sarasoo, which also contributes its waters to that stream.

To the westward of Boojnoord lies the valley of Semulghan, surrounded by lofty hills, from which several subordinate glens drain into the Sarasoo or the Monah; but as this part of the country becomes far more mountainous than that to the southward, it would be endless and unprofitable to attempt describing the valleys and

* See the geographical notices in the Appendix.

† A description of this remarkable strong hold will be found in the Appendix.

ridges of which it is composed; the more so as they contain hardly any population, or are but partially and occasionally occupied by parties of the Toorkoman tribes.

A narrow pass called Dehneh Derkesh leads from the valley of Semulghan, in a south-westerly direction to that of Banskelleh; and this opens into a wide but desert plain, which communicates, as I was informed, with the long valley running between Sharood and Meyomeid; and by certain comparatively easy passes to the northward, with the Attock and desert.

The south-western extremity of that wide and desert plain terminates in a narrow outlet, the commencement of a deep dell or valley called Sheheruc, which opens into the rich plains of Goorgaun, divided from the desert by the Attruck. Of the country among the hills to the south-west of this I know little*, but it contains many small well-peopled districts, the inhabitants of which mix but little with those above or below the mountains, and I could get no very intelligible description of their country.

To complete this general description of the country, there remains to give some idea of the extent and nature of the desert that occupies so great a proportion of the table land of Khorasān, which it seems of importance to do for the elucidation of the subject, even although it may involve a degree of repetition.

The western limit of Khorasān is very nearly that of the great salt desert. It skirts the district of Tehrān, and forming a long inlet to the north-west, between that and Koom, it confines the districts of Cashān and Ispahan, in a line rendered very irregular by the occurrence of mountainous promontories, and cultivable tracks. It insulates the districts of Yezd, and extends continuous with the deserts of Fars, Kerman, and Seieestan, as far north as Tubbus,

* It can be but a stripe included in the breadth of the chief range of the Elburz, between the districts of Shahrood, Jahjerm, Damghaun, &c., and the known districts about Goorgaun, Astrabad, &c. Like the rest of the inhabitants in this mountainous region, they are highlanders of a very slenderly cultivated and rather savage disposition, prizing, and jealous of, the species of liberty they possess, which, in fact, is but nominal; for their chiefs are as severe tyrants as the government officers, whom they dread, can be.

including hardly any habitable country except the district of Birjoon and Kayn. On the east it is confined in the same irregular manner as on the west, by the district of Furrah, Subsawur, and Herāt. To the north and east of Tubbus there is a tract of more inhabited and fertile country (although intersected by ramifications and filaments, as it were, of the desert) which includes Toon and Goonahbad, and probably communicates with the richer tracts about Herāt and Ghoriān.

Between Tubbus and Toorsheez the desert is again found intervening, and running, through not uninterruptedly, in an east north-east direction, towards the districts of Kohistan, and the mountains of Hazārāh: the whole country to the west of Toorsheez is occupied by it, and it penetrates by inlets, perhaps of no very great extent, between that district and Subzawār.

The same desert, followed from the deep inlet by Koom, rounding the eastern side of the hills Kinaragird, skirts the plains of Khaur and Vurōmeen, the districts of Deh Nimmuck, Semnoon and Damghan, Shahrood and Meyomeid, in a line much indented by spurs and ramifications from the Elburz: and after a deep sinus between Abbas-Abad and Muzeenoon, it returns to the southward, where we left it at Subzawār.

The nature of this desert varies much in different parts. In some places the surface is dry, and even produces a few of those plants that love a salt soil; in others we find it to consist of a crackling crust of dry earth, covered with saline efflorescence; a considerable portion is marshy, and in the lower parts water accumulates during the winter months, which is evaporated, either totally or partially, in the hot weather, leaving a quantity of salt, in cakes, upon a bed of mud. In some places, the surface is formed of a hard baked and perfectly barren clay. Again, in certain districts, sand abounds either in the shape of heavy plains, or hillocks in the form of waves, easily moved by the wind; and sometimes of a nature so light and impalpable, as to prove extremely dangerous, as well as disagreeable to travellers, who not unfrequently are buried in its heaps. I have reason, how-

ever, to believe, that the salt desert (or *Kubeer* *, as it is called by the natives), predominates in Khorasān; and salt certainly abounds in many districts, to which the desert does not reach: there is little doubt, that this salt desert penetrates through the inhabited isthmus extending between Herat and Mushed; into the mountainous districts of Kohistan, and Hazārāh, where we are informed there is much salt, and brackish water; and although there must be a great difference in the levels, it does seem possible to trace a connection, however obscure, between the desert track we have been describing, and that extensive sandy steppe †, which commencing at the foot of the Elburz, stretches almost boundlessly to the north.

Having thus described the general lines of the country, I shall again beg to refer the reader to the Appendix for a more particular account of the districts above enumerated, as well as for all the geographical, historical, or general information I obtained regarding the countries contiguous to Khorasān.

* Mr. MacDonald Kinneir, in his valuable memoir, appears to have misunderstood the meaning of this word. In speaking of the slip of desert which intervenes between Koom and Kinaragird, he calls it Deria Kubbeer, or the *sea of Kubbeer*. Kubbeer, or rather Kuveer, is a term generally applied to salt desert, whether wet or dry; so that if the track in question, has the word *Deria* or *Sea* ever applied to it, it probably alludes, either to some traditionary account of a sea having once existed there, or has been added because it occasionally is covered with water, or is as a sea in vastness of extent, although of sand or salt desert.

† There is a great deal of Kuveer, or salt desert all through the steppes of Khaurezm and the desert lying between the Oxus and Caspian sea.

CHAP. XII.

ACCOUNT OF THE TOORKOMAN TRIBES. — THOSE BORDERING ON KHORASĀN ADDICTED TO ROBBERY, MURDER, AND MAKING SLAVES FOR SALE. — SOONIES BY SECT. — DETEST THE PERSIANS AS SHEEAHS. — THE COUNTRIES THEY INHABIT AND INFEST. — THE TUCKEH TRIBE. — THE GOCKLAN TRIBE. — THE YAMOOT TRIBE. — NUMBERS OF EACH. — MANNERS AND CUSTOMS. — SUPREMACY THEY ACKNOWLEDGE. — INDEPENDENCE. — HISTORY OF EESHAN DERWĒSH. — HOSPITALITY TO STRANGERS. — QUESTIONED. — THEIR ARMS, DRESS, AND APPEARANCE. — BREED AND TRAINING OF THEIR HORSES. — CAMELS. — DOGS. — CHAPPOWS, OR PLUNDERING EXPEDITIONS. — DISPOSAL OF THEIR PLUNDER AND CAPTIVES. — PURCHASE THEIR WIVES. — NUMEROUS PROGENY. — MOVEABLE HOUSES. — MANUFACTURES. — ENCAMPMENTS.

As in the course of the following narrative mention will frequently be made of the Toorkoman tribes, who, indeed, must form a very prominent object in any account of the northern parts of Khorasān, I will trespass on the reader's patience a little longer, to lay before him a few particulars relative to the character and customs of that people to whom he will ere long be introduced.

Among the peculiarities that mark the population of Asia, there is none which is more calculated to attract attention than the division of so great a portion of it into the two classes of fixed and wandering communities. The pastoral life appears, indeed, to be suggested to man by his natural disposition to indolence and ease; for it affords an abundant supply for his most prominent wants, without any great or laborious exertion. But this sort of life can only exist, to any considerable extent, in countries which afford but little encouragement for agriculture; or which are, from whatever cause, but thinly peopled. When a fertile spot occurs, those who first occupy it and experience the comforts which its produce, united with a fixed residence, can bestow, will not lightly abandon it: they grow rich; others follow their example; mutual wants arise, and are supplied; trades spring out of these wants; a village; a town, a city is

formed, the fixed inhabitants of which monopolize the fertile lands in their vicinity, and drive the shepherds and their flocks to the remoter and less productive districts. Thus, in the richer countries to the south and east of Asia, as well as in Europe, we find no considerable or distinct portion of the inhabitants affecting a wandering and purely pastoral life; but the northern and western parts, including Arabia, Persia, a portion (at least) of Affghaunistan, Balkh, and all the countries that lie to the north of its parallel of latitude, as far on the east as the most civilized parts of China, and on the west, including a portion of Poland and Russia, all, from time immemorial, have, in greater or less degree, been occupied by tribes, who, wandering from place to place, as the choice of pasture guided them, employed themselves entirely in feeding their flocks and herds, their sole means of subsistence; and who never have, and never can be persuaded to reside in towns or villages. They claim a hereditary right to the use of those extensive tracts, which being either unfit for the purposes of agriculture, or never having been occupied by the stationary population, afford to those who choose to take advantage of them a sustenance for their cattle: but they yield to the sovereign of the country (where such a person exists) little more either of obedience or of tribute, than the occasional military service of part of their youth.

The proportion of these wanderers to that of the stationary population, necessarily varied, according to the nature of the country, and the denseness of its inhabitants; in many extensive tracts the former greatly exceeded the latter, and in some entirely occupied their place. In that portion of Asia more immediately under consideration, both cases occur; cities and villages are every where rare, compared with the extent of surface; and the influence of royal authority itself is limited to a narrow sphere. In the wide space that intervenes between the imperial powers of Russia and of China, on the west and on the east, and which on the south is bounded by the kingdom of Persia, and the lofty central mountains of Asia, we find but two sovereigns who possess considerable and supreme power, and three or four inferior chiefs hardly independent

of them; the rest of the population is scattered in hordes over the face of the land, in almost savage freedom.

The history of so considerable a class of men certainly presents a field for very various and interesting enquiry, to all who delight in the study of their species; for it will be found that the tribes differ widely in their habits and dispositions, according to the circumstances in which they are placed, and the nature of the influence to which they are most exposed. In some parts they are purely pastoral, mild, hospitable, fond of and kind to strangers; in others they are shy and reserved, shunning all foreign intercourse; in others again savage, ferocious, predatory, and blood thirsty.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that the greater number of those who belong to the latter description are to be found in the countries which border upon Khorasān. We find to the north, the Gocklan, the Yamoot, and Tuckeh Toorkomans, who occupying the country behind the Elburz, and in the steppe of Khaurezm, pour from their deserts upon the cultivated countries around; plundering villages and caravans, committing every sort of atrocious outrage, murdering on the spot the old, the feeble, and the helpless; carrying into slavery all who are fit for labour, and thus depopulating many extensive districts, that, but for them, would have continued fertile and well inhabited. On the east, the Timoorees, Hazārehs, Feerozecooees, and Jumsheedees, commit the same ravages; disposing of their captives to those who frequent the slave markets of Khyvah and Bokhara: and on the south, and east, are found the wild Ballooches, who not only plunder and murder, but, as I have been assured, have of late found out the value of prisoners; and who have encouraged the slave merchants that frequent the great northern markets, to come and purchase their captives. Even the Affghaun, not naturally cruel, assumes in this ominous neighbourhood a fiercer character, and adds to robbery and plunder the crime of murder.

So striking and decided an effect cannot have been produced upon the general character of so large a class of men, without some potent cause; and I believe it will not be necessary to seek for that, further than in the local and political circumstances of the countries

among or near which they inhabit, and whose stationary population has likewise been powerfully influenced in a similar way. Khorasān having from the earliest ages been a sort of debateable land, upon the confines of several great monarchies, and a constant object of desire to their sovereigns, was always the theatre of fierce and bloody wars; in which the wandering tribes in its vicinity were generally enlisted on one part or other. Whichever party was successful, they were sure to be the gainers by a systematic course of plunder, and they thus imbibed a taste for such practices, that was strengthened in every succeeding age. Whether the custom of selling their prisoners as slaves owed its origin to this system of plunder, which sought to turn every thing that was taken into property, and to the experience that prisoners will redeem their freedom with money, rather than remain in captivity; or whether they found their country so drained of men by a constant warfare, that enough did not remain behind to perform the necessary domestic and agricultural duties*; and that they were willing to supply this drain by allotting to their captives these more servile offices, it would be difficult to say: perhaps it arose from a combination of these motives; but if this solution of the question be not received as sufficient, there is a religious cause, which doubtless has lent its aid not only to the custom in question, but to all the barbarities that are perpetrated in these countries. The Toorkomans, and most of the wandering tribes in this quarter are Soonies; the Persians are Sheahs; and it is well known how deadly a hatred exists between these great Mahometan sects. The former are from their youth instructed to consider the latter in the light of unbelievers; that to shed their blood, or to make them captives, is not only lawful but meritorious; and they consequently wage a religious war against the "*Kuzzil-bashes*" as they call the Persians; committing every sort of atrocity, in the belief that it is pleasing to

* All these tribes cultivate somewhere a little corn; and it frequently happens that, at any particularly favourable spot, a small settlement, of a permanent character, is formed, to look after the interest of the wandering community in that quarter, while they are absent pasturing their flocks, at large in the desert. I have even heard of villages formed at particular spots in the desert by the Tuckeh Toorkomans.

God, and not the less zealously, because they can turn it to their own advantage.

Encouragements so powerful being held out for barbarity and outrage, it is not surprizing that the tribes in question should have become cruel, blood-thirsty, and rapacious: these dispositions pervade even their private lives, and domestic relations; the life of man has but little value in their eyes, and a word, a look, or a trivial mistake, is constantly apt to occasion bloodshed. The merest trifle will induce a Toorkoman to put his wife, his child, or his servant to death; and the more frequent occurrence of such incidents is prevented rather by considerations of interest* than by any restraint of moral feeling, or the ties of blood and affection. Even the wars between the tribes have assumed the same cruel and rapacious character which marks their foreign warfare; avarice has quite overpowered religious zeal, and the unholy act of selling captives of their own faith is now a frequent practice.

The information which I have collected regarding particular tribes, and their peculiar customs, is very limited; but where so little is known generally on the subject, every gleaning on the spot may be deemed worthy of attention. I have made mention in another place of the principal tribes which occupy the wild and mountainous country of Hāzārāh and Balai Moorghaub, to the east of Mushed, and extending northward towards Balkh†; still further in the same direction, and upon the banks of the Oxus, a considerable tribe of about forty thousand families, called the Aersanee, feed their flocks; one of their principal chiefs being Kahwar Koolee Beg. The Sullur Ghazun, or Salera, and Suhawah tribes are of much more importance and strength; or rather these are the collective names of a number of smaller tribes or teers‡ which not only inhabit parts of the desert on the left of the Oxus, but crossing that river, are to be found

* It will be seen hereafter, how valuable the women are; other servants are also valuable in proportion to their situation in the household.

† See the geographical notices in the Appendix.

‡ They call the subdivision of these tribes teers: the word in its original signification means an arrow.

scattered over the whole of Mawer-a-ul-nehr, and the countries to the north-east, as far as Kathai. The subdivisions of this tribe were reported to be very numerous; but as the account given was by no means distinct, and consisted merely of names unaccompanied by any remarkable facts, or anecdotes, it would be found equally useless and uninteresting.

The tribes, regarding which I learnt the greatest number of particulars, and which fell in some degree under my own observation, were those which occupy the desert to the north of the Elburz range of mountains, and the steppe of Khaurezm, and these are three in number; the Tuckeh the Gocklan, and the Yamoot.

The tribe of Tuckeh, is numerous and powerful, no account which I received estimated its amount at less than forty thousand families; they range the country from the bed of a small stream called the Chunder, one of the feeders of the Attruck, on the west, nearly as far to the east as Serrukhs; and are to be found all over the desert as far as Khyvah. They pay a nominal obedience to Mahomed Raheem Khan, prince of that state, who has frequently sent his troops against them to inforce it, and driven them for protection to the Koords. They occasionally profess a friendship for the Koords, when it is mutually convenient; to resist on the one hand the power of Mahomed Raheem Khan, and on the other to intimidate the King of Persia from sending an army to over-run the country. But the Tuckehs are a treacherous and faithless race, who never suffer an opportunity of plundering, even though it be their friends, to escape them; and fear of consequences alone withholds them from seizing and making captives of the caravans which pass through their haunts, from Khyvah or Bockhara; and from Chappowing* the territories of Mahomed Raheem Khan himself.

The Gocklan were formerly as powerful a tribe as that of Tuckeh, and are, in disposition and habits, quite as bad, but their power has been broken by a succession of adverse events; for they

* The term Chappow has before been explained to signify a plundering incursion. It is very well known, and very expressive in the language of these countries.

have been severely handled on all sides. Aga Mahomed Khan, enraged at their constant aggressions, sent a powerful force against the tribe, and after putting multitudes to death, he ordered that all the male captives should have the thumb of their right hand cut out by the socket, thus disabling them from using either the bow or the spear. Mahomed Raheem Khan, at a subsequent period, desirous to reduce them under his obedience, destroyed a great number; the Tuckeh being their enemies, and a more powerful tribe, also pressed sorely upon them; and the Persian government has oppressed them grievously, since they were driven to take shelter in its territories. Thus the tribe of Gocklan is considered as almost politically destroyed; it was variously estimated to consist of from eight to fifteen thousand families; probably the truth may be about ten thousand.

This acknowledgment on the part of the Gocklans of the Persian supremacy, however expedient, or perhaps even necessary to their existence, has proved to them a most disastrous step; for not only do they suffer under the tyranny of their new masters, but it has brought upon them with exasperated bitterness the wrath of their foreign enemies. Mahomed Raheem Khan, indignant, no doubt, at the defeat of his schemes of conquest and power, of which the subjection of the Gocklan tribe, and their entire transplantation to his territory formed a part, has denounced them, and declared to his subjects and the other Toorkomans, that since they have acknowledged the superiority of a heretic state, (and to use their own expression) "leant their backs upon the Kuzzil-bashes," they are no longer to be considered true Mussoolmauns; and that therefore it is lawful to plunder them, take them prisoners, and sell them captives like other unbelievers. The other tribes are but too well disposed to take advantage of this licence; and, accordingly, the Tuckehs and Yamoots take as many prisoners as they can from this oppressed race, and send them to Khyvah, where they are publicly sold in the slave bazars there.

The country occupied by the Gocklan tribe extends from the Chunder on the east to the Koormooloo (another stream) on the west; and stretches from the foot of the hills as far as the Attruck;

and so far as there is pasture on its opposite bank, but they do not venture into the sandy desert beyond. During the winter season and early spring, they pasture their flocks near the skirts of the hills upon the dry vegetation which remains of the luxuriant crop afforded by the preceding spring and summer. About the No-Rōz*, or a little after, they sow their crops of wheat, barley, and rice, and remain fattening their flocks and herds upon the rich herbage which then covers the country until June, when the corn ripens: they then cut and thrash it out, and retire with it beyond the Goorgaun, out of reach of the pestilential vapours which the continued heats of summer exhale from the swamps and forests at the foot of the mountains.

The Yamoot tribe is divided into two parts, one of which owns the authority of Mahomed Raheem Khan, and occupies the country from about the bay of Balcan, all the way to Khyvah, including the shores of the Caspian sea. The other, which acknowledges the supremacy of the Persian crown, lives in the neighbourhood of Astrabad, ranging from the Koormooloo on the east, to the Caspian sea on the west, and northward to beyond the Attruck. Like the Gocklans they cultivate the plain at the foot of the hills, in a line distant a few miles from the villages; and having reaped their crops they move to the north of the Attruck. Those who are rich enough to afford the journey, and possess camels enough to carry a sufficiency of water, go to Balcan, where they remain until the heats are over.

The Yamoots are constantly at enmity, if not at actual war with both Gocklans and Tuckehs; and readily join the king's forces in any expedition against the latter. But the extent of tribute they render to the Persian crown is limited to presents of horses and the occasional service of a few horsemen; they pay no money, no impost upon their flock and herds; indeed so slight is the tenure by which they are held even in nominal allegiance to the Persian crown, and so troublesome would they prove as enemies should they quite throw it off that that government is glad to retain them on any terms, rather than allow them to secede to Mahomed Raheem Khan, and

* Vernal equinox, or Persian new year.

commence their depredations on his territories, under the auspices and protection of that prince. That division of the tribe which obeys Persia is estimated at fifteen thousand families; that which is subject to Khyvah at ten thousand families.

The customs and manners of these tribes are all similar: they live in portable houses, and change their station frequently, as the pasture around becomes scarce; seldom remaining more than five or six days in one place. They encamp in parties of from thirty to a hundred, or even as far as two hundred families; each party having its *Reish suffeed*, or elder, to whom considerable respect is paid — whose advice is taken in all matters affecting the interests of the community, and who adjusts petty disputes. But they have no governors, chiefs, or nobles among them: and if any one should attempt to arrogate superior consideration to himself, or openly aim at power or authority, it would be the signal for his destruction. Thus, although a sense of interest induces them to unite for the sake of plunder, the very construction of their society precludes the possibility of their ever combining into any very formidable shape. Such an event can only occur, when some individual supereminently endowed with talents and courage, like a Chengiz, or a Timour, arises to force into union substances naturally repellent: and it is to this disunion that Persia owes the comparative security she enjoys at present in this quarter.* The nature of their govern-

* That such an union however may be formed has occasionally been proved, and was so not long ago, to the bitter cost of the Persians, who inhabit the districts bordering on the desert, particularly those of Astrabad, Finderisk, Peechuck Muhuleh, &c. It is about fifteen years since a personage made his appearance in Toorkistan, who, had not his ambition and abilities been exceeded by his mad enthusiasm, might have created a state and founded a dynasty, as others of no greater pretensions have done before him. His name was Niaz Koolee, and he was a native of Charjoo, in Mawur-a-ul-nehr; but he was afterwards known by the appellations of "*Khaujah Kashgaree*," (or the prophet of Kashgar) and "*Eshan*" ("they, or the man"). He was originally a simple moollah of no reputation, but he travelled into India, where it was said he was instructed by the religious mendicants there, in some peformances of natural magic and sleight of hand; after which he went through Persia, and observing the weakness of its government, he conceived the bold idea of becoming its master. With this object in view he went among the Toorkomans and practised his deceptions so successfully that these ignorant people believed him to be a holy or inspired person, and flocking

ment, if such a term can properly be applied to so unorganized a condition of society, approaches to the patriarchal; although the *teers* or sub-divisions into separate families be very numerous and small; and do not, I believe, in the least admit of any foreign interference, or claim to superiority of one over the other.

Even in the minor occurrences of life, this spirit of equality and simplicity prevails. There is but little distinction of rank at any time observed: and even the deference paid to the claims of age and relationship among the other nations of the east are here much less regarded. The greatest as well as the least enter a tent with the words of peace, and offering their hand perhaps, to those whom they know, in token of amity, sit down without regard to place or person, or any of those ceremonies and etiquettes so scrupulously adhered to by the rules of Persian politeness: and they sit and loll, or stretch themselves out, quite at their ease, and evidently without being sensible of violating any received rule of good manners.

The Toorkomans pique themselves upon hospitality: in some places its duties are willingly and liberally, as well as honestly discharged; but among the tribes whose morals have been vitiated by habits of plunder it is seldom safe to trust to the strongest professions. When any stranger (who is not an acknowledged enemy) enters a camp, he is saluted at the first tent he approaches by its inhabitants, who run out, seize his reins, and insist on his alighting, and becoming their guest; even should the tent contain but a single

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to him followed and obeyed him in all things. By this time his success had so inflamed his ambition, that nothing less than the kingdoms of both Persia and Bockhara would satisfy him. But to begin with the former he employed his powers of persuasion and raised a considerable force, which followed him as his disciples, and under his guidance plundered the borders of Khorasān so successfully, that the whole kingdom was in alarm at his progress. The king sent a force to oppose him, consisting of four thousand Astrabad Toffunchees, and four thousand horse under command of his son, Hyder Koolee Meerza, Governor of Mazunderan; but he defeated these more than once, and was in a fair way to carry his Toorkoman zealots to Tehrān itself; when one day being again opposed to this force, impelled by some extravagant fit of frenzy or enthusiasm, he rushed forward sword in hand, and almost alone, against the Toffunchees, and fell dead, being shot through the heart before he reached them; thus ending his career and freeing the king of Persia from serious alarm; for his followers immediately dispersed. His grave is still shown in the plain near Ok-kallah, not far from Astrabad.

woman, she will give the "Salaam Aleikoom," and insist on doing the honours; if he refuse, or attempt to excuse himself, and go to another tent, it is taken as a serious affront, and abuse, if not worse, is the consequence. "What!" will the offended party exclaim, "does he suppose that I had not bread and food enough to offer "him, that he thus quits my house for another's? or was not the "shelter of my house as sufficient for his head as that of such a "one?" Wherever he goes he is saluted with the words of peace; the calleeoon is presented, and sour curds, butter-milk, bread and cheese, the usual fare, is set before him. There is then no fear of open aggression, either on the part of host, or any of the camp; nor will they, in general, even steal any thing from him; and he may depend on being furnished with a guide to the extent of their range of country, if not to the next stage.* I was assured, that in this manner any traveller, not in hostility with the tribes, might journey throughout the countries between Herāt and Bockhara, Hāzārāh, Moorghaub, Balkh, and, in short, through most of those occupied by the Toorkoman, or other wandering tribes; but the three more particularly in question, with the greater part of those immediately bordering on Khorasān, are so universally and devotedly addicted to plunder, that all who were best informed upon the subject declared that it would be the height of imprudence to venture among them upon such terms. In fact, I believe that none but a Mussoolmaun and a Soonie could safely do so any where.

It is almost unnecessary to repeat here, that perfidy, cruelty, rapacity, and avarice, the infallible consequence of their habits, are characteristics of these tribes: but they do not, in general, hoard their money; they most commonly turn it into such property as camels, horses and brood mares, valuable swords, arms, and armour, women's ornaments, and clothes. A few among them, indeed, are reputed to be rich, and I heard of one individual, considered the

* I quote almost verbatim the words of those who gave me the greater part of the particulars which I have collected regarding the tribes. But though I have every reason to think that what relates to their manners and customs is quite correct, I think that in what respects their hospitality and trust-worthiness towards their guests my informant has gone too far, and that what is added in the latter part of the paragraph more nearly expresses the truth.

wealthiest man among the tribes, who was reported to be possessed of seven or eight hundred camels, and two camels' loads of treasure; one consisting of money, the other of women's clothes, jewels of gold and silver, rich furniture, &c. Money is not very current among them, sales and purchases being carried on chiefly by barter, in sheep, camels, horses, &c.

The Toorkoman women are not shut up, or concealed like those of most Mahometan countries, nor do they even wear veils; the only thing resembling them is a silken or cotton curtain which is worn tied round the face, so as to conceal all of it below the nose, and which falls down upon their breasts. They do not rise and quit the tent upon the entrance of a stranger, but continue occupied unconcernedly with whatever work they were previously engaged upon. They are, in truth, rather familiar with strangers; and have even the reputation of being well disposed to regard them with peculiar favour; it is said, indeed, that they not unfrequently assume the semblance of allurement, with the treacherous intention of seducing the incautious stranger into improper liberties; upon which the alarm is given, the men rush in, and convicting their unhappy guest of a breach of the laws of hospitality, they doom him without further ceremony to death, or captivity, making a prize of all he may have possessed.

The head dress of these women is singular enough; most of them wear a lofty cap, with a broad crown resembling that sort of soldier's cap called a shako; this is stuck upon the back of the head, and over it is thrown a silk handkerchief of very brilliant colour, which covers the top, and falls down on each side like a veil thrown back. The front of this is covered with ornaments of silver or gold, in various shapes; most frequently gold coins, mohrs or tomauns, strung in rows, with silver bells or buttons, and chains depending from them; hearts and other fanciful forms with stones set in them; the whole gives rather the idea of gorgeous trappings for a horse, than ornaments for a female. The frames of these monstrous caps are made of light chips of wood, or split reeds, covered with cloth; and when they do not wear these, they wrap a cloth around their heads in the same form; and carelessly throw another, like a veil,

over it; the veil or curtain above spoken of, covers the mouth, descending to the breast; earrings are worn in the ears, and their long hair is divided, and plaited into four parts, disposed two on each side; one of which falls down behind the shoulder and one before, and both are strung with a profusion of gold ornaments, agates, cornelians, and other stones, according to the means and quality of the wearer. The rest of their dress consists of a long loose vest or shirt, with sleeves, which covers the whole person down to the feet; and is open at the breast, in front, but buttons or ties close up to the neck; this is made of silk or cotton stuff, red, blue, green, striped red and yellow, checked, or variously coloured: underneath this, are the zere-jameh or drawers, also of silk or cotton, and some wear a short peerahn or shirt of the same. This, I believe, is all; but in the cold weather, they wear, in addition, jubbas*, or coats like those of the men, of striped stuff made of silk and cotton; on their feet they generally wear slippers like those of the Persian women.

The dress of the men varies according to their rank; many of the poorer sort wear nothing but a short woollen jubba, or shirt, and a pair of woollen drawers; others a long brown woollen wrapper: some wear the national Toorkoman or Oozbeck dress, which consists of several robes or jubbas descending to a little below the knee, bound round the waist by a sash; a shirt and drawers of cotton or silk; the stuff of which these jubbas are made is a mixture of silk and cotton, striped blue, purple, red, and green; the better classes, however, particularly of the Gocklans and Yamoots have for the most part adopted the common Persian dress; but the Tuckehs keep more to their own costume, often wearing jubbas woven of camels' hair above their lower garments. The head dress of the men is various; bonnets of red, black, or grey sheepskin, round and close,

* The Jubba is a large wrapping gown, with sleeves, tight at the wrists, but wide above; open in front, and so wide, as to admit of being folded round the body; the one side lapping broadly over the other; it very much resembles the barounee, but is commonly made of coarser materials. The Khorasānee jubba is most commonly made of brown, or reddish grey woollen; and frequently of camels' hair. It is a very good external covering, its close texture not readily admitting the wet, and in great measure excluding the wind.

or with broad tops; the common Persian cap, or that of quilted cotton worn by the Koords; on their feet they wear the usual Persian slippers, the Koordish leather sock, with rolls of cloth around the legs for hose, or boots. The tribe of Tuckeh in particular wear boots of the Oozbeck-fashion.

The general characteristic appearance of these tribes varies considerably; but there is also much individual variety among them. The Tuckehs have a great deal of the Tartar physiognomy; many of the men were tall, stout and well made, with scanty beards, eyes small, and drawn up at the corners; high cheek bones, and small flat noses: some on the contrary had handsome features, more resembling those of Europeans than Asiatics.

The Gocklans also bear marks of Tartar origin in their countenances, but less than the Tuckehs, and even in the same family, remarkable differences of feature were to be seen. Khallee Khān, the chief of an encampment, with whom I lodged, was a handsome man, not unlike a Persian; while his brother was strongly marked with the Tartar features. This, however, was more obvious in the women than the men; most of them were extremely ugly, haggard and withered; the elder ones were particularly frightful, affording admirable representations of Hecate and her wëird sisters. The mother of the khan, who came out to welcome us, with her silver white hair and her unearthly yellow visage, had she been in Scotland some years ago, or in many parts of India *now*, could never have escaped being burnt or drowned for a witch. Yet, I observed, some young women remarkably handsome, with piercing black eyes, a nut brown ruddy tint, and sweet regular intelligent countenances; nor was it easy to believe, that the withered hags beside them could once have been lovely, fresh, and blooming like them; the children too, were better looking than their mothers, and many of them quite beautiful.

The Yamoot men have much less of the Tartar cast of countenance than those of either of the other tribes; there was, however, in most of them a peculiarity which distinguished them from the Persians; though it was not easy to decide whether it consisted in feature or in manner, probably in both: their complexion was in

general lighter, and more sallow than that of the Persians, and many of them had eyes and hair so fair, that I took them for Russians, whom they also resembled in a certain harsh irregularity of feature; but by far the greater number that I saw would not have been distinguished by an indifferent observer from the villagers and peasantry about Astrabad.

The arms used by these tribes are chiefly the spear and the sword; the former consists of a steel head with four flutes and edges very sharp, fixed upon a slender shaft of from eight to ten feet in length: in using it they couch it under the left arm, and direct it with the right hand, either straight forward, or to the right or to the left; if to the right, the butt of the shaft lies across the hinder part of the saddle; if to the left, the fore part of the spear rests on the horse's neck: they manage their horses with the left hand, but most of them are so well broke as to obey the movement of the knee, or the impulse of the body: when close to their object, they frequently grasp the spear with both hands to give greater effect to the thrust. This is quite contrary to the practice in the Indian spear exercise, in which the weapon, fourteen to sixteen feet long, is poised in the grasp with the arm bent and uplifted, as if to dart it, and the blow is only given by the motion of the arm from the elbow downwards, the horse being kept at a gentle canter, so as readily to obey the rider's will: here the horse, spurred to the full speed of a charge, offers an attack no doubt very formidable in appearance, but perhaps less really dangerous than the other in which success depends so greatly on skill and address. They are all sufficiently dexterous in the use of the sword, which is almost universally formed in the curved Persian fashion, and very sharp: they also wear a dagger at the waist belt. Firearms are as yet little in use among them; the Tuckehs possess a few, taken from the travellers they have plundered, and procure a few more occasionally from the Russians by the way of Bockhara. The Gocklans and Yamoots use bows and arrows, but it is remarked that they are by no means so dexterous as their ancestors were in the use of those weapons. I have heard it said that one of

the Gocklan warriors of old *, mounted on his horse and in possession of his bow and arrows, delivered the latter so rapidly and with such precision, that he did not mind a dozen of opponents. This decline of skill is attributed to the cruel expedient by which Aga Mahomed Khan incapacitated them from the use of their favourite weapon, and which occasioned many of them to take to the matchlock; but they do not as yet possess a sufficient number of these, and have by no means acquired the skill in their use which they have lost in that of the bow and arrow.

All the men of these tribes are excellent horsemen, and possess a race of horses, the excellence of which is celebrated all over Asia. Those bred by the Tuckehs have at present the greatest repute; only, I believe, because being in greater numbers, there is a more extensive choice among them, for the breeds are the same among them all. They value size and bone much, but blood, evinced by the power of enduring fatigue, still more. Size and bone appear to be indigenous to the horses of the country; figure and blood are borrowed from the Arab, and Nadir Shah took great pains to increase these qualities by sending the finest horses he could obtain from Arabia to improve the breed. After all, I do not think that any one accustomed to the symmetry of the Arab, or even the English horse, would consider them handsome; the impression they at first give is, that they are deficient in compactness; their bodies are long in proportion to their breadth and bulk of carcase, and they are not often well *ribbed up*; their legs are long, and might be thought deficient in muscle, generally falling off below the knee: they have narrow chests, nor is their general breadth at all remarkable: their necks are long, their heads large, heavy, and seldom well put on; nor does the general appearance give the spectator the idea of activity or fleetness. Such was the first impression conveyed to me by the sight even of the superior horses of the Toorkomans; perhaps the rather low condition

* This will bring to the reader's mind the mode of warfare adopted by the Parthians of old, the ancestors of the Gocklans; who fight and use their arms exactly in the same manner, shooting at their advancing enemy, while themselves are retreating.

they are for the most part kept in, increased its unfavourable nature; and it was not for some time that the effect began to wear off, and the fine and valuable points of the animal to force themselves into observation. They have large and powerful quarters resembling those of the English horse; the shoulders are often fine, their legs clean and strong, and though generally spare of flesh, what they have is firm and good; and their size unburthened with a load of fat, renders them fit to support the weight of their rider and his burthen, for an astonishing length of time. I do not by any means intend to assert, that the want of beauty is universal; on the contrary, I have seen some of the Toorkoman horses very handsome; and when they are in good condition, and well groomed, they certainly have a great deal of figure; and on the whole, approach more to the character of the English horse than any other breed I have seen in the East.

Their powers of endurance are indeed almost incredible; when trained for a chappow or plundering expedition, they will carry their riders and provisions for seven or eight days together, at the rate of twenty or even thirty fursungs (loosely, from 80 to 100 miles) a-day.* Their mode of training is more like that of our pugilistic and pedestrian performers, than that adopted for race horses. When any expedition of great length, and requiring the exertion of much speed, is in contemplation, they commence by running their horses every day for many miles together; they feed them sparingly on barley alone, and pile numuds upon them at night to sweat them, until every particle of fat has been removed, and the flesh becomes hard and tendinous; of which they judge by the feel of the muscles, particularly on the crest, at the back of the neck, and on the haunches; and when these are sufficiently firm and hard, they say in praise of the animal, that his "flesh is marble." After this the horse will pro-

* The extraordinary powers possessed by this breed of horses, are mentioned by many authors. Among late writers, Sir John Malcolm and MacDonald Kinneir relate several instances within their knowledge, of immense journeys performed by them; and though it can seldom fall to the lot of an European to have personal experience of such facts, yet they are so commonly known and so well attested in Persia, that we cannot with fairness refuse our credit to their truth.

ceed with wonderful expedition, and perseverance, for almost any length of time, without either falling off in condition, or knocking up, while horses that set out fat seldom survive. Upon an occasion shortly before I was in that part of the country, when certain of the king's horsemen, with a party of the Yamoot and Gocklan made a chappow on the Tuckeh tribe, the former, who set out with horses fat and pampered, lost them almost every one, while the Toorkomans, with their lean but powerful animals, went through the whole fatigue without inconvenience. They are taught a quick walk, a light trot, or a sort of amble, which carries the rider on easily, at the rate of six miles an hour; but they will also go at a round canter, or gallop, for forty or fifty miles, without ever drawing bridle, or showing the least symptom of fatigue. A Toorkoman, with whom I was talking on this subject, with reference to his own horse, offered to go from Mushed to Tehrān, or to Bockhara, neither of which journeys is less than five hundred miles, in six days at farthest; and the possibility of the feat was confirmed by hundreds, both Persians and Toorkomans; indeed the distances to which their chappows have frequently extended, prove too fatally that the power exists. But I have reason to believe, that their *yaboos* or galloways, and large ponies are fully as remarkable, if not superior, to their large horses, in their powers of sustaining fatigue; they are stout, compact, spirited beasts, without the fine blood of the larger breeds, but more within the reach of the poorer classes, and consequently used in by far greater numbers than the superior and more expensive horses. It is a common practice of the Toorkomans to teach their horses to fight with their heels, and thus assist their master in the time of action, and at the will of their rider, to run at, and lay hold of with their teeth, whatever men or animals may be before them; this acquirement is useful in the day of battle and plunder, for catching prisoners and stray cattle, but renders them vicious and dangerous to strangers.

It is quite a mistake to believe that horses are to be had in these parts at low, or even at moderate prices; animals of the best breeds cannot be had under a sum of money equal to 150*l.* or 200*l.* sterling;

for some of remarkable blood and beauty, I have heard 350*l.* to 400*l.* demanded; and nothing possessing the most moderate degree of goodness united with size and figure, can be had under 50*l.* to 100*l.* sterling. Common horses, good enough for drudges, but with no degree of blood, nor belonging to the favourite Toorkoman breeds, may be had at small enough prices, but even good yaboos, bred in the desert, will sell for 30*l.* to 40*l.* sterling.

It appears probable from all accounts, and from the present increased price (which has risen greatly of late years) that horses are getting scarcer, which perhaps may be owing to the unsettled state of the breeding countries; from what I saw of the bazars at Mushed, I do not think it could have furnished an hundred tolerable horses; yet, as caravans are constantly proceeding from thence to the chief places of demand, it is *there* the chief depôt should be. The town of Serrukhs and its surrounding plains would no doubt furnish a few, and there are periodical cattle fairs held there, at which I was informed a very tolerable display may sometimes be seen; but an enlarged demand for any continued period of years would soon exhaust the stock, both there and on the plains of Gocklan and Tuckeh. Not only the court of Tehrān, but most of the nobility in the western and northern parts of Persia, as well as in Khorasān, are supplied from this quarter with their most favourite horses; there is besides a very considerable export to Bockhara, to Candahar, Caubul, the Punjab, and India; and the increase of this has probably tended in some degree to raise the price of the inferior breeds, for few of the best ever leave Persia. If a further annual demand of three or four hundred was to arise (as has, I believe, been contemplated), for the purpose of mounting our Indian cavalry, the breeding country would be soon unable to supply it, at least with tolerable horses, for neither the people of the tribes or villages possess sufficient enterprise, forecast, or capital, to provide for the increase; and the consequence would be, the same as it has been in the neighbourhood of Sherauz and Bushire, a great increase of price and deterioration in the quality of the article. In fact, the prices allowed for mounting the Indian cavalry would never purchase the *good* Toorkoman horses, and better

than the inferior ones may be had cheaper, and nearer home; nay, there is little doubt that a large proportion of those horses brought by the Caubul dealers to our Indian provinces, have originally been obtained from Khorasān, and the breeding plains around it.

Next to their horses, the most valuable possession of the Toorkomans is their camels; of these there are bred among them, and generally in Khorasān, three principal sorts; those with one hump and those with two humps being the stock kinds; the latter (or dromedary) is slight and swift, but being less powerful as a beast of burthen, it is less valuable than the other kinds, and only sells for from eighty to an hundred Persian rupees. The former, which is in more general use, will carry loads of from sixty to an hundred maunds Tabreez (from 450 to 700*lbs.* English), according to its size and strength; and it sells at from 120 to 140 Persian rupees. But the third sort, which is bred between these two, is greatly preferred before either of its parents, being uncommonly patient, docile, and strong; they grow to a very large size, are low in proportion to their bulk, with short stout bony legs, and a large quantity of shaggy hair upon their necks, shoulders, haunches, and on the crown of the head: these animals will carry from 100 to 150 Tabreez maunds (700 to 1100*lbs.* English), and they sell at from 160 to 200 rupees a piece. I believe they do not permit these to breed among themselves, because the produce, instead of partaking of its parent's temper, becomes extremely vicious and dangerous. The colour of these, as indeed of both the other breeds, varies from a light grey to a brown colour, more or less dark.

For the protection of their flocks, the Toorkomans have a breed of very large and fierce dogs, which assist their shepherds, like those of our own, in managing their flocks, and which watch around them at night; without such vigilant watches it would indeed be impossible, so surrounded by nations of thieves, to preserve for a single night, either national or individual property; *with* them it is almost impossible for a thief to carry off any thing whatever, without the alarm being given: one or more of these dogs sleep under the wall

of each house, so that none can enter or leave it undiscovered by its inmates.

They have another breed of dogs, which perform the office of our pointers; finding the game by scent, and stealing upon it so softly as not to alarm it, until the hunter sees it, and kills it on the ground; or the dog itself catches it; for few can shoot a bird on the wing. These dogs vary in appearance, but I have seen some not unlike the more slender kinds of our smooth pointers. A few of the richer individuals among the Toorkomans, and many of the nobles of Khorasān, keep a sort of greyhound, with long silky hair on the quarters, shoulders, ear, and tail, which has great speed, and with which they course antelopes and hares; no strict Mussoolmaun, however, will eat the latter.

Although these tribes originally were and still continue in most of their habits a pastoral people, yet robbery and plunder is the Toorkoman's true profession; his flocks and herds indeed afford continual occupation, and maintenance to his family; but to plunder it is that he looks for riches, and all extraordinary indulgences; and so far from considering it as a crime, he looks upon it as the most honourable and praiseworthy of all employments. They unite together in larger or smaller bodies, according to the nature and remoteness of their object, under some leader, whose known conduct and courage has inspired them with confidence, and who for the time is absolute in his authority; and carrying a stock of barley for their horses, and bread for themselves, equal to the very sparing consumption of seven or eight days, they sally from their haunts in the desert, often upwards of two hundred miles beyond the inhabited country; and ascending the passes, move with astonishing celerity, probably at least two hundred miles more, upon the point to be attacked, which may be in the neighbourhood of Shahrood, Subzawār, Nishapore, or even at a much greater distance*. They lie in wait near the gates of the

* The inroads or chappows of these plunderers used not unfrequently to extend to Cashān, nay, to the vicinity of Ispahan; the latter cannot, by the most direct route through the desert, be less than between two hundred and fifty and three hundred miles from Shahrood, and six or seven hundred miles from their homes in the desert beyond the Attock;

village (if such be their object), and wait in perfect silence until morning dawns, and the unsuspecting inhabitants come forth from gates, to labour, to drive their cattle afield, or for other purposes; when they start from their lurking place, seize all they can catch, murder those who resist, rapidly plunder the village, and binding their booty upon such cattle as they may have secured, hastily retreat before the neighbourhood have caught the alarm. If their object be a caravan, they conceal themselves in some hollow near its course, having scouts stationed unseen, but watchful of its movements, upon all the heights around, and when it has reached the ambuscade, they dart upon it with a force and rapidity that defies resistance or escape, bear down all opposition, and bind as prisoners all whom they lay hands upon; then begins the work of plunder and often of blood; the old, and unfit for work are massacred, the cattle unlikely to be of use in their retreat, or unable to keep up with them, are disabled, or cut to pieces: such goods as may be thought worth the carriage are laden upon the rest, and they commence a rapid return to their fastnesses. The prisoners, with their arms tied behind their backs, are fastened by ropes to the horses of the Toorkomans who have them in charge, and who, if they do not willingly move fast enough, drive them on, with blows of their heavy whips, to increase their speed. Whatever may be the state of the weather, they are stript to the drawers; even shoes are seldom left them; they are never accommodated with a horse unless pursuit renders it necessary for their captors to quicken their rate of travelling beyond what it may be possible for those on foot to keep up with; then every man whose horse can bear it takes up a captive behind him, and away they scour. If there are any whom they cannot thus assist, or if they doubt the power of their cattle to proceed sufficiently fast with the double burthen, they put the

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but in these days the country about Shahrood, Damghān, and the neighbouring districts was more constantly infested by them; and might perhaps afford them in its recesses a safer halting place, than it now does. The chappow which was made while I was in the country, upon Ghoriān, only forty miles from Herāt, must have marched at least five hundred miles, and a great part of that through, or upon the skirts of, an inhabited country.

prisoners to death on the spot, and continue their flight unencumbered.

When they reach a spot, however, where they consider themselves in safety from pursuit, this severity relaxes; indeed, it appears to be assumed more from the necessity of the case, and to discourage any attempt at escaping, than from malevolence, or wanton cruelty, to beings whose lives are of too much value to them to be lightly thrown away. They then move more slowly and pay more attention to the necessities of their captives, whom they carry to some recess far beyond the haunts of civilized man, where the existence of a little water enables the Toorkomans to have a sort of depôt, and there they are kept on very spare food, until they can be sent at once to Khyvah for sale; or they are taken to one of the regular camps, and put to do duty, until the owner may have business there, or at Bockhara; or that merchants who trade in slaves come round to purchase captives: in either case, one or other of these places is the ultimate destination of most of the prisoners taken by the Toorkomans. Long established custom has made the trade in captives a regular branch of commerce in these parts; and there are many merchants, both at Khyvah and Bockhara, who do little else than travel twice a-year through the country of the Toorkomans, to purchase up such of their unfortunate prisoners as they believe are likely to pay for their ransom, and even those from which no such hope is entertained; the former they carry to such places as they themselves indicate, as their home, and where they agree to pay the stipulated ransom; or leaving the captives themselves at Bockhara or Khyvah, they take letters from them to their friends, and on being satisfied regarding the money, they send and order their release. The latter are purchased merely on speculation, to resell at the slave markets of these towns.

Although this trade sound harshly, it would be by no means fair to condemn the merchants who engage in it, and who in truth mitigate rather than increase the sufferings of these unhappy captives: without their aid many a one who revisits his country would

languish for ever in chains and slavery, far from his family and his home; even the transportation of so great a number from the severe drudgery, the rude camps, and wretched fare of their Toorkoman captors, to the more civilized regions and milder service of the inhabitants of Bockhara and of Khyvah, is a blessing of no inconsiderable value. Nor is the condition of these captives so miserable as might be supposed, from the severity of their initiation into slavery; it is true that those who cannot afford to purchase their ransom, continue for ever the property of their owners; and that many are employed in the harder duties of agriculture, and forced to labour in the field like the peasantry of other countries; but they are not (we are assured), wantonly ill-used, or even severely tasked; they are not beaten, they have a sufficiency of food and clothing, and, for the most part, fully more security of life and limb than they enjoy in their own country. Those who are retained in the cities as servants of the inhabitants, are in general very well off; their masters are for the most part kind to them; and, if they prove useful and willing, show greater favour to them, than to the natives. So mild, indeed, is the servitude to which they are subjected, that I have been assured that the most of those who are clever and industrious, find means, by carrying on a petty trade, to raise enough of money for their own ransom in the course of from ten to twenty years; and to this they are rather encouraged by their masters, who find it, perhaps, more useful to have around them thriving and grateful dependents, than mere menial labouring servants; they frequently get into a line of trade during this period, which after they have succeeded in their first object, they do not choose to abandon, and from these small beginnings they become merchants of large dealings, and good repute; often trafficking in the very line to which they owed their first settlement in the place.

Those who become servants to farmers, after awhile obtain permission to cultivate for themselves some small patch of land, on which they rear melons or other fruits for sale; and they also are enabled in time to gather together the amount of their original purchase-money,

which they carry, and lay before their master, demanding their liberty, and we are informed that this is seldom refused; on the contrary, when a captive has given satisfaction to his master, a portion of the ransom is sometimes forgiven him. The master then gives him a paper declaring the bearer to have purchased his freedom, and this is always respected; nor can the freed captive again be made a slave, unless in travelling he become subjected to a second capture.

That the life of prisoners thus situated is not very miserable, and that persons who conduct themselves with discretion and industry generally thrive, and become not only reconciled to, but fond of the country, is sufficiently proved by the number of those, who having in the manner related, purchased their liberty, continue to reside in the country; in ten or fifteen years they have made new acquaintances, acquired new habits, and probably entered into new connections, both of blood and of trade, from either of which it would be difficult to detach themselves; and a Persian has in general so little to attach him to his own country, that it is by no means strange they should prefer remaining in one which they have found kind and propitious, to returning to a dubious welcome, in a land where the nobles live but to oppress the poor, and fatten on their substance. It is proper to observe here, that the most favourable accounts I received, relative to the condition of these captives, were from persons connected with Bockhara, to which they principally refer; but even at Khyvah, which is far behind the former place in point of general civilization, it is certain that their treatment is on the whole mild and humane.

To return to the Toorkomans — their propensity to thieving is not confined to this description of plunder. A reciprocal system of robbery and pillage constantly goes on between the three tribes, and I believe among the Toorkoman tribes in general. Formerly this was confined to thefts of cattle and goods; but since Mahomed Rāheem Khan declared it lawful to sell a Gocklan in the bazar of Khyvah, it has been extended to the human race. While we were detained at Shahrood, the Tuckehs, to the number of five hundred

horsemen, made a sudden inroad upon Goorgaun, and plundered a small settlement* of the Gocklans called Hyderabad; killed a few, and took thirty or forty prisoners, with some horses and camels. The Gocklans are too weak to make reprisals in such cases, but readily join in any expedition against the Tuckehs. The Yamoots and Gocklans are however nearer neighbours, and more equal in strength; and between them the succession of attacks and robberies is reciprocal, and the loss pretty equally balanced. Parties of two or three will lie in wait near the path, in the patches of jungle so common in these districts, from whence they start out upon and seize such individuals as chance to pass along unarmed, and off their guard; these the Yamoots either restore upon receiving a ransom, or send to Khyvah for sale: but the Gocklans, who have not the latter alternative in their power, doom to death, by way of reprisal, such prisoners as are not ransomed. This, however is of very rare occurrence, for the tribes are particularly tenacious in this regard, and seldom fail to ransom back any one of their body who has the misfortune to become a prisoner. During the time I was in the Gocklan camp, a Yamoot was taken in the act of attempting to steal cattle: his companions escaped, and immediately a message was dispatched to prevent him from suffering either violence or death; and intimating to his captors that the ransom (which in such cases always far exceeds the market price at Khyvah) should be immediately sent. The prisoner, heavily chained, but not otherwise harshly treated, remained all night with us in the tent where we slept, and mingled not only in the company but in the conversation with perfect unconcern.

* It must be remembered that the Gocklans being confined by their own weakness and the dread of their enemies, to a particular and limited range of country, have acquired more settled habits than the other Toorkoman tribes; and they have actually established a few small settlements on the skirts of the hills, where some of their number constantly reside and keep up their relations with the neighbouring inhabited districts, selling the produce and manufactures of the tribe. The Yamoots have something of the same sort, and even the Tuckehs occupy almost constantly the ruins of the old and deserted towns on the Attock, pitching their tents among them; but the bulk of all the tribes keep the open plain constantly.

While we yet remained in this encampment, a fine horse belonging to it was stolen and traced to the Yamoots. I found upon enquiry that they considered it better to purchase him back, and take their chance of making a similar prize in future, than to make an attempt to *steal* him back while the tribe were on their guard; the chance of being taken, and the greatness of the ransom, if that were the case, being evils too serious to run the risk of. All our horses were kept chained up before the chief's tent, where we slept, under a strict guard, to prevent such accidents occurring to the cattle of their guests.

Notwithstanding that a species of conventional truce is understood to subsist between the villages bordering on these plains and the tribes that inhabit them, there is, in fact, a constant scene of petty theft going on among them, goods and cattle being its chief objects; for the tribes that have any dependence upon Persia seldom dare to extend it to those of her subjects, at least whose residences are near them. The villagers, in their turn, have become almost as expert thieves as the Toorkomans; but the latter having no fixed habitation, and constantly residing in the open plain, have, on the whole, greatly the advantage, in point of security as well as success.

It is the custom among the Toorkomans for a man to purchase his wife, a certain number of camels, sheep, or cattle constituting the price. The women are valuable as servants, not only attending to the household matters, but manufacturing such articles as the family sells, the men paying little attention to any thing beyond the larger cattle and their plundering expeditions. It is somewhat singular that, in these bargains, a widow who has been some years married, bears a far higher value than a young girl: the latter will bring from two to four hundred rupees; the former as many thousands. Five camels is a common price for a girl; from fifty to a hundred are often given for a woman who has been married, and is still in the prime of life. The reason assigned for this curious choice is, that the former is not supposed to be as yet by any means acquainted with the management of a family, or with the occupations and manu-

factures * that render a woman valuable to her husband; and so great may be the difference of degree in this species of knowledge, that a woman known to excel in it will command the large price above stated.

It is, however, rendered highly probable from this high price, that polygamy must be less common among the Toorkoman tribes than in other Mahometan countries. Whether from this cause or not, I cannot say; but it is certain that their women are by far more prolific than others, even, as I was assured, in the proportion of two to one. I can myself assert, that out of every camp we passed through, such crowds of children issued, that one of my servants, in amazement, cried out that it was "like an *ant-hill*." They were stout, healthy, hardy little creatures, almost quite naked, and it was admirable to see the courage and unconcern with which infants, that seemed scarcely able to walk, would splash and plunge through streams that would have made an European mother scream. Every thing about them told of the rough school in which they were receiving their education. My host, Khallee Khan, though by no means much advanced in life, had ten fine sons, born of his *two* wives.

When one of these Toorkomans dies, they wash the body on the spot where he breathed his last, or as near it as possible; and on that spot they raise a little mound, by digging a circular trench, two or three feet wide, throwing the earth up in the centre; and in this mound they plant a tree, or pole, to mark the place. The plain is studded, in some places pretty thickly, with these traces of mortality. The body is carried for interment further into the plain.† There

* The manufactures of the Toorkomans consist chiefly in carpets, which they weave of very beautiful fabrick, and which are highly prized, fetching very large prices. They are chiefly of the twilled sort, but they also make them of a fabrick resembling the best Turkey carpets, and of very brilliant patterns. They seldom exceed in size an oblong of from twelve to sixteen by eight or ten feet, and for the most part are greatly smaller. They also weave cloth of camels' hair, and coarse woollens, chiefly for their own use; as well as numuds of an inferior quality. They dispose of a good deal of butter and cheese, the produce of their flocks and herds, bartering it for articles which they require from the towns and villages.

† This refers chiefly to the Gocklan and Yamoot, whose chief residence is near the foot of the hills.

are numerous burying-grounds to be seen all over this country, even in the plains near the rivers, — sad proofs of former population and prosperity, now totally disappeared.

The portable wooden houses of the Toorkomans have been referred to by several writers; but I am not aware that any exact description of their structure has been given. The frame is curiously constructed of light wood, disposed in laths of about an inch broad, by three quarters thick, crossing one another diagonally, but at right angles, about a foot asunder, and pinned at each crossing with thongs of raw hide, so as to be moveable; and the whole frame work may be closed up or opened, in the manner of those toys for children that represent a company of soldiers, and close or expand at will, so as to form open or close column. One or more pieces thus constructed being stretched out, surround a circular space, of from fifteen to twenty feet diameter, and form the skeleton of the walls, which are made firm by bands of hair or woollen ropes, hitched round the end of each rod, to secure it in its position. From the upper ends of these, rods of a similar kind bent near the wall end into somewhat less than a right angle, are so disposed, that the longer portions slope to the center, and being tied thus with ropes, form the frame-work of a roof; over which is thrown a covering of black numud, leaving in the center a large hole to give vent to the smoke, and light to the dwelling; similar numuds are wrapt round the walls, and outside of these, to keep all tight, is bound another frame, formed of split reeds or cane, or of very light and tough wood, tied together with strong twine, the pieces being perpendicular; and this is itself secured by a strong broad band of woven hair stuff, which firmly unites the whole. The large round opening at top is covered as occasion requires, by a piece of numud, which is drawn off or on by a strong cord, like a curtain. If the wind be powerful, a stick is placed to leeward, which supports the fabric.

In most of these houses they do not keep a carpet or numud constantly spread; but the better classes use a carpet shaped somewhat in the form of a horse shoe, having the centre cut out for the fire place, and the ends truncated, that those of inferior condition, or who do not choose to take off their boots, may sit down upon the

ground. Upon this carpet they place one or two other numuds, as may be required, for guests of distinction. When they have women in the tent, a division of split reeds is made for their convenience; but the richer people have a separate tent for their private apartments. The furniture of these tents consists of little more than the furniture of the camels and horses; *joals*, or bags in which their goods are packed, and which are often made of a very handsome species of worsted velvet carpet, of rich patterns; the swords, guns, spears, bows and arrows, and other implements of the family, with odds and ends of every description, may be seen hung on the ends of the wooden rods, which form very convenient pins for the purpose. Among the Gocklans and Yamoots, all the domestic utensils are made of wood; the calleeoons, the trays for presenting food, milk vessels, &c. and in this respect, there is a remarkable change from the domestic economy of the higher country, where all these things are formed of clay or metal. Upon the black tops of the tents may frequently be seen large white masses of sour curd, expressed from butter milk, and set to dry as future store; this broken down and mixed with water, forms a very pleasant acidulous drink, and is, I believe, the basis of that intoxicating beverage which is called *kimmiz*, but which I never saw in use among these tribes. The most common and most refreshing drink which they offer to the weary and overheated traveller in the forenoon, is butter-milk, or sour curds and water; and indeed a modification of this, with some other simple sherbets, were the only liquors presented at meals.

Such are the simple wooden houses of the Toorkomans, one of which just makes a camel's load; there are poorer ones, of a less artificial construction, the frame work of which is formed of reeds. The encampment is generally square, inclosing an open space, or it forms a broad street, the houses being ranged on either side with their doors towards each other; and at these may always be seen the most picturesque groupes, occupied with their various domestic duties, or smoking their simple wooden calleeoons. The more important encampments are often surrounded by a fence of reeds, which serves to protect the flocks from petty thefts.

CHAP. XIII.

THE AUTHOR ASSUMES THE PERSIAN DRESS, PURCHASES GOODS TO PERSONATE A MERCHANT OR A PHYSICIAN. — ATTENDANTS ON JOURNEY. — MEERZA ABDOOL REZĀK. — HIS HISTORY AND CHARACTER. — OTHER SERVANTS, AND EQUIPAGE. — LEAVE TEHRĀN 19TH DECEMBER. — KEBOOT GOOMBUZ. — ALLEE ULLAHEE SECT. — RECEPTION AT EYWANEE KEY. — ANCIENT RUINS. — GURDUNEE SERDARA PASS. — CASPIAN STRAITS. — PLAIN OF KHAUR. — PASS FOR A HADJEE. — SUSPECTED FOR A RUSSIAN SPY. — DEH NIMMUCK CARAVANSERAI. — GOOMBUZ-E-DOOZD. — SHATIR'S TOMB AND BRIDGE. — LASGIRD. — SEMNOON. — LODGE AT A MOOLLAH'S. — POPULATION, BUILDINGS. — OPPRESSION OF GOVERNOR. — SYRIAN COLONY. — VILLAGES CLUSTERED AND FORTIFIED. — INROADS OF TOORKOMANS. — ILL CONDUCT OF MULETEERS, VEXATIONS AND DELAYS AT SEMNOON. — LEAVE IT ON THE 27TH. — GURDUNEE AHEAIYOON. — CARAVANSERAI. — DOWLUTABAD. — JOINED BY MAHOMED HOOSSAIN KHĀN. — HIS CONVERSATION. — A COURIER COMES WITH STRANGE INTELLIGENCE FROM MUSHED. — MIRACULOUS FOUNTAIN. — DAMGHĀN, ITS BUILDINGS, TOMBS, AND ANTIQUITIES. — INSOLENCE OF A MULETEER. — DEH MOOLLAH. — REACH SHAHROOD. — PREPARE TO JOIN A CARAVAN FOR MUSHED.

DURING the remainder of my stay at Tehrān, I busied myself in preparations for my journey; reducing my baggage to the smallest compass compatible with ordinary comfort, leaving my European clothes, and every unnecessary article at Tehrān, and supplying myself with native habiliments in their stead. I determined to hold it in my power to assume the character of a merchant, in case of need, as a means of accounting for a journey, which no native would believe an European to have undertaken from mere curiosity: accordingly, I procured some parcels of goods suited to the markets of the countries I proposed to visit. I likewise furnished myself with a stock of medicines, sufficient not only for our party, but to bestow as occasion might require, in the character of a physician, which is always attributed to Europeans, and which has often obtained for them protection and respect, in the most difficult situations.

As I was not myself at first very familiar with the language of the country, I sought to procure some respectable native, sufficiently acquainted with the history and literature of his own country, and possessing taste enough for enquiry on such subjects, to accompany and assist my efforts; and I considered myself fortunate in engaging for this purpose the services of Meerza Abdool Rezāk, a young Persian of good family and singular character. His father was a wealthy and respectable merchant of Ispahan, who would fain have brought up his son in the same lucrative line, but the young man's genius not taking that bent, he was unwillingly permitted to commence his studies as a man of letters; in the course of which, he visited most of the seats of literature in Persia; and, partly with his father, partly alone, made pilgrimages to Bagdad, Damascus, and other places of note in the east. He however quarrelled with, and left his father, who was a man of severe and tyrannical disposition, and for some years before his being introduced to me had lived by his wits, exerting talents of no mean stamp, only when necessitated to do so by want. Careless, enthusiastic, and fond of travel, he readily embraced the proposals I made him to accompany me into countries he had long desired to see; and possessed of honourable and independent principles, with veracity rarely to be met with in Persia, he was, in these respects, just the person fitted to accompany a stranger through the country. He had some turn for observation, was an excellent Arabic and Persian scholar, and sufficiently acquainted with Turkish to make his way where it was spoken; but these good qualities were unhappily counter-balanced by a degree of indolence and unsteadiness, that in the sequel rendered him in many respects almost useless to me. Being in the rank of a gentleman, and a companion, rather than a servant, it was understood that he should eat with myself, and I allowed him a salary of 100 reals a month.

Besides the Meerza, I had with me five servants; one Christian, a negro servant, who had served me faithfully from his boyhood, for more than twenty years, and on whom I could most implicitly depend; a Persian Jeloodar, a groom, a cook, and another servant,

named Seyed Allee, who acted in any capacity that might be required, and who turned out to be the most useful of all my Persian attendants. Three of these were mounted on my own horses, the other two upon baggage mules; and in spite of my exertions to reduce the baggage, what with my mercantile speculation, the cumbrous instruments required for taking observations, and the clothing and appurtenances of the horses and servants, we found that no less than four mules, besides a pony for the Meerza, were required to carry our establishment. The party was respectably armed, so that we could have repelled the attack of any marauding party; and what was preferable, our appearance was likely to render such an effort of courage unnecessary; for banditti, unless in very superior numbers, do not willingly attack travellers who carry an imposing countenance.

The route from Tehrān to Shahrood being comparatively safe, we did not think it necessary to wait the tardy movements of a caravan; and therefore, having hired baggage cattle to Semnoon, we left Tehrān upon the 19th day of December, and took the road towards Mushed.

Our first march was to Keboot Goombuz, a small and ruinous village, said to be six fursungs east of Tehrān; and which, being on the direct road to Mushed, is constantly filled with devotees passing and repassing to the shrine. Our route lay to the north of the site of Rhé, or Rhages, between a shoulder of the Elburz, and a hill called Kerna-khaneh Yezid; being, as tradition declares, one of the stations from whence in the days of the glory of Rhé, the horn of the king was periodically sounded. From thence we skirted a part of the Elburz, having an open plain on our right ending in the salt desert.

The village of Keboot Goombuz is chiefly inhabited by a singular sect of Mahometans (if such they may be called), termed *Allee Ullahees*. These fanatics recognize the Almighty himself, in Allee, the son-in-law of the Prophet; and the origin of this wild belief is referred to a legend as wild and fantastic as itself. Allee, it is said, being one day enraged, for some cause or other, against a certain individual, struck his head off with his scimetar; but repenting of his rashness,

he replaced the head upon its shoulders, and restored the man to life. No sooner was this miracle performed, than the man dropping upon his knees, began to worship Allee, assuring him, that he was "God himself." Allee shocked at his impiety, disclaimed all title to this; but the other insisted, and the dispute continued, until Allee, exasperated, again decapitated him; but his compassion once more predominating, he again restored his victim to life, by replacing his head; as soon, however, as the operation was performed, and its owner could speak, he re-commenced his assertion, swearing that Allee was no other than the Almighty himself. Allee's wrath was by this time exhausted, or perhaps his vanity was flattered with the compliment, for he only called the man a fool, and dismissed him. From this twice decapitated head are descended the sect of *Allee Ullahees*, who still adore Allee as the divinity himself; they are very fanatical in their own faith, though they are considered in the light of unbelievers by the faithful. They are said to have many strange rites and customs. A person who passed through one of their villages in Arabia, at the time of a festival, relates, that having made a great fire, they took their children and threw them into it, and that such as came out unhurt, were considered as true to their faith; while such as were not so fortunate were suffered to perish, as unworthy of the divine aid. He also asserted that they themselves went into the fire, which did not even singe their garments.

On the 20th we proceeded about six fursungs further in the same direction (a little to the south of east), to the village of Eywanee Key. On our left was the Elburz chain; on our right the plain of Vuromeen, once proverbially fertile; now only cultivated in patches near the road, and on the borders of the little mountain streams, and soon degenerating into the salt desert that stretches toward Cashan. The path lay upon the inclined plain, formed of detritus from the hills, which constitutes a remarkable feature in Persian scenery, and consists for the most part of unproductive gravel; wherever the bed of a torrent issues from the mountains, this mass becomes more elevated, and the stream, instead of being confined to a single channel, runs deviously according to the accidental directions it receives, over

this gravelly slope, to the more level ground below: it is only when it has reached this lower region that the soil in general admits of cultivation, and villages are formed, and every drop of water is expended in irrigation. We crossed several of these streams, now swoln by the melting snow, and troublesome from their rapidity, and the masses of floating ice they carried along; the principal of these was the Jaje-Rood, not far from the east of Keboot Goombuz.

We remarked this day, that the sediment which collects at the bottom of stagnant pieces of water, (and caked in hard thin pieces resembling broken pottery,) was used for manuring melon beds.

The village of Eywanee Key contains not more than an hundred houses in a ruinous condition; but it has large and rich dependencies, and the villagers within doors were in comfortable circumstances. I had very decent lodgings provided for me in the house of one of the ryots, decently fitted up with good numuds and carpets; a looking glass hung on the wall; there was a sunk stove in the apartment, round which the family sit to warm themselves, and a glimpse at my host's wife showed her well dressed and adorned. My servants, however, had foolishly permitted it to be known that I was an European, and in consequence the villagers not only charged me extravagantly for every thing required, but gave me little rest in my own room, flocking to see myself and goods; and insisting, though without any incivility, upon having my instruments, arms, and other objects of curiosity, exhibited for their inspection; a desire sufficiently unpleasant, as it was calculated to excite very dangerous longings.

Another source of annoyance was their anxiety to avail themselves of the medical skill, which, as a *Frank*, they presumed me to have; every sick creature in the village was mustered; and although I endeavoured to convince them that I was no physician, they persisted in craving both advice and medicine. The greater number, indeed, were cases beyond the reach of any advice, but some were amusing enough; one was very desirous to become fat, but in spite of the most strenuous exertions remained lean; another had a pale and miserable child of eight years old, whom he desired should be made

ruddy and stout; the mother of a third had been for several years affected with the white leprosy; her son hoped I could make her clean in a single day; a fourth was old, and had a rheumatic knee, and wished to become strong and active: all were clamorously urgent, and it was with difficulty I could get rid of them, at a very late hour, by telling them that I required sleep to refresh my intellects, before I could consider their several cases with proper effect.

Every one, indeed, appeared determined to make the most of me; several of them, during the evening, made a strong attack upon the meerza, to obtain through his means some thing or other from me; one wanted some tea, another some brandy or a little wine, quicksilver, or even a little gunpowder; and all were enraged at him when he refused to solicit for them. One man, after complaining with much simplicity that *he* had benefitted nothing by the arrival of a "Feringhee"* at the village, ran off and fetched a pair of boots, which he commended as excellent for travelling, and was sorely disappointed when I refused to purchase them, at about five times their value. Many other of his fellow villagers participated in his feelings, and grumbled very audibly when we departed, at not having participated in the spoil which their companions had obtained.

In the course of our march to this place we had observed upon the plain to our right several remarkable mounds, which looked like the sites of forts, and which we learnt, that tradition attributed to the Ghebres; and of course to an æra antecedent to the Mahometan conquest of Persia. The largest of these were too far out of our line of march for examination, but we found one of the same description at the village of Eywanee Key. It was a mass of ruins imposing enough in appearance at a little distance, exhibiting the semblance of pillars and arches in great variety; but upon nearer approach, we found that it consisted of a mass of mud; the upper part of which was occupied by a quantity of ruins, chiefly of the same materials. On closer examination, we found that the furrows made by the weather into its very centre, showed fragments of bricks and pottery, the

* Feringhee, or Frank; the common appellation given in the country to Europeans.

usual debris of an Eastern town, in great abundance, and denoting great antiquity ; while the upper part consisted of the sun-dried bricks and mud, which are employed in the construction of all modern villages in Persia : even the cornices and mortar edgings of the windows were still in great part remaining in the better houses ; and had we not been assured that the place had been abandoned for more than two hundred years, we should have believed, that no considerable time had elapsed since it was inhabited. The people around vaguely named this ruin *Ghebrabad* or the abode of the Ghebres ; which appellation is given to many places of a similar description in the vicinity.

We examined another of these ruins, distant about three miles from the village ; a mass of about ninety to an hundred paces square at the base, and gradually diminishing as it rose to a height of about thirty feet. It seemed to be solid mud taken from the plain, but neither ditch nor hollow could be seen around it. The top exhibited the appearance of several domes and excavations, as if the upper part at least had been formed into habitations ; but the rains had filled up some with mud, and broken down other parts, so that nothing definite could be discovered : the whole had considerable marks of antiquity about it, but neither here, nor at the village, could any thing be found that might lead to a probable conjecture as to the date of either structure ; it is, however, most likely, that these and many others which we afterwards met with, were merely safety keeps attached to villages, founded at a very remote period, to resist the attacks of the Toorkomans, who at all times have been used to make inroads upon this part of the country, plundering the villages, and carrying their inhabitants into slavery.

At about a mile south of the village, may be seen the ruins of another building, to which it owes its name. The word Eyẇanee Key is supposed to be compounded of Eywān (in Persian), a royal dwelling*, and key, which may either be the same as "*Cai*," an epithet or adjunct given to the names of monarchs, and signifying

* Eywān properly signifies an open hall, supported on columns.

"great, glorious," as *Cai* Khosroo, *Caikobād*, &c. &c.; or it may be Key, which in old language signifies wine, or the pleasure received from drinking it, and thus the name would bear the interpretation of "a royal drinking house." The first is the probable explanation, although the tradition (very likely made to suit the name) is, that some of the former sovereigns having here for the first time experienced the delights of intoxication, ordered a pleasure house to be erected, in commemoration of his enjoyment. Of this building probably nothing now remains; a caravanserai was built upon its site by Shah Abbas, which in its turn has become a ruin: this was a spacious and noble fabric, and near it once was the village, which, as tradition tells, was removed to its present situation, in consequence of some dark crime committed, I believe, against the laws of hospitality; and the inhabitants have destroyed a great part of the caravanserai for the sake of the bricks. We found the ruins in possession of a tribe of Arab Eels, who had for ten years occupied them. One of these told me, that when he first came there the place was in tolerable repair, and the entrances had gates hung in them, now it is a complete ruin, so rapidly has the work of destruction proceeded.

It was on the morning of the 22d that we examined these antiquities and we afterwards quitted the village, and continued our route six or seven miles in the same direction as before, to Gurdunee Sirdara, which is a pass of two fursungs in length, that winds through a ridge of hills projected from the Elburz. It is supposed by European writers to have been near this pass that Darius, flying towards Bactria, after the battle of Arbela, was murdered by Bessus *, and the scene is well suited for deeds of violence and blood.

* According to the account given by Arrian, the murder was committed some days journey to the east of the *Caspian Straits*, upon the road to Bactria or Balkh. As I believe no doubt is entertained regarding the situation of ancient Rhages, it seems certain that this celebrated defile must have been hereabouts, and it might be interesting to enquire whether this in question may not (as has been conjectured) be the very place.

There are indeed two defiles nearly within the same distance of Rhé or Rhages, to either of which the name and description given by Arrian, may be supposed to apply: one,

The lower hills, formed probably at some remote period from the detritus of the loftier mountains, are curiously furrowed: so as to present at some distance the ribbed and waved appearance of sand:

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which is called the Feeroze cooee pass, winding through the Elburz mountains, at about seventy miles from Tehrān, sends off a steep and difficult pass through a cleft in the rocks that leads into Mazunderan, and is called Sawachee. (Vide Morier's 2d Journey) The other, which is Gurdunee Sirdara (or Sirderah) mentioned in the text, only conducts through a ridge of hills projected southward from the Elburz range, dividing the plains of Khawr and of Vuromeen. The first leads directly to the banks of the Caspian sea, the other has no connection with it whatever.

Let us consider what Arrian says upon the subject, and judge which of the two offers most points of similitude to his slight and incidental description of the country. In the first place, he states that Darius determined within himself, if pursued by Alexander, to fly into *into Parthia and Hyrcania*, or even *into Bactria*, and accordingly he did fly, and passed through the Caspian Straits, &c. &c. But being placed under confinement by Bessus, he appears to have been hurried on towards Bactria, and certainly (as is to be inferred from the sequel) *never reached Hyrcania*.

Alexander, after five days stay at Rhages, marched *in one day* to the Caspian straits, against the Parthians: the next day he entered them, and (passing them no doubt) reached a *fruitful country*, abounding in provision and forage, a store of which he was resolved to lay in, as he heard that *the interior parts of the country lay uncultivated and waste*. Hearing then of the captivity of Darius and the treason of Bessus, he took his choicest troops, and by making forced marches for four days and nights, the last being through *a country desert, and destitute of water*, he over took the barbarians, &c., He then marched into Hyrcania, which is *on the left of the road to Bactria*, the road bring bounded on one side *by a chain of high and inaccessible mountains*, on the other by a spacious plain extending even to the great sea; and this way he led his army, &c.

The whole of this passage inclines me to think, that whichever of these defiles may in ancient times have borne the name of the *Caspian Straits*, it was through this, which is now called the Gurdunee Sirdara, that Darius fled or was carried towards Bactria, and was pursued by Alexander; for though the description given by Arrian is short and uncircumstantial, there is a remarkable coincidence between it and the face of the country through which they must have passed, even as it now is, after so great a lapse of time. The march which carried the army of Alexander through the Sirdara pass, would have brought them into the plains of Khawr, at that time, probably, as afterward, *fruitful* and well cultivated. Three days of forced marches, which Alexander is represented to have made, would have carried him partly through a waste and uncultivated tract, towards the present district of Shahrood, and the *desert, void of water*, over which the last night's march was urged, was probably between Shahrood and Muzenoon, which will be more particularly described in the text, and which has ever been waste and abandoned from that cause. Presuming this to have been the course pursued by Alexander, he would have left one of the principal passes into Hyrcania, (Astrabad and Jorjaun), viz. that by Bostam and Robaut-e-suffeed, but a little way behind him on his left; and as he appears after having witnessed the fate of Darius, to have turned back to gather up those whom he was forced

little rock could be seen in these; but, as they approached the Elburz range, they assumed a more rugged character. Near the entrance of the pass the soil changed from the gravelly waste on which we

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to leave behind in his rapid course, he probably descended into Hyrcania (into which it it is thus evident that Darius, had never entered, whatever might been his intentions when free), and proceeded along, with the mountains on his right, and the spacious plain on his left to Zadracarta, the capital of Hyrcania.

If on the contrary we examine the pass of Feeroze koh (or Sawachee), and the country to which it leads, we shall find that none of the foregoing particulars at all apply. A *day's march* from the Rhé or Rhages end of the defile, could not have brought the army to a *fruitful country, abounding with provision*, neither are there any waste and uncultivated tracts to be gone through immediately beyond, for Hyrcania and the adjacent provinces are fruitful, and appear to have been at all times well inhabited; still less, therefore, shall we be able to find any extensive desert *void of water*, for the fourth march. Besides, we can hardly believe it probable, that Darius or the traitor Bessus, whose intention we are told was to fly into Bactria, would have left the straight road, leading through an open country, to descend out of his way, into a country of forests and morasses, where his progress might be retarded by a thousand accidents, and his enemy be thus enabled to overtake him.

It has been generally supposed that the *Caspian Straits* led into Mazunderan, because that country borders on the *Caspian Sea*, but if, as I believe, the pass, as well as the country, took its name from a very barbarous people called *Caspii*, who (according to Strabo), lived north of Hyrcania, and who might have been reached by either pass, it is possible that both defiles may have borne the name. It is also possible, and the suspicion has more than once occurred to me, that some confusion may have arisen in the historian's mind, where two remarkable defiles, situated so near to each other were in question, and this appears the more probable as it is stated to have been the intention of Alexander to proceed against the *Hyrcanians* and *Parthians* (they are always coupled), from Rhages, which he would naturally have done by the pass of Feeroze koh, when he was induced to abandon that object for the time, and pursue Bessus and Darius into Bactria. The opinion that the pass of Sirdara (or Khawr), is the same as the Caspian Straits, is supported by the highly learned and respectable authority of Rennel, (see Geo. Syst. of Herod., page 174, note.)

It is clear, however, that there were two roads leading to Bactria or Balkh, from the western parts of the empire: one the upper and more southern one, by which I have presumed Darius to have fled, and which probably varied little from that which is now the high road to Mushed, Serrukhs, &c. the other must have led from Mazunderan, along the foot of the Elburz range, the "*high and inaccessible mountains*," of Arrian, which were on the right; and having on the left the "*spacious plain*," to the "*great (Caspian) Sea*," which was indeed the plain of Hyrcania. It is to be remembered, that all this plain, and the extensive tract at present called Dameen-e-koh or the Attock (see Geographical Memoir in the Appendix), which is now totally desert, was then well cultivated, and covered with populous cities and villages, consequently a very natural course for a great road. The pass from Rhages to this road was doubtless by Feeroze koh, and it is very probable that both united about Serrukhs.

had been travelling, to a white sandy loam ; and the hills, of an earthy consistence, showed the rock bursting occasionally from their surface in very fantastic forms. I regretted that it was not in my power to afford a longer time for examining their structure ; but the pass has so bad a name as a continual haunt of the worst plunderers, the refuse of the Arab and other wandering tribes, that it was believed to be highly dangerous to dismount or halt for a moment ; particularly as the baggage had gone on before, rather slightly protected. The pass itself is a narrow tortuous valley, full of little hollows and ravines, without a blade of grass or a sprig of wood; all is bare and desolate; a stream of salt water runs through it, whitening with its saline efflorescence all its banks ; it would not need a very fertile imagination to fancy, that the place has been withered and blasted by divine wrath like other lands of old, for the commission of some hideous crime.

This pass, which was once probably considered of importance, bears the marks of having been carefully fortified. At the western entrance, just above the salt stream, may be seen the ruins of a small building, which evidently formed one of its defences ; close by, and just in its jaws, a large oblong mound of earth, about an hundred and fifty yards long, by sixty or seventy broad, has been probably the site of a larger work ; and not far off there is still, in tolerable preservation, a building constructed of brick and stone, about twenty yards square, with a tower at each corner ; to which, from its appearance and form, I should be inclined to assign a very remote date; but nothing is to be found about any of these ruins to indicate what that date should be.

A little more than half through the pass we found another remarkable building constructed of a dark granite, forty yards square, having a tower at each corner, and a small semicircular bastion in the centre of each face ; the gateway, defended by two similar bastions was in the northern face, and the appearance of the structure was altogether very uncommon. Three or four large bricks *, about fourteen

* I believe that these large bricks were formerly in more common use in Persia (even so late as the reign of Abbas), so that their presence here does not prove any thing ; although it was singular that they should be found in so remote a situation, where no building of such bricks, of which they might have formed a part, exists.

inches square by three in thickness very similar to those found at Babylon, were discovered among the ruins, but without inscriptions; nor was there any thing resembling letters or a date, to be found in any part of the building: there can, however, I think be no doubt of its high antiquity.

The eastern end of the pass (where likewise are to be seen traces of posts and fortifications), debouches on the plain of Khaur, which is separated from that of Vuromeen by the Sirdara range. In the days of the prosperity of Rhé, both these plains were celebrated for their fertility, and furnished that extensive city with a large portion of the necessaries of life. Their chief produce now is small bushes of thorny weeds, which are carried to Tehrān for fewel. The King's camels were scattered over them, collecting these for the royal use. As we cast an eye over the wide extent of Khaur, from the height above the pass, it exhibited but a brown and barren expanse, over which were scattered the ruins of villages, and many of the remarkable mounds resembling those described above, several of which were very large. I reconnoitred one with a good glass, and observed it to be inhabited, the top being studded with buildings. It was at least sixty feet in height, and a number of miserable huts at its base had been formed into a village. These elevated castles, as well as the various ruins we saw in the pass, were, by the superstition of the peasantry, variously attributed to gowls, gins, and ghebres; but no one had any particular story attached to it. Upon the whole, I do not remember any one march in Persia that exhibited so many traces of antiquity as that of this day.

We obtained lodgings for the night in a miserable hut in the poor village of Kishlac, belonging to the district of Khaur, after a march of six fursungs, or about twenty-two miles. I now passed for Hadjee Mahummud, of Buduckshan, just returning from Mecca; but though the tale at first received implicit credit, I did not find this venerated character any protection against the rapacity and imposition of the villagers, who only thought of obtaining what they could from the holy man. I believe, however, that the suspicions of my hosts were awakened, by seeing me taking an observation of

the stars with my sextant; for they remarked that the Hadjee was engaged in "strange prayers."

On the 22d we marched to the caravanserai of Deh Nimmuck, a distance nearly as great as that of the day before. This day, while making enquiries of an old man regarding a mud fort near Kishlac, a younger man came up, and, eyeing myself and my servant for a while with a dark, suspicious air, he desired the others to have nothing to do with us, for that we were spies, come to examine and give a bad name to the village; that several enquiries of a like nature had been made before, and had always been followed by some disaster; therefore, he concluded that we were ill-disposed people, and should not be trusted. He treated the story of my being a Hadjee with contempt, asserted that I was a Russian spy, and became very abusive. There was no contending with prejudice so inveterate; therefore, for fear of a general rising of the village, I left it, being nearly torn to pieces by a number of large and fierce dogs, which they let loose upon us. This may serve as a trifling specimen of the obstacles thrown in the way of research in these countries, and the troublesome prejudices with which travellers have to contend, the moment they quit the beaten track. The objects of my enquiry were, first, to know the history of the place, and then to ascertain whether any coins or antiquities were ever found in the ruins. With regard to the first, the old man said that it had been a populous village, ruined in the Affghaun invasion, which was all he knew. In answer to the latter, he told me that coins, and such things, were occasionally found, but that all were immediately disposed of, and none were now on hand.

We passed also the fort of Heratoo, at least sixty feet high, and very picturesquely crowned with buildings, of which I was tempted to take a sketch. It is one of a knot of villages belonging to Zulfecar Khan, governor of Semnoon. All villages in these parts are thus collected in knots, on the banks of streams that flow from the mountains, which are not more than four or five miles distant. Each village has its safety-keep, and they are surrounded with good and numerous gardens. The salt desert which skirts this district on the

south assumes here a very extensive appearance; the first hills that vary its flat expanse are, at least, fifty miles distant from the Elburz, on the south, and beyond them it stretches away to the districts of Tubbus and of Yezd.

The caravanserai of Deh Nimmuck, which was built in a very desolate situation by Shah Abbas, is in good repair, and afforded us comfortable quarters, but exceedingly poor fare; the only thing to be had at last was a little meat, prepared in the autumn for keeping during winter, by being half dressed, of which neither the appearance nor the flavour were to be commended; and we were entertained during the whole night by some noisy muleteers, who sang at the top of their voice, until it was time to start in the morning. The district of Deh Nimmuck has received its name from the abundance of salt which every where forces itself into notice: most of the streams are salt, and a white effloresence, indicating its saline origin, covers the surface of the earth in many places. Several white spots in the mountains were pointed out to us as the positions of salt-mines.

On the 23d we marched about 25 miles, to Lasgird, chiefly to the eastward, along a barren gravelly plain; but the direction for the last few miles changes more to the northward, and the road passes over a bed of deep soil washed from the earthy hills above, and ploughed by the winter torrents into narrow ravines, some of which were fully an hundred feet deep. A ruined tower, built on the brow of one of these precipices, was pointed out by the name of Goombuz e Doozd * as the resort of a noted band of plunderers, who had long infested the road. Another, close to a deep and very narrow chasm, is still more celebrated, as the Shatir's tomb †, having, as tradition tells, been built on the following occasion.

On one of the journeys made by Shah Abbas the great, into Khorasān, he was delayed at this ravine by the want of a bridge; and

* "Goombuz e Doozd," is the tower (or rather dome) of the robbers.

† There are many "shatirs' tombs" in Persia, and many tales of which that class of men (who are in fact running footmen attendant on great men) are the heroes. One of these tombs is but three miles distant from Ispahan, and one of the best views of that city is to be had from its site.

while waiting upon its brink until some means of crossing it could be provided: the king, struck with the narrowness of the chasm, desired an active fellow among his shatirs to leap across it. The man obeyed, and succeeded, to the admiration of the monarch, who desired him to leap back again: this also he successfully performed; upon which the king observed, "That fellow must be rich — I am "sure he must have gold about him, he leaps so well" (alluding to a saying in the country, that a full purse acquired in service, renders its possessor more active and willing, than he who has saved nothing). "Let us," added he, "see what he has got." The man was stript upon the spot, and a considerable sum in gold and jewels, presents he had received from the king, were found in his girdle, and carried to his majesty, who told him, "Now try the leap again:" the poor fellow attempted it, but, failing, tumbled down the chasm and was killed. * The king ordered a bridge to be built over the place with the shatir's money, and the tower just mentioned to be erected to his memory, the ruins of which are still to be seen. The breadth of the chasm is indeed so small, that I have little doubt that a very active man might bound across it in some places; and the depth can be little, if any thing, short of a hundred feet. †

The hills to the north of our route, which form a screen to the more elevated range of the Elburz, not only here but all the way from Keboot Goombuz, assume a very peculiar character; the lower parts are of an earthy consistence, as if they had been formed from the decomposition of the more elevated mountains behind; and are of various hues, brown, red, yellow, gray, white; which, from the absolute want of any vegetation, are distinctly visible. The stone, which occasionally makes its appearance, is in a state of decay; but the

* The story may be false or true, but it is perfectly characteristic of the monarch to whom it alludes; who, in spite of his magnificence, his conquests, and his abilities, which have obtained for him the too often ill-merited title of great, was cruel, indifferent to the crime of shedding human blood, capricious, and often displayed a littleness of mind in his actions, that would have disgraced the meanest of his subjects.

† Not far from hence another chasm marks what once was the boundary between Khorasān and Irak; and may perhaps be considered about the proper natural division, whatever may be the political variations of its limits.

soil, which is chiefly calcareous, has a strong tendency to harden into a sort of secondary formation, and the whole is deeply cut into hollows and ridges. Above this earthy range, the heights attain a loftier pitch, and assume a more rugged appearance; rock is more abundant, and generally stratified, in a manner very curiously waved and twisted; the colours above described being intertwined with each other in the most freakish forms. Behind, might occasionally be seen the loftier and snow-clad summits of the Elburz. The whole of this day's march, and indeed the greater part of the former one, lay through a country entirely desert, and totally incapable of being otherwise, from the scarcity of fresh water.

The village of Lasgird, though poor itself, is situated in a fine basin of rich and well cultivated land, surrounded by hills on three sides, but open on the east to the plain of Semnoon. Attached to the village is a mud fort, by far the most complete of its kind of any we had yet seen; the form is circular, and closely resembles that of a tub, the base of the mass being but little broader than its summit; its height may be sixty or seventy feet, of which the lower forty are of solid mud; above this are two distinct stories of habitations, the doors and windows of which, with their balconies of rough wood stuck all round into the substance of the wall, resemble the hoops of the cask. The appearance of this solid and circular mass, viewed at a little distance, rising from the plain, is exceedingly striking and peculiar.

While engaged in making a drawing of this place, I was a good deal interrupted by the curiosity of my fellow-travellers, who flocked to see what I was about. Among the spectators were several who belonged to a caravan that had come from Bockhara, by the way of Mushed; and who, in answer to our enquiries regarding the state of the road, informed us, that although they had escaped unmolested, the danger in many places was very great; they added, some appalling narrations of the cruelty and rapacity of the Toorkomans who infest it, and it was clear enough from the more precise parts of their information, as well as from the general opinion entertained upon the

subject, that there would be great imprudence in attempting to cross the dangerous parts of the desert, without the protection of a caravan.

On the morning of the 24th we were early on foot, that we might reach Semnoon, distant about twenty miles, in good time. Our road lay across the plain, among pretty plentiful cultivation, for ten miles, to Soorkh Kallah, another mud fort, with several dependent villages. From hence the country became gravelly and barren, descending gradually to the town of Semnoon; which, from the brow of a height, we saw in the hollow before us, making a very imposing appearance surrounded with numerous gardens, inclosures, and some cultivation; beyond these, however, the plain was brown and desolate, to the foot of the mountains, which frowned in gloomy grandeur around it. As we approached, the delusive semblance of prosperity vanished, and we found ourselves riding through a long maze of utter ruins, abandoned suburbs, and crumbling garden walls, over an execrable road; these hide the city from the traveller, until he reaches its gate, through which he enters a wretched bazar, that extends for some hundred yards, very partially occupied by shops.

I was stopt at the custom house, and asked, who I was, and whither bound? the answer was, "a merchant going to Mushed;" but I heard them arguing the matter among themselves; and some of them opining that I was a Feringhee. Being very desirous of doing away this impression, and of breaking, if possible, the chain of information which had hitherto, and was still likely to pursue me, I alighted at a caravanserai; and having first dismissed my mule-drivers and their cattle, I removed to lodgings in a private house, which had been secured for me by one of my servants, sent on in advance.

My host was an old, and very devout Moollah, who with his son, gained a livelihood by teaching the boys of the neighbourhood to read and write. The old gentleman had seen but little of the world, he had performed a pilgrimage to Mushed, as in duty bound; but talked of Sheerauz, and even Tehrān, as of distant countries, he would fain have visited, but which were far beyond his sphere of travelling; he thought the air, the water, the soil, the fruits of Sem-

noon, the choicest in the world; and it was not a little amusing to hear his vague and fanciful accounts of this his native city, both with reference to its past and present condition; its wretched crumbling buildings and ruinous houses, were magnified by his fond partiality, into superb edifices, and thickly crowded dwellings; and its inhabitants, which even in its best days never amounted to any large number, were swelled into a population of ten or twelve thousand families *, or at least an hundred thousand souls.

I employed a part of the next (Christmas) day in going through the town, that I might myself judge of its extent, population, and general condition; and I found the impressions we had received at first view, and the accounts given us by others of its wretchedness and misery, fully confirmed. The bazar was one of the most paltry I ever saw, the only shops were those of the most common and needful trades, mean and scantily supplied; an idea of its poverty may be gathered from the fact, that the whole bazar did not contain a regular butcher's shop, and I could not for the first day procure a single bit of meat in the town; nor was there a saddler to repair a broken saddle; every thing breathed of poverty and oppression. Instead of the magnificent numbers stated by my host, I found that according to the best information the inhabitants could not be stated at more than three or four thousand souls, and these consist almost entirely of husbandmen, who cultivate the fields and gardens in the vicinity; and of the tradesmen who supply their most urgent wants. The only manufacture is that of a coarse cotton cloth called kherboz, which is rather held in estimation, but is chiefly used in the place.

The governor, Zulfecar Khan, is pronounced by the general voice to be a cruel and unprincipled tyrant; unfortunately for the people, he has the ear of the sovereign, and they have no resource against his rapacity. He pays to the crown seven thousand tomauns a year; but it is asserted that he collects from the district near an hundred thousand. † His oppression was so grievous, that the inhabitants,

* A family in Persia may be taken at an average of eight or ten persons, because the descendants and relatives often inhabit the same house with the head or principal person of the family.

† This must be a great exaggeration, from what I saw of the district, it is impossible that any such amount can be extorted annually, by any means.

wearied out, went in a body to the king to complain, but his majesty only referred them back to their tyrant, who, exasperated at their boldness, wreaked upon them a cruel vengeance. It is said, that he maimed and put to death upwards of a thousand of both sexes, cutting off the hands, putting out the eyes, and otherwise mutilating the men; and cutting off the noses, ears, and breasts of the women. The people desponding and broken hearted after this, paid, in as far as they were able, the rapacious demands of their oppressor, and the natural consequence, ruin and desolation, has ensued.

There is a curious variety of building in this town; several large and lofty houses attracted our notice, being built only indeed of sun-dried bricks and mud, but in a castellated form, with loop-holes, bastions, and towers, evidently for defence. These were doubtless of considerable antiquity, for the well-tempered and tenacious clay used for such purposes stands long uninjured in this dry climate, and the walls of these buildings remained firm and lofty as they were from the first, overtopping all the city; although those for whom they were constructed, no doubt rich and noble families, had long forsaken them, and had probably gone with the country to decay. Many deep chasms that occur within the walls, and look as if they owed their existence to the action of water, have their sides burrowed into caverns, that shelter a part of the inhabitants with their flocks and herds, and these caverns seem to be preferred to the ruinous buildings that still remain untenanted in numbers above ground.

The town of Semnoon is of considerable antiquity; but I have heard no authentic account of its origin: there is a mosque of mean appearance, which bears an inscription in lacquered tiles, recording that it was built by Shah Rokh, the son of Timoor the great, in the year of the Hegira 880; but there are baths near it, which are of a date considerably more remote, being built as the inscription declares, in the year of the Hegira 566, by one Abdool Caussim, surnamed Baber Khan: probably the mosque is of the same period, and has only been repaired by Shah Rokh. There is likewise an old minār built of brick, curiously ornamented externally, and which has the appearance of great antiquity.

A table of stone built in the wall of the mosque above-mentioned by order of some prince who is termed Shah Baba, (probably meaning Shah Abbas) bears a firmaun under date A. Heg. 1031, relieving the inhabitants of this district from a certain portion of their taxes, in consequences of the severity of these having been represented to him ; but the people of Soorkh Kallah are especially excepted from this act of grace, being, as the inscription goes on to declare, Soonies, and in other ways evil doers. There is likewise a firmaun of Shah Hoossain, dated A. Heg. 1106, setting forth that there are in the town of Semnoon many shops which deal in wine, and sell *cheris* (or Bhang*), and many gaming houses, and other abominations ; and that the king derives a considerable revenue from the taxes on these ; nevertheless for the discouragement of crime, he orders that all of these may be abolished forthwith ad for ever. There are several imaumzadehs† outside of the walls, said to be of considerable antiquity ; but they are only built of mud and sun-dried bricks, and contain nothing to attract or satisfy curiosity.

Around the walls there are many well-kept gardens, and orchards that produce excellent fruit ; and judging by what we saw the climate should be moderate, for the leaves though nipt by th frost, were still hanging on the trees and partially green. At Deh Nimmuck and Lasgird, the thermometer in the morning stood at 31° and 32° ; at Semnoon, upon the 26th, in rose in the morning to 38°, and stood during the day at 42°, while the air felt raw and uncomfortable, but in the afternoon when we got without the walls, and the mist which hung around, retreated to the brows of the Elburz, it felt delightfully fresh and invigorating.

There is, we were informed, a village in the hills near Semnoon, named Shummeerzadeh, because its inhabitants are considered to be descended from a colony of Syrians‡ transplanted long ago to this

* Bhang, or cheris, is an intoxicating preparation made from hemp, which may be used for smoking, or by a modification in the manufacture, for drinking.

† The word Imaumzadehs means the descendants of an Imaum ; but it is generally applied in Persia, to the mausœleums built over the bodies of such descendants, which are to be found scattered in great abundance all over the country.

‡ The Persian name for Syria is *Shum*.

quarter. Whence this tradition arose, or what may be its foundation in truth, I cannot say. The people are said to be very fair, and their women extremely beautiful; being particularly remarkable for the pure red and white of their complexions, which excels any thing in Persia. No man, I was assured, by the old Moollah and one of his friends, could behold with impunity the beauties of this village, when assembled at the harvest; indeed the friend gave a very affecting account of his swooning for delight, on first beholding them. He added that they have at the village a species of excellent apples, the hues of which vie with the cheeks of its fair ones.

Whatever may once have been the prosperity of this part of the country, it is certain that few traces of it now remain: nor is it the poverty alone, but the evidence of insecurity that strike the traveller; every thing bears testimony to the state of alarm in which its inhabitants live, or have been used to live. Each village or hamlet has its walls or safety keep, and they were obviously clustered together for mutual protection; the cultivation is circumscribed and limited to the vicinity of these clustered dwellings. As we advanced from Lasgird, and particularly about Soorkh Kallah, we remarked many towers of mud, from fifteen to eighteen feet high, scattered like sentry boxes among the fields; and we found upon enquiry that these were very needful precautions against the cruel foe that occasionally made his attack upon them. We had now reached that part of the country into which the Toorkoman tribes often extended their depredations, although for some years past they have more seldom ventured to the westward so far as Semnoon.

Bands of these fierce robbers, amounting to hundreds, would burst through the passes leading from the deserts east of the Caspian, and carry terror and desolation even to the gates of Cashan. Not content with the plunder of a caravan, or stripping and carrying off such travellers as fell into their hands, they attacked and destroyed whole villages, dragging away the inhabitants, with their goods and cattle. None could say where the attack might light; and it was therefore necessary that the whole country should be for ever on their guard; the villages were walled, or had fortresses at-

tached to them, into which the inhabitants might retreat in case of alarm: but even this was insufficient; so rapid were the movements of their enemies, that the inhabitants were often surprised in their fields or gardens at work. Every one, therefore, went armed to his labour, the sword was girded on, and the matchlock lay beside the peasant while he guided the plough. They built among their cultivation, at small intervals, round towers, as described above, with one low aperture at bottom, into which the labourers might easily retreat on the least alarm; and barricadoed below, and armed with their matchlock, could bid defiance to their enemies; who, however superior in numbers, did not dare to remain for any long time together in one place, or even to dismount, lest they should be surprised in their turn. Thus, in fear and doubt did the husbandman pursue his occupation, nor could any precaution render him secure. Instances continually occurred of individuals and even parties being carried off; and, occasionally, when the banditti were numerous, they succeeded in surprising and carrying off the inhabitants of a village. Not many miles from Lasgird we observed the ruins of a village, Abdoolabad, which some years ago had suffered this fate. The few survivors retreated into the hills, where they formed a new settlement, and fort of the same name. Nor was this a solitary instance, as various clusters of ruins in the plain fatally testified.

Fortunately, of late the state of the country has not, openly at least, been so turbulent as to encourage the inroads of these plunderers; and the more peaceable and less accessible districts have been free from attack: but the storms that have passed have left their traces, and these districts have in no wise recovered from the miseries inflicted by foreign enemies and their own rulers. Water also is scarce, and where that is wanting, fertility cannot exist in Persia. The deficiency of natural streams is often supplied by cannauts, but during our whole march from Tehrān to this place, we saw no marks of such works except about Soorkh Kalla, where a few lines of the little heaps that indicate their course, were observed. The season of the year added to the gloomy and desolate aspect of

the country, and the mind became involuntarily impressed with sensations of a corresponding nature.

As we had reason to be much dissatisfied both with our muleteers and their cattle, we determined on changing them here, but found it by no means so easy a matter as I had been led to expect. Semnoon, being a principal halting-place for caravans, we were told that there would be abundance of baggage-cattle to be had there at all times; but we found it very difficult, in the first place, to ascertain whether there were any beasts in the place, or not, and then still more so, to make terms with their owners; and when at last we had engaged a man with a sufficiency of mules to carry our baggage to Shahrood at seven reals a load, although he had left pledges for the performance of his agreement, he broke off, unless we should choose to give him three reals a head more. We soon had reason to believe that our former muleteers, disappointed of their expected profit, were at the bottom of all this; and feeling the more indignant at the attempted imposition, the meerza was dispatched to the house of the governor, where, meeting with a son of Zulfecar Khan, he complained of the roguery practised upon us; and the young man immediately ordered his darogha to provide us in the morning with mules as far as Damghān, where, he said, his brother would do us the same good office, to Shahrood. This application proved the justice of my belief, that the disguise I wore could not avail me as a concealment, at least so near home; for the young man seemed perfectly aware of who I was; but the only observation he made to the meerza was, that the connection between a *Seyed* *, and an unbelieving *European*, seemed to him a strange one, and that he could not conceive how it had taken place.

Notwithstanding these fair appearances, we discovered that a great man's word is not always to be relied upon, and that we were still far from the attainment of our object; the mules, though ordered at an early hour, were not forthcoming even at nine in the

* The Seyeds are descendants of the Prophet, and considered as invested with a peculiar and inherent sanctity throughout every country where Mahometanism prevails.

morning; and although a messenger, dispatched for intelligence, informed us that we should certainly have them, still hour after hour passed on in fruitless anxiety. It appeared in the sequel, that Junghez Khan himself either could not, or did not dare to take the mules, without at least a promise of their hire, and had offered four reals a-piece as far as Damghān; but his word was so little to be trusted, that it was very dubious whether we should or should not obtain them, after all. These were not, indeed, the terms on which I should have chosen to procure them; but, having once applied to the great man, there was no retreating, and we were forced to let the governor's servants have their way, while (as we afterwards understood) two sets of mules were offered us for hire, and dismissed.

After a terrible delay, and the assistance of our own men, six miserable animals were brought, one by one, and we loaded; but when we had moved to a sort of square, near the centre of the town, the whole made a dead halt, and refused to proceed. Upon enquiry, the muleteers, with much abuse, let me know, that they had received no money, and would not move without their hire. As we knew that orders had been given to pay these people, we set immediately about enquiring into the justice of their complaint; and then the truth came out. The darogha had made the requisition for mules a pretext for levying a contribution upon the inhabitants of the town; and we were told he had already collected more than a hundred reals, as premiums for excusing such as had mules, but who did not wish to have them thus employed; or as money to defray the expence of such mules as he pretended were ready. Of all this, however, not one farthing had been touched by the muleteers; and, as they steadily refused to proceed until paid, I was forced to send the meerza again to the darogha, to complain of the delay. That worthy officer declared that *he* had no money, but would send for a supply, which he openly allowed was to be raised by public requisition: but the meerza very properly refused such an expedient, not only on account of the probable and indefinite delay, but of the shameful extortion to which it would have made us a party: so the matter was compromised by a payment on my part, of the money

demanded, and the mules moved onwards without any further delay. I have given an account of this little occurrence at somewhat more length than its importance may seem to merit, because it illustrates well the true character of Persian generosity, and the mode of managing such affairs, whether on the part of an individual, or the government, all over the country. When a stranger applies for assistance, he finds his cause espoused with an alacrity which leads him to hope everything; the great man swears by his eyes, by your head, by his own, that all you require shall be granted; that he will frank you through his territories; but here the matter generally rests: he never thinks of inforcing, if indeed he ever thought of *giving* the necessary orders; his servants, at all events, make these orders a pretext for extortion. You are ill-served, and bitterly cursed; those forced to serve you are wretchedly, if at all paid; and the only party that benefits, are the officials of the great man, who squeeze for the time, that they may in turn be squeezed at their master's convenience.

We at length left Semnoon, and slowly proceeded along the dreary plain in which it is situated; till having crossed the stream that runs along the low ground towards the salt desert, and again gradually ascended nearly to the foot of the hills beyond, we cast our eyes backward, astonished at the endless length of the gravelly slope we had traversed, and saw Semnoon like a small irregular line upon the surface of the plain. The wonderful fallacy of distance is at least as remarkable upon the plains of Persia as it is at sea; and often proves a source of great fatigue, in long journeys, to the weary traveller; who, hanging on his horse hour after hour, and hardly making any sensible progress, dares not yet separate himself from his party and baggage, to push forward for his resting place.

Our ascent continued winding along a ravine among hillocks of earth and gravel, until we entered the defiles of the mountains that form the eastern side of the valley. About sunset we passed a ruined caravanserai, situated in a dismal hollow, surrounded by rocks, and said to be twenty miles distant from Semnoon; and from thence continued to ascend by a very tedious winding path, among crags and ravines, until we had reached a very considerable

height, whence a few miles of descent brought us to a large and strong caravanserai, in which we were to repose for the night. The ground, after we had ascended a little way, was covered with snow, and the latter part of the march was uncomfortable in more ways than one, for the Gurdunee Aheaiyoon is a notorious resort of thieves, and if there are any Toorkomans upon the road, it is there they are sure to lurk; so that it was not without apprehension that I went aside, or lingered behind the party, to take specimens, and bearings. The stage indeed is proverbially dreary and fatiguing, for they have a story in the country, that the horse of a traveller, which had brought him without faltering all the way from Sheerauz, gave up and died of weariness in the Gurdunee Aheaiyoon. We left Semnoon about half past eleven in the forenoon, and reached the caravanserai about half past seven at night; so that we calculated the distance at between 26 and 28 miles, our course being about north-north-east.

The caravanserai is situated among desert mountains, covered at this time with snow, and far from any habitation, so that nothing was to be procured except what we brought along with us; but indeed there was neither fewel to dress meat, nor time to spare for it, so we begged a few roots and bushes from a traveller, who had reached the place in better time, and whose attendants had dug them from under the snow: with these we warmed our benumbed hands, and made ready some tea, which, with a little bread, and some Semnoon honey, made no uncomfortable repast: after this, we retired to the place where the horses were tied, as being the warmest corner, and wrapping ourselves in our sheepskin cloaks, settled ourselves to sleep.

At four next morning (the 28th) we were waked and called to load, but the cold was so great, that although perfectly sensible of the importance of exertion, it was extremely difficult, without fire, and almost without light, to get anything done; and it was near six in the morning, before we were in motion. The thermometer only fell to 11°, but as I could not fairly expose it to the full effects of the cold, I think it would have sunk still lower, without doors; a severe wind added to the effects of the cold, and we were all glad to walk

for several miles, until the rising sun and our gradual descent, restored to us a moderate degree of warmth. At the dawn of morning we found ourselves upon the declivity of a hill, overlooking the plain of Damghān. Heavy clouds rested to the north, on the wild crags of the Elburz, and half veiled the range of hills to Shahrood, but we seemed to have reached a table land of greater elevation than that we had left; for the mountains, which, from the side of Semnoon appeared of great height, were but crags that rose abruptly from the plain, when viewed from the position we had now reached; and the Elburz range themselves appeared diminished in like manner, although their crests were on a level with those we had left.

A very gently inclined plain, covered with snow, brought us, after a march of from 32 to 34 miles, to the village of Dowlutabad, which is the first inhabited place after quitting Semnoon, in a distance of from 58 to 60 miles. There are, however, two caravanserais, one of which, with the village that supplied it, has long since been destroyed; the other, built by Shah Abbas, about ten miles from Dowlutabad, is still made use of, though the requisite supplies are brought from Amrowan, a village four or five miles off the road. Our course was nearly north-east, keeping the hills upon our left, and the salt desert on our right; the scene was dreary, and we passed it in a dreary day, for the clouds which had brooded over the mountains, and clothed them in snow, soon sent forth a wind so cold and piercing, that it numbed our joints through all our warmest clothes and sheepskin pelisses, making it no easy matter to sit our horses, and keep our garments on. The cattle with great difficulty reached their stage at five in the evening, and all were glad to get under shelter upon any terms. Our accommodation was very indifferent; indeed we had for some time the prospect of passing our night under the vault of heaven, for every chamber in the little mud-built caravanserai was full: the powerful argument of a little coin, however, at length induced a party to give up their room; a lady was evidently disturbed on our account, but our regard for the fair sex was not strong enough to hinder us from availing ourselves of the comparative

comfort which the apartment promised, and a tolerable dinner soon reconciled us to whatever of disagreeable might still remain.

During this day's march we were overtaken by Mahomed Hoossain Khan, master of ceremonies to Hussun Allee Meerza, prince and governor of Khorasān; who, having been dispatched upon business to Tehrān, was now on his return to Mushed. It was this person who had been at the caravanserai the night before, as well as at the house of Zulfecar Khan, in Semnoon, and who, being unfortunately aware that I was upon the road, would not fail to give notice of the circumstance wherever he might go; but, as he had been an old companion of the meerza, there was no shunning him. Accordingly, when he came up to us he saluted us, and immediately entered into a conversation that was far from pleasant; for he was neither agreeable himself, nor was he happy in the choice of his subjects. His countenance was a picture of brutal insolence, and he spoke in a loud and imperious tone of command, particularly offensive. No sooner had the usual introductory questions regarding my country, journey, and its objects, been put and replied to, than, in the most abrupt manner, he commenced a string of interrogatories regarding my faith and religious opinions; particularly of the mission of our Saviour, of the existence of a future state, and a God; and many of those subjects that form points of discussion among modern sceptics. Finally, he desired to know what I thought of the Mahometan faith, and pressed me very hard in a sort of comparison which he wished to draw between that and the Christian persuasion. I replied to all these interrogatories, as well as I could, in an evasive manner, avoiding all discussion which could have tended to no good, pleaded my imperfect knowledge of the language in excuse for not continuing the subject, and referred him to the meerza, who was not a little confounded at his folly, for such further information as he might desire to obtain.

While we were yet thus discoursing, a courier came up, who had been dispatched from the court of Mushed, to Tehrān, charged with intelligence of a curious description, and very characteristic of

the country in which we were. It appeared that the prince having directed the commander in chief of his troops, Abbas Koolee Khan, to proceed to Kelaat Naderee with a force of five hundred men, and three small guns, in order to co-operate with Seyed Mahomed Khan, the chief of that strong-hold, in an expedition against the Toorkomans, that chief had watched his opportunity to surprise the general, and had taken him prisoner, with his guns, equipage, and all his people. Some report of this had reached us on the 22d, at Khaur, but it was only now that the chupper * was passing with the intelligence for the king; so slow is bad news of reaching the ears of absolute monarchs.

Dowlutabad is the chief of a cluster of villages, situated at the debouche of a small stream from the hills, and which were neater and in better condition than any we had seen on this road. Each village has its little square fort, with towers at the corners, built of mud, or of sun-dried bricks; and all have a prepossessing air of snugness rather singular in such a country. But the little mud towers scattered among the cultivation betray, that not always can the husbandman pursue his labours in security, and that the Toorkomans occasionally carry desolation to the gates of these villages. The ruins of many others confirm this tale; but of late the attempts at such daring plunder have been of more rare occurrence.

There are several fine streams in the hills behind this district, which, in like manner, irrigate their respective establishments of villages and cultivation: but to the waters of one fountain, not far distant, tradition has attributed this remarkable property; that if they be polluted by the touch of any unclean thing †, they become troubled, and a storm arises, which, if not speedily assuaged, would desolate the whole country. But as there are few evils which have not their corresponding remedies, it has been discovered that the sacrifice of a sheep, with certain appropriate rites upon the spot, has the effect of pacifying the offended power; and gradually the storm

* Chupper, or courier express.

† Meaning thereby unlawful, according to the Mahometan faith.

abates, and the wind ceases.* There are persons, we understood, skilled in and at all times ready to perform the needful rites, in cases when the evil has been committed, and who reside in the neighbouring village; and I could not help remarking to my informant that some malicious person must surely have been at work this day, to raise the violent storm that had so severely buffeted us on our way to Dowlutabad. It is curious thus to trace the remains of ancient superstitions amalgamating with the later religion of a country, and pointing to times long gone by, when a more picturesque mythology prevailed. The original "genii loci" have given place to Allee, Moorteza Allee, and the race of imaums, who are, at least, as prolific of miracles as their predecessors.

We reached Damghān the next morning (the 29th) in good time, the distance from Dowlutabad being only ten or twelve miles, along a gravelly plain. That city, or rather its ruins, lies on a slightly-elevated brow of the plain, inclining to the north-east; and they are conspicuous at a distance by two minarets, belonging to different mosques, the only lofty buildings in the place.

Damghān was originally a city of more importance than Semnoon; but, suffering yet more severely under the same description of tyranny, its decay has been more complete. It is now, indeed, little more than a mass of desolate ruins, through which a solitary individual may now and then be seen to pass. The bazar is but a wretched, vaulted lane of mud-built shops, which would be but poor if all were occupied; but there are hardly to be found in it half a dozen beggarly booths of the most needful trades. The present population was stated to me at two thousand; but if any judgment can be formed on so hasty a view, I do not think it can be nearly so great. Every one exclaims against the tyranny and extortion of the governor, Zulfecār Khan, and his son, Mootaalib Khan.

* It is interesting to observe, that this fountain is alluded to, and its traditional virtues confirmed, by the historian of Hoomayoon Shah (Aboul Fazel), in his account of that monarch's journey into Persia to implore assistance from Shah Tahmaseb. (Vide Price's History of Mahometanism, vol. iii. page 841.)

There are several traces of antiquity about Damghān which, point, however, to no more remote date than an early period of Mahometan history. Of two mosques, one is quite ruinous and fallen into disuse; the minaret belonging to it (one of those we had remarked from a distance) has been injured by lightning, and its top destroyed.* The other mosque, a plain and ugly structure having its centre arch placed in a screen of forty feet high, is in tolerable repair, and its minaret, of considerable height, is perfect in its mason work; but the wooden gallery which once encompassed its top is now falling to pieces. Both these minarets are of the same description and materials, as that taken notice of at Semnoon; that is, built of excellent burnt brick, ornamented with a sort of fillagree-work of the same, and beautifully constructed. In the last-mentioned mosque there was a firmaun of the same sovereign, and granting to Damghān the same immunities as those to Semnoon. We had the curiosity to request several persons in the mosque to explain to us the nature of this document; but not one of them was able: the learning as well as the prosperity of Damghān is at a low ebb.

Just beyond the walls, near the gate by which we entered, there is an inclosure in which were two monuments that attracted my attention; one, probably the mosque attached to the place, had recently undergone extensive repairs, which detracted from its appearance of antiquity; the other was a very curious tower of brick, highly ornamented, and of remarkable architecture; preserving a cylindrical form of about fifteen feet in diameter, to a certain height, surmounted by a dome in the shape of a cone, in all above thirty five feet high. It contained various tombstones, from which, however, nothing could be made out; we learnt that the whole went by the name of the Chehl Doochterān†, or Chehl Sirān, but of its date or story we could learn nothing. Another monument, however, in the same inclosure, but of much plainer architecture, with a small mosque and

* Damghān was destroyed by an earthquake, A. Heg. 242.

† Chehl Doochterān, "the forty daughters, or maidens;" Chehl Serān, "the forty heads."

moselleh* attached, bore an incription, which once recorded the date and name of the founder; the former was unfortunately worn out; the latter was "*Ahmud ibn Allee, ibn Abool Taher, king of Arabia and Adjem.*"† He that was interred therein was "*Peer Allumdar,*" as appeared from a very old inscription, in ornamented Arabic characters around one of the windows of the mosque, engraved in the original plaster of the building; a proof of the wonderful equability and dryness of the climate. These inscriptions seem sufficient to prove that the monuments are to be referred to some of the early Arabian dynasties, that held sway in Persia, and, combined with other corresponding circumstances, might, perhaps, tend to elucidate some point of history; or at all events, to refer to a particular æra, and reign, most buildings of this description; and probably) if that were a subject of sufficient interest) throw some light upon the foundation of the cities which contain them.

We lodged in a caravanserai that had seen better days; but which was still capable of affording us shelter. At this place, we made a new arrangement for transporting our baggage to Shahrood, taking on some of the muleteers who had come from Semnoon, and replacing others. We had, to our no small mortification, been forced to carry on from thence some of the people who had been troublesome on the way from Tehrān, and among them a little old man called *Ismael Coossa* (or Ismael with the *thin beard*), who was particularly malicious and ill disposed, in a country where all of his trade are notoriously so: he was for ever grumbling and quarrelling, making difficulties and finding faults; his age and apparent weakness often protected him in cases when he would otherwise have probably met with his deserts in a good beating; but as he very likely had found patience to have its bounds, he substituted craft for strength; and having on some occasion been punished deservedly by losing a tooth

* Moselleh, signifies a place for prayer.

† Could this have been one of the Taherite sovereigns, who flourished between the years 200 and 260 of the Heg. in Khorasan? The title of "King of Arabia and "Adjem," is against this supposition, as the Taherites, holding their power confessedly from the Kaliphs, never could have been styled kings of Arabia.

and half his beard in a fray, he kept these spoils always in his pocket, to produce upon occasion, and thus to turn the tide of popular pity in his favour when fearful of coming off worst.

This decrepid old wretch, just as we had begun to load our newly hired cattle, on the morrow of the 30th., came into the caravanserai, and enquired of me with sufficient insolence, why *he* was not employed to go with us to Shahrood? and on being informed that he owed his dismissal to his own ill conduct, he roundly swore that not a load should move unless he went; adding, that his hire from Tehrān to Damghān had not yet been paid; and that none of the baggage should be moved until he should have received every farthing. The extravagance, both of his falsehood and his threats, was so absurd, that I at first treated them with contempt; nor did I take the trouble to interfere, until I actually saw him interrupt the loading, and that the others were afraid or unwilling to go on; but then I went out of my chamber, and became witness to a scene which I could hardly have credited even in this country of disorder. The little wretch, weak and powerless as he seemed, and in reality was, held at bay all the other muleteers, four or five in number, with my servants and the meerza at their head; and whenever a load was about to be placed upon a mule, he rushed forward with the most determined air, just as if he had the right on his side, and threw it on the ground: when opposed he got furiously savage, and even took up stones to throw at the people. I ordered my servants to interfere, and end this disgraceful scene, either by steadily and effectually resisting the absurd opposition of this troublesome person, or by going and complaining to Mootaalib Khan, or his Naib, to obtain relief from so unpleasant a persecution. It was strange, however, that they long would do neither the one nor the other, and seemed paralyzed, and awed by the mischievous creature; nor was it until I showed great anger, and bitterly reproached them for their cowardly conduct, threatening to use very violent measures myself, that the meerza at last repaired to the house of the Naib to solicit assistance. The Naib, however, could with difficulty be roused from the depths of his harem; and when he came, he showed but little

disposition to act vigorously; but he gave us one of his men to settle the quarrel, and liberty to do with the delinquent as we pleased.

But Ismael Coossa, far from attending to the remonstrances, or even the manual arguments of this messenger, closed with him, pulled his beard and his cap, and behaved like a madman; still not one of my servants would move to his assistance; and seeing no end to the business, I told the meerza to follow me to the house of the Naib, and that I would myself see whether he would, or would not, use decided measures to free us from our tormentor. The Naib, Aga Baba, spoke high, told me to do with Ismael what I pleased, to put him to death if I were so disposed, called him a brute, a dog, who should not be suffered to continue in his insolence, or even to live; buthe declined doing the only thing that would have been effectual, viz. coming in person to settle the dispute; so finding that the liberal permission first granted was all I was likely to obtain from Aga Baba, I left him, determined at least to repel force by force; therefore, when Ismael again attempted to interfere, I collared him, and held him fast myself; the meerza, at last roused to action, held him firm by the girdle, and the other servants following the example, the loading was soon completed. But the torrents of abuse and curses which poured from the fellow's mouth is not to be described; he writhed, gnashed his teeth, scratched, and once or twice broke loose, and took up a stone; but the butt of my gun overawed him, and seeing me in real earnest, he did not dare again to expose his person too much. When all was ready, I sent off the baggage with some of the servants, retaining the meerza and another to keep him in the caravanserai until the party should be clear of the town: I then mounted and followed; but no sooner was my back turned than he broke loose once more, tore off the meerza's cap, and ran with it, crying Amaun! Amaun*! to the Naib's house, urging the bitterest complaints against him, and all the party; until Aga Baba, who appeared to love his ease, and who had been already sufficiently wearied of the business, after an ineffectual attempt to pacify him, told the

* Mercy! Mercy! a cry which is used either in begging for quarter, or for protection from supposed injustice.

meerza that the man should be prevented from giving further trouble; and recommended him to follow his friends.

I have related this incident at what may perhaps seem tedious length; not only because it is characteristic of the brutality and savage obstinacy of Persian muleteers, but because it shews how slender a reed that traveller trusts to, who hopes for assistance or justice from the authorities of government, unless he supports his complaint by the pleading of that advocate which here carries all before it; money. Here were travellers, peaceably pursuing their journey, detained for several hours, and it might have been for days; insulted, their baggage tumbled about, their property damaged, and their servants abused, by a single ruffian who chose thus to vent upon them his disappointment and malice. And when these travellers applied to the chief authority of the place, so far did they find themselves from being protected, or indemnified for the ill-treatment they had received, that after their running a considerable risk to liberate their property, by coercing the offender; he would never have been in any degree restrained from continuing his atrocious conduct, had the magistrates rest not been broken by his clamour.

Had I followed the dictates of passion, and acted as in most places I should have been tempted to do, by punishing the fellow with a beating; I should have completely turned the tables against myself, and lost the only vantage ground I had. Had a Christian struck a Mahometan, even of such infamous character as this, it would have been followed by instant and severe punishment; even his own servants would not have dared to protect him: and had he drawn Mahometan blood, even in the slightest way, the most fatal consequences might have ensued. So I was *forced* to be calm, and, swallowing the indignation and anger I felt, to repel actual violence and injury as well as I could. It is a strange inconsistency to see such outrage, and excess of insolence, tolerated in a country where the rulers are understood to be absolute; but perhaps Persia may not be the only land where the appearance of arbitary power and summary justice covers weakness and oppression, though I believe

there are few countries possessing even a nominal government, where such conduct would have totally escaped punishment.

Upon quitting Damghān, our road lay, as before, along a gravelly plain that sloped from the feet of the mountains on our left; which, although they assume different appellations at almost every village, are part of the same chain that are continuous from Tehrān, and which I have always denominated the Elburz. The salt desert lay on the left, about twenty miles distant from the mountains, and assumed here more the appearance of a lake, or marsh, for there was a good deal of water on its surface. Blue hills fifty or sixty miles off appeared to bound it on the south-west. A fine stream that rises at once from a fountain called Chushmah-e-Allee, issues from the hills, just behind Damghān; and irrigates its dependent villages, and cultivation.

The soil continues gravelly as far as the village of Mehmandost, twelve or fourteen miles from Damghān; but it there becomes more sandy, and of a light loamy nature, giving rich crops of wheat and barley; the sweetand tender green of which was now beginning to appear in some of the fields; and indeed we observed that the farming and tillage were remarkably good in this district; the fields neatly divided into square compartments for the benefit and facility of irrigation; the remains of a good many cannauts were to be seen, some still serviceable; and the villages though clustered together, were each inclosed by comfortable mud walls, in the style of forts, to keep off the Toorkomans; the scene of whose inroads we were now fast approaching. We rode thirteen or fourteen miles further on, to Dehmoollah, the chief of another cluster of villages, chiefly remarkable for a fine specimen on a large scale, of the same species of mud fort we had seen so often on the way to Semnoon, but had lost sight of since. Lodgings were assigned us in a private house, as more comfortable than the crowded caravanserai, and the people, though inquisitive, were civil and obliging.

In spite of our change of muleteers, I found it difficult enough to get early on foot on the morning of the 31st, although very desirous of reaching Shahrood in good time. I had heard that a caravan

for Mushed was soon to start from that place; and was anxious to avail myself of its protection: we did not however reach it till past noon, although the distance does not exceed fifteen or sixteen miles. The road resembles the gravelly slope of yesterday, raised in many places by the shingly beds of numerous mountain torrents, which, however, are void of water except during the melting of the snows, or a violent fall of rain; so that they confer no benefit on the land. A low range of hills commence in the salt desert not far from Dehmoollah, about fifteen miles distant from the Elburz, and run parallel with them, until they join the hills of Meyomeid, which might be seen afar off. The salt lake runs up between them, till it is lost in a plain, on which a wide and barren prospect opens to the east-north-east, a few villages, and more numerous ruins, slightly marking its otherwise unvaried surface. It was along this plain, that the lawless plunderers from the northern deserts, poured on the richer country to the south-west; and its gloomy aspect seems to speak it well suited for such inmates, and only such.

We approached Shahrood by a road among gardens surrounded by walls so lofty that nothing can be seen. The village itself is walled and flanked with towers, but it has also a fort, of which the works are more complete. The neighbouring villages as well as the town itself are surrounded with some fine cultivation, and the whole place has an air of considerable comfort and prosperity.

It was a singular circumstance that the low hills on the opposite side of the plain were much streaked with snow; and a good deal was lying on the valley between them and the hills above Shahrood; while the latter, though much loftier, were entirely free; nor was any snow to be seen in the direction of Damghān. This could not be accounted for by the difference of exposure, as the former were, if any thing, more exposed to the action of the sun's rays. The more lofty peaks of the Elburz appeared through the openings of the ravines, all covered with snow.

Our first care upon arriving, was to make enquiry regarding the movements of the caravan; and for this purpose I dispatched Mahomed Allee, the jeloodar, a-head, as well as to make an arrangement

for baggage cattle, the mules we had being engaged no further than to Shahrood. We found that it had already gone to Budusht, a village about four miles further on, where there is a large caravanserai, and where cāfilahs of any large size prefer remaining on account of the facility of grazing their camels in the plains around. We were sorry to learn, too, that it proposed starting the next morning for Meyomeid, as, though we were determined to accompany it, the time was full short to make our preparations, particularly as the baggage cattle were to be changed. However, by dint of activity, we got all in readiness for the morning, and settled ourselves comfortably in the caravanserai for the night, in preference to moving on to Budusht, where the numbers assembled would have rendered it impossible to obtain shelter for ourselves, or for our cattle. Soon after this a report was spread that the caravan would not break ground from Budusht until the evening of the next day; and having, as we believed, ascertained the truth of this report, we made some alteration in our arrangements, glad to gain the additional time.

CHAP. XIV.

JANUARY 1, 1822, REPORT OF A CARAVAN BEING ATTACKED BY TOORKOMANS — CONFIRMED. — FIND THAT THE CARAVAN WE PROPOSED TO ACCOMPANY HAD GONE. — MAHOMED ALLEE, THE JELOODAR'S BAD CONDUCT. — REMAIN FOR THE NEXT CĀFILAH. — RECENT TOORKOMAN CHAPPOWS OF CARAVANS. — REBELLIOUS STATE OF KHORASĀN. — MORE REPORTS. — TOORKOMAN TREATMENT OF CAPTIVES — SLAVE TRADE AT KHYVAH. — VISIT THE GOVERNOR OF SHAHROOD. — VISIT THE TOWN OF BOSTAM — ITS BUILDINGS. — PILGRIMS COLLECT TO FORM A CARAVAN. — SHAHROOD DESCRIBED. — REMOVE TO BUDUSHT. — REPEATED ATTEMPTS, AND CHECKS TO MARCHING — ENDLESS RUMOURS, AND INTRIGUES TO DELAY — CONSULT THE FRIENDLY GOVERNOR, AND ADVISED TO PAUSE. — ACCOUNTS OF A CHAPPOW IN WHICH A PARTY OF TUCKEH TOORKOMANS DESTROYED A GOCKLAN VILLAGE. — THE ROAD OPEN — LEAVE BUDUSHT — A VERY ANXIOUS AND COLD NIGHT — CARAVAN DISCIPLINE — CAREFUL RECONNOITERING — HALT FOR MORNING PRAYERS. — AFFRAY AT THE VILLAGE OF MEYOMEID WITH A RUDE VILLAGER — BRAVE CONDUCT OF MY NEGRO SERVANT — PUNISHMENT OF THE CULPRIT.

THE next morning, January the first, 1822, opened ill. While engaged in weighing and arranging our loads for the evening, a confused report began to buz about that a caravan had just been attacked and plundered by the Toorkomans; some said it was a small one of five men and twenty camels, others of twenty men and one hundred camels: some stated that it had taken place but four fursungs distant from hence; others insisted that it was a great deal further off, and on the other side of Meyomeid. At last, a merchant went to the governor Mahomed Saleh Khan, who was in the castle, to obtain a correct account of what had happened; and after a space of considerable anxiety we learnt that a caravan from Toorsheez, consisting of thirty men and about twenty-five camels, had been attacked by about eighty Toorkoman horse, who carried the whole off. No particulars had been ascertained, nor did it distinctly appear how the news, so far as they went, had reached the village; but some persons coming from Mushed had passed by the spot, where the event had taken place, and seen the marks of the fray:

torn clothes, camels' jhules*, and other property scattered about; but it was not known whether any one had been put to death, and in truth little more was known than that such an event had occurred.

This knowledge, however, was sufficient to occasion considerable disturbance in the place, and to call our attention powerfully to our own situation. The first point was to ascertain the strength of the caravan which we proposed to accompany, and judge how far it might be able to cope with such attacks; and this enquiry brought on another, which I believed had already been sufficiently put, and that was, whether the cāfilah was *still at Budusht*, or had set out, as at first proposed, on the morning of this day. It soon appeared that the doubt was but too well grounded, particularly as we found that Mahomed Hoossain Khan had set out the evening before to join it. I dispatched Mahomed Allee immediately to bring correct intelligence if possible; and he soon returned, having met many persons, who like ourselves had been disappointed, on their way back from Budusht, which place they found deserted, the caravan having moved from thence soon after sunset on the preceding evening.

This was a severe blow indeed; I had already lost so much time since my arrival in the country, that every day became doubly precious; yet the loss of this opportunity was likely to cost me many days, or even weeks; for until another cāfilah should collect, it was quite out of the question to attempt crossing the desert to Muzeenoon. Not only would my servants have objected, but no camel-driver, or muleteer would have ventured his cattle with me, had I even determined to put my person and property into such jeopardy. I had done all in my power to sift the intelligence in which I had trusted, and in this I had no cause for self-reproach; it only showed how little dependence was to be placed on any thing we might hear in a country where truth is unknown. But if I had no cause to blame myself on this occasion, I looked back with bitter regret to the carelessness with which our arrangements for the journey had been made

* The jhule is the body clothes or covering of a camel or horse.

at Tehrān. I was not then, indeed, aware, how unfit the meerza was to manage such matters; he had undertaken them confidently; and I, knowing how much better a native is qualified to deal with natives, than I could possibly be, and sure of his honesty, trusted to him without scruple; it now appeared how unwisely. The business of hiring baggage cattle is most commonly entrusted to the chief jeloodar, or managing servant, who always obtains some advantage in making the bargain. The meerza's interference, therefore, in this particular was doubly unfortunate; for it not only disgusted my servant Mahomed Allee, at the outset of our journey, but was the means of our being wretchedly supplied with cattle. Had I committed the charge of procuring these either to him, or to the servants of my friends at Tehrān, or had I even seen the owners, and made my own arrangement with them as far as Shahrood, we should not only have avoided all the vexation which we had experienced on the way, but should have arrived there in comfort several days earlier, and in time to have made every needful preparation for joining the caravan, which now had left us to our fate.

I had by this time, however, sufficient proof that Mahomed Allee was by no means a trust-worthy person. He had recommended himself to the gentleman from whose service he entered mine, by his faithful discharge of a particular duty; but whether it was that he believed he could more easily impose upon a stranger, or that an evil disposition long repressed was now forcing itself into view, I cannot say, but his conduct very soon changed for the worse; for, in addition to great overcharges in accounts, he began to evince a violent and imperious temper, continually taking unreasonable offence, and indignant if every thing were not left to his management. There was little doubt that he had been the principal instigator of Ismael Coossa's insolent conduct, and that all the difficulties we had experienced in our bargains for baggage cattle, both at Semnoon, and Damghān, had originated in the anger which he felt at being disappointed of his expected profits in the arrangements at Tehrān. This, however, was not the moment for taking the proper notice of such things, still less of making changes in the establishment: all that

could be done was to keep a vigilant eye over his conduct, and repress with firmness any glaring attempts at further incroachment.

With regard to our future motions, there was nothing now left but to establish ourselves at Shahrood as comfortably as circumstances would permit, until another cāfilah should assemble, the time for which no one could predict; and accordingly I hired a house for our accommodation, and removed at once from the caravanserai. It was a poor mud-built cottage, but private, and having a small court yard, in which I could make my astronomical observations without interruption; here, therefore, we remained as patiently as we could.

Of reports there was no scarcity, but it was impossible to ascertain the credit due to any of them; some averred that there had been two parties of Toorkomans, one of eighty, the other of two hundred horsemen: that the former had retreated, after making prisoners of the caravan from Toorsheez, while the latter was still unaccounted for.

A considerable number of pilgrims arrived this day from Resht, and many travellers from other places; who, with those disappointed by the sudden departure of the last caravan, already amounted to a considerable body; and there were accounts of several other parties upon the road, so that even before the night closed in, we felt some encouragement to hope that our detention might not prove very long.

Next morning (the 2d) Mahomed Allee came in with a face full of news, to tell us that Abdoolla Beg, a man belonging to Meerza Moossa, the wuzzeer at Mushed, had arrived with more correct accounts of the *chappow*, and soon after the man himself came to see us. The amount of his information was as follows: — He was pursuing his way to Tehrān, in charge of certain horses, presents for the king, and had pushed on from Muzeenoon to Abbassabad (a village in the desert, about 90 miles from hence), in hopes of overtaking a caravan which had preceded him; but he was too late, it had left Abbassabad: he however persisted in following, and met a caravan from Budusht, which informed him that those he was in pursuit of were but a short distance a-head, upon which he pushed on still more rapidly, and just as he came in view of it, he saw it actually engaged

with the Toorkomans, who had already gained the advantage. Seeing this, he returned with precipitation to Abbassabad, whence however two days after, being joined by other travellers, he again set out, and in passing the scene of action had seen the relics of the fight; three men cut in pieces, much blood lying about, several asses and cattle houghed, and fragments of various articles of merchandize. A little after, he had met with Furijoolla Khān, the son of Mahomed Sāleh Khān, who had been sent out with a party of horse to reconnoitre, and who told him, that he also had just arrived in time to see the Toorkomans carrying off the prisoners and camels, leaving the least valuable loads upon the ground, of which he had taken possession for the proper owners. He confirmed the report given of the enemies' numbers, stating that the party he saw consisted of about 80 horsemen, but that there had originally been 280; what had become of the remainder he however did not know, nor could Abdoolla himself give any very satisfactory proof of their existence beyond the word of Furijoolla Khān.

Abdoolla Beg gave us a lamentable account of the state of Khorasān. The Toorkomans of Hazārah and the desert, he said, were ravaging on the side of Balkh and Bockhara, and were in league with Seyed Mahomed Khan, of Kelaat. Mahomed Khan of Toorbut, Bunyad Beg of Hazārah, and Reza Koolee Khan * of Kabooshan, were (as he assured us) in open rebellion, each plundering in his own vicinity. The first-mentioned of these three chiefs had but lately been with his followers in the neighbourhood of Nishapore, where he had plundered two caravans, on their way from Herāt towards Irāk, and had given assistance to Abbas Koolee Khan, a chief who, for six months, had defended a petty fort near that city, with only two or three hundred matchlock men, and three zumboorucks, against the army of the prince. He assured us that no road in that country was safe for caravans or travellers of any description. He confirmed the account we had received of the cap-

* The reader who peruses the account given in the Appendix of the state of Khorasān, will observe that some of Abdoolla's statements were not absolutely correct; but this, at the time, we could not tell.

ture of Abbas Koolee Khan, the prince's general, by Seyed Mahomed Khan, adding, that the latter had detained captive only fifteen or sixteen of the principal persons of his suite, along with the general; and, after stripping the rest, had turned them out of Kelaat. He ended his account by oberving that, in short, the king could call nothing in Khorasān his own, beyond Mushed, Nishapore, and Subzawār, and that these were devoured by his servants.

This account of matters in our very route was by no means encouraging. From hence to Subzawār, the Toorkomans of the Attock* sweep the country; from hence to Herāt, and thence to Mushed, the Hazārahns, Feerozecooees, and Jumsheedees, spread terror and desolation. Thus, if any faith were to be put in the information of this man, it would neither be easy to choose our route, nor to know whether any in the direction we wished to take were practicable.

Had we given ear, indeed, to every tale related in this place of the activity and cruelty of the Toorkomans, it would have been sufficient to justify the apprehension that there was but a very indifferent chance of escape from their hands, so much was every one at Shahrood occupied with the subject, and so many were there who had suffered severely by them. We met with several who had been prisoners in their power, and who had, by various chances, returned to their country. A man was brought to me this day, who had just returned from a three years' captivity among them. He said he was a native of Meyomeid, a village in the desert, forty or fifty miles from hence; that, in crossing towards Shahrood, to recover some wages, in company with another man, they observed a flock of wild asses, in full flight; and, while gazing at this uncommon spectacle, five horsemen made their appearance in chase, who, when they observed the two travellers, quitted the pursuit, and rode up to them. They soon recognized them for Toorkomans, and attempted to escape; but it was too late. The relater attempted to throw himself

* Attock, as before explained, means the skirt or feet of the hills, and commencement of the desert; it is commonly used for the desert itself in these parts.

into a dry well, or hole, to avoid them; but one of them galloping up, knocked him down by a blow on the head with the back of his sword, and binding his elbows behind his back, with a rope tied about his neck, to prevent any attempt at escape, dragged him at his horse's rein for eight days together, giving him but very little to eat. At night they tied his feet also, and throwing a numud over him, they lay down across it, so that he could not move, and went to sleep. When they reached the camp, he was put to such labour as herding cattle, assisting agricultural labours, &c. They fed him but poorly, but did not otherwise use him ill; and he allowed that the Toorkomans in general treat their slaves well.

His friends hearing of his captivity, raised three hundred reals for his ransom, and sent them by a merchant, who unfortunately died by the way, so that the money was lost. After three years he was carried to Khyvah for sale, where a merchant belonging to Bostam purchased him for six hundred and fifty reals, and brought him to Shahrood, where he was now begging for money to pay for his ransom. He remarked that at Khyvah by far the greater portion of the population consists of Persian captives, who are kept too much in awe by the immense deserts and armed Toorkomans, by whom they are surrounded, to make any attempt to escape.

With Abdoolla Beg there came also a young man who had been taken prisoner by these marauders only some months before, but who had been fortunate enough to make his escape from their hands, after a short detention. He gave the following account of himself, which, though doubtless true in part, bears in some parts a strong tinge of romance. — He was taken prisoner along with the greater part of a caravan, which was proceeding from Shahrood to Mushed, but which was surprized and plundered, a little way beyond Meyomeid, at a fountain called the Chushmah-e-Zeyder. They carried him, he says, twelve days' journey, to their encampment in the desert, where he was put to labour; but forming an attachment with his master's daughter (who met his advances more than half way), his situation became greatly ameliorated, and he was left much at liberty. In these circumstances he remained for three

months; after which, believing that he might be able to effect his escape, one day, when the father, with the greater part of the males, had gone to chappow, and the mother to pay a visit, he took the opportunity, and invited the young lady to walk in the neighbouring country. She, occupied, no doubt, with her own reflections and hopes, suffered him to inveigle her to a distance of fifteen or sixteen miles from the encampment; and, upon her then expressing a desire to return, he looked her full in the face, and replied, "*You* may go "back, indeed, but I shall return no more: may God protect "you!" — "What!" cried the lady, in a passionate fit of rage, "and "do you mean thus to leave me, after all your assurances of love, "and after carrying me so far from my home?" — The lover, on this explosion, did his best to pacify his mistress, and succeeded in calming her most violent transports: but, upon his again wishing her all happiness, and attempting to leave her, she declared her determination to accompany him in his flight, and another violent altercation began, which he, wisely reflecting that she would prove a serious incumbrance on the way, at last ended by threatening to put her to death, if she did not immediately desist and quit him. Frightened at his threats, she at last allowed him to depart, and he made the best of his way in the direction where he had been informed Shahrood lay. The lady, however, alarmed the camp on her return, and fifty horsemen mounted, and pursued his footsteps, which were traced to a rocky hill, the haunt of foxes and jackalls. In one of the holes of these animals he hid himself; and when his pursuers came up they approached his retreat so near, that he heard them observe to one another, "He certainly is not far off, for his "traces are plain to this hill:"—but he called on the names of God and of Allee, and the robbers were baffled.

When the Toorkomans had left the place, he continued his way fortunately without further interruption, for twelve days; during this time, he assured us, that his only sustenance was a small piece of bread which he had put in his pocket at the time of his flight, and snow, of which there was a sufficiency on the ground; he was also signally lucky in making his way almost straight to Shahrood.

He further informed us, that not long ago, and soon after his return from captivity, he was proceeding to Mushed in company with fifty Turks ; when at the same place, the Chusmah-e-Zeyder, they were attacked by a party of Toorkomans, who were lying in ambush there for caravans ; the Turks however repulsed them with considerable loss, and they finally took to flight. That when he was moving on with his party from the little mount where they had made their stand, he observed among the dead and the dying his old master the Toorkoman, who recognized him immediately, and called out "Ah, Ismael, is that you, you who left my house, and fled?" "Yes," replied Ismael, "it is myself, thanks be to God, I am now here." "Ah!" said the marauder, "why did you desert me? with you pros-"perity left my house, and ruin has come upon it; nothing has gone "well with me since you quitted my family; but now, for God's "sake, give a little water." "I will," said the hard-hearted Ismael; and going to a short distance he returned with a large stone, with which (he asserts) he dashed out the unfortunate Toorkoman's brains, and then rejoined his companions.

It is said, that these plundering tribes, hold the Turks, although of the same religious faith, in great fear and hatred, Abdoolla Beg spoke of their courage in the highest terms, and observed, that fifty Turks, if they could but gain a little eminence, would certainly beat off three hundred Toorkomans; at the same time he attributed to the latter great activity and courage; telling us, for our consolation, that neither our party, nor any caravan we were likely to muster, would have any chance of safety, in case of an encounter with them. The day passed in a feverish anxiety, listening to wild tales and indefinite reports, that were poured in upon us; and which I was quite inclined to listen to, as, although much, no doubt, was exaggerated, or false, the whole was yet illustrative of the character of the people, and the condition of the country.

On the 3d, several pilgrims came in from Mushed; they had neither seen nor heard of Toorkomans on the way; and they had met the caravan that had quitted Budusht on the 31st ult., in safety near Abbassabad.

I had a visit this morning from a very respectable man, called Hussun Jah Jermee (or of Jah Jerm, the village of his birth), who was now a merchant of Khyvah, having been taken prisoner when a boy of nine years old, travelling with a caravan thirty or forty miles from his native town: the alarm had been given in time, and the caravan being prepared for defence, had escaped being plundered; but the boy was accidentally taken, and carried to Khyvah. He was by no means ill treated, according to his own account, but they sold him with others in the common bazar, where he was purchased by the chief jeloodar of Mahomed Raheem Khan, the King; and he rose in the service of that officer, till in process of time he became the nazir or steward of his household. During this period, however, he had traded a little, and saved so much money, that he was enabled to purchase his own liberty, and set up as a merchant, in which career he was so fortunate as to become possessed of considerable wealth. His chief concerns lay between Khyvah and this place, and his time became chiefly occupied in making commercial journeys between them; his family was now settled at Khyvah, where he usually spends half the year. On this occasion he had brought with him no extensive adventure; a few loads of raw cow hides, and two captives (whom they call here aseers, and talk of as if they were a peculiar class of people, or of goods, so constantly are they referred to, and made the subject of trade or conversation) purchased at Khyvah, whom he was carrying to be ransomed by their friends.

The trade is carried on to a considerable extent; and while the practice of selling the captives taken in plundering expeditions shall continue, it is a trade of mercy *, for without such merchants to act

* It cannot justly be objected here (as in some other cases pretty similar), that these merchants by purchasing captives encourage their capture: this is not the case. The blame of that encouragement rests with the states of Bockhara and Khyvah, the sovereigns of which not only permit but encourage their subjects to purchase captives from the Toorkomans for the purposes of various labour, which the Oozbecks themselves seem not sufficient to perform. The merchants in question only purchase up a certain number of these captives, who would otherwise remain at these places in perpetual slavery; or they become middle men, between the Toorkomans and the bazars at these places; merely making their profit on the transit from the camp to the city. The degree of en-

as agents between the parties, and who as such enjoy a species of neutrality, many poor wretches who now regain their liberty would languish in perpetual bondage. Hussun informed me, that the profits on his trade might be calculated at about twenty per cent *, and I gathered from him a good deal of information regarding the countries in which he has lived, the substance of which is laid before the reader in the Appendix.

In the forenoon I paid a visit to Mahomed Saleh Khan, the governor of the district, who resides at a village about four miles distant, where he has built a neat mud fort. He received me with much kindness in his dewan-khaneh, a comfortable warm room, where he entertained me with tea and fruit, and held a long conversation with me on a variety of subjects; making particular enquiry as to the objects of my journey, and the nature of my several pursuits †, of which he had already heard: he was very inquisitive on the subject of Europe, and of England in particular, imagining, however, what I found was a common mistake even amongst the best informed people, that England was but a city of Feringheestan, or Europe. He put many questions about America ("*yengee dunia*," or the *new world*) and India, and wished to know what sort of inhabitants the former had, whether they were Mahometans or Christians; how they lived, what were their habits and customs, of what description was the country, and its productions. Of the latter he made enquiry as to the extent of territory in the English possession; and whether any, and how much, remained to the native powers. I discovered that he, in common with most of his countrymen, had taken up the idea that the British had gone to India with the premeditated intention of conquering the country; so, as the best mode I could devise for combating this impression, I gave, as

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couragement this holds out to the trade of making captives is very small, while that of the misery they are the means of alleviating and of sometimes wholly relieving, is very considerable indeed.

* His own expression was two tomauns in ten.

† Drawing, and taking astronomical observations, the latter had already obtained for me the reputation of being a munujoom, or astrologer.

well as I could, a short account of the rise and progress of the British power in India, showing, as I proceeded, that that nation had been *forced* into the measures by which she had acquired territorial possessions, instead of voluntarily adopting them.

He further enquired very curiously regarding the nature and doctrines of the Christian faith, and was desirous of contrasting it with the Mahometan religion insisting at the same time, that I should state my candid opinion of both. This is a very common topic of discourse upon such occasions; and they continually urge the stranger to state his private sentiments upon the most abstruse and difficult points both of doctrine and faith. But as little good to either party can ever be expected from such conversations, I always endeavoured to excuse myself, and waived the subject whenever it was possible; giving, as my apology, the comparatively imperfect knowledge I possessed of the language, which made me unfit to do justice to matters of such serious import; and upon this occasion, I was the more desirous to escape a controversy which might offend, as I saw persons in the room ready to take up the cause very warmly, in case of any opinion being given. Soon after I had sat down, a number of visitors had entered the room, attracted by the arrival of an European; and among them, an old blind man, brother to the Khan, whose eyes, with those of three other brothers, had been put out by order of Aga Mahomed Khan, in consequence of some rebellious movement, in which they were unfortunate. This man was particularly warm and zealous in defence of his faith, even before any attack was made upon it; and no good end could have been answered by combating the opinions, or endeavouring to disturb the faith of an old man, whose chief consolation, under one of the heaviest of human calamities, was probably in the exercise of, and belief in the truth of, his own religion.

I enquired of the Khan his opinion regarding the safety of the road, and whether any further particulars were known respecting the caravan that had been plundered. He said that it was but a small one, and that the attacking party consisted of sixty or seventy horsemen, but that he had received no intelligence of the other party of two

hundred, said to have also been on foot; and that he believed the road now to be perfectly safe, as the others had, in all probability, retired with the booty. He pressed me strongly to remain for the day, or even to take up my residence with him, where he said, I should be more comfortable than at Shahrood, until a caravan should assemble; but I excused myself, well knowing how little the civility of the host and the curiosity of his people would leave me at liberty to pursue my occupations. The Khan is a man of very pleasing appearance, and good humoured countenance, a fine florid complexion, and a thick black beard; his manners are kind and affable.

January 4th. Hopes were now entertained of speedily being released from Shahrood, as a number of pilgrims, and loaded camels, had come up, and the panic had greatly subsided; several persons, on their return from Mushed having reported, that nothing to create alarm had been seen upon the road.

I rode this forenoon to see a fountain, the water of which, according to tradition, has a communication with the river Zeinderood at Ispahan. A shepherd, it is said, who fed his flocks in this quarter of old, being one day oppressed with thirst, sought for water for some time without success; at last he observed a dog come dripping wet from a hole in the rock, and being thus induced to examine it, he saw a rill of water at a great depth; into which thrusting his staff, it accidentally dropt from his hand. Sometime afterwards, being in Ispahan, he recognised his own stick, although battered and bruised, among others for sale in the bazar; and upon enquiry he discovered that it had been found in the Zeinderood. The matter having come to the King's ears, he resolved to ascertain the truth of the report, by ordering some chopt straw to be thrown into this subterraneous fountain; and this having in due time made its appearance at the source of the Zeinderood, the fact that a communication existed between the two waters was presumed to be established. Upon this the king ordered the former to be closed up, lest mischief might be done to the inhabitants of Ispahan by ill-disposed people in Khorasān,

We were informed not only that the place could easily be recognized, but that the murmurs of water might be plainly heard

underground; but the result afforded an example of the inaccuracy of the information to be had in this country; for though furnished with a guide, said to be perfectly acquainted with every spot about the district, he could show nothing calculated to give colour to the tradition. There were, indeed, some traces of old buildings, one of which might have passed for the cell of a recluse, built in the niche of a perpendicular rock, and very difficult of access; but the only tradition regarding it was, that it contained a print of the hoof of Duldul, the sacred mule of Allee, of which, however, no trace was visible. At a little distance was said to be a similar impression of Imaum Reza's foot; but I was too well acquainted with what these Cudumgahs usually turned out to be, to waste my time in looking for them.

We saw, however, something of the country, and if we missed one (invisible) fountain, we saw another fine stream, called the Chushmahe jelallee, which issues from a hole cut in the bank, which with a long channel leading to it, has been excavated with great labour to a depth of sixty or seventy feet, to facilitate, and augment the current, showing the high value set upon any source of this indispensable requisite of cultivation in Persia. The king claims the property of this as of most other natural sources; that is to say, the assessment upon the land which it irrigates, is levied by means of this water, which is divided into two hundred wuzuns or measures, proportioned to its size, each wuzun being estimated as sufficient to irrigate land enough for one hundred mauns Tabreez, of seed, and letting at two hundred mauns of corn: the estimated return of fair land being ten for one, the assessment, by this mode is about equal to that which is commonly imposed throughout the country, or one fifth of the produce: and as it is founded upon the employment of that agent, which is not only necessary to, but which in general secures the success of agricultural operations, it may be deemed a tolerably equitable method of taxation. Most of the fountains and rivulets in this neighbourhood, including those we have already passed, are thus meted out into wuzuns. In the neighbourhood of Shahrood, however, and particularly in the valley of Bostam, there

are a good many cannauts, chiefly or wholly private property, and the land they irrigate pays to the king only the land-tax usual upon such occasions.

On the 5th I went to see the town of Bostam, which I had heard contained some curious old monuments. It is situated about three miles and a half north-east of Shahrood, in a valley surrounded by hills, and watered by a stream from the Elburz, which, with some cannauts, fertilizes the cultivation of several villages, and a large extent of gardens.

The town, enclosed by a wall furnished with numerous round towers, is about a mile and a half in circuit, but contains hardly any thing except ruins and small fields; its inhabitants, we were informed, do not amount to more than three or four hundred, it being in this respect inferior to most of the villages dependent upon itself. No very remote antiquity is attributed to this town*; it was founded, according to tradition, by a prince named Bostam Meerza, whose tomb is still extant in the place. There are two mosques founded in the reign, and by the order of Sooltaun Mahomed Khodabundeh, one in A. Heg, 699, and the other in 700. The former has a dome, the interior of which is richly decorated with plaster cut into figures, and sentences from the Koran, and the doors are very finely carved. The dome is cracked through in several places; but this, it is said, has been the case from time immemorial, and has never increased, which, with the preservation of the ornamental work, can only be attributed to the fine equal climate of the country. On the gate of this mosque, and on part of the ceiling of the dome, there are inscriptions which declare the mosque to have been built by Sanghōr Beg Abdool Roomee, by order of Secunder Sānee, Shahee-Irān wo Toorān, Mahomed Khodabundeh.

Annexed to the mosque there is a minaret, called the minār of Bayazeed, because it is asserted that if any one standing on the balcony at its top, commands it to shake in the name of Sheikh

* It is however mentioned in the Kholaussat-ul-akbar, as having been much damaged by an earthquake, A Heg. 242. (Vide Price's Hist. of Mahometanism, vol. ii. page 152.)

Bayazeed, the minār will immediately shake. The solution of which miracle is simply this; the minār, like the mosque, being constructed of excellent brick-work, but very slender, and having by some accident a slight inclination to one side, when it receives at its upper extremity the additional weight of a man, will vibrate very perceptibly if he puts himself into violent motion, and whether he calls on the name of Bayazeed or not. This vibratory movement is by no means indicative of decay; the building is sound and may still stand, as it has stood, for ages. It is between forty and fifty feet in height, and is ornamented with brick fillagree work, like those at Damghān and Semnoon. I know of no good reason for connecting this minaret with the name of Sheikh Bayazeed (a celebrated Sooffee saint, of whom more will be said below), unless it be that the tomb of that remarkable person is near to its base.

Not far from this mosque (just across a small court), and apparently cotemporary with it, is the mausoleum of Bostam Meerza, in form not unlike the common imaumzadehs of the country; a square building, with a top like an extinguisher upon it, that once was covered with green tiles. It contains nothing inside worthy of remark; but in a vault below, where the bones of the meerza repose, there is, as we were assured, a body which has been there longer than any tradition records; the flesh, nails, hair, &c. of which have kept perfectly entire and uncorrupted, although quite dried up. I would gladly have taken a look at this phenomenon, but the vault was closed up with earth, and a body had been deposited there but forty days before, which there was no reason to believe had shared in this incorruptibility, so that the people were unwilling to open it; nor did I think it at all prudent to awaken unfavourable suspicions by too much anxiety on the subject.

Close to the mosque, another mausoleum has been erected over the remains of one Caussim, the son of Imaum Jaffer Sauduck; it resembles in form and outward appearance that of Bostam Meerza; but the interior is kept in good order and carpeted. The tomb itself is covered with a square frame of wood and cloth, with silver balls at the corner and on the top. There were formerly several

candlesticks and other pieces of plate belonging to the shrine, but the plunderers of Khorasān took them away many years ago, and the establishment is too poor to replace them.

The memory of Imaumzadeh Caussim is held in considerable veneration in these parts, and his mausoleum is a place of pilgrimage resorted to by the neighbouring inhabitants; but I could learn little respecting him beyond the particulars of his death, which prove that he was contemporary with Bayazeed. The catastrophe of these two saints is thus related: they were travelling together, and had taken up their abode for the night at a place half-way between Bostam and Shahrood. While taking their evening repast, Caussim observed an *ant* upon the table-cloth, which (as he remarked to Bayazeed) must have been brought against its will from their last stage; a cruel and tyrannical act; and he therefore desired him forthwith to carry back the insect to the place whence it had been brought. Bayazeed obeyed his pious friend; and during the time he was absent, night having come on, the inhabitants of Shahrood and of Bostam saw upon the road between the places a great light, which was found upon enquiry to proceed from the person of the imaumzadeh, in sign of heaven's approbation of the humane sentiments he had felt towards the forlorn insect. The affair, however had an unhappy result; for the men of both places being attracted to the spot where this phenomenon was to be seen, fell to fighting for the person of the imaumzadeh, and seven of the Shahroodees were killed. Upon which one of the opposite party, shocked at the slaughter, and desirous of effectually putting an end to it, caught up a spade, or some such instrument, and knocked out the saint's brains with it. This settled the dispute, and both parties having come to their senses, took up their dead and marched off. The Shahroodees buried their fellow villagers on the spot where they fell, which is marked by a small hillock, still called "Heft-tun," or the seven bodies. The Bostamees took up the body of the dead imaumzadeh, and carrying it to their own town interred it there.

Meantime Bayazeed returned, and learning what had happened, reproached the men of Bostam so violently with their crime; that

they lost patience, and swore that he should share the same fate if he did not hold his peace; but Bayazeed, instead of being silenced, dared them to the deed, saying, that now his friend was murdered, *he* had no wish to survive him; they took him at his word, and, falling upon him, stoned him to death, and heaped over him for a tomb the very stones with which they had beaten out his brains; and very sufficient they were for the purpose, certainly, large, round, and heavy; but whether they performed this office for the saint or not, they form a mound of fourteen or fifteen feet square, just outside the entrance to Imaumzadeh Caussim's tomb.

Bayazeed was a derwish, or sooffee, of great celebrity in these parts; the time he flourished in may be inferred from his having been contemporary with the son of the sixth Imaum, but I have not any certain information regarding the exact period of either his birth or death. As a freethinker he was held in abhorrence by most rigid Mussoolmans; but he had a very numerous attendance of devoted disciples, and many miracles are attributed to him. Among the Toorkomans, with whom he lived a great deal, he was regarded as a saint of great power, and his influence over these rude tribes was very extensive. Among other extravagant stories that are related of this person, it is said that in his fits of intoxication (which were frequent, from the use of wine and Bhang, in both of which he freely indulged), as well as in the extatic dreams to which these enthusiasts are subject, he was used to speak of himself as the divinity; at which blasphemy, when his disciples reported it to him after his recovery, he was or pretended to be so shocked, that he desired they would punish, and try to awaken, or even put him to death, in case of the recurrence of so heinous a crime. This, however, his followers long refused to do, but at last they yielded to his solemn injunctions, and when next he became rapt, and assumed the name and attributes of the Almighty, they drew the knives, and stabbed their master in various parts of the body, until he fell down senseless: but, on recovering from his fit, what was their astonishment to find, that the wound which each respectively had inflicted was transferred to his own body from that of the saint.

To return to the ruins of Bostam. The tombs and mosque just described are situated in a ruined square; the entrance to which is by a gate of brick, ornamented with lacquered tiles, opposite to which there is a screen of similar design and execution; the remains of a large mud building, probably intended for the use of the khadums * of the shrine, lie before it, and those of a medressa, built by Shahrokh, the son of Timoor, are on one side.

The other mosque is a plain brick building with a singular tower attached of the same materials, but of admirable workmanship, the greater part of the walls being as fresh as the day they were finished. The dome was probably covered with lacquered tiles, but these have fallen off, and the external coat of the dome is more injured than any other part of the building. The shape of this tower is circular; but the walls are curiously cut into a succession of salient and re-entering angles, like the roller of a machine for crimping linen, and the whole appearance is remarkable. The khadums informed me that it was attributed to a daughter of Mahomed Khodabundeh; but an inscription around one of the doors of the Mehrāb, was very legible, declaring the date A. H. 700, and that it had been built by Mahomed ibn Hoossain, ibn Abou Talib ul Mohundis, by order of Sooltaun Khan Cāsān†, Mahomed Secunder Sānee Shahee-Iran wo Toorāun. The khadums and moollahs were all civil, respectful and attentive, not only giving me free permission to enter every where, but affording every facility and information, so that I was enabled to make sketches of both places.

I may observe that at about a third of a mile from the town are to be seen the ruins of an old fort of the same description as those of Lasgird and Deh moollah, which, with some other appearances, would lead to the belief, that Bostam may have held this situation previous to the establishment of the present town.

* Khadums, servants.

† Cazan, or Ghazan Khan, was the fourth Moghul sovereign of Persia, in descent from Chengiz Khan: he died A. Heg. 703, and was succeeded by his brother, known by the appellation of Sooltaun Mahomed Khodabundeh; therefore the dates would imply that these buildings were both erected by Ghazan Khan, as seems to be signified by this inscription.

Upon our return to Shahrood, we found that a number of pilgrims and travellers had arrived from Tehrān; so that a caravan fit to cross the desert was likely to be assembled in a day or two; the safety of the road also continued to be confirmed, by the arrival from Mushed of several parties, who had met with nothing calculated to create alarm on the way.

A gholaum of the prince's had also arrived from Mushed, by a circuitous route, who confirmed the accounts given by Abdoolla Beg, of the disturbed condition of Khorasān; he mentioned, that when the prince heard of the capture of his general by Seyed Mahomed Khan, he resolved to send a plundering expedition into the neighbourhood of Kelaat, in the hope of taking prisoners some of that chieftain's family, so as to place in his own hands the means of treating for the liberty of his favourite; or, at all events, to indemnify himself in some degree for the loss and dishonour he had sustained. But while his preparations were yet on foot, he received a letter from Mahomed Khan Karaoee, strongly advising him to desist. That chief observed, that Seyed Mahomed Khan was *his* friend, and that he had acted in the matter of surprizing the Sirdar, at the instigation of himself, and other chiefs; that therefore, should the prince make any demonstration on the side of Kelaat, let him beware, for these chieftains would send a chappow which should plunder Mushed. If the prince were willing to take counsel, he had better let Seyed Mahomed Khan and Kelaat alone; for, no good could be done there; but that he should send to Tehrān, and procure from the king the release of the writer's brother, the father* of Nujjiff Allee Khan, of Boojnoord, and several other persons (indicated by name), two of whom were confined at Sheerauz, the rest at Tehrān; that when these persons were set at liberty, Abbas Koolee Khan and his companions should also be released, but that till then they should be held as hostages for their security.

It is probable from the sequel of this adventure (which will be hereafter related), that part, at least, of the gholaum's information was

* I suspect some error in this; I do not believe that Nujjiff Allee Khan's father was alive; the gholaum might easily mistake.

incorrect, but its consistence with the general spirit of Asiatic policy gave to all the strongest tinge of truth; and part of it at least was so, for Seyed Mahomed Khan, as well as Mahomed Khan Karaoee, were, no doubt, extremely desirous of liberating themselves from every remaining tie of enforced loyalty; and freeing from the power of the king such of their relatives as were held in pledge for their own good conduct. The prince, at all events, took the advice he had received, so far as to suspend his attack upon Seyed Mahomed; and he remained at Mushed, uncertain how to act, and unable to make any useful exertion, awaiting the result of his communication with the king.

During the 6th so many persons arrived, that hopes were entertained of being able to depart without more delay; and we prepared to quit Shahrood for Budusht on the following day.

The town of Shahrood, although originally far from being so important a place as Bostam once was, is said to have equal claims to antiquity with it; but their fates in later years have been very different; for the latter has gone entirely to decay, while the former has attained a degree of prosperity very unusual in this part of the world: this may chiefly be attributed to situation. Bostam is in a valley, open indeed, and upon the road to Mazunderan, but out of that which leads directly from Tehrān to Mushed, into which most of the other high roads lead. Bostam has likewise suffered considerably by the contending parties that have divided the country, having been plundered by Toorkomans, Affghauns, and Khorasānees in their turns. Shahrood has escaped this fate in former times, perhaps by its lesser pretensions to riches; and of later years by being less exposed in common with the rest of the country, while its situation upon the great road to Mushed, and at a point where those from Yezd, Herat, Tubbus, Toorsheez, Astrabad, and Mazunderan, all meet, has given it most important commercial advantages; for though it has little trade of its own, it thus becomes the theatre of large mercantile dealings, and an entrepôt for the produce of all the surrounding, and many distant countries.

The fort of Shahrood has a good wall, with a ditch, and towers of strength sufficient to resist any effort that can be made upon it by

Persian force: the town, although less perfectly defended, is quite equal to repel any force that cannot remain long before it; and the fort offers an asylum in times of serious danger, for the wealth and property which its inhabitants may not wish to trust in the town. The bazar, though irregular, is well supplied with necessaries, as well as with a great variety of goods. A large extent of fine well inclosed gardens surrounds the town, and there is much rich cultivation attached not only to it, but to several large and well peopled villages in the neighbourhood. The population is stated at from four to five thousand souls, including two thousand toffunchees, kept up for the defence of the district.

The assessment levied on the district of Shahrood, including Bostam, Mogham, and their dependencies, amounts, as I learnt from the chief meerza of Mahomed Saleh Khan, to 2500 tomauns in money, and 2600 khurwārs of grain in kind; which calculating wheat at eight mauns for a real, amounts to something more than 4000 tomauns, or together 6500 tomauns, and this, as I have understood includes the expence of the toffunchees, of which 1000 are of the Arab tribes, the rest being persons resident in the town. This assessment is allowed to be light, and it is pleasing to state that Mahomed Saleh Khan, the present governor, is a just and moderate man, much beloved by the people under his charge. He entertains 100 horsemen of his own, but there are no mounted troops maintained by the town, or district.

The climate of Shahrood, if we may judge of it from our short experience, as well as from the report of sojourners, is temperate: the thermometer placed outside the house, in the little court before it, stood pretty equally in the morning, before sunrise, at 25° to 26°; at noon, in the sun, it rose to 60° or 64°, or when there was little or no sun, to 50°, falling gradually in the afternoon to 45°, and in the evening to 38°. Snow remained lying in the low places, on the streets, and behind walls, where the sun did not act powerfully, in large masses, undergoing no dissolution; and ice continued in the shade all day. In the plain of Bostam there was plenty of snow; all the north-western exposures of the hills were covered, and those higher and further removed were thickly clad. The farmers were

sowing wheat and barley, of which a great deal was already above ground, and their tillage was very good.

The height of Shahrood above the sea, estimated by the temperature at which water boils (viz. 205⅓ of Fahrenheit), may approach to 3300 feet. I tried Leslie's hygrometer once or twice, when the air felt tolerably dry, but it only fell to 30°, which may be attributed to the moisture with which the air was loaded by the dissolving snow, for the climate is naturally very dry.

The necessaries of life are cheap at Shahrood: some idea may be formed of the expence of living from the following facts. The cost of meat, rice, butter, milk in plenty, bread and eggs, with firewood enough to dress the whole, for four persons, was under one real, or eighteen-pence sterling a-day. The keep of four horses for seven days was but nine reals (about fourteen shillings), and this at an unfavourable time of the year, and part of the outlay being in the hands of a servant who was far from frugal, and not over honest. Bread at this time sold at the rate of 36 lbs. English for a real, barley at seven mauns, or about 50 lbs. for the same sum. Dried fruits were also cheap, and other things bore proportion. Firewood was dear, seventeen mauns, or about 120 lbs. for a real: but that is an expensive article all over Persia.

Had I been desirous of acquiring celebrity as a physician, I might have had sufficient opportunity of practising at this place; for, without the least intimation of such a wish on my part, I had numerous visits of invalids, anxious to have the advice of a European on their several cases. There were few, however, in which I, or any one, could have rendered much service; as formerly, most of them were of a chronic or imaginary description, that would have defied the best medical skill. A lean and cadaverous person was desirous to become fat, another had a son liable from his birth to fits, a third had lost the use of his limbs by a paralytic shock, a fourth by a shot through the loins from a Toorkoman matchlock; one had a rupture of twenty years' standing, another a chronic rheumatism of little less duration. The chief secretary of the governor also came, ostensibly to pay me the compliment of a visit, but in reality to consult me.

He said he had but one wife, who had born him ten children, all of whom were dead except one daughter, whose health was so bad, that he saw himself likely to be left without heirs in his old age; his wife, he allowed, was old like himself, and had long ceased to indulge the hope of presenting him with any addition to his family; but his wish was, that I should give him some efficient advice in this distressing situation, so that he might not descend childless to the tomb. His daughter's case was not so hopeless, and I could not help suggesting that he was more likely to promote his own object, by providing carefully for her health (to which end I suggested some precautions), and by trusting to Providence for her preservation, than by any advice that I could give him.

As imagination certainly had much to do with the complaints of several of my patients, and as Asiatics cannot comprehend how any one can recover without taking physic, I had recourse, in several instances, to bread pills, coloured, and flavoured with peppermint, as accessories to the attention recommended to diet, exercise, and other simple precautions; and I make no doubt that considerable benefit might arise to many of my patients, if they persevered in the rules laid down; all of which good effect would be attributed to my valuable medicine. It was, indeed, saying a good deal for the healthiness of the place, that though it was perfectly well known I was in town, not more than ten or a dozen cases of real ailments were brought to me, out of a population of four thousand souls, besides the inhabitants of the adjacent villages; and not one of these was afflicted with any acute or temporary illness, such as might have been relieved by the assistance of a mere passer-by.

On the 7th of January we left Shahrood, and took up our quarters at Budusht, in expectation that the caravan now assembled would set off the same night. Budusht is a fortified village, three miles and a half east of Shahrood, containing not above an hundred houses. It has no regular bazar, but furnishes corn and straw for the cattle, and bread, meat, milk, and some of the most prominent necessaries, for travellers. These lodge at a fine large caravanserai, built by Shah Abbas, about a gun-shot from the village, capable of afford-

ing accommodation to a very large number, both of men and cattle.

At the time of our arrival it had been determined, by the greater number of travellers in the caravanserai, that we should load at midnight, and set off at such a time as might enable us to have passed a considerable portion of the most dangerous part of the road by the dawn of morning; and, according to this understanding, every thing was prepared. But those who have to do with Asiatics in general, with Persian camel-drivers and muleteers in particular, must never rely on the strength of any resolution whatever, however reasonable it may appear at the time it is formed.

Till seven in the evening every thing went on well: at that hour a meeting of the chief persons on the spot was held, to determine on the arrangements necessary for the conduct of the caravan; and, while discussing these, a question arose, it is not easy to say how, whether or not the caravan should break ground *at all* this night, or *delay till the next?* No reason, good or bad, was assigned for the proposed delay; it appeared to be merely the effect of fear and indolence combined; but, alarmed at what was going on, I sent the meerza to combat the mischievous spirit that was rising, by representing the danger of affording time, by delay, for the Toorkomans to receive intelligence of our intended departure, and reassemble, instead of proceeding when we had reason to know that the road was clear. This gave a new turn to their ideas; but there was no chief to take a lead, and improve the favourable disposition. Several of them proposed that I should myself assume this important office, perhaps merely because I had the strongest party, and the best horses; but I declined the uncomfortable distinction, on the plea of being too little acquainted with their customs for such a charge; being perfectly aware so many of the *faithful* would never brook the command of an infidel European, or pay him either the necessary respect or obedience: but I begged to offer my advice, and that they received with much good humour, and even deference. At last, from among four aspirants they chose one, Hadjee Abdoolla, a native of Cochoon, as cāfilah bashee (chief of the caravan);

and he being of the party inclined to move, it was at last decided that we should set off a little after eight, instead of waiting till twelve, that night.

The indolent faction, however, still continued to urge difficulties, and suggested the prudence of waiting for a considerable armed party, said not to be far off; but seeing that this had no effect, they had recourse to another expedient. They tutored a man to come, as from the village, with the pretended intelligence that a messenger had arrived with information from another village of five hundred Toorkòman horse having been seen upon the road. This had the effect of creating a momentary alarm; another council was called, and though the party inclined to march was still powerful, they were gradually overruled, and our departure was deferred till the morrow. Thus the fears or interested motives of a few selfish individuals created a delay that might have proved fatal to the whole caravan.

On the 8th it was easy to see that there was no hearty intention of moving entertained; a general uneasy restlessness prevailed, and about four o'clock a fresh rumour was spread that no less than *two thousand* Toorkomans had been seen, not far from Meyomeid, and were now upon the road. Had reflection or reason been the order of the day, the palpable extravagance of the report would have neutralized its effect; but we had not reasonable creatures to deal with, and the effect was ludicrously surprizing. Every thing was confusion and bustle in a moment; and, from the agitation that prevailed, one might have imagined that the Toorkomans were actually at the gate of the caravanserai. I sent Mahomed Allee to the village for further intelligence, and he came back with a long face, and so silly a confirmation of the absurd tale, that I was quite out of patience, and flatly told him, in presence of the whole party, that I did not believe one word he said; for that, if there had been the slightest foundation for such an alarm, the governor, who could not fail to know it, would have instantly sent to put the caravan upon its guard. Piqued at my taunts, Mahomed Allee affected the greatest zeal, and offered to mount one of my horses, and set off at once for Meyomeid, and to bring back true intelligence of the state of the road.

I replied, that I neither desired to expose him nor my horses on so useless an errand, but that he might mount, and go to the village of the Khan (about four miles off), and learn from him the truth.

Mahomed Allee returned in two hours and a half, which time was passed by all in considerable anxiety; he brought me a note from the governor, in which that nobleman declared, that no such intelligence had reached him, although he had twenty-four horsemen out upon the scout, and that he did not consider the report entitled to the slightest credit. From several circumstances I had myself observed, as well from remarks overheard by the meerza, I felt convinced that the khan's report, however favourable, would produce no strong effect; because it was clear that certain interested persons had resolved on delaying the departure of the caravan at all events; and this was rendered still more apparent, by the mode in which they received the khan's note: some affected to doubt his authority altogether; others accused Mahomed Allee of a premeditated lie; and others said, that it was no matter what the truth might be, *they* would not start that night; but, on the following evening when every thing should be well prepared, and the caravan reinforced with other arrivals, then, oh! then, it would be a fortunate time, and highly proper to march. I sent Mahomed Allee, and the meerza, once more among the rest, to endeavour to counteract this vexatious disposition to delay, and it would be tedious to relate all the fluctuations that agitated the councils of the night. I prevailed on one party to load, and we had commenced ourselves, when one of our camel drivers suddenly ran restive, and stopt us for a time, which gave a fatal check; the moment was lost, and the march finally deferred for the night.

I cannot express how mortifying it was, thus to see precious time fruitlessly consumed by the intrigues of some wretches, who having affairs of their own to transact, made no scruple to sacrifice to their private convenience the interests, perhaps the lives, of so many of their countrymen. They even aggravated the injury, by affecting moderation in their triumph, soothing those who chafed at it with an insulting air of patronage and commiseration, as if they pitied the

wrong-headed fools whom they had thwarted for their good; and praising the prudence of those who had ceased to grumble, as if they believed them convinced of their folly, and contented to resign themselves into better governance. We discovered, indeed, that besides the selfish intrigues of these individuals, we had to contend with the concealed machinations of the villagers, who, finding in the consumption of so large a caravan, an excellent market for their corn and straw, were by no means unwilling to yield their aid in delaying its departure.

It is indeed curious to see how little time is appreciated by Asiatics in general; even should their object be of the last importance, they will yield for the moment to the slightest obstacle, and put off from day to day, with the greatest apathy, a consummation which one strong effort might effect. To most of our assemblage delay was a positive loss, for there were among them many merchants, and almost every one, pilgrim or camel-driver, had his little venture, to which he looked for advantage; yet they all submitted to be thus cajoled, and resigned themselves almost without a struggle to the injurious influence of their false companions.

On the morning of the 9th all talked boldly; some were for loading at noon, others in the evening, but none spoke of exceeding that; nay, I had but just returned about eleven o'clock, from shooting a few pigeons to serve as food in the desert, when the word was given to load, and I had hardly a moment left to swallow some breakfast, before every thing was packed up, and some of the divisions were filing out of the caravanserai, when again the demon spoke and we were baffled. Evening became the word again, but as I had observed it was always towards night that false and terrifying reports took effect, I was very desirous that we should break ground while the minds of men were active and vigorous, and unaffected either by the indolence or visionary terrors which the decline of day more or less creates.

Our caravan, by this time, consisted of eight or ten distinct parties. One of Yezdees, forty camels and a strong party of men, petty merchants, and camel-drivers; another of fifteen or sixteen well

armed Turks; another of Subzawārees returning home; a large party from Muzeenoon; a fifth from Resht; a sixth from Mazunderan, both carrying dead bodies to Mushed, and well armed, though great cowards; a seventh of Herātees: in all they amounted to about one hundred and fifty men, and the same number of camels. Of these, the first mentioned parties were always desirous to move, and it was to them we generally applied for assistance, in resisting those who proposed delay; but I observed that my own servant, Mahomed Allee, had now, without assigning any reason, joined the latter, and brought round to his opinion the Yezdees and the Turks. Extremely indignant at this perverseness, I was meditating how most effectually to counteract his treacherous conduct, when the meerza, exerting a spirit I did not believe he possessed, fell upon him, reproached him severely for what he had done, ordered him immediately to get all things ready and loaded, and then went to rouse the other parties into action. Mahomed Allee sulkily replied that the plan was a bad one, that the meerza was no judge of such matters; *he* might go on if he chose, but neither himself nor the other servants would stir. This insolence decided me; I called Mahomed Allee, rebuked him sharply for his faithless and disrespectful behaviour, of which I assured him he should one day or other feel the effects, and ordered him to get the horses saddled and the camels loaded without further delay. Even to myself he behaved so insolently, that I was forced to employ the most determined measures, both in word and action, to reduce him to quietness, if not to obedience and respect. I then went to the Turks, Yezdees, and Subzawārees, upbraided them with paying attention to the words of a dishonest servant, assured them that I was myself determined to start, and urged them to load. This had the desired effect; when our party had loaded, and were followed by the Muzeenoonees, the whole caravanserai speedily got into motion, for no one wished to be left behind; even the most active of the opposition loaded, and, after some difficulty and loss of time, the whole mass began to move, arranging itself into its several parties; first the Muzeenoonees; then our party with some stragglers, followed by our friends the Turks; then the Herātees, Yezdees, and the rest.

We all proceeded to the banks of a small stream, about two miles from the village, where a halt was called, to allow the laggers to close up. Here we remained about an hour, and after every one had come up, there was a question of moving onwards; when some one exclaimed that a horseman of the governor's had just arrived, with orders to stop the departure of the cāfilah, as the Toorkomans were certainly in motion. This rumour had the usual effect; it spread like fire in gunpowder, the whole caravan was panic-struck; a buz of alarm was heard throughout the mass for a few minutes, and then some enquiry was set on foot for the messenger of these evil tidings; but he was no where to be found; the vision that had scared us was gone, — gone they said to a distant village, to warn them of the danger; but the mischief was done; the alarm was complete.

Still, however, we had but halted; and the question was now put, "Shall we proceed in the face of these formidable phantoms, or return baffled to the village?" Those who were persuaded of the falsity of the report, few indeed in number, still urged the former step; but it was strongly opposed by the timid; and after great loss of time, and much bootless discussion, the elders proposed that the decision of the question should be submitted to the will of God, to be declared by a mode of divination resembling the "Sortes Virgilianæ," of which the Mahometans are very fond; namely, opening the Korān and deciding on the course to be pursued in any doubtful case, by the meaning of such text as may first present itself to view. This was instantly agreed to on all hands, the book was produced from the girdle of a moollah in company, and all stood suspended in anxiety for the event. The answer was pronounced by the moollahs to be *un*favourable to our proceeding; and, in an instant, the whole cāfilah of more than an hundred and fifty camels, and an equal number of men, like a flock of pigeons at sight of a hawk, had turned their faces, and were in full retreat toward the village, at a far more rapid pace than that with which they advanced; the very camels seemed to have caught the panic of their owners, and moved swifter back to this haven of safety.

I was so disgusted and indignant at this shameful retreat, that I resolved, if it were possible, to proceed at all hazards, rather than return to the village. I went back, and communicated this my resolution to those who had comported themselves most boldly, exerting myself to rouse their energies, but all in vain; those who before had listened, at least with respect, now, that heaven itself, as they conceived, forbade the step, paid not the smallest attention to me, except to say that I too had far better take warning, and follow the rest. With some difficulty I extricated my party from the retreating torrent, and halting them, called a council of war; for it was not very easy to decide upon the best course to pursue. I gave no credit to the idle reports that had prevailed, nor did I fear the consequences of proceeding for, myself: but I was not so confident either of the justice or expediency of thus exposing six or eight other persons who would be ruined for life, if any accident of the nature we dreaded were to happen, and that such were of frequent occurrence was but too certain. I did all in my power to elicit from my people their real feelings upon the subject, but it would not do; the camel drivers declared themselves ready to proceed, and my servants, although obviously alarmed, said they would be entirely guided by me. The chief camel driver observed, that he did not think there was any great risk in the first day's journey; but that the two next were extremely dangerous, and he stipulated, that in case we were detained at Meyomeid, I should pay for the subsistence of his camels, as it would be unsafe to pasture them in the deserts; to this, as being but reasonable, I agreed, and, with a "Bismillah" or two, on we went.

Our course was by no means free of anxiety, however, and we kept a sharp lookout on all sides. We had not gone two miles before we were aware of five horsemen at a distance, who seemed to be approaching us from the low ground in the valley to our right. On reconnoitering them with my glass, I discovered that they were well armed and mounted men, at about a mile and a half distant; from whence they came we could not say, but upon looking at the declivity of the hill above the valley, we observed several other moving

things of a suspicious appearance, but too distant to be made distinctly out. The five were soon joined by two more; these were then increased to nine, and several detached horsemen were observed scattered about. This became alarming, for nothing friendly was to be looked for from that quarter; and I called upon the Sarwāns* to give their opinions regarding them: they agreed, that in any thing coming from the desert we could only expect enemies, and that these might probably be the advanced guard of a larger body. We, however, continued our way, watching their motions with a jealous eye; as, if they did not increase in number, I considered our own party, well armed as we were, as fully equal to repulse their attack.

In a little time, we observed the whole body join for awhile, as if for consultation, and then hold their course direct towards us. Upon this the sarwān cried out immediately, "They are enemies, they are "undoubtedly enemies; in the name of God, let us return!" and certainly, when we considered that the whole track before, and on each side of us was a desert, without a road leading to any inhabited quarter, except that on which we then trod, it seemed almost impossible that these people could be any other than the foes we dreaded; while it was equally improbable that so small a band of Toorkomans would show themselves so near the village, without a stronger force at hand; to commence, therefore, our journey over the dangerous waste, marked as we must have been, on the verge of nightfall, would have been extreme imprudence, and as the people were now in great alarm, with deep mortification I consented to return to the village. For some time the horsemen continued to approach us; but, after a little, they once more halted, as if to consult; and, almost certain that they meant to charge us, we got ready to receive them; but after a few minutes they moved slowly off towards the hills, leaving us to regain the village at our leisure. Such was the success of our efforts to inspire a Persian cāfilah with courage to cross this formidable desert, and it convinced me that

* Sarwāns, camel-drivers.

there was nothing now to be done but to wait with patience, until events should of themselves bring on the period of departure.

The 10th dawned without affording much hope, although some of the most reasonable talked of choosing a Reish Suffeed* of their own, and proceeding at all events, inviting me to accompany them; but I had now too much experience to trust greatly to their resolutions.

During the forenoon, as it was said that some appearances of travellers were to be seen in the direction of Meyomeid, I went with my telescope to the roof of the caravanserai to ascertain the truth; a crowd gathered around me while thus employed, expressing great solicitude to know what was to be seen, and disgusted as I had been with their cowardice, I thought it no harm to amuse myself with it. Assuming, therefore, a countenance of alarm, I turned to the meerza, and in a low confidential tone, but loud enough to be heard by the bystanders, exclaimed, "that a dreadful sight was to be seen! twenty "persons advancing with rapidity, all giants of at least twenty yards "high, riding on flying dragons, from whose mouths issued flames of "fire, and lightnings from their eyes." Instead of comprehending my drift at once, they all evinced the strongest symptoms of terror, turning to each other, as if for counsel in their extremity; and I am persuaded that the farce might have been carried on much longer, had not the meerza broken out into an incontrollable fit of laughter, and I myself could retain my grave face no longer: then they slunk away, one by one, looking foolishly enough; while the meerza called them all the contemptuous names he could find words for, and turned from them with scorn; indeed they confessed the justice of our reproaches, and very fairly agreed that they had merited all the contempt with which they had been treated.

But contempt had no more effect than entreaty or command. Reports arrived as usual, and with the usual consequences; but as I had ceased to hope, I felt but little disappointment. One reflec-

* Reish Suffeed, or "white beard," a term commonly applied to any superior chosen for his age and experience.

tion, however, gave me some uneasiness. A story had been related to me of a certain Indian nawāb, who had come to Mushed on his way to Kerbela; and that while halting in the former city, certain agents of the Toorkomans had given notice to the tribes, of the time for his leaving it; upon which five hundred horsemen had mounted to surprize him; and the prize only escaped their hands, in consequence of the courage of a few well armed men in the caravan, who repulsed the plunderers in every attack, with loss. If then it be true (and there is too much reason to believe that it is so), that the Toorkomans have secret agents in the towns where caravans collect, to give notice of their strength, value, and period of marching, it certainly was not unreasonable to apprehend, not only that careful intelligence would be given them of the intended march of an European gentleman (always presumed to possess much wealth), but that every endeavour would be made to delay his departure, until the means of intercepting him should have been assured. This seemed so feasible a mode of accounting for the continual efforts made to delay our march, that I thought it worth while to ride over the next morning, and call upon the friendly governor, state my grounds of alarm, and request him, should he deem it expedient so to do, to give me an escort of five or six horsemen, with which I would depart, whether accompanied by the caravan or not.

Accordingly, on the morning of the eleventh, I rode towards the village, and met the governor coming towards Budusht, attended by twelve or fourteen horsemen; he told me that a sowar* of his had actually been chased in by some eight or ten of the Toorkomans; and that he had himself received a letter from Nujjiff Allee Khan of Boojnoord, informing him that a thousand had taken horse upon a plundering expedition, although their course had not been ascertained. The Khan himself was going to Goorjee, a village five fursungs off, upon the frontiers of the district, where he looked to learn the truth. Such being the aspect of affairs, he

* Sowar, or horseman.

advised me by no means to think of moving; adding that he had been very uneasy in the belief that I had already set out. He tried, however, to set my mind at ease, as to the nature or consequences of our detention, telling me that he did not believe there existed any intelligence with the tribes, or that the reports that occasioned the prolonged delay had originated in the causes which I had suggested. I accompanied the Khan to Budusht, and took leave of him, extremely mortified at the prospect thus opening upon us of further and indefinitely prolonged detention.

While, however, we were brooding over these unlucky events, a little while after, certain horsemen came in from the Mushed road, and reported it not only safe and tranquil, but gave notice of the approach of a large caravan, which had passed unmolested, so that we might pursue our way in all confidence. We were yet rejoicing over these contradictions to the gloomy reports of the morning, when three horsemen were descried coming from the northward, and soon recognised as those who had been sent upon the scout by the Khan; and upon enquiry from these, we found that the supposed Toorkomans, were horsemen from Meyomeid, who seeing a man dogging them believed *him* to be an enemy, and so gave chase accordingly; thus each party was deceived by their own fears.

Thus the greater part of the report which had induced the Khan to take the field was neutralized: the clouds of danger and distrust that had brooded over us in the morning in great measure dispelled, and the courage of the caravan began in consequence to rise fast; nothing now was heard but bold words; "When shall we load?" "Will *you* set off to-night?" "Will you go with *us*." "Inshallah! Inshallah!" "Bismillah! Bismillah!" "When *shall* we load?" I said nothing, but determined to load and march, without a word, at sunset. I had but sat down to make the needful arrangements, when I was informed that the Khan was coming to visit me; and before I could get my little cell in order to receive him, he walked in. He not only confirmed the mistake which his horseman had made in regard to the travellers from Meyomeid, but informed me also that the Toorkomans reported by Nujjiff Allee Khan to be on the chappow had been accounted for; that they were of the

Tuckeh tribe, and had gone to plunder a Gocklan settlement, which they had destroyed, after killing fifty or sixty of the inhabitants, and making as many more of them prisoners; and that they had retreated with their booty as rapidly as they came. "Therefore," said the Khan, "the road is now clear; and I advise you, *Inshallah*, "to be off this night." He staid but to smoke one calleeoon, and after pressing me to become his guest upon my return, he commended me to the protection of God, and left me to my preparations.

Nine o'clock having arrived without a word of loading, I made a stir, and sent for the camel drivers, who came lazily, and expressed their wish not to load until others had commenced. Different opinions still prevailed in the caravanserai, and the desire for rest naturally felt by men snugly lodged in a cold night, was evidently operating, so that very decided measures were necessary. The Yezdees gave the first impulse by loading and moving out of the caravanserai; and thus strengthened, we also persisted, but so dilatory were our camel-men, that we did not move out before ten o'clock. The moon had now risen in great splendor, and lighted up the brown plain, which was now dotted by the strings of camels, mules and horses, as the different parties filed out in long succession, towards the place of rendezvous.

The departure and march of a considerable cāfilah under circumstances like ours, and when under tolerable guidance, is a picturesque and interesting, if not a gay and splendid object; the various parties file out under the orders of the cāfilah-bāshee, and take their places in the procession with perfect order and regularity; the whole halt a few miles from the town or village, to give the stragglers time to come up; the Toffunchees on foot are usually mustered in front, the camels are gathered into as compact a body as the nature of the ground, or the road will admit of; the unarmed foot passengers move in the centre, where they are protected; the armed horsemen are placed on the flanks, rear, or a-head; and several are detached to look out, at some distance, on all sides, and to bring intelligence of what they may see, or give alarm in case of approaching danger.

Such, however, was not the case with our caravan; — it wanted both head and heart; all was confusion, yet it was a confusion that interested, and the more so, because it was a pledge of the sincere disposition now felt by all to leave a place, where we had been so long and so disagreeably detained. By the bright but uncertain moonlight, and the gleaming of the numerous fires, the busy and tumultuous scene reminded me strongly of Scott's description of a Scottish camp or Highland army, where clansmen were calling out to each other continually the names and watchwords of their clans; "a Campbell, a Campbell," "a Seytoun, a Seytoun," "a Beatoun, a Beatoun;" here in like manner each was shouting to his fellow, but it was "Allee Mahummud, Allee Mahummud," "Caussim, Caussim," "Ibrahim, Ibrahim," "Hoossain, Hoossain;" and the jingling of bells, the roaring of camels, the neighing of horses, the braying of mules and asses, the shouts of sarwāns and muleteers, echoed and re-echoed at all distances, and in all keys, formed a confusion of sounds, not incongruous with the wild and varied costume both of men and of beasts.

We halted at the stream as before, to let stragglers close up, and to get into some kind of order: it was not without alarm that I saw this halt, on a spot which had but two days before been so fatal to our progress, and my joy, when after the space of half an hour, the mass again put itself into motion, was proportioned to the dread of disappointment which had preceded it. I was also rejoiced to see an old Hadjee of some respectability, who had before been spoken of as a proper chief for the caravan, now selected to fill that station; and a sense of danger, with the conviction every one felt, of the necessity for some degree of subordination to their individual security, gave him a degree of authority with the wild and lawless men of which our cāfilah consisted, that was comfortable, and promised well — still he was but imperfectly obeyed; some wished to proceed without waiting for the Herātees, who had refused to load with the rest, and consequently had lagged behind; others, and among them the chief of the Herātees himself (who had gạlloped up when he saw the caravan actually set off), insisted on its remaining until all

should have come up. Neither plan was exactly followed, we waited for some time, but moved on again before they joined us.

As we approached Khyrabad, a considerable village long since destroyed by the Toorkomans, and through the ruins of which the road led, the cāfilah-bāshee requested Mahomed Allee and myself who were in front, and well mounted, to ride on a-head and survey with care the ruins, which afforded excellent lurking places for an ambuscade; and we did so with our arms prepared. They were ghastly enough, the long high tenantless walls wholly roofless, and cleft by time into rude columns, which threw their dark shadows across the ground fleckered with snow; and the stillness of death reigned among them, the more dismal because it might veil the most fierce and ruthless life, or be wakened in a moment, by the wild yell of attack and destruction. All was safe, however; the cāfilah passed on unmolested, and halted once more upon the other side to collect stragglers.

It was a clear, frosty, starlight night, with a cold wind that chilled us to the bones, but we did not dare to dismount and walk, until we had passed the ruins far, and reached the open plain, for all the horsemen as forming the strength of the caravan, were required in case of attack; and even when the more immediate danger of surprize was past, only two or three at a time were permitted to dismount, and lead their horses, that in case of the worst, few might be found unprepared. During the night, which was an anxious one, our route lay chiefly over plains covered with the common stunted weeds of these countries; but towards morning the ground became broken into ridges and hollows, highly favourable for concealing an enemy, and we proceeded with redoubled caution.

On the morning of the 12th we found ourselves upon a height, to which we had gradually risen, overlooking the plain on which we had journeyed all the way from Aheyaioon, and which stretched away in boundless extent to the east-north-east, all, all desert; no spot on which the eye could rest with pleasure, all dusky brown. It was here about forty miles broad, having on the south the hills of

Meyomeid (the skirts of which we had reached), and on the north the Elburz range. We were informed that this plain communicated almost uninterruptedly with the great desert to the east of the Caspian sea; but there must be passes of considerable height between, as the difference of level is very great,

At this place a halt was called for morning prayers, but though the whole party went through their forms of devotion, it was as travellers usually do, hurriedly and imperfectly; and a great deal more attention was bestowed upon getting fires kindled to revive our half frozen limbs, and relax the numbness occasioned by hanging all night upon our horses: indeed, situated as we were, among ravines that might teem with enemies, and overlooking a plain which they have desolated, it was hardly to be expected that the minds of the party could be given up to devotion, although the forms of their religion prescribed the ceremony.

Having resumed our march, we were soon after cheered with the sight of our resting place, the village Meyomeid, distant about twelve miles, situated on a slope at the foot of a rocky hill; one or two smaller villages upon the same slope, three or four miles west of Meyomeid, form the whole of its dependencies: these have little or no cultivation, but subsist by traffick which they carry on with the Toorkoman tribes, purchasing their produce, and furnishing them with such articles of Persian manufacture as they require, and which they obtain from the merchants who pass with caravans upon the road. Meyomeid itself deals extensively in this trade, which, with the supply of caravans that are continually passing and repassing, forms, as far as I could learn, its sole support.

We reached the village at about eleven o'clock, a little in advance of the caravan, having been thirteen hours and a half on the march, during which we came a distance of thirty-six miles. About half way we passed an old caravanserai, with a large tank for water now dried up.

Meyomeid itself claims little notice; it may contain from three to four hundred souls, and has a fort strong enough to resist the de-

sultory attacks it has chiefly to fear, and a fine stone and brick-built caravanserai, erected by Shah Abbas the second, of itself a sufficient defence against such as might be attacked in it. The village is one of the dependencies of Shahrood. Its inhabitants are wild and savage enough, as might be inferred from the character of their country and associates. Their language and their appearance were equally barbarous. I received, indeed, a proof of their rudeness, the consequences of which might have been serious. While quietly going out of the gates of the caravanserai, a young fellow who stood by them, with a parcel of stout and long poles in his hand for sale, raised one of them in the air as I passed, and let it fall close before me, as if he would have struck me on the head. I looked, astonished, but merely said, "Thank you, friend, that is civil; but "don't do so again," and passed on. He laughed, and grinned most insolently, calling me "Feringhee," but I said no more. On my return, a little after, I found him still in the same place, and he repeated the same action as I passed, the stick falling so close that it nearly grazed my clothes. I then stopped, went up to him, and enquired the meaning of such conduct; on which he aped my manner, and returned me so many insolent airs, that I could not help telling him, if he continued them I should punish him. He, however, not only persisted, but imitated and mocked the anger I showed, till it rose so high that I hit him a severe blow on the face. He flushed with rage, and instantly seizing one of the poles with both hands, brandished it in the air, and struck me full upon the side, just in the loins, while, not believing that he would dare to use it, I made no guard, so that the blow came down unbroken, with so much force that I nearly fell. I immediately grasped the stick, and nearly wrested it from him, intending to use it upon him; but his companions came to his assistance, and I should have come very ill off, had not my negro servant, John *, who was engaged in our

* This faithful creature is now no more. The zeal and fidelity with which he followed and served me, from the time we both were youths, for three and twenty years, well deserved the attachment which his master felt for him; for it falls to the lot of but few to possess such a servant. He accompanied me throughout the whole of my travels, in this

chamber, observed the fray, and, rushing like a lion upon my antagonist, grappled with and struck him so fiercely that he was nearly borne to the ground. I now again interfered, and my servant, Seyed Allee, coming up with others, the combatants were separated, the fellow still foaming with passion.

I sent immediately for the meerza, told him what had occurred, and insisted that the delinquent should be carried before the ket khodah of the village, and the case fairly stated. By this time the people began to find out that they had been in the wrong, and endeavoured to pacify me, calling the man an ass, a beast, that would not hear reason, not worth my anger: nay, when they saw me determined, and talking even of sending an express to Mahomed Saleh Khan, their governor, they took the stick, and putting it into my hands, begged I would punish him on the spot; but this I refused. I told the culprit that he had insulted a peaceable traveller, and an English gentleman, in the most unprovoked manner, and that the regular and proper mode of proceeding was to state the case to the ket khodah, or reish suffeed of the village, who ought to punish him for his fault as he saw fit. If he declined so doing, there was no more to be said; but that I should certainly write to Mahomed Saleh Khan by the first opportunity, and they might depend upon it they would not then escape. So saying, I returned to my chamber, and the man was taken to the village. Soon after a person came from the ket khodah, to inform me that the man was then undergoing a severe bastinado, which should be continued until I should desire it to end.* I instantly gave the expected order, adding, that all I re-

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and in other countries, attending me in many scenes of danger and distress with unwearied affection; but died under circumstances of a painful description, soon after his arrival with me in England.

* It is very usual, when punishing a defaulter in Persia, thus to make the ill-will or revenge of the injured party (when he is a person to whom they desire to show respect) the measure of the punishment awarded to a criminal who has offended him. I have little hesitation in saying that it is more to give scope to the gratification of revenge than for the exercise of better feelings; for it often strikes them with surprize to see an European totally forego the pleasure of punishing his enemy when in his power. One day, as the late Dr. Jukes, along with the resident at Bushire, and some other English gentlemen,

quired was to convince the people that such proceedings would not be tolerated, and to ensure the safety of English travellers in future. I was assured by the meerza and my servants that a sufficient punishment was in reality inflicted on the culprit. The blow I had received was so severe that I continued in great pain during the remainder of the day, and had reason to fear that its effects would incapacitate me for the long journey that lay before us for the morrow.

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entered the gate of that city, on their way to pay a visit to its governor, an Abyssinian slave who was there thought fit, without any provocation, to pour out a torrent of abuse upon them as they passed. The resident fortunately recognized the man, told him he should hear of it, and, when they visited the sheikh, mentioned the circumstance, begging that such insults to British subjects might be put a stop to. Presently, while drinking their coffee, a loud and long-continued roaring, near the balcony where they were sitting, induced one of the gentlemen to ask the sheikh if he were punishing any delinquents, and what might be their crime. "Oh," said the sheikh, with perfect coolness and unconcern, "that's, no doubt, the fellow that insulted you:—yes, they will go on basti-"nadoing him until he die, or you tell them to stop." It may be supposed that the gentlemen, in no small haste, begged that the man might be released.

CHAP. XV.

A LARGE CĀFILAH ARRIVES AT MEYOMEID. — CHIEFLY PILGRIMS FROM MUSHED. — LEAVE MEYOMEID. — ALARMS ON THE ROAD. — PIOUS FORTITUDE OF MEN LEFT BEHIND. — ABBASSABAD, A GEORGIAN COLONY. — ITS SITUATION AND MISERY. — ARRIVE AT MUZEENOON. — RUINS THERE. — SECT OF HUSSUNEES, OR ISMAELITES. — ESTIMATE OF THE PARTY'S VALUE AS SLAVES BY A TOORKOMAN. — MEHR VILLAGE. — REMARKS ON TRAVELLING WITH CARAVANS AND CAMELS. — REACH SUBZAWĀR. — DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY. — QUIT IT AND REACH THE REMARKABLE CARAVANSERAI ZAFFAROUNEE. — VILLAGE OF HOOSSAINABAD. — PLAIN AND CITY OF NISHAPORE. — REACH THAT CITY. — FRIENDLY CONDUCT OF FURROOKH KHAN. — ACCOUNT OF NISHAPORE, ANCIENT AND PRESENT. — REMARKABLE ZOOLOGICAL FACT.

In the morning, soon after daylight, a large cāfilah was descried in the distance, slowly winding among the hillocks that bounded the horizon, and approaching the village. About nine o'clock it arrived, and we found that it consisted of about 600 camels and as many persons, chiefly pilgrims, old men and women, returning from Mushed, and bound for Cashān; so that the greater part of the camels were loaded with kajahwahs. * Their appearance was picturesque and imposing, for the sight of such a living line, slowly moving through the desert, creates an interest of no mean character; and the idea that these were chiefly pilgrims, who had left their homes to undertake a journey of many hundred miles, replete with perils and privations,

* Kajawahs, are boxes, or rather cradles, formed of wooden frames, covered with cloth or leather, from three and a half to four feet long, by four feet high, in which those who travel upon camels are seated: — they are partly open in front, and when fitted up with bedding, make a conveyance by no means contemptible in a cold night, for those who can sit for many hours together in the Asiatic fashion, with their legs doubled or crossed under them: — the traveller becomes soon accustomed to the measured motion of a camel's pace, and thus can enjoy both warmth and sleep, blessings most enviable during the long and wearisome nights of a winter's journey, and which those who travel on horseback are totally deprived of. Each camel carries two of these baskets, or cradles, which are hung like panniers one on each side.

as an act of devotion grateful to their Maker, and conducive to their eternal welfare, has something touching in it, that commands our respect, however we may pity or condemn the superstition that excites to it. The interest was changed, not destroyed, when the cāfilah began to reach its ground, part unloading its contents, while the remainder still continued winding among the broken ground near the village: the various and fantastic habits, the picturesque forms of the cattle and equipments, with the uproar and confusion that arose, as each party sought for a spot to encamp upon, formed a picture, which only the hand of a master could delineate with fidelity and effect.

The passengers by this caravan had seen nothing on the road to occasion alarm; they had, however, heard of the fate of the Toorsheez cafilah, and having but few armed men among them, had engaged thirty toffunchees from Muzeenoon to convoy them to Meyomeid, at a hire of 300 reals; but they, taking fright, or desirous to raise their terms, had drawn back; whereupon those of the cāfilah, "putting their trust in God, and Imaum Reza," departed without them, and arrived in safety thus far.

There was again some delay about moving, but we got clear of the caravanserai at a little after ten o'clock, and entered on the most dangerous part of our journey. The distance between Meyomeid and Abbassabad is about 50 miles; the road lying for the most part through a broken country of gravelly hillocks, covered with dry brown weeds, and corresponding hollows, affording the most perfect cover for an ambush. About four miles from the village there is a fountain, which gives rise to a small stream, called Chushmah-e-Zeyder, in the vicinity of which there is a little wood and good grazing, which makes it a tempting spot for the bands of marauders to halt and refresh in, as well as one where they can conveniently lie in wait for travellers: accordingly, it is the most dreaded spot on the road. The caravan was, however, in better spirits than on the preceding day, and the various parties halted to collect and prepare against a surprize, at a place about three miles from the village. Here the line was properly formed, and horsemen stationed in advance, on both flanks and in the rear. My horses being the most efficient in the party,

Mahomed Allee and another were dispatched to the left, while Seyed Allee and myself went on the right, riding to the top of every height and searching every hollow, a little in advance of the main body; thus taking the duty of scouts, which involved no small anxiety and fatigue.

We had several alarms, though none proved well-founded; one of the party found a Toorkoman calleeoon*, pretty fresh, which showed how lately they had been there; other more equivocal traces attracted attention; but they only induced a full degree of caution, and we moved on, occasionally stopping to collect stragglers, for about 22 miles, when we had an alarm, which promised to be more serious than it proved to be. From the top of a height we saw a smoke, and several unloaded camels grazing; and as no one dreams of anything in this dreaded waste, but to get out of it as fast as possible, we had reasonable grounds for believing that these were signs of enemies. The cāfilah therefore halted, and prepared itself for action, and we of the advance went on at a canter to reconnoitre. We found three men, Herātees, who had been in company with the caravan that had reached Meyomeid, but two of their camels having fallen ill, the chief of the party had staid behind with them that they might have time to recover, and proceed. "Were you not afraid," asked we "to halt in so dangerous a place, upon any account what-"ever?" "Why should I fear?" he replied; "I trust in God. — You "have 150 men with arms and horses, yet you fear; we are but three, "but in that trust we fear not."

We resumed our way, leaving this really pious man behind; and soon came to the plain where his camel lay dying upon the road, attended by one of his men: we could be of little use, but we reared the beast upon its legs, a measure deemed essential to its recovery, and each sarwān as he passed tendered his opinion and advice, I fear with but little avail. Night closed in just as we cleared the first range of low hills, and entered upon a dusky plain. At six fursungs, or

* The Toorkoman calleeoon, or pipe, is a very simple machine, being only a hollow reed, which they use for inhaling the smoke, often without passing it through water at all.

about 25 miles * from Meyomeid, there is a small caravanserai built by the second Abbas, but totally deserted, from the disturbed state of the country; from thence, the road wound again among broken ground, and little heights, some parts being sandy; the path for about five fursungs more becoming intricate and winding; after which the caravan, whether emboldened by success, or grown careless, I know not, while yet at a very considerable distance from their caravanserai, halted on a small plain, to gather weeds and furze for fewel, while many of the horsemen, and I among the rest, rode on to Abbassabad.

About three fursungs before we came to that place, we had passed another caravanserai of Shah Abbas the second, quite ruinous, near which there is a fountain of sweet water, where Imaum Reza, on his journey to Mushed, is said to have performed the miracle of raising to life a dead man: the place, by moonlight, was romantic, but like all watering places, a spot of dread; between the two caravanserais the people pointed out to me the site of a valuable copper mine, which was worked as late as the time of Nadir Shah, but which has been abandoned since the troubles, consequent upon his death, and the dread entertained of the Toorkoman plunderers: indeed, the present king lays so heavy a rent upon all such property, that although the ore is said to be rich, no one would undertake the adventure, even if the state of the country were safe. It is found in fissures in the rock, but the shafts and excavations are now filled with water. A rich lead mine, abandoned for the same reasons, also exists in the vicinity; but the time of night, and the danger of the road, effectually prevented me from attempting to look after either.

We reached Abbassabad about three in the morning, after a march of seventeen hours, during which the distance actually travelled might be about forty-five miles: the night was comparatively mild, a fortunate circumstance, as we were forced to be lightly clad, for the sake of activity in case of need.

* The Khorasānee fursung is somewhat longer than that of Irāk; the latter being in general found rather less than four miles, the former something more.

The village of Abbassabad presents an interesting object to the traveller; its origin was singular, and the destinies of its inhabitants are as singularly deplorable. Upon the high road connecting two capitals of great resort, there existed a great space, barren and desert by nature, always endangered, and often rendered impassable to travellers by the incursions of the fierce Toorkomans of the north; so that communication between them was at times totally interrupted. In this dangerous and desolate track no one would voluntarily settle; yet a connecting point was obviously required, and the want was felt by every sovereign of the country, whether powerful or weak. It was Shah Abbas the first who provided for this inconvenience in a way highly characteristic of that sovereign's policy: he transplanted one hundred Georgian families from their rich native soil, to wither on the barren salt marshes of Khorasān, with as little remorse or consideration as he would have changed the horse he rode, or the clothes he wore.

He, however, provided for their safety, and even for their maintenance; and, on the whole, made their situation as comfortable as the nature of it would admit. He built them a fort, as well as a large and fine caravanserai, in a spot where, while they remain upon their guard, no attempt of their enemies can harm them; he assigned them fixed wages, and supplied the wants they could not provide for by agriculture; an employment from which they must be debarred, as well from the barren nature of their soil, as from the exposure to attack which it would involve. The fort is situated on a little earthy hillock, not far from, but not commanded by, the neighbouring hills; and it overlooks the caravanserai, which is built on the slope just below it, forming a sort of outer court connected with it; a fine rill of fresh water runs from below the fort, through the court of the caravanserai, supplying that necessary of life in a way that no enemy can interrupt. The caravanserai itself is a substantial and spacious building, having about fifty good chambers in the interior area, with stabling and cover for many hundreds of cattle, and niches in the thick walls for their keepers and other travellers: it had solid gates, to bar the entrance of a foe, but they have been three times burned,

and had not been replaced since the last time; the fort, however, so completely commands the area, that except by surprize no considerable harm could be effected. At the distance of one third of a mile there are the ruins of an old fort, and village, destroyed long ago in some of the troubles of the land, which now serve but as a lurking place for the robbers who come hither to plunder.

The sufferings of this Georgian colony since their transportation hither have been very severe; the greater part have lost either their lives or liberties, at one time or other by the incursions of the Toorkomans, and at present there are not in the little mud fort more than two hundred souls great and small, of which thirty or forty are men; and of those who are grown up, there is not one who has not been taken prisoner two, three, or more times, and either made their escape, or been ransomed back. I saw several who had thus escaped, and others who had at this time relatives in the hands of their enemies; one youth had seen both his brothers killed two years before; the father of another had gone only three days before to Muzeenoon, for corn and straw, and had not been since heard of. The Toorkomans, they said, were continually about their village, and the fountains of fresh water near it, in more or less force. The wages and supplies granted to them in former reigns have been stopt in this; they occasionally receive thirty khurwars* of grain, which is all they have to live upon, except what they earn at the risk of their lives and liberties, by the supply of caravans; all the articles they furnish, as corn, straw, flour, &c. &c., being brought from Muzeenoon: fire-wood alone they gather in the neighbourhood.

They complain bitterly of their lot, and would fain leave the place, but this is extremely difficult; for none are permitted to depart, and if any one be caught attempting to run away, he is brought back and severely beaten for it. It is still more difficult for a family to leave such a place, particularly as an officer of government continually resides there. One of the people with whom I conversed described

* About three thousand Tabreez mauns; *khurwar*, or *ass's load*, is estimated at a hundred mauns Tabreez, or about 725 lbs. English.

the misery of their situation very feelingly, and even strikingly. "Set "down as we are," said he, "in the midst of a wilderness, with a bound- "less salt desert on one side, on the others hills of brown rock or "grey earth perfectly unprolific, the change of seasons passes almost "unknown to us." "I know not winter," continued he, "from "spring or summer, but by the complaints of my children, and the "cold it brings; the wretched patch of corn you see beneath the "walls seldom comes to maturity; if enemies do not destroy it, "friends do. We have a single fig-tree near yonder hill, which in "kindly seasons yields much fruit, but the Toorkomans gather it "oftener than we do, and there is not another tree of any sort near us; "we have attempted to rear shoots in that garden, but to no end; "they have always been violently destroyed. We dare not keep any "sheep; each of us may possess one or two goats, and perhaps an "ass: horses and camels no one dreams of; it would only be rear- "ing them for the Toorkomans. We are always on the alert against "these cruel enemies, yet are we constantly suffering in our families, "having fathers, wives, sons, or daughters, carried off, and never "heard of more. As for me, I have been three times in their "power, twice I escaped, and was ransomed the third time at a "ruinous price: most of my kindred have gone the same way; but "what are we to do? We cannot run away, for should we be caught "our punishment is dreadful, and if we escape, our fault is visited "upon our families, and fear of the consequences to them makes us "submit to every thing."

The range of this poor creature's ideas, with regard to the rest of the world, was circumscribed like his personal liberty: he believed that there existed few places so magnificent as the caravanserai of his native village. "Have you," said he, "any thing like this in the "desert places of your country?" When I told him that with us no such things were required; that there were no Toorkomans, no robbers of men; that each man there reaped that which he sowed, in peace and security, that there was no need of arms, nor did any body walk with guns, swords, or daggers; that no such things as wars or rebellion had for a long time been known among us; "Is that

" indeed the case?" exclaimed the poor fellow with earnestness, " Oh " then take me with you to that land."

It is said that the Toorkomans do not now a days come often into the caravanserai, though formerly that was frequently done; not long ago, four hundred men made an attempt to surprize the fort; they alighted at nightfall in the ruined village, where two hundred remained; and the rest got undiscovered into the caravanserai, and hid themselves in its huge recesses, intending to wait there till morning, when the villagers for the most part all come out; then to seize them, and rushing into the fort, to take possession of it also; the noise attending which bustle should be a signal for the rest to come to their assistance. The plot was, however, discovered and the village saved by accident; one of the villagers chancing to go down to the caravanserai, saw the keen eyes and wild features of a Toorkoman, with his drawn sword gleaming on him from a recess; he challenged, and receiving no answer fired his matchlock, and alarmed the fort: the garrison turned out with the arms they possessed, and fired from the walls upon the Toorkomans, who now began to appear, and who finding their scheme frustrated, retreated precipitately, leaving three killed in the place.

The next morning as we viewed the country around, from the eminence of the fort, we could not wonder at the despair of the miserable inhabitants who are bound to it for life: A *kubbeer*, or salt desert, like the bed of an evaporated sea, glittering with saline efflorescence, stretched in boundless desolation to the south and south-east, islanded by a few rugged rocks; and all to the north and west ridges of earthy hillocks or bare rocky cliffs bounded the view without one point of verdure to rest the weary eye. We quitted this wretched place, with sincere commiseration for its inhabitants, at half past one, on the 13th, keeping up the same precaution as on our last march, there being several very dangerous spots just on our road, particularly two springs of sweet water much frequented by these formidable marauders, and Mahomed Allee with myself and two or three other horsemen rode in advance, among the earthy hillocks which

skirted the road. Horse tracks in plenty were seen, but nothing more seriously alarming. At one of these dangerous spots there are two fountains of water, one fresh, the other salt, which rise close to each other. The hillocks, though earthy in appearance, are found on examination, to consist of a substance as hard as many sorts of stone, probably calcareous, and totally destitute of vegetation; perhaps formed as those in former parts of our route, from the detritus of the loftier mountains.

About eight miles from the village there is a stream of salt water, over which a bridge of one arch was thrown by Nadir Shah, remarkable only as having at one time separated the provinces of Irāk and Khorasān; but the boundaries of these provinces have varied so much, and so often, from political circumstances, that little of interest attaches to any of them. Somewhat further on, the road, which had hitherto only skirted the salt desert, strikes across an inlet of it, to Muzeenoon, the village of which we had indeed seen from the fort of Abbassabad; but it fell dark as we entered on this part of the journey, and we made our way with difficulty, as the snow lay thick upon the ground. When we were near the village (as we supposed), I pushed on with Mahomed Allee, to secure accommodation, but we lost our way, and wandered for a long time among the ruins of an old town, which seemed of immense extent, nor did we reach the caravanserai, cold and wearied as we were, until ten o'clock at night; and after experiencing all the uneasiness attendant upon a conviction that we should have to pass it in the open air, without food or covering either for ourselves or horses; and at last, when a fortunate turn did bring us to our night's abode, we could procure neither fuel, fire, nor bread. The camels did not come up till a full hour afterwards, having been eight hours and a half on the road; but as it is very level, and as they went at a round pace, I calculated the distance at from twenty-six to twenty-eight miles; in the country it is said to be seven fursungs of Khorasān.

We resolved to remain a day here to refresh both ourselves and the animals; during which time I examined the ruins in the neighbourhood, which had appeared so extensive the night before.

Muzeenoon is a village that gives name to a considerable district, in which there are several large villages, and a great deal of cultivated land; the village itself was once a place of importance *, and, like many others in Persia, has had a succession of towns; one replacing the other, as it fell to decay in the lapse of events, until a great extent of ruins accumulated in the neighbourhood of that which yet remains. The inhabitants, not now exceeding three or four hundred in number, occupy a poor village that has arisen by degrees at the back of the caravanserai, and a fort resembling those at Lasgird and Dehmoollah.

The first object that attracted our attention was an old fort close in front of the serai, quite in ruins, but evincing the remains of great former strength. It was constructed of sun-dried, and faced with fire-burnt bricks, and it is not a little remarkable, that the former have, on the whole, stood the effect of time better than the latter; indeed the latter have chiefly been used ornamentally, disposed in symmetrical figures on the exterior of the wall, not contributing in any degree to the strength of the building; their edges have, therefore, been more exposed, and have sooner crumbled into decay, and those which were glazed or coloured have long since lost their enamel. The Meerza remarked, that the place much resembled some of the Arab forts he had seen in the parts about Bagdad, and it may probably, with many other buildings, date from the time when the Arabs were masters of Khorasān.

We next examined a much more recent mass of ruins, the remains of a town built by Allee Yār Khan, who was governor of the district not long ago, but who taking occasion to rebel against his present Majesty, although his son was held in the king's power as hostage for his father's fidelity, provoked the monarch in one of his expeditions into Khorasān to bring his army against it. The khan came out with presents to the king's tent, and made every show of submission; but when he returned into his fort he was instigated, it

* This is proved by the fact of its having repulsed an attack of Ahmed Shah Dooraunee, about the year 1750. (Elphinstone's Caubul.)

would appear, by some unaccountable caprice, forgetting, doubtless, the situation of his son, to fire several cannon-shot into the middle of the royal camp. The king instantly gave orders for the death of the young man, and further directed his body to be cut in pieces and thrown into the fort. This violent and bloody proceeding probably struck dismay into the Khan's mind, for he immediately submitted upon terms.* Whether it was upon this occasion or not I cannot say, but the village was destroyed by the king's order, and remains an empty mass of ruins. The fort has had a good strong wall and ditch, and, if well defended, should have bade defiance to any force that Futeh Allee Shah could bring against it.

A mile distant from this place there is another abandoned city, a ghastly relic of what once was substantial and comfortable, if not magnificent. The extent of the ruins is great, and it is remarkable that all the dwellings bear the marks of having been large and commodious, built almost entirely upon one uniform plan, each having had a large centre room, covered with a dome, out of which led four corner apartments, and several other good chambers. The great number of such buildings struck me particularly. They were all constructed of unburnt brick, or mud; most of the walls were in good preservation, but the domes in general had tumbled in. There were many large areas, containing what must have been extensive establishments, all in very tolerable condition; but no remains of public buildings, calculated to impress the idea that the place had ever been of much consequence. Every thing, indeed, looked more as if it had been a

* They preserve in these parts a story, which proves that the devotion of clanship occasionally may be found, even among the selfish tribes of Persia. There was, it is said, a furosh in the king's household, belonging to the particular clan, and even, from the same village as Allee Yar Khan, and who was employed in the tent of Abdool Hoossain Khan, the king's nazir, at the time he heard that his natural lord had declared himself rebellious; the fellow immediately struck work, exclaiming, "The khan is yaghee (rebellious), I will be so too;" and though severely beaten, he refused to return to his duty, still repeating the same words; till at length he became senseless, and in the end died of the blows he received; yet still in the occasional moments of returning perception, he continued to murmur, "The khan is yaghee, I will be so too." "Such a dog was this fellow," observed the person who related the story, giving the poor creature no credit, for the obstinate, even if mistaken fidelity of his clanship.

considerable town, tenanted by persons in a comfortable though not in an exalted station of life; and that it had become depopulated suddenly, in the midst of prosperity, rather than gone gradually to decay; for the uniform appearance of the whole differs widely from that of places that have dwindled by degrees from magnificence to ruin. We learned in the sequel that this opinion was confirmed by the tradition of the country, which declares it to have been a town plundered and destroyed by the Toorkomans at some remote period; and though the expeditions of these marauders do not at this time often extend to Muzeenoon, it never was re-occupied; the succeeding generations preferring, according to the usage of the east, to erect less comfortable habitations of their own, rather than to occupy the deserted walls of their predecessors.

After roaming among these remains for a considerable time, in the belief that they were perfectly tenantless, we stumbled on a single family who had but very lately taken up their abode in a remote corner, and were buried, as it were, in the ruins. I could not expect any authentic account of the place from these, although, as religious persons, they should have possessed some learning; but one, a very old man, told me that it had been in the same condition long before the time of Nadir Shah; and that the oldest tradition attributed it to the Ghebres, in the time of Bahman the grandson of Gushtasp (Darius Hystaspes). That some place of consequence may have existed here in times as far removed, is, doubtless, possible; but though the buildings of mud and sun-dried brick last for an extraordinary time in Persia, it may safely be pronounced impossible that the ruins now standing can have any relation to so remote a period. The meerza observed that there was a remarkable resemblance between these buildings and the present houses of the Ghebres at Yezd.

We remarked among the ruins a large quantity of a black vitrified substance, resembling obsidian, occasionally veined with red, yellow, and other colours; it was scattered about the streets, and pervaded the walls very plentifully, every where appearing in strata of considerable extent in the earth itself: whether it was natural or artificial we

could not tell; but if the latter, the manufacture which gave it rise must have been very extensive indeed; and if the former, it is a singular substance to be found in a low soil of sand and clay, far from mountains or rocks.

Not far from this deserted town there is a collection of ruins, among which are two monuments of imaumzadehs; one of which, in tolerable repair, and with some pretension to magnificence, covers, as it is said, the bones of Seyd Ismael, considered by the Ismaelites, or Hussunees*, as the last legitimate imaum, and founder of that sect of Mahometans. I am, however, inclined to doubt the truth of this as it is difficult to believe that a sect so devoted to their spiritual superiors would permit the acknowledged tomb of their saint to remain so much neglected as this has been; every one is acquainted with the devotion of his followers to Hussun Soubah, and his successors; and even at this day the sheikh or head of the sect is most blindly revered by those who yet remain, though their zeal has lost the deep and terrific character which it once bore. It is but lately that one of these, by name Shah Khuleel Oollah, resided at Yezd, during the time that Mahomed Zemān Khan, son of the present prime minister was governor there. He was a person of high respectability, and great influence, keeping an hundred gholaums of his own in pay; but he was put to death by the inhabitants of Yezd, in a riot to which they were instigated by tyrannical acts of their ruler. Shah Khuleel Oollah gave his assistance to the governor, and the Yezdees enraged at this, broke into his house and murdered him. The Bhoras, from India, were particularly devoted to their saint; and many that day sacrificed themselves in his cause. Among others, the resistance opposed to the murderers by an Indian pehlewān† of that sect, is particularly mentioned; he placed

* For an account of this extraordinary sect, and the history of Hussun Soubah, their founder, the curious reader will do well to refer to Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia.

† The term Pehlewān, is applied to a hero of romance, such as an Amadis de Gaul, &c., who performs feats of wonderful or superhuman prowess. But of late it has been used to less heroic characters: wrestlers, prize fighters, and bullies, as well as persons of great strengtd and courage, are now termed Pehlewāns.

himself before the chamber door, to which the insurgents had penetrated, and kept it shut with his powerful arms, until he fell covered with wounds.

Meerza Abdool Rezak, who was acquainted with this man during has stay in Yezd, mentioned as a curious proof of the reverence in which he was held, that one day, while he was paying him a visit, the saint was employed during their conversation in paring the nails of his hands and feet, which the meerza picked up from the carpet to throw away; when an Indian of the sect, who was in the chamber, seated at a respectful distance, prevented him from doing so by a significant gesture; when he left the room, the Indian followed him, and most earnestly begged him for the nail parings as a most precious possession, which the meerza, inwardly laughing at the man's superstition, after a while gave him. In like manner the shavings of his head, the water he washed in, and such offals, were preserved as valuable relics by his followers; and instead of paying wages to his servants, he would frequently give them one of his old robes, which cutting into pieces they would sell at a high price to the pilgrims who come to visit the saint. These devotees are so eager to pour in presents upon their ghostly chief, that he had accumulated great riches. He was succeeded in his religious capacity by one of his sons, who meets with a similar respect from the sect.

The inhabitants of Muzeenoon, having ceased from hostile intercourse with the Toorkomans, seem disposed to turn their former enemies to account, by driving a traffick with them, no doubt of a profitable nature; the plunderers here find a market for their booty, and obtain the necessaries of every sort which they or their tribes require. Perhaps the convenience of such a neutral point has proved the safety of Muzeenoon, as well as of Meyomeid and its dependencies; we saw several individuals of these tribes in the bazar and caravanserai, who had come on commercial errands, and who offered us various articles for sale. From one wild looking wretch we wished to purchase a small horse, but could not agree about the price, and when after some chaffering I named the sum I was willing to give, he looked fixedly at me for a moment, then sprung upon its

back with a gesture of contempt and indignation, exclaiming as he rode off, " A pretty offer truly; why with this beast I need but go be- " hind the hill yonder to the Chushmah-e-Zeyder, and I shall be sure of " a couple of captives, that will bring me treble the money you offer." Just before this sally, we had been making inquiries of this man respecting his trade and occupation, and had been not a little amused with his blunt observations: we asked him the common prices of captives among the tribes, making him set a value upon each of us as we stood, and this he did readily enough, and with very little delicacy; he said the meerza would not sell for much, as his occupations had unfitted him for hard labour; as to myself, he observed that I was not intrinsically worth much; but that being an European, and, therefore presumed to be rich, a larger ransom would be asked for me: indeed, although both the meerza and myself were greatly his superiors in bulk and stature, he seemed to view us with contempt; but he eyed the servants, some of whom, particularly the negro John, were stout well made men, with longing looks, as if he fain would have had the chance of making them his prey.

We resumed our journey on the 16th, at a little after five in the morning. The most dangerous part of the journey being now over, our caravan no longer requiring the security of mutual support, separated; each party of those which had composed it making its own arrangements for its future progress; ours with those bound for Subzawār still kept together. The morning was cold, and a heavy fog, which had continued for several days, concealed the plain over which we travelled, and quite obscured the sun. The soil sometimes resembled the clay of the salt desert, but oftener consisted of grey gravel, intermixed with a quantity of dark specks and pebbles.

After a march of twenty-four miles we reached Mehr, a poor village of forty or fifty houses, but surrounded by others of more prosperous appearance, and a great deal of fine cultivation; particularly that of Sood-khur, near which there was a large extent of fine land. The cultivable soil is most commonly a rich and solid mould of a reddish colour, scattered in patches among the large tracts of gravelly waste, which is only covered with camel thorn, thistles, and a sort of aromatic rue. Grass, although now dry, abounded more

than usual, on the earthy though uncultivated parts. The cultivation of cotton was extensive, and bore a large proportion to all the other produce; but I believe that it either forms a second crop, or that it is sown along with the wheat and barley, and gives its crop after they have been reaped. Mulberry is cultivated, and a good deal of silk is made and manufactured, not only here, but at every place we have passed, including Semnoon: stuffs for shirts and trousers, handkerchiefs, and other domestic purposes are fabricated in all the considerable villages, though not for exportation. The cotton is also woven into kherboz, or coarse cloths, and striped stuffs; or it is sent in its raw state, to supply the markets of Mushed or Tehrān. At Mehr we lodged in a very good caravanserai, built by a merchant of Ispahan, in the time of Abbas the second.

The camels were loaded, and sent off at nine in the evening for Subzawār; but as there was little to apprehend in this stage, I indulged in lying down in my clothes, upon a numud, till near morning, and then followed at a brisker pace. The annoyance of travelling with camels is excessive, particularly in the cold season; not only because they are slow of motion, but because they always make their journey in the night time. The chief reason of this is, because their keepers graze them in the daytime, and thus save the expence of feeding them in-doors; they also affirm, that the camel travels with more ease in the night than in the daytime; and this may be true in the hot season, but not so, I am persuaded, in the cold. The discomfort, also, to the traveller is greater than can be conceived by those who have not experienced it. At the very hour, when, after the fatigues of the day, he has set himself down after his chief meal, and feels most disposed to rest, he is roused from his warm room to bustle about his baggage, and after the arrangement of that disagreeable business is over, he must mount his beast, face the keen, cold, frosty wind, perhaps a storm of snow or rain, and drag on at the snail's pace of two and a half miles an hour, distressed with the most invincible propensity to sleep, from nine in the evening till the same hour next morning.

This morning we had a fine frosty, cloudless sky; but the distant hills, and even the farther parts of the plain, were shrouded in

haze. At break of day we found ourselves upon a wide gravelly plain, thickly interspersed with rich patches of red earth, highly prolific when irrigated; and we continued passing through extensive tracts of the same nature, with several villages and much cultivation. At about half way we passed a caravanserai like those of Shah Abbas; and not far from Subzawār our attention was attracted by a minār, about a hundred feet high, like those described at Semnoon and Damghān; and known in the country by the name of Minār-e-Khosroughird. It was constructed of excellent brickwork, and ornamented with devices of the same material, all of Mahometan origin. There are extensive heaps of bricks and mud around it, which indicate the site of a considerable town, but it now stands alone.

I ascended the minar by a flight of spiral steps, so worn down by constant treading as to be dangerous to mount. The pillar that forms the centre round which they wind has been nearly destroyed towards the summit, and the top of the tower itself has been thrown down; but the whole of the remainder is as firm as the day it was built, and the masonry is most excellent. At some distance from this minār may be seen the remains of an old fort, called also Khosroughird, the appearance of which would indicate great antiquity. In all probability the whole of these ruins were within the circuit of that Subzawār which was destroyed by Mahomed Shah Khaurezmee. From the top of the minār we could discover a good deal of insulated cultivation, and several villages around the city, which, with its wall and round towers, was visible about a fursung distant. On our way thither we passed the remains of many buildings, both of mud and of good mason-work, either stone and lime or brick, all indicating the existence of a former extensive city, but nothing that could give the slightest clue to a date. We reached Subzawār between nine and ten o'clock in the forenoon, and took up our abode in the private chamber of a very mean-looking and dirty caravanserai.

The city of Subzawār boasts of great antiquity, having been founded, it is stated, by Sassan, the son of Bahman, from whom

descended the kings of the Sassanian dynasty. Of its early history not much is known; it was destroyed by Mahomed Shah Khān. rezmee*, but afterwards became the seat of a race of independent sovereigns, called the Serbedaurians, who, after a tumultuous and disorderly reign of about forty years, yielded to the fortunes of the great Timour, when he overran Khorasān, in the year of the Heg. 783. In all likelihood it never, after this event, attained any great degree of prosperity. Whatever remained, or had escaped during the subsequent revolutions of Khorasān, was destroyed completely when the Affghauns invaded Persia, in the reign of Shah Hoossein, and its inhabitants were either put to death, or made slaves. From those days, until the time of Allee Yar Khan Muzeenoone, a few years ago, it would appear that the place continued totally deserted, and the present city is entirely his work; for he rebuilt the walls and fortifications, and induced people to come and build themselves habitations within them. If we might take for granted the report of the kelounter of the place, it contains one thousand inhabited

* This great conqueror, who was a rigid Soonnie, persecuted the heretic sect of Sheahs with great rigour, putting multitudes to death during his invasion of Khorasān, for that cause only. It is said that his cruelties and persecutions had already destroyed the greater part of the population of Subzawār, when the remainder came before him, and, throwing themselves at his feet, begged for mercy, on the plea that many of them were, in reality, Soonnies. The king reproached them severely as liars, and insisted on various proofs, in support of their assertions, which it was difficult or impossible for them to adduce. At last he told them that if there was to be found, in the whole city, a single person named Abubekr (a notorious Soonnie name), he would spare the city and remainder of its inhabitants for his sake. The people retreated in great despair, for they knew that such a name had never been given to any one of their children. They, however, set on foot an enquiry, and at last they found a wretched creature, cripple, blind and stuttering, whom they required to go with them before the king. "How shall I go," said the miserable creature; "I can neither see my way, nor walk, nor should the king ask my name "can I speak it plain?"—"Oh, never mind, you shall be carried; and if you can only "satisfy the king you shall be taken care of for life." The poor creature was accordingly carried before the monarch, and the effect of the natural defects in his person was ludicrously enough described by the Persian Moollah who related the tradition. "What!" said the king at last, "is this the only Abubekr you have to produce? This will never "do."— Then," replied the deputies, "your majesty must even use your pleasure with your "servants, for they have not a better Abubekr to lay at your majesty's feet." The king, it is said, laughed, and consented to spare the remnant that still existed of the unfortunate Subzawārees.

houses; but I cannot believe that they amount to half the number, and should be disposed, from all appearances, to judge that the population does not exceed two thousand souls. The bazar is miserable, consisting of not more than twenty or thirty shops, occupied chiefly by sellers of eatables, shoemakers, tailors, and other tradesmen; but the price of articles of consumption is very reasonable.

There are two governors in Subzawār, one, Mahomed Khan Hagilār, a respectable old officer, who resides in the fort, and commands two hundred toffunchees as its garrison, upon a salary of three hundred tomauns a-year; the other, Mahomed Tuckeh Khan, a Kadjer, and like too many of that tribe a haughty empty fool, superintends the district, and had but lately come to it. From the district there is collected an assessment of thirty thousand tomauns in money and kind, but the governor raises as much more for his private benefit.

There are few remarkable traces of antiquity about Subzawār beyond those already noticed; part of another old minār like that of Khosroughird; and an old medressah, which an Arabic inscription in coloured tiles over the gate declares to have been built by one Fukkr-u-deen, or Fukkr-u-Doulut, are the only other buildings that attract attention; and upon the whole Subzawār will be found grievously to disappoint the hopes of such travellers as may have formed even very moderate expectations of its magnificence, founded upon its having been one of the principal cities of Khorasān.

After viewing the place, I sent the meerza to wait upon the Governor Mahomed Tuckeh-Khan, to report my arrival, and in case he should be civilly received, or if the governor should express any expectation of the sort, to offer a visit on my part; but he found the great man so haughty, and even brutal, that he left his presence as soon as he could. The meerza then went to Mahomed Khan Hagilār, with a compliment on my part, and to beg that he would give orders for the gates (which are always shut at sunset), being opened about midnight, at which time I was desirous to depart; adding, that the shortness of my stay would I hoped plead my excuse for omitting to wait upon him. The Khan very obligingly, at once complied with my request, and received the meerza so well,

that upon his return, he occupied himself for two hours in writing a poem, satirizing one governor, and eulogizing the other, which he forthwith transmitted to the Khān.

We loaded and marched about ten at night; the gates were opened to us without delay, and we found ourselves beyond the walls of Subzawār in a gloomy night, not without a feeling of regret for the shelter we had quitted. The camels went like snails for the greater part of the way, and the men were all sulky, so that the night passed uncomfortably enough. We passed the lights of several villages in the early part of the road, but I can say nothing of the country, except that it was perfectly level; and at day break on the morning of the eighteenth we found ourselves in sight of the Robāut (or caravanserai) Zafferounee, which we reached by eight o'clock, after a piercing cold march of ten hours, said to be seven fursungs, or full twenty-eight miles.

This old caravanserai is the largest in Persia, and more notorious as a haunt of thieves and banditti than even for its size. It is indeed a most dismal looking fabric, situated on a large plain, or rather slope of the usual dusky hue, that extends from the bottom of a rocky hill; and being the only object raised above its surface, it is visible from a great distance on every side, so that while marching towards it, although continually in progress you seem never to approach it; when at last you draw nigh, it seems like a huge ruin of the fabulous ages, the abode of evil spirits, rather than a place intended for the accommodation of men. There is no cultivation near it; but a small village of an hundred and fifty inhabitants, kept up by order of government, supplies travellers with the few necessaries they require.

This caravanserai is worth describing; it is said, that when in perfect repair, it contained seventeen hundred chambers; a set of baths, and an establishment of shops, within its walls; and that it could accommodate, I know not how many thousand men and cattle. How much of this may have been accurate, it is quite impossible to judge, for the whole is now so ruinous, that it is difficult, in tracing its plan, to determine on what might have been the uses of its several parts.

The building forms an oblong square, of about one hundred and fifty spaces by ninety-five; having a tower at each corner, and two in each side; in the centre of the front there is a gateway, on each side of which are nine arched niches. This large oblong is divided into two compartments, by a line of chambers and stabling, forming a face internally, with a large arch like a gateway in the centre: the first compartment has ten arched niches and the gateway, on two of its sides, and seven with a large blind archway on the others. The second compartment is square, and has eight niches and a gateway on each of its inside faces. The general disposition has been, first, a series of chambers, each having an arched verandah, but not communicating; within these are chambers of sizes and shapes suited to the construction of the building, which is very intricate; within these, again, a great extent of stabling. It is impossible, as has been above observed, to follow with any degree of accuracy the original plan of the building; so great is the dilapidation it has suffered: but it has evidently been a caravanserai, not only on a scale of very uncommon grandeur, but remarkably well contrived and finished.

The external coating of the wall has been built of burnt brick and lime, in the same style of architecture as that of the various minārs I have described, and the arches are all well turned, with bricks, tiles, and mortar; but the more massive parts, and the interior of the thick walls, consist of burnt bricks and clay. The interior of the chambers or cells have been carefully plastered, and in some may be traced the remains of ornamental painting. On several parts of the walls which have been tastefully decorated with brick figures, and around some of the arch-ways, may be seen an ornament in the style of Arabic letters; but these have either been in an uncommon character, or have been so much obliterated by time, that the meerza could make out nothing from it, nor could any date be discovered.

Most antique edifices, such as this caravanserai, have traditions regarding their founders attached to them, although in many cases the tradition has probably been fabricated to suit the occasion; the

building in question, is not deficient in this particular. It is said to have been erected by a very rich merchant of Khorasān, who wished to perpetuate his name by some act of charity, or public beneficence. Whilst the fabric was building, and a quantity of clay for that purpose was tempering in the road beside it, a cāfilah, consisting of one hundred camels, loaded with saffron, chanced to pass; and one slipping in the clay, fell with his load and was disabled: the owner of the whole, who was along with them, seeing the accident, began to inveigh bitterly against those who could so carelessly mix their cement in the public road, and complained sorely of his loss. The noise came to the ears of the merchant, who was himself superintending the progress of the building, and who enquiring from the owner what might be the value, not only of the load, and beast which had been disabled, but of all the rest, purchased the whole from him on the spot, and causing the saffron to be tumbled into the clay, kneaded it up instead of chopped straw, with the cement: it was from this that the caravanserai obtained the name of Zaffarounee, or of *saffron*. The tradition further goes on to relate that the merchant fell into difficulties, as indeed might well have been expected from his extravagance, and ultimately became a beggar; that travelling in search of subsistence, into foreign parts, he chanced to visit the place where the saffron merchant, now grown immensely rich on the large profits of his fortunate sale, lived in splendor. It came to the ears of the latter, that a stranger in very poor condition, but who spoke of his former rich estate, and particularly of his large charitable works in Khorasān, was living wretchedly in the town; and suspecting from several other circumstances that this was his old benefactor, he invited him to his house, and after feasting him superbly, induced him to relate his history: when, in concluding it, the unhappy Khorasānee described his destitute condition, the other interrupted him, saying, "How can you call "yourself poor, when you are, in reality, a man possessed of great "riches?" "Ah, no," replied the other; "once, indeed, I had "much wealth, but it is all gone, and I am now a beggar." On this his host carried him to a secret chamber, which, on opening, he

showed him was full of money. "This," said he, "is all yours; it "is the price of the saffron which you so liberally purchased from "me: I have traded upon it and become rich, but the original sum "itself I always reserved as belonging to you: take it now, and "live happily." Such is the tradition. It is far more likely that the caravanserai was founded by a saffron merchant from the profits of his trade; it is a mode of disposing of money which was more common in the days of old, than in these modern times.

Of so lone and wild a spot, it but natural that numerous and terrific stories * should be related. It has indeed been always a dangerous spot, and was particularly so during the troubles after the death of Nadir Shah. Many a caravan was plundered here, and many have been the murders its walls have witnessed. No place can indeed be conceived more fitted for such deeds: the mountains, with their wild rocky dells on one side, are just near enough to yield shelter to the banditti who may choose to resort thither; and from the caravanserai itself, in the dark and intricate recesses of which a number might lurk unnoticed, the approach of prey may be observed, as far as vision can reach.

While we remained here, indeed, we were not permitted to believe ourselves safe; various reports were brought us of thieves, who

* Of the tales of terror related of this place, one which an old man told the meerza as having happened to himself, may serve as a sample. He said, that when only a boy of eighteen years of age, he travelled upon this road in company with a Turkish horseman, a mighty man of war, who was going to Mushed. They halted in this caravanserai, and while eating their evening meal in a half ruinous chamber, a human hand freshly severed from the arm was thrown upon their table cloth, from an opening above. The boy's heart, at this sight, died within him, but the Turk only exclaimed aloud, "What scoundrel wants to spoil my dinner?" Immediately, as if for answer, a head ghastly and bleeding, followed the hand. The Turk's wrath increased; "Damn these fellows!" said he "can't they let me eat my meal in quietness; what do they want?" A foot was next let fall, and the Turk's anger was complete, he swore he would be revenged on the whole gang. Having finished his dinner, he mounted; and ordering the boy to collect the dissevered members, and put them into his tobrah (or small bag) he made him follow close, and sallied out; forty armed horsemen were there ready to attack him, but the Turk was an hero of the first water, he resisted their attacks, fought retreating and still guarding the boy, for a distance of two fursungs, and killed or wounded so many of the robbers, that at last they made off, and left him to continue his way in peace.

were said to lurk in certain hollows and ruinous buildings in the neighbourhood; and we learnt upon better authority that several tribes of Eels, that then occupied the hills around, were but too apt to take advantage of the traveller's weakness, or to purloin what they could under cover of night, from those whom they dared not openly attack. We observed, too, that the various parties which arrived in the course of the evening, instead of putting up at the caravanserai, preferred entering the village, which is fortified.

These circumstances induced us to make particular enquiry, and the more so as every place within the caravanserai was open in several quarters, and consequently incapable of being guarded; a serious evil, as we had by far more reason to dread attempts at secret robbery, than open attack: the meerza, therefore, was sent to the ketkhoda of the village, to ascertain as far as possible the extent of the risk we ran, and in case of need, either to obtain a few guards for the ensuing night, or quarters within the walls. The ketkhoda received my message with perfect civility, proposed that we should become his guests, but regretted his narrow accommodation, and after some consultation it was finally agreed that we should remain where we were, with a guard of four armed men, to protect ourselves and property, and with this precaution we went to rest.

We remained quiet until about midnight, when, as I was dozing for the first time, I was thoroughly awakened by the report of a gun, close by me, and an exclamation of "Doozd! doozd!" (thieves, thieves). I started up with my gun, and was informed by one of our vigilant guards, that three or four men had been seen stealing along the opposite wall, in the shadow of the arches, as if to get round our quarters; on which he had given the alarm, while the other had fired at and run after the supposed thieves. There was a rush out of all hands, and plenty of noise was made, but nothing was seen; so that whether there were thieves or not in the serai, or whether the watchmen gave the alarm merely to prove their zeal and alertness, we never could discover, but we remained free from further disturbance until a little past four, when we loaded, and set off on the road for Nishapore, in a very cold frosty morning.

The whole of this country having a suspicious character, from the number of wandering tribes at this period on foot, as well as from the troublesome times, we moved with caution. There are two roads from the caravanserai to Nishapore, one, which leads through a desert track, by a long and intricate pass, over a range of low hills, is rugged, difficult, and much infested by thieves; the other, which winds round the foot of the same range, is level, good, and passes through a peopled and safe country. As the difference in distance was not great, I, of course, preferred the safe road; but whether from accident or design I know not, the camel drivers took the upper road with all its disadvantages, and we found a great part of it of a very unpleasant character; passing for several miles through a narrow defile, along a small stream that wound among bushes and huge fragments of rock, with one or two ruined buildings, extremely well calculated for an ambuscade, and dismal enough. We observed several men, who hid themselves on seeing us, perhaps more frightened at us, than we at them; but we passed on without alarm.

There was a great deal more of vegetation upon these hills, although brown and withered, than we had in general seen; and it affords very good pasturage for the flocks of the Eel tribes who frequent them, as well as shelter to a quantity of game which started at every step. Just at the commencement of our descent, in the jaws of the defile that debouches on the plain of Nishapore, we passed the ruins of a caravanserai, which had some time before been repaired, and converted into a fortress, by some petty khan, who chose to set up for independence, and most probably for the purposes of committing depredations: the prince had very lately given orders for it to be destroyed, and it was now, for a second time, in ruins.

As we descended, the whole plain of Nishapore, once so celebrated for its riches and fertility, opened before us; and we should have enjoyed a very extensive view including the city itself, had it not been for the haze which rested on all the distance. Little villages, all in the form of square forts, with towers at each corner, were scattered about the plain, but most of them were in ruins, the prince having lately destroyed several, on account of the real or alleged

refractory dispositions of their owners. We passed close to one or two that belonged to Hoossain Koolee Khan, a person of some rank, who owns a good deal of land about Nishapore. He was reported yaghee (refractory), and the prince sent a force, which destroyed four of his villages, and levied from him a considerable sum of smart-money: the women and children of the chiefs were carried to Mushed, and the remaining inhabitants distributed among the other villages.

There exists, no doubt, among the chiefs, and even the most petty proprietors of this country, a strong disposition to resist as much as they can, the payment of any taxes or demands to government, and to become as independent of its authority as possible; but it may be doubted whether the system of severity, and even destruction, so often practised by the crown and its subordinate officers, in lieu of all other punishments, be well calculated to repress the evil.

We reached the village of Hoosseinabad about four o'clock, and found great difficulty in getting accommodated. The village being but seldom visited by travellers, had neither caravanserai nor mehmān khaneh *, and the only visible shelter outside the walls was in some sheds of clay, where it would have been madness for us to have remained, as the whole neighbourhood was notoriously infested by thieves. The villagers, however, although they admitted that to be the case, most inhospitably refused to receive us within their walls, and we were like to be in serious difficulty, when one of my servants found means to persuade the ketkhoda, not only that I was not a dangerous person, but that it might be greatly to his advantage, if he should admit me to the shelter of his house for the night. He now became as urgent for me to enter, as the whole of the villagers had at first been to exclude us, and we soon found ourselves in possession of a small but warm chamber, with a comfortable meal to refresh us, after our ride of about thirty-two miles.

I found my host to be a shrewd and intelligent man, and gathered from him a good deal of information regarding the country around him, of which his accounts were deplorable; the rapacity and tyranny of their rulers weighing down both chiefs and people

* Mehmān Khaneh: — a house for guests, or strangers.

where obedient, and placing them in peril of life and property in case of resistance. He told me, that much of the land around Nishapore belongs to proprietors who cultivate their properties upon the following terms. The ryots are their servants, they find the seed; the ryots furnish labour both of men and cattle. When the harvest is over, the produce is divided into three parts, two of which go to the proprietor, who accounts to the crown for all its dues, the other remains entire to the ryot. The crown dues, however, from the unsettled state of the country, are less accurately defined, and by far less regularly collected; they appear when duly levied to consist of ten tomauns for each yoke of bullocks, which is calculated to produce thirty khurwurs* of grain; this valued at seven or eight mauns for the real, would bring the duty pretty nearly to the usual standard of one-fifth of the produce.

The ryots, however, pay a tax upon whatever stock they keep, of half a real† for each sheep or goat, the value of the former, when in lamb, being five reals; otherwise but two and a half, or three reals; a goat varies from one and a half to four reals; they give more produce in milk, but less than sheep in wool‡; four sheep or goats will on an average produce one Tabreez maun (seven pounds and a quarter). A cow will sell for from eight to twenty reals; being principally used in agriculture, no tax is levied on them.

The ketkhoda observed, that those ryots who account with their landlords are better off than those who account directly to government; from the officers of which the poorer classes suffer great extortion; but although he was himself in the first class, he assured me, that he could do no more than live; indeed, the misery of the village was very apparent.

At four in the morning of the 21st the baggage went on to Nishapore, and though I did not follow till seven, I reached that town only

* Vide note, page 369.

† In some places, particularly about Nishapore, a full real is levied.

‡ It must be recollected that goats' hair enters extensively into the coarser woollen manufactures; and that from beneath the coarser external hair of these animals, a down called "*Koolk*," is obtained, little inferior to the fine wool of Thibet, and from which various articles of clothing are made.

half an hour after it had arrived, the distance being about fifteen miles. In riding along, we remarked that the soil was in general good, and that the portion of the plain over which we crossed was capable of great improvement; the long rows of little heaps indicating the course of cannauts, and the number of villages, most of them in ruins, scattered about on all sides, proved that much had once been done to render its fertility efficient. In many places there was a coat of thick, though brown and dried up grass, and the proportion of rich loam to that of poor gravel was very considerable. Cultivation was abundant near the city, and numerous well inclosed gardens and small villages extended for a considerable way along the feet of the hills. The town itself makes a poor appearance, being confined within a mud wall and ditch, without either minarets or domes; the only building that appears above the wall is one shapeless lump of a mosque: nor is the impression received upon entrance much more favourable; for, after passing the gates, the road led through a miserable lane of mud huts, and a bazar little superior to that of Subzawār, to a small caravanserai; in one of the most decent chambers of which, as no private house was immediately procurable on hire, we took up our quarters.

Our first enquiry was regarding the chiefs of the place. We understood that the young prince, the governor, had gone to Mushed at the desire of his father, accompanied by his naib, Allee Khān; and that the only person left in charge was Allee Asker Khan, commander of a few toffunchees, who served as guard in the ark. The meerza waited on this person as soon as we had refreshed ourselves; but not finding him at home, he went to call on Furrookh Khan, an officer in command of the artillery stationed in this district. This man had been one of those placed under command of the English officers, who were appointed to discipline the troops of Abbas Meerza at Tabreez; he had been attached to the artillery under Captain Lindsay, and had imbibed a great respect and some attachment for the English in general. Though a professed Mahometan, and a rigid observer of many of the forms of his religion, he was by no means so of all its inhibitons; he indulged very freely in the use of

wine, and rather boasted of the quantity he consumed, than thought of concealing it. It was, I rather think, this strong attachment to the joys of wine that induced the meerza, who was no enemy to such indulgence, to seek out the Topechee Bashee*, and they appeared, indeed, in some respects to be kindred spirits.

The khan, when he heard that an English gentleman was in town, not only expressed his strong desire to see him, but to become his host, while he should remain in it; and accordingly, as we were sitting after dinner, we were surprized by a visit from this warm hearted gentleman, whose impatience was so great that he could not wait until the morrow to pay his respects. He was accompanied by two pages, who seemed perfectly in his confidence; and one of them, upon a signal, produced from under his cloak, a large bottle of wine which he had brought, knowing, as he was pleased to say, the fondness of the English for that beverage.

It did not, indeed, seem to have been the commencement of the evening's jollity with the good khan, who was evidently under the influence of wine when he entered; but determined to lose no time, after the first compliments, he took the cup and bottle, and after drinking off a large potation, filled a similar draught for me; but though I pleaded the pain in my bruised side as an excuse for avoiding such stimulating indulgences, I found it no easy matter to pacify the khan, who seemed as jealous of having his liquor slighted, as our ancestors of yore; the meerza, however, did it ample justice, and appeared to admire its flavour: it was a light small white wine, more resembling that of Georgia, than that of Sheerauz.

Our new friend remained with us full two hours, during which he poured forth the whole stock of his acquaintance with the English people, and English manners; I found, too, that he had been a great traveller, having visited Bombay, Poonah, Hydrabad, Masoolipatam, Calcutta: and he related various anecdotes and incidents that left no doubt of his veracity; he ended by making offer of his house, horses, and all he had, insisting upon our taking up our quarters with him

* Chief of artillery.

the morrow, and swearing that he was the servant of the " Englese, " and not of Futeh Allee Shah," &c. &c.

In the morning when, after having refreshed ourselves with the bath, we were seated at breakfast, the khan again favoured us with a visit. The good gentleman had been so drunk the night before, that I did not believe he would recollect a word of what he had then said; it appeared otherwise however, for he referred to, and repeated his offers, and when I found that no house was to be had for hire, for the time we should be obliged to remain here, and that the khan was in reality more sincere in his offers than his countrymen in general are, I thought it might be as well to comply with his obliging invitation, especially as I believed it would not be difficult to make him some adequate acknowledgment at the time of taking leave. After breakfast, therefore, we removed into a small house adjoining his private apartments, very comfortably fitted up with numuds and carpets, and affording accommodation for both servants and baggage. The price we paid for this accommodation was rather inconvenient, being the constant presence of its master, who conceived that attention to be necessary for our ease and entertainment. He kept perpetually enquiring into the objects I had in my frequent observations for latitude and time, desirous, as he said, to promote them as far as he might be able: and he promised to bring me an old gentleman, who, he assured me had more knowledge regarding the history and antiquities of Nishapore than any person in the place. He brought out his arms and curiosities to amuse me, together with an old suit of English uniform that had been given him by some of his friends, and which he put on to show me how well he looked in it: finally, he got very drunk again, called for a stringed instrument (called a tarr), on which he played several tunes, acccompanying them with his voice, and remained so late, that I was forced to give very broad hints of my wish to retire before I got rid of him.

The next day brought Mahomed Ameen Khan, the ancient friend of our host, of the noble tribe of Byāt, whose forefathers, so he assured me, had been governors of Nishapore, but who is himself much reduced in circumstances, and lives on the trifling remains of

his once large property, grumbling at the times, and quite willing to assist any who might attempt to amend them. I did not, however, find, that much curious or useful information was to be obtained from him; he told me that the remains, or rather the indications, of several cities were to be traced near the present Nishapore, all of which were connected with the ancient city of that name; but he could give me no distinct account of them, though he promised to send me guides, who should take me to every thing of an interesting nature that the country contained.

I soon found that the information which these persons possessed was by no means of the description I had anticipated; but they were well acquainted, as the khan declared, with all the mountains, roads, districts, and villages around, and with many extraordinary places among them. The hills, he assured me, were much frequented by professors of chymea * and magic, and particularly by Indian mendicants and enchanters, who prepare from the plants which grow among them in the spring season, the medicines necessary to the success of their magical incantations; and many are the fanciful tales related of the exploits which they perform. One of the guides declared with solemn earnestness, that only a year or two before, one of these mysterious personages had taken a guide from his own village to a certain cave in the mountains, in which there is a well supposed to be bottomless; and when they arrived at the place, the Indian anointed the guide's eyes with a soormah †, which made him blind, so that he fell down at the mouth of the pit, afraid to stir. In this condition he remained two days, until the jogee ‡, who, mean-while, had disap-

* Chemistry, among the eastern nations, has always been considered as closely connected with, or indeed as forming a part of, the art of magic; and that is supposed to be the constant and favourite study of Indian sages. — Indian enchanters are much dreaded in Persia.

† Soormah is an ointment made up with ore of antimony, and used in the East to anoint the edges of the eyelids; the dark colour it imparts being thought to give brilliancy to the eyes, while its cooling qualities are supposed to be useful as a preservative. Any ointment for the eye thus has obtained the name of soormah.

‡ Jogees, or Yogees, are individuals of a particular sect of Indian religious mendicants, who often wander beyond the bounds of their own country, and are occasionally

peared, returned, and restored his sight by a second application, took him along with from the cavern, thus effectually keeping the man in ignorance of the object of his visit.

Both the Khan and the guides were eager in their endeavours to impress me with the belief, that the mountains in the vicinity, are rich in mines, not only of iron and lead, but of silver, gold, and even diamonds. They averred, that mysterious beings had been met with by many persons among them, who had given the most convincing proofs of the existence of such precious substances, by presenting them with portions of them. One, he said, having a desire to explore a cavern in these mountains, carried along with him three mauns and a half of oil, to light him on his subterraneous course, but the whole was expended without his reaching the end. Just as his lamp was expiring he discovered an old woman washing clothes, who enquired what he wanted, at the same time desiring him to return; he told her what had happened to him, and begged her to furnish him with some oil to enable him to find his way back; upon which she filled his lamp with soap suds from her tub, which burned like oil until he had reached the cavern's mouth, and there he discovered that they had also transmuted his lamp into gold. A great deal more of a similar nature was related by these men, seconded by the old gentleman, who always chimed in with something quite as wild; nor could I, after all, succeed in eliciting from either of them a single piece of valuable or really authentic information.

Both of the Khans, and particularly Mahomed Ameen, appeared indeed to be convinced, that the information I sought was in reality less connected with the history and antiquities of the country, than with such objects as might tend to facilitate the conquest of it, in case our nation should invade it for that purpose; he had, in fact, set me down as a spy on the part of the British government, which is a

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seen in Persia, on their way to Ba-koh, or certain other places of religious pilgrimage, and the appellation becomes applied to all religious mendicants from that country, of whatever sect.

very common opinion held of travellers in Persia; and he fully and unequivocally declared, that we should have all the assistance *he* could command. — All my assurances to the contrary were of no avail, and he appeared to be determined not to lose the opportunity of making friends against the day of need. He told me, with an air of mysterious confidence, that he could direct my attention to an object better worth while than all the nonsense of which we had been talking; and this was a natural fortress in the hills, not more, he said, than fourteen or fifteen miles distant, which, though smaller, was equally impregnable with Kelaat Naderee, which it closely resembled; having within itself wood, water, game, cultivable ground, and every thing necessary for maintaining a garrison, with very little external assistance. "This," said the old man, looking very knowing, and placing his finger by his nose, "this is the sort of inform-
"ation you want; I know well enough what you are all about; in
"such a place as this you might maintain yourselves unknown, until
"you gathered head, and were strong enough to show yourselves
"more openly."

So eager indeed was the old man to curry favour with the supposed envoy, that he even appeared disposed to great concessions, in a point which few orientals can bear to be meddled with, namely, his religion; he made many enquiries regarding the doctrines and principles of Christianity, observing, that he, for one, was disposed to be more friendly to those who professed it, than even to those of his own faith. He was, or affected, for the occasion, to be much of a free thinker, said that he believed there was a great deal of nonsense in both religions, but that the Christian prophet was the great and true one: at all events, he was a friend to good men of whatever faith they might be.

Observing my sextant and other instruments in a corner, he expressed great anxiety to be instructed in our systems of astronomy and astrology; and a most tedious and unprofitable discussion soon commenced between the meerza and him, on the comparative truth of the two systems; the former vainly attempting to drive into the head of an old and not highly endowed man, conclusions that have

resulted only after the labour of ages, from a combination of the highest talent and science under all the advantage of European learning.

About noon we rode out to view the antiquities around Nishapore. The whole face of the ground, for a considerable space around the walls, and particularly towards the east and south-east, is irregularly raised into heights, and hollows, and thickly sprinkled with mounds composed of old bricks and broken pottery, with which also a great portion of the surface is every where covered as with gravel. The first objects that attracted our attention were some large masses, not far from the eastern or Mushed gate of the town, in which might be traced the foundation of bastions, built partly of brick, and partly of clay. There is, however, no continuity of plan, or any thing to lead to a conjecture of what they may originally have been; tradition calls this the site of the *ark*, or citadel, of one of the ancient Nishapores.

Somewhat more than a mile to the eastward, stands another lofty mound, on our way to which we passed over fields thickly strewed with broken bricks and pottery; this was pointed out as the ark of the city originally founded by Shahpoor; its base may cover a space of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred yards square, and it rises above the plain, to a height of sixty feet composed, as far as we could judge, of earth mingled thickly with fragments of bricks and tiles. The ground about this large mound was much broken, and bore extensive traces of former habitations, but not a vestige remained that could lead to a conjecture of what they may have been, or when they existed.

We observed many other sets of mounds, some in clusters, others detached, all of which were said to have formed so many distinct towns, though now not one building remains; and indeed although there is sufficient evidence that this was the seat of a dense population, it would be most difficult to determine what may have been the site of the principal and most ancient city of Nishapore, and what those of suburbs, gardens, and large villages

attached to it. I was in truth struck with the number of villages that even now were scattered over the plain in all directions; many of which, no doubt, were in ruins, but many also were inhabited and prosperous; the sight was sufficient to convince the spectator that Nishapore continues to be what it always was considered, one of the richest districts in Khorasān.

Certain large inclosures further to the southward attracted our attention: their mud walls had mouldered down so as to form but one continuous heap, with larger masses where the towers and bastions once stood. Whether this was the inclosure of a town or garden it is difficult to say; the comparative equality of the ground within, which is now under cultivation, would lead to the latter conclusion; but the original strength of the walls, with their numerous towers, as well as their extent, would certainly point to the former, unless, indeed, as a garden it be supposed to have appertained to royalty. The chief inclosure must be nearly six hundred yards square, and is connected or continuous with another less distinct, but of equal size, and there are many earthen mounds all about.

At one side of this inclosure there is a burying-place, in which may be seen a tomb, marked by a stone pillar, bearing a long Persian inscription. It is the resting-place of Sheikh Furreed-u-deen Uttār*, a derwesh, or sooffee, of great celebrity in his day. He was not only

* Further particulars regarding this sage may be found in the second volume of "*Les Mines de L'Orient.*" His full designation was Mahomed Bin Ibrahim Uttār, Nishapouree. He was born A. Heg. 613. His father was a druggist, and he followed that occupation himself for several years, until a warning from a derwesh induced him to assume the garb of a mendicant also. He is said to have lived 114 years, 29 of which he spent at Nishapore, and 85 at *Shadbagh*, or *Shadbash*, a city said to have been ruined and fallen into complete decay three years after the death of this sage. The circumstances of his death agree with those related in the text, excepting in the motive assigned to him for deceiving the moghul who took him prisoner. The author quoted in "*Les Mines de L'Orient*," attributes this deceit to a desire of provoking death from their hands. He was a poet, as well as a great philosopher and saint; and his works, in both sorts, are said to be very voluminous. It is said he was buried in the city of Shadbagh, at a place called Sheher Bazargan. Of the city or the place I have no knowledge, although the former is mentioned by Dr. Herbelot, in the Bib. Orient. Whether, therefore, the tomb mentioned in the text, and revered at Nishapore as that of Sheikh Furreed-u-Deen-Uttar, does or does not contain the bones of that saint, it will be impossible to determine.

remarkable for his sanctity,but for his riches and his munificence. The latter virtue he possessed to so great a degree, that his substance was gradually expended in such donations, and he was forced to assume the garb of a derwesh, taking along with him the only valuable piece of property that remained to him, namely, a gold and jewelled drinking cup. While quitting his dwelling for ever, he met a person who enquired of him the way to the house of the rich sheikh Uttar. The sheikh told him that he had addressed the very man, who was now possessed of neither house nor home, nor of any worldly possessions but that cup, which he besought him to receive, as the last and only thing he had to bestow.

In the days of Chengiz Khan, when the city was destroyed by the Tartars, under his son Tooli Khan, this sheikh Uttar was made prisoner, and sold among the rest of the inhabitants; and, it is said, that being exposed in the market-place, the sum of seven hundred tomauns were demanded for him from a Toorkoman who was purchasing slaves. The buyer remonstrated against the enormity of this demand, but the sheikh cried out "Give it, give it; I am worth "more money;" and the Toorkoman, upon this declaration, made the purchase. Some time after, when the country was distressed by famine, the sheikh was again exposed for sale by his master; and an old man who sold barley and straw observing him, offered a bundle of the latter in exchange for him. "Take it," cried the sheikh to his master, "I am worth no more." * — "How!" asked his master, in a rage, "did you not tell me before that you were worth more "than seven hundred tomauns, and am I thus deceived? No, I will "not take this man's offer, but you shall die for your treachery." So

* This story has reference to, and illustrates one of the peculiarities (and, in truth, inconsistencies), of these enthusiasts. A Derwesh, or Sooffee, is constantly changing the tone he holds to his disciples, and the world, regarding himself, from high to low, at one time arrogating to himself excellencies and attributes little short of divine; at others, howling out that he is a miserable and weak sinner, and less than the lowest of created beings. He pretends that both these moods spring from the direct agency of the divine Spirit, which operates strongly in the first case, and leaves him uninspired and wretched in the latter; and both extremes are viewed by his followers as mysterious though undeniable proofs of their master's claims to sanctity. It is to be supposed in the story that to these fluctuations of the spirit the sheikh's inconsistent replies were to be attributed.

saying, he drew his sword, and smote off the sheikh's head; but no sooner had it rolled to the ground than the body taking it up, ran with it a full mile, to the spot where the tomb now is, and with its own finger for a pen, and its blood for ink, wrote upon a stone the epitaph which has since been engraved upon the tomb. This tomb was built by one Meer Allee Shere *, and was originally more considerable. Now, all that remains is a small oblong inclosure of brick-work, to mark the spot, and the pillar, or rather upright slab of black marble, about ten feet high, on which the epitaph is engraved. This stone was fixed into another as a pedestal, with a quantity of molten lead, which was carried off by some neighbouring villagers, the lower stone being broken in the operation: but, as the khan told us, they never throve after, and, in a very short time, they and all their families were numbered with the dead,—victims of saintly vengeance. The rest of the villagers took the warning, and restored the lead; and the khan, who is a great admirer of the saint, and a firm believer in his power, means to rebuild the tomb at his own expence.

Not far from this place there is a monument upon a more extensive scale, built, it is said, over the remains of Seyed Mahomed, a brother of Imaum Reza's, of whom I could learn no particulars, and, perhaps, it is altogether a mistake, as there is a monument to the same saint at Ak Deh, near Yezd. This in question consists of a square building, with a dome in the usual taste of these edifices, originally covered with Cashanee work †, which has dropped off from age. It was built by Shah Tahmaseb of the Suffavean race, but

* Probably the Meer Allee Shere taken notice of by the author of the Kholaussat ul-Aukhbar, as the favourite and able minister of Sooltaun Hoossein of Khorasān, whose proper designation was Saheb Kereem Aboolghauzee, Sooltaun Hoosain Bahadoor. This prince, who was son of Meerza Baykera, and great-grandson of the great Timour, succeeded to the throne of that country upon the death of his rival, Meerza Yaudgar, A. Heg. 875. He made Herāt his capital. Meer Allee Shere is mentioned as the author of many works of charity and magnificence in that country.

† The embellishments of mosques and other public buildings in Persia are most commonly formed of glazed and coloured tiles, bearing various devices, and put together in symmetrical figures; one of the chief manufactories for these tiles being at Cashan, the manufacture itself has very generally received the name of that city.

has undergone repair in later times; the archways and domes have at one time been handsomely decorated with Cashanee work.

Close by this large edifice, there is a small building, in which repose the relics of Omar Keyoomee, a poet who flourished in the days of the celebrated Nizamool Moolk, chief minister of the great Sooltaun Malek Shah, of the Seljook dynasty. The wuzeer himself, the well known Hussun Soubah*, and the poet Omar were school-fellows, and during the days of their youth they entered into a mutual agreement, that whoever of the three should first arrive at riches or power, should share his good fortune with his two companions. When Nizamool Moolk was raised to the wuzeerut, upon the death of his father, Omar Keyoomee went to him, and claimed the benefit of their mutual agreement: Hussun Soubah also went to see his old friend, but he refused any favour, haughtily observing, that he looked too high for even the wuzeer to help him onward, and would carve out his own fortune. Omar, enamoured of poesy and ease, said, "Place me in a situation where I may live in comfort, "and enjoy wine in abundance to inspire my muse". The wuzeer assigned him the district of Nishapore, then celebrated for its rich fruits and wines†; here the poet lived, died, and was interred. My friend the meerza was delighted at finding this tomb, and paid his devotions at it with true enthusiasm; for he looked upon the poet as a congenial soul, and only regretted that no Nizamool Moolk existed in these degenerate days to bestow upon him the means of a like happy and careless life. These tombs are inclosed in a garden, once laid out in tanks, fountains, and parterres, now all gone to decay; a few fruit trees, and five or six very fine old pines, give a shade to the place, and shelter to multitudes of rooks.

Such were the only vestiges of antiquity I could discover or hear of at Nishapore: the place has indeed been made so often the theatre

* It is hardly necessary to mention, that Hussun Soubah was the founder of the sect Hussunees, better known by the name of Assassins, as their chief was by that of "Old man of the mountain."

† This account of the agreement between these three celebrated characters is related in the Kholaussul-ul-Akhbar. (Vide Price's Mahom. vol. ii. page 28.)

of the most savage barbarity, and so freqnently has been completely desolated, that it can be no matter of astonishment if every trace of former grandeur and prosperity should by this time have vanished. The city of Nishapore boasts, in truth, of a very remote antiquity, having been founded, as some pretend, by Tahmuras * Deevebund, and destroyed by Alexander the Great. It was rebuilt by Shahpoor D'houlactaf, of the Sassanian dynasty, who, in a progress through his dominions, became pleased with the situation. The former name is said to have been Aber Sheher †; that which it bears at present is differently derived; some say, that is is a combination of the two words, *ni*, for *no*, new, and *Shahpoor*, the sovereign who rebuilt it; others contend that it is an union of the word *nei*, a *reed*, with the king's name, because the place abounded in reeds.

I have not been able to collect many particulars of its history, though there are several Persian works which treat regarding it. ‡ Nishapore was one of the royal cities of Khorasān, and for a long time the seat of the Seljook dynasty, the founder of which, Togrul Beg, was crowned there. In the year of the Hegira, 548, and under the reign of Sooltaun Sanjer of that dynasty, this city, which had attained to an extraordinary degree of splendor, was, in common with the rest of the country around it, so completely destroyed by the Toorkoman tribe of Ghuz, that it is said the inhabitants when they returned after the retreat of their savage enemies, could not recognize the situation of their houses.

It would appear, however, that the city was soon rebuilt, and under the reign of the Khaurezmian sovereigns who succeeded those of the Seljook dynasty, it regained its former state of magnificence: but this did not long continue; under the reign of the unfortunate

* One of the Peishdadian, and fabulous kings of ancient Persia, surnamed Deevebund, from his success in subduing the evil spirits, with which part of his kingdom at that time was infested.

† Query, "Abou Sheher?"

‡ It is mentioned particularly as having for several months withstood the conquering arms of the Arab conquerors, when in the 31st year of the Hegira, under Abdoolla Aumar, they overran the whole of Khorasān.

Mahomed Shah, the sixth of that race, it was utterly destroyed by the Moghuls during the irruption of Chengiz Khan. Nishapore had, in the first instance, submitted implicitly to the will of the conqueror, but subsequently unable to withstand the distress and entreaties of Jelall-u-deen, the son of Mahomed, and their own favourite prince, who was still endeavouring to make a stand against the torrent of desolation, the inhabitants furnished his army with some supplies and refreshments; which offence so exasperated the conqueror, that he sent orders to his son, Tuli Khan, who had just taken Merve, to leave all other objects, for that of inflicting the severest possible chastisement on this devoted city. Tuli Khan obeyed but too well; according to the historians quoted by Petit la Croix, the Tartars having found means to enter the place after a siege of only three days, spent a day and night in plundering it, and in massacring and reducing to slavery its wretched and defenceless inhabitants; the city was razed, and the ground on which it stood levelled so completely, that it is said a horse might have ridden over the whole site without stumbling; and the slaughter was so great, that many days were occupied in numbering the dead. But we may be permitted to withhold implicit credit from the historian when he asserts, that the number of the slain, including those put to death in the neighbourhood, but without taking into account those who were smothered in the ruins where they had sought for shelter, amounted to seventeen hundred and forty seven thousand.*

The situation was, however, so favourable, that the city of Nishapore was soon rebuilt, but it does not appear ever to have recovered its former importance or splendour; although it occasionally was the seat of a temporary sovereign, for we find that when Khorasān was invaded by Timoor in A. Heg. 783, Nishapore, as well as Subzawār was in possession of Khojah Allee Mowiād, an independent sovereign, and the last of the Sarbedarian race, who not only submitted himself to the conqueror, but attached himself to him ever

* Major Price, quoting a Persian "History of Khorasan" observes that this total was without counting women and children. For a more particular account of this horrible massacre, see his "History of Mahomedanism," vol. ii. page 524.

afterwards through life, and thereby preserved his dominions and subjects from the too frequent massacres made by that cruel prince.

This was the last gleam of greatness and prosperity that gilded the fate of Nishapore. It passed from hand to hand with the rest of the country, as it was conquered or inherited by the several potentates who succeeded Timoor Shah and his posterity. In the reign of the Suffavean sovereigns, it partook of the general prosperity which the power and talents of that race of monarchs assured to Persia, although they could not prevent occasional visits from its ancient enemies the Toorkomans, who let slip no opportunity of plundering Khorasān. It suffered severely in the Affghaun invasion, which terminated the rule of that dynasty; but it was retaken from their hands in the early part of Nadir Shah's career, and, in common with the rest of Khorasān, continued to enjoy that monarch's favour during his lifetime. In the second Affghaun invasion under Ahmed Shah Abdallee, in the year 1749, consequent upon the death of Nadir, Nishapore was vigorously attacked by that chief, but he was repulsed for the time, and he only succeeded in taking it in the following year, when, according to the report of those still alive who witnessed the event, the inhabitants experienced horrors, only inferior to those inflicted on their ancestors by their Tartar invaders. According to Mahomed Ameen Khan, the city was rendered so desolate, that there did not remain within its walls a single inhabited house; and in this condition it long continued. When, however, the days of terror were past, a few of the peasantry, encouraged by Abbas Koolee Khan, of the tribe of Byāt, began to reappear and repair a few of the habitations, the same chief assisted them to rebuild the walls, and others, attracted by this commencement, removed from their hiding places, until the town gradually advanced to the state in which it now is. It cannot, however, be said, that its rise has been so rapid as to give very favourable impressions of the fostering care of government. The circuit of the present wall does not exceed 4000 paces; were the whole inclosed area fully occupied, it could not contain above 30 or 40 thousand persons, and at present the greater part is still covered with ruins. According to the account given by

the Khan and others, there are not above 2000 houses occupied, which would indicate a population at most of 10,000 souls; but I do not believe, from what I saw, that there is half that number within the walls. The bazar is somewhat superior, it is true, to that of Subzawār, but it has no appearance of trade, and contains only articles calculated for the consumption of the place. It is to be recollected, however, that I saw the town at a time when the little court which is kept there being absent, it was in a great measure deprived of what small appearance of gaiety and population it may possess during the residence of the prince.

There are no manufactures of consequence in the place; the silk that is made from the small private gardens of mulberry, is wove into coarse stuffs for the women, and cotton cloths are also made for home consumption. Nishapore cannot boast of a single branch of foreign trade, excepting that in Toorquoises: the mines near the place shall hereafter be described, and, indeed, the town benefits but little even by them.

The district of Nishapore has been bestowed by Hoossain Allee Meerza as a provision for one of his sons, a boy of 10 or 12 years of age, to whom he has added a more efficient governor, under the name of naib, or deputy, in the person of a noble, named Allee Khan. This is a very common mode of providing for the sons of princes, but it is always dreaded by the people, because it subjects them to a double and very painful rate of extortion. The district is assessed at 100,000 tomauns a year, in money, produce, and service; and at least twice as much more is extracted from it, to feed the various officers and myrmidons of government.

The plains and district of Nishapore have in all times been celebrated for their fertility; when looking from the top of the old ark, at the numerous villages on every side, and inquiring whether they were all inhabited, I was answered in the affirmative; and it was added, that in the different muhulehs (or departments) of Nishapore, they reckon 14,000 distinct villages, all inhabited, and irrigated by 12,000 cannauts, and 18 small rivers from the mountains. This magnificent detail is, no doubt, greatly exaggerated, being but a re-

iteration of the traditional account of this place in its days of high prosperity: no such vast population or cultivation now exists, most of the villages are ruinous; the cannauts, the remains of which, covering the plain, may serve almost to attest the truth of the above statement, are now choked up, and dry; and the rivulets, if they exist, flow by desert banks, or irrigate the few fields which yet remain: still, in spite of the desolation produced by a succession of savage invasions and oppressive governments, the plain of Nishapore can boast of more fertility and cultivation, than perhaps any other part of Khorasān, certainly than any part which owns the authority of the crown.

The climate of Nishapore is equally celebrated with the fertility of its soil. The thermometer while we remained there, ranged in the morning from 16° to 19° of Fahrenheit; on one or two damp days only it rose to 20°. At noon it rose to 45° or 46° in the sun, and 40° in the shade, falling in the afternoon about 10° as the sun declined; and we were informed that this was the usual and unvarying rate at this season.

I may remark as a curious fact in zoology, that many of the cannauts, both here and at Shahrood, swarmed with fish, some of which were of considerable size. When it is remembered that these are not natural, but artificial sources of water, brought from under ground for distances of many hundreds and even thousands of yards; and that the water, after issuing into the open air, has but a short course, being either entirely absorbed in irrigating the cultivation, or lost in the barren plain beyond it, and thus having no communication whatever with any large or permanent body of water, it seems difficult to account for the presence of these fish. The natives say that they are to be found in most considerable cannauts, but are never put into them by the hand of man. It may be added, that we saw no fish in any of the mountain streams on the southern face of the Elburz, although some that we crossed were clear, and of considerable depth. The Russian soldiers, who catch these fish, observe the same fact, all are taken in cannauts, not in the natural streams. They are a leather-mouthed fish, of no great delicacy, but perfectly sweet and wholesome.

CHAP. XVI.

THE AUTHOR VISITS THE CELEBRATED TOORQUOISE MINES NEAR NISHAPORE, 24TH JANUARY. — VILLAGES OF MĀDAN. — DESCRIPTION OF THE MINES. — DEFECTIVE MODE OF WORKING THEM. —REASONS WHY IMPROVEMENT IN THE ART OF WORKING THEM IS NOT MADE. — MINES THE PROPERTY OF, AND FARMED BY, THE CROWN. — THE INHABITANTS OF THE TWO VILLAGES CLOSE TO THEM HAVE A MONOPOLY OF LABOUR. — MODE OF FARMING AND DIVIDING THE PRODUCE. — TOOLS. — DIFFERENT SHAPES IN WHICH THE GEM IS SOLD. — DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH THE FARMERS AT THE MINES. — TRICKS AND SHIFTS OF THE VILLAGERS. — HORSE CLOTHS STOLEN. — SUSPICIONS OF VILLAGERS. — WILD SHEEP OF THE MOUNTAINS. — QUITS THE VILLAGE. — VISITS A SALT MINE. — RETURNS TO NISHAPORE.

On the 24th of January, about five in the morning, we set off to visit the toorquoise mines, which we understood to lie about nine fursungs to the westward of Nishapore. The road led directly over the plain, which was interspersed with villages, and their little patches of cultivation; but these decreased in frequency as we advanced, till at last we travelled on the barren waste; and after riding seven or eight and twenty miles, descended into the bed of a fine stream that issued from the hills on the left, and followed it upwards for a considerable way. We then turned into a mountain glen, winding among hillocks, which on the right consisted of various coloured earths; but on the left were tolerably covered with herbage, which though chiefly dry and brown, afforded pasture to the flocks of several detachments of Eels, whose dark tents we passed in the glen. A faint but beautiful shade of verdure might be seen stealing over many parts of the hills, even at a distance from the watercourses, the effect perhaps of a few slight but soft showers of rain, and the late cloudy weather; and it gave a milder and lovelier tone to the scenery than we had enjoyed for a long time past. Winding among these not unpleasing vallies for some nine or ten miles fur-

ther, we reached the village Mādan*, situated at the foot of the hill in which the toorquoise mines lie, and we estimated the total distance from Nishapore at between thirty-six and forty miles.

There are two villages at this place, both recognised under the name of Mādan, viz. the old and the new; the latter has probably grown out of the superabundant population of the former. Each is built upon a height, and both are fortified; a precaution quite necessary, situated as they are in a wild and remote country, surrounded by wandering and savage tribes, by no means scrupulous with regard to the property of their neighbours. It was in the old village that lodgings were assigned me, in the house of the ket-khoda; to which, after entering the place, we arrived by a succession of intricate passages more like the burrowing of foxes, than the habitation of human beings: indeed the village itself more resembles a rabbit warren, an ant hill, or a beaver's town, than any other things I can conceive: for it consists of a mass of earth somewhat like the forts at Dehmoollah and Lasgird, perforated, in the strangest possible way, into little cells of every sort and size, connected by passages so extremely winding, dark, and narrow, that it is very difficult for a stranger to find his way among them, and which form an excellent means of defence against an external foe. Our quarters were far from superb, and it was very difficult to procure any thing to eat beyond the common necessaries of bread and rice. After a good deal of negociation the latter source of uneasiness was removed by one of the villagers, who was prevailed upon to give up a small portion of meat which he possessed, in a semi-cooked state, along with the pot that held it, for a consideration of about four times its value. This was transferred to my pillaw, and the khan of the district, who called upon me some time after, found the meerza and myself busily employed in picking rice and raisins for our afternoon's repast.

The khan appeared to be a plain, civil person, by no means averse to give us information regarding the village, or the mines attached to them; the amount of which, with all other particulars ga-

* The word Mādan in Persian signifies a *Mine*.

thered there, I have thrown into the general account of these mines. The khan has under his charge, a Ballook or division, one of the twelve which constitute the district of Nishapore; he told us, that there were in this division ten or twelve villages aggregating above one thousand houses, and from six to eight thousand inhabitants. The two villages of Mādan alone contain between eight hundred and a thousand souls, of which two hundred may be men in their prime; my own observations tended to confirm this estimate.

The next morning we took guides, and set off to see the mines. The hill in which they are situated lies about forty miles west north-west of Nishapore, and is connected with those that separate its plain from Koordistan, and which are a branch from the Elburz range: these, as will be seen in another place, are chiefly of a primitive character; but the hill of Mādan totally differs from them in appearance and formation.

The approach from the eastward is by a long glen, in which there is a quantity of a plum-pudding stone or aggregate rock, composed of various sized pebbles strongly cemented together, and forming, in some cases, the tops of the little hillocks that abounded in the glen; these, however, more generally consisted of differently coloured earths, the decomposition of rocks long since mouldered away. The colours of this earth were ash-grey, dull red-grey, ochery yellow, deep red-brown; there was some perfectly white, and occasionally patches of a substance resembling red chalk. Higher up upon the hills we observed red or yellowish rock protruding from the ridges formed on their sides.

As we approached the village, and gained a view of the higher hills of the range, they proved to consist of a very red and brown rock, which appeared through their similarly coloured debris; so that the characteristic tint of the mountain is red-brown, having in some parts a dash of yellow ochre, which added an occasional richness to the duller masses. The quantity of rock that appears, however, is small in proportion to the soil, which is but partially covered with brown tufts of dried weeds, and scanty grass; the bottom is formed of the

same earthy hillocks which are so universal in similar situations over the whole of this country.

The whole range is evidently much tinged with iron; and though the rock, when more closely examined, exhibits a variety of shape and colour, its prevailing characteristics are an irregular fracture and a red-brown colour. The yellow stone is soft, and in decay; that which is dark is harder, and in some places the metal may be seen abundantly pervading the rock, in the form of specular ore both in veins and in masses, the facets being generally small, so that the fracture of a piece rich in ore almost resembles that of the metal itself.

The toorquoise, or feeroza, as it is called by the natives, is found only in the principal hill of the cluster; that is to say, no mine has hitherto been discovered, or perhaps sought for in the others; it is found in most, if not in all, of the substances of which the hill is composed, but principally in four; viz. in a dead grey earth, in the heavy, hard, brown rock; in the soft yellow stone, and in the rock which is pervaded with specular iron ore. There are five principal mines or pits from whence the gem is taken. The first to which we were led, is called the "Khurooch," which signifies "that which has made its appear-"ance;" this is by no means so old as the others; the stones are chiefly found in loose soil of a whitish grey colour, attached to pieces of the matrix, dug from small pits on the side of a hill: this earth, and the small loose stones it contains, the workmen turn over and over, and find fragments of the gem as if by chance. In one of the largest pits into which I descended they had arrived at a stratum of loose stones and pebbles, exactly resembling the aggregate rocks in the glen below; and from among these they pick out pieces of toorquoise. The whole character of the place had the appearance of an exhausted mine, or rather perhaps of natural debris, than of original formation; as if the soil and its gravel had resulted from the effects of detrition and sediment, perhaps, by the agency of water upon the mountain above: the grey soil is of the same nature as that of many of the low hillocks described above. The stones found in this place are seldom of much value.

From hence we wound along the side of the hill, always rising, to a great mass of dark brown stone, the accumulated refuse thrown out of several pits dug under an overhanging rock upon the hill side, where considerable excavations have been made. Among this debris we found several pieces with fragments of the gem sticking to them in various forms; some in that of small round pimples of an exquisite blue, budding, as it were, from the dark brown stone. In the excavations there lay a quantity of the fragments hewn from above, to be broken up for their contents; and upon examination both above and below, the rock was discovered to be full of little veins containing the blue matter of the toorquoise, which run in all directions, but chiefly between the lamina of the rock; and we had here an opportunity of observing how the gem is found in the matrix. These veins were, however, small, and though we procured several bits sufficient for specimens, it did not appear as if pieces of much size or value were plentiful. The rock was a varied one of brown and red, with yellow intermingled, resembling some ores of iron, evidently coloured with that metal and not unlike some parts of the aggregate rock below. This rock so far evinced a disposition to stratification, that its principal fissures dipt to the south-west at an angle of 45°: beneath the solid rock, in the crevices, and in layers between the strata, there was a congeries of pebbles, resembling those in the abovementioned aggregates, yellow, red, grey, and brown; and in this mass pieces of the gem are frequently found. This mine has obtained the name of Mādan-e-siah, or the black mine, and the excavations extend for several hundred yards along the side of the hill.

From thence we turned round an indenture of the hill, to another large series of excavations in a rock of considerable extent; great collections of ruins in front of these, testify, that in former times this mine has been largely worked; but this is no longer the case, though I know not why; for the nature of the rock is entirely the same as that of the Mādan-e-siah; and in the lofty roof we could trace the veins of toorquoise matter, several pieces of which we also found in a fallen mass. A great portion of the outer part of this

excavation, was incrusted with a white efflorescence, which the natives said was *zeng* (*alum*), and which they informed us abounds hereabouts. On the roof, too, there were several patches of a fine verdigrease blue colour, that led me to suspect the presence of copper; although the natives denied having ever heard of copper in the hill, and attributed this appearance also to the presence of the zeng. Could this have been the colouring matter of the Toorquoise, laying hold of some other substance adapted to receive it, though calculated to vary its shade ?

The excavations in this place are very extensive, and diverge in various directions; some, it is said, extend nearly to the Khurooch mine. I had no time to examine them, and as it could have led to no further conclusion regarding the nature or formation of the gem, it was of little consequence. In the interior recesses of this mine the inhabitants of the village have more than once sought refuge in times of danger; the last time they were thus forced to burrow in the ground, was during the Affghaun invasion under Ahmed Shah Abdallee; and the barricadoes and small buildings which they constructed for their convenience under ground, now the haunt of wild animals, are still to be seen.

We descended from hence to a collection of excavations called the Kummeree mines, which are of late origin; part of these are but pits dug in grey earth like that of the Khurooch mine, and may possibly be also the remains of some former working; but the greatest number of stones are obtained from two deep excavations dug in a solid rock resembling that of the Mādan-e-siah, and the toorquoise is found in the same form as there, that is to say, in small veins variously dispersed through the body of the rock: a man who was working here offered me the produce of his day's labour in an old shoe, consisting of pieces of various sorts and sizes, but chiefly very small, in slender veins more or less detached from the rock. Stones of a large size are occasionally found here, but all are liable to be pervaded by numerous white spots, that greatly lessen their value. Water had taken possession of one pit, so that the lower part cannot be worked at all; and though it is high upon the hill side, so that

they have all the advantage of a considerable fall, the miners are such bad engineers that they have not even attempted to drain it off.

We next ascended to a considerable height, where, in a cleft of the hill, is situated the mine called Abdool Rezākee, from having been discovered, or formerly worked, by a person of that name. The chief excavation is under a great overhanging rock, of the same nature as that of the Mādan-e-siah and others, and from this mine are obtained the finest and largest stones of any. At the entrance there is a prodigious quantity of debris, which has accumulated from former workings; and in this, which forms a large bank, nearly filling up the mouth of the cavern, there have been dug many pits, for re-examining the rejected matter, and obtaining from it whatever stones may have escaped the vigilance of the original miners. The interior rock principally consists of the same red and brown stone; but there is also much of a soft, yellow stone, and a mouldering reddish rock, both pervaded with toorquoise matter; as well as of a rock much firmer in its texture than the others, being hard and quartzoze, of a whitish grey, with streaks of red, and veins of specular iron ore, full of metallic lustre.

In this mine the toorquoise matter did not appear to run so much in veins; but this might be accidental, for we were told that the greater part of the gem is found in this manner, and that all the most valuable stones are obtained from hence. But there can be nothing more deceitful than the appearance of this rock: I took up a bit which had the most promising show of blue matter dispersed about it, and broke it up for specimens; but it contained only a few, and very poor pieces, with a great quantity of white, or light-green stuff, which might have been taken for toorquoises in an imperfect state, and which was plentifully scattered throughout this mine. Several pieces were also found of sufficient hardness, but of a dead pale hue. Had these been possessed of a full degree of colour, they would have been worth an immense price; as it was, they were worthless. In some instances the stone was found adhering to the hard rock; in others, dispersed in spots through its

softer and more decayed parts. Thus there was no general inference to be deduced from what we saw, that would account for its mode of formation; for although the finer specimens are very sparingly sprinkled, the toorquoise matter seems to pervade the whole hill, in greater or lesser degree.

These were shown to us as the principal toorquoise mines. Having taken a round of the hill upon our return, we fell upon another, which was called, as we were informed, the Khaur-e-suffeed, or white cavern, from the colour of the external rocks. The original mine is not worked; the excavations are extensive, but entirely abandoned, being now incumbered with the ruins of former and more spirited operators; and at present those who work here content themselves with breaking up the debris that has been thrown out, and which forms an huge mass of dark-brown fragments on the side of the hill below the cave. These they pick coarsely, and then carry them away to be washed and examined; and among them they find small but beautiful pieces, barely enough to pay for their labour.

In visiting these celebrated mines, which alone have furnished the world from time immemorial with one of its highly valued gems, although I did not expect to discover any great degree of ingenuity or science in the art of mining, I had conceived not only that the excavations were of great extent, but that the method of working them must by this time have been reduced to a system, however imperfect it might be; so that, at all events, the material for which they seek should neither be destroyed in their operations, nor smuggled away by the workmen. Certainly, however, although the enquiries I had made upon the subject had prepared me to be low in my expectations, I found that they were yet far above the truth. System or management there is none whatever; and nothing can be more inartificial than their mining process; neither skill nor ingenuity are exerted, no sort of contrivance is made use of to lessen labour, or to economize either time or materials. In former times the excavations made were extensive; and though little attention appears to have been paid to regularity, still the refuse was removed,

and searched, no doubt, to a certain extent, as it was carried out, the interior being thus left clear. In these days they confine their operations to digging where experience has shown that fragments of the gem may be found, leaving the refuse just where it was, or moving it so slightly that it soon encumbers and even checks further progress; or they rake among the refuse of former times for what their predecessors may have overlooked: or finally, as their most extensive operation, they break down with picks and hammers, and quite at random, the rock that forms the walls and roofs of their mine, without any attention to the veins of the gem, so that many valuable pieces may be broken in the operation; and they leave the fragments just as they fall, to embarrass their future work, so that the mine soon becomes impracticable. There are no shafts or chambers formed on a regular plan; no roads constructed to remove the refuse from the horizontal excavations, nor any means adopted for raising it from those which dip downwards from the surface. If such become filled with water, they must be abandoned, for they cannot remove it. And, finally, they have not established any system by which the rock containing the precious material may be broken, or the material itself be freed from the matrix with the least possible injury.

The whole of this defective management may be fairly placed to account of the wretched government, and the insecurity of property, which is the bane of every thing that might be good or valuable in Persia. The people want neither acuteness nor ingenuity, but these qualities are crushed and rendered unavailing, by want of occasion, and even by the danger of exercising them. Were any rich individual, or even the prince himself, to take in hand the whole concern, and, after establishing some system by which the produce might be assured to himself, or his farmers, were he to expend a few hundred, or at most a few thousand tomauns upon the improvement of the access to, and facilities for working these mines, there cannot be a doubt that, as long as the demand for the gem should keep up, the profit would be great; but no one, and least of all the king or the princes, would venture on such a speculation. Were private

persons disposed thus to invest their capital, they well know that even the most solemn assurances of protection and favour from government would only be kept until the concerns should become profitable; that then rents would be raised, duties imposed, exactions of various descriptions made, which would, by degrees, impoverish them, if, indeed, a more summary method of appropriation were not adopted. Nay, who could insure to them that government itself should stand for a sufficient time to allow of their reaping the benefit of its promises, if even they could be relied upon. Princes themselves have but too uncertain a tenure of their state to lay out one tomaun in the hope of eventual profit. It is but an additional illustration of the constant Persian practice; every one lives for himself, and snatches what he can. No means of making money, except such as require outlay, are rejected, and this is more particularly the case with the king and the nobles of the land. Thus it ceases to be wonderful that, among other objects of high promise, the toorquoise mines of Nishapore are left in the hands of ignorant peasants, who have neither capital to advance nor skill to direct their operations.

These mines, being the property of the crown, are farmed out to any one who chooses to give the rent required; and this varies according to the sovereign's pleasure, although it is naturally regulated by the demand for the gem; the highest obtainable sum being demanded, although the concern is not regularly set up to auction. This year the demand was two thousand tomauns of Khorasān, or forty thousand reals of Irāk, a sum so much beyond the supposed value, that the whole of the Abdool Rezakee mine, the oldest and best of all, valued at seven hundred tomauns of the above sum, has been refused by the farmers, and remains, nominally at least, unworked, and, consequently, yielding nothing to the crown.

The inhabitants of these two villages have, for time out of mind, furnished labourers for the mines, and have for a long time past been the farmers of them also. The advantage of situation having not only given them a complete monopoly of the labour, but such facilities for collecting the produce, and interfering with the opera-

tions of those who should attempt to rival them, that all competition with them has long since been given up as a losing game. The manner in which they conduct the business at present is as follows: one hundred villagers take the whole mines, and work in parties of from five to ten, who divide the produce of their labour either collectively, or by these separate parties, each contributing his share of the rent. The produce is then sold to the merchants who resort here to trade, or it is sent for sale to Mushed. The governor of the village, doubtless, has a good share in the profits, but I believe he is not necessarily engaged in the trade; or if he be so, he has not ostensibly any overpowering proportion; but his influence is great, and it often controls bargains in such a manner, that those who possess fine stones, rather wait their opportunity, and smuggle them out of the village, than run the risk of exposing them for sale: besides which, the largest and most valuable stones are not unfrequently laid hold of as presents for the sovereign, or the prince, without any consideration for the property of the owner, or permitting him to profit at all by the gift.

The day on which we visited the mines was Friday, which being the Mahometan day of weekly rest, there were but few people at work; we however could observe the slovenly manner in which they proceeded, as well as the coarse and inefficient nature of their tools; they use large hammers to break the rock, and a sort of adze with a sharp and a heavy end; but neither picks, crows, nor wedges, so that the progress of their work is both slow and uncertain.

The toorquoise is sold at this place, chiefly in three shapes: the first is in that of single stones freed from the matrix, and ground so far as to expose the size, shape, and colour of the gem; but not polished, or further cut. In this state, by wetting it, any flaws it may contain can be perceived, and the true value of the stone may be nearly determined. The price is in proportion to the smallness of the risk. There are, however, several gradations in this state: in some cases the face of the stone is only ground clean, so as to give to view its size and colour, the thickness and exact form remaining

uncertain: in others, there is still more care taken, and the stone is still more developed. Again, and particularly when they believe a stone to be valuable, they cut it into the best shape it will admit of, grinding off every portion of the matrix, and leaving to the stone-cutter only the task of polishing it.

The next state is that in which the stone is freed as much as possible from the bulky parts of the parent rock, without the action of grinding; and is presented to the purchaser, covered only with the inner sheathing that envelopes it in the vein; it is met with thus of all sizes, and a parcel of such stones generally contains a quantity of miserable trash, along with a proportion of large and promising pieces, which latter are mostly applied upon one edge or side to the grindstone, just to show the colour and tempt the purchaser; but the fineness or the equality of texture, which constitutes the value of the gem, cannot be known from this; and the risk in purchasing such a parcel is therefore considerable. There are, indeed, always a few pieces of good weight and colour thrown into such parcels to attract customers, but experience has taught these men to know with tolerable certainty a valuable stone even in the matrix, and they always separate and keep it for sale by itself, so that it seldom happens that many of great beauty are found among parcels thus purchased in the rough. Occasionally a parcel of very picked and tempting pieces of this kind are offered for sale, but always at high prices; as an instance — four very large and heavy pieces of the stone, quite free from the rock, and showing good colour, were offered to me at one hundred and fifty reals; I offered thirty, which was refused, nor would any thing under a hundred reals be accepted. These, after being ground and polished, might have proved worth three hundred reals, or they might have turned out worth very little.

The third state in which the toorquoise is offered for sale is in lumps, with the parent rock very loosely knocked off, so that no estimate can be formed of its intrinsic value, consequently it is entirely matter of speculation. Such stones are sold by weight, at a price agreed on between the parties, according to appearances; and

which varies from three Khorasānee tomauns to thirty*, for a maun Tabreez. In this sort of lottery there is sometimes a good deal of money made, as stones of great value are sometimes found among such rough parcels.

I was myself desirous of making some purchases, in the hope of picking up a few good stones at a reasonable rate; but I found here, as in many other situations, that an article is generally dearer to any one, but a professed dealer, at the place of production, than in those where it is consumed. A stranger enters such a market with every disadvantage; comparatively ignorant, he has to deal with perfect adepts in the trade, and being himself neither a regular customer, nor wholesale dealer, he has to compete with those who are both: thus he should not only lay his account with being cheated in price and quality, but with paying the sellers at a rate calculated to satisfy their extravagant hopes of the profit they look to in a foreign market, and to lull the fears of their regular customers, or indemnify themselves for the risk which they incur, of losing these from disgust: it perhaps will not, therefore, appear extraordinary, that my bargains at the mines were neither advantageous nor extensive. It was, indeed, amusing, though not a little provoking, to observe the numberless and gross attempts at imposition, which they continued to practise; and the ingenious tissue of lies with which they endeavoured to carry them through. One, for instance, would bring a parcel of stones for sale; much bargaining would ensue; the price offered would in the first instance be rejected, and the parcel withdrawn: — presently the same parcel would be brought back, with an intimation that the owner was content to take my offer, but upon examination it was seen that some of the finest stones had been withdrawn; and the bargain then was finally rejected on my side In a little while, however, the same parcel, with the addition perhaps of a few remarkable pieces to disguise it, would be brought by another party, and the same game once more played

* From sixty to six hundred reals for seven and a quarter lbs. English.

over by him: thus they would persevere until we were quite sick of their palpable tricks. At least six or eight large parcels, besides lesser ones, and single stones, were offered me during my stay in the village, but all at prices so exorbitant, as to leave it clear that they desired to make no sale, unless they could grossly cheat the Christian stranger who had come to see their country, perhaps, they thought as a spy, and thus make him pay dearly for his curiosity.

I have no doubt that jealousy on the part of the khan operated greatly to the prejudice of my intended speculations; and that if it had been my intention to make purchases to a large amount, the only plan would have been to conciliate that person, and one or two of the elder villagers by presents, and take up quarters for a week or a fortnight among them; but from what I observed here and elsewhere of the value put upon the toorquoise in Persia, I do not believe that they could be purchased there at a rate which would yield any considerable profit upon a sale in Europe.

Disgusted with the bad conduct and extortion of the people, and having satisfied myself as far as possible with regard to the toorquoise mines, and their produce, I resolved to quit the village on the forenoon of the 26th. I had, indeed, intended to have staid another day, but on the preceding night the body clothes of one of the horses were stolen, and upon application to the khan I had received but little satisfaction; he indeed put the blame upon some Koords who had lodged in the village the night before, and advised me to say nothing about the matter, and that the goods might probably be restored next night without noise*; but seeing that I could not rely on his protection, and by no means certain that on the next night the horse might not follow his clothes, I took the measure of prompt departure, the more decidedly as it was plain that the villagers began to view me with no kindly eyes; perhaps conceiving me to be a spy sent to ascertain what rate of taxation they might be able to bear.

* Not an uncommon expedient with thieves who believe themselves in danger of detection; and it is a compromise which the sufferers are generally well pleased to acquiesce in without prosecuting vengeance, or justice further.

Indeed, upon seeing me using my instruments, and taking observations, some of them expressed as much.

I may remark here, that the mountains in this vicinity are frequented by the wild sheep: while I was at the village, a ram of this description was killed by one of their hunters, and brought to me as a present, in hopes of a handsome return. It was a noble animal, just what it might be conceived the finest sort of domestic ram would be in a state of nature, bold, portly, and very strong, thick like a lion about the neck and shoulders, and small in the loins; covered with short reddish hair that curled closely about the neck and fore quarters, and bearing an immense pair of crooked and twisted horns; its flesh, of which we had a part, was remarkably well-flavoured.

We quitted the village on our return to Nishapore, about twelve o'clock, and at about four miles down the glen we visited a salt mine not far from the road, which, along with another about three miles distant, supplies great part of the neighbourhood with that article. There were three excavations, none of them of great depth, in each of which a vein of salt is found, from six to eighteen inches in thickness, curiously curved in shape as well as direction, and bedded in a matrix of grey earth or stone, similar to that of the neighbouring hills. They work them in the simplest manner, with pointed hammers, using one as a wedge, and driving it onwards with another, until a large mass is detached. This salt is beautifully white, and the crystals so clear, that I was enabled to read through a mass of two inches in thickness, as through a pane of glass. The rent paid for this mine to government is 20 Khorasānee tomauns a year, and the other yields about the same: the salt sells at the rate of one real for the load of a camel (from six to seven hundred pounds), and it is highly esteemed throughout the country.

We reached Nishapore about three hours after sunset, after a ride of between eight and nine hours; and having gone at a good rate, I am convinced the distance is not short of forty miles. A long detention at the gate of the town, in a keen frosty wind, prepared us well to value the comforts of a blazing fire and a good dinner, to which our kind host welcomed us as warmly as ever; and although

particularly drunk himself, and hardly able to speak, he had yet the consideration to leave us at an early hour to the repose we required.

Persians, when they are addicted to wine (and the instances are far from unfrequent), preserve no restraint, and show very little anxiety to conceal their frailty, unless when they are persons following grave occupations. Indeed their maxim is, that there is as much sin in a glass as in a flaggon; and that if they incur the penalty, they will not forego the pleasure; which to them consists, not in the gradual exhilaration produced by wine and conversation among companions who meet to make merry, but in the feelings of intoxication itself; and therefore a Persian prefers brandy, and deep potations, because these soonest enable him to attain that felicity. Of all Persian drunkards I have seen, our good host had least affectation of concealment, and was the most indefatigable toper; he spoke of the quantity of wine he daily consumed (which he assured me was never less than from a gallon and a quarter to a gallon and a half), not as a matter of boast, but of fact, which he cared not who should know, and which he felt himself to be suffering from; but he never hinted at limiting himself, or leaving it off: so that, being naturally of a weakly constitution, there is every reason to believe that his habit will soon destroy him.

CHAP. XVII.

MAHOMED ALLEE, THE AUTHOR'S PRINCIPAL PERSIAN SERVANT, DISMISSED FOR BAD CONDUCT. — PREPARATIONS TO LEAVE NISHAPORE FOR MUSHED PUT A STOP TO BY THE ILLNESS OF A FAVOURITE HORSE. — THE DISCARDED SERVANTS SUSPECTED OF HAVING CAUSED IT. — FURTHER VISIT OF MAHOMED AMEEN KHAN, WHO OPENLY SPEAKS OF AND PRESSES BRITISH INVASION OF PERSIA. — SUPPORTED BY FURROOKH KHAN. — DISINTERESTEDNESS OF THE LATTER. — HIS ONLY REQUEST. — DEPARTURE FOR MUSHED ON THE 31ST. — UNHANDSOME EXTORTION OF A PERSIAN NOBLE, WHO HIRED OUT BAGGAGE CATTLE. — CAUTION AGAINST HIRING MULES OR CAMELS FROM GREAT MEN. — RICHNESS OF NISHAPORE VALLEY. — DERROOD VILLAGE. — CROSS THE MOUNTAINS BY A STEEP AND DANGEROUS PASS TO THE VILLAGE JUGKERK. — MISERABLE ACCOMMODATIONS. — DESCEND FROM JUGKERK UPON THE PLAIN OF MUSHED. STORM OF WIND AND SNOW. — TOORGABEH LARGE AND ANCIENT VILLAGE. — REACH MUSHED BY NOON OF THE 2ND FEBRUARY. — GLOOMY IMPRESSIONS ON FIRST ENTERING THE TOWN. — A SERVANT SENT IN ADVANCE WITH LETTERS TO THE PRINCE'S WUZEER, MEERZA MOOSSA. — THE PARTY CONDUCTED BY THE ORDERS OF THAT NOBLEMAN TO LODGINGS IN HIS PALACE OF THE CHAR-BAUG — WHICH PROVE VERY UNCOMFORTABLE.

THE next day I carried into effect a measure, the necessity of which I had long foreseen, in discharging my chief Persian servant, Mahomed Allee. The conduct of this man ever since, and even previous to the affair at Shahrood, had indicated a subdued hostility like that of a concealed ruffian, rather than the devoted obedience of a good servant; his manners were disrespectful, his answers short and insolent, and he even thought fit to disobey, or purposely neglect such of my orders as were not to his taste. In several instances where his aid was required, and particularly when I was struck by the ruffian at Meyomeid, he stood looking on with his arms folded, and an air of derision, as if he was rather gratified at my embarrassment; and in several other respects his behaviour was such as to leave me but the alternative of believing that his intentions to me were of the very worst nature, or that his head was disordered; in either case he

was no fit servant for me, and I resolved on getting rid of him here, where our host appeared friendly, and well disposed to assist me. I therefore told the khan the state of the case, and, upon his promising to procure for me another servant, at least so far as Mushed, I signified to Mahomed Allee that I no longer required his services; the groom also, who was his creature, was discharged; but as their families at Tehrān had been receiving a portion of their wages, and as I had advanced them something considerable at first setting out, there was but little now due to them. Mahomed Allee showed neither surprise nor sorrow at my intimation, but demanded his full wages; and on my offering him a letter to my friends at Tehrān, who should pay him anything that might then be due, he broke out into a noisy torrent of invective; so that I was forced to order him to quit the room, and he retired muttering that I should find him worse than Ismael Coossa at Damghān.

I paid little attention to his threats at the time, but considering the ruffian-like character of the man, and his vicinity to his own country, where he might have influence enough with many like himself to do me mischief, either by an attack upon the road, or by propagating falsehoods with regard to me and my intentions in the country, I thought it prudent to provide against such possibilities, and therefore begged our host to have an eye over his motions, and by no means to permit him to leave Nishapore before me; all of which he very kindly promised.*

It was my intention to have proceeded on my journey to Mushed on the the 29th, but a disappointment in baggage-cattle forced me to postpone it, and on that morning one of the servants came to tell me that my best horse was sick, his head being greatly swelled from the effects of a kick, which they said he had received at the village of

* This man followed me to Mushed, from whence he departed with a caravan to Tehran, and the very first act he committed was murdering his own wife, in a very shocking way, in consequence of some whim of jealousy; the woman having been related to a family of some influence, her relatives demanded his blood in satisfaction of the murder; and I understood, just as I was leaving Persia, that he had been delivered up to their vengeance, which always ends in a cold-blooded private execution.

Mādan. Upon going myself to enquire into the matter I found my beautiful Arab in a most melancholy state; its head swoln to three times its natural size, its eyes closed up, and its mouth, which it was unable to open, in a complete state of salivation. Moreover, they had smeared him over with red and black earth, used as a cooling application, which contrasted so dismally with his natural grey colour, that a more deplorable object could not well be conceived. I examined his head, and observed that both there and in other parts there were marks of blows, and I entertained no doubt in my own mind that the two discarded servants had got to the horses, which were stabled in a neighbouring caravanserāi, and thus maltreated my favourite animal, out of revenge against its master. The people about, indeed, said that it might be the effect of a disease called *yaman*, which sometimes affects horses in a similar way, but more often attacks their legs and bellies, but does not destroy them, unless it strikes internally. The coincidence of this illness, however, with the threats of the discontented servants, were too striking, not to give me violent suspicions against them: at all events it retarded my march for some days.

In the evening we had a visit from Mahomed Ameen Khan, who now came to the point, and spoke plainly out what he had before but hinted at. He said that there neither was nor could be any doubt of the intention entertained by the English, sooner or later, to take possession of Khorasān, and, by degrees, of the rest of Persia, invading the country either over land from India, or by the way of Bushire; and that all he begged to know was, why this measure was so long delayed? That the manner was easy, and the success certain; we had only, he said, to send a few hundred men, under the disguise of a cāfilah, or in small detachments, by the way of Caubul, who might easily seize on some strong place like Kelaat, or these strong holds which he had offered to point out to me, where a hundred men might defend themselves against a host, and where they would soon be joined by multitudes of those who are discontented with the present state of things; that he was grieved to see the desolation of the country, and the old nobles trampled down by

a parcel of Eels and robbers, who only wait for the death of Futeh Allee Shah to seize on every thing that yet remained; that for his part, as a possessor of land, and one of the old and noble stock, the best he could in such an event expect would be to suffer the infliction of blindness, mutilation, or imprisonment for life, and that he, of consequence, was eagerly desirous for the happy deliverance which so many looked forward to. He observed that the beneficial arrangements of the British in India had reached the ears of many of his countrymen, who were all most anxious to enjoy the like comfort and security, instead of their present state of misery and uncertainty; and adding a great deal more in the same strain, he ended by asking me what I had to answer to all this, what in reality was the nature and extent of the friendship which I had professed for him (I had never professed any thing of the kind, although he had, over and over again, assured me of his;) and, finally, what arrangement was I disposed to make for him when all these things should come to pass?

I replied, that I had frequently before assured him that no such plans as he was pleased to imagine were, to the best of my knowledge, in contemplation; that I was no emissary of the kind he supposed; that I had no end in view from my travels beyond my own gratification, and the promotion of a few scientific objects, and that I now again assured him and entreated him to believe this to be the case. All was in vain, he was quite incredulous, and waggishly smiling, only repeated, "Ah, don't tell me, don't tell me; I know, I "know better." I then gave up useless asseveration, and told him, that as he would so take the matter I should not waste my breath any longer in denials; that he must be perfectly aware, whatever might happen, that the event must be distant, and the issue uncertain, none of us in all human probability would live to see it, and that at present all such conversation was at best vain and trifling. "Well," said he, "I only ask, if such an event *were* to take place, "how should you act towards me?" I replied that he took me up in an unwarrantable manner, that I had not the means even if I had the will, to answer his questions; I was here a private individual,

without power, authority, or even employment, how then could I say more, than I had already done, denying, as I did, the knowledge of any such intentions as he had been pleased to attribute to my countrymen, how could I answer a man who required me to state, what their conduct would be, if such measures should be carried into effect? That as to his offers of friendship, I had received them, as I should have done those of any good man such as I believed him to be, but that if he looked for any particular benefit to arise out of this I feared that I could not, in candour, encourage his hopes, for that I professed myself to be, without the power of materially benefitting him in any way.

"What then," cried he, "is likely to be the effect of my friend-
"ship to you, in case your countrymen do come?" I replied by again urging the improbability of such an event; but added, that I doubted not that every Englishman would acknowledge whatever acts of kindness he might confer upon a traveller and a countryman like me; yet that even in the very improbable case he contemplated, *I* was not the person to declare the measure of their favour to any one. "You speak at a distance," said he, impatiently, "and I come to the point. I know you do mean to come here, and "for the purposes I have mentioned; why then will you not confide "in me, and say how far you will favour me, your friend?" In this manner the old man continued for a most tedious while to persecute me; when at last we were fortunately interrupted, and I was relieved from further perplexity; but he continued so wedded to his favourite opinions, that nothing could change them; and I have related the conversation rather at length, not only to explain the ideas which are very generally entertained in Persia of the views of the British government, but to show, that they are by no means unpalateable, to a considerable share of its inhabitants. The old gentleman took leave of me, and I saw him no more; but he took the meerza aside, and very earnestly questioned him as to the nature of my business, of his own connection with me, and other subjects which appeared to have excited in him a very restless curiosity.

When Furrookh Khan came to visit me after dinner, I taxed him with having set such an old fool upon me, but I stopped, when the Khan very gravely replied, "Laugh not at the words of Mahomed "Ameen Khan, for they are good, wise, and true; he is a learned "man, and a great astrologer; and what he predicts will most likely "come to pass." Finding my good host likewise thus minded, I took the hint, and said no more upon so tender a subject.

As it was my intention to have departed this day, I had, on the evening before, sent to the Khan a present of certain trifles, merely as a mark of my gratitude for his kindness, with an apology for the smallness of their value; indeed, it only consisted of a piece of fine flowered English muslin, a couple of English pen-knives, a bottle of peppermint, &c. &c. But on this evening he complained of what I had done; because he observed, as my host, he could not in honour accept of any thing from me; and it was only at the representation of the meerza, who assured him that it was not intended as a present, but as a *keepsake*, that he would hear of accepting it. In the course of the evening he told me that the young prince was expected almost immediately at Nishapore, and that I must go and wait upon him. I excused myself from this, on the plea, that as a traveller with but little equipage, I had not the means of presenting myself in a proper manner before great men; and as an instance in support of my argument, I mentioned the want even of a suitable horse, in consequence of my own Arab being disabled. The Khan immediately replied, that that should be no hindrance, as it was his intention himself to present me with a fine horse of his own, fully equipped, as a mark of his friendship for myself, and his love to the English people. I was not a little discomposed, as well as astonished at this intimation, for which I was by no means prepared; the more particularly as I possessed no means of making an equivalent return, without putting myself to serious inconvenience; and therefore said, that as I was quite sensible of the Khan's goodwill, I hoped he would excuse me from receiving so unnecessary an additional proof; indeed, as he was rather far gone by the time this offer was made, I hoped that in the morning there would be no more of it.

I was mistaken; the next day the horse was sent me in due form, with his caparison of silver, and a velvet covered saddle. I accepted it in the usual form, but intreated that it might be kept for me until my return, as I was going upon a dangerous and uncertain journey, on which I should not be able to carry him. This, however, would not content the good Khan, he told me that he saw it was but a refusal on my part, which he would not receive: at last, just as I was about to depart, a messenger was sent to say, that if I pleased the horse should be kept until my return. Although I was rejoiced to be thus freed from an unpleasant and embarrassing obligation, I yet could not help feeling a shade of disappointment at the suspicion thus forced upon me, that my good friend the Khan was not quite free from the insincerity of his countrymen, and had been guilty of an unworthy and unnecessary subterfuge. I afterwards had good reason to feel that I had done him injustice; for I received from him two letters during my stay at Mushed, both telling me that the horse was well, and awaiting my orders; and threatening if I did not tell him what to do with it, that he would send it to Mr. Willock's care at Tehrān, by the first caravan, in order to be kept for me. Not only this, he went on to say, that though by no means a rich man, he possessed a sufficiency for himself, besides which he had two hundred tomauns lying idly by him; that I was going into a bad and dangerous country, where a command of money might be of importance to me, and might not easily be had; and if I would accept of it, he would at my first word dispatch to me a part, or the whole of that sum by the hands of a faithful servant; nay, he indicated to me ways in which I might make this offer available: this was repeated twice, in a way, and with an earnestness not to be misinterpreted; and which made the meerza, who well knew the character of his countrymen, exclaim "Mash Allah! this "is really a good and honest man." I can only add, that though I did not avail myself of his offers, I firmly believe that he made them in sincerity; for, independent of the simplicity of the man's manners, he could have had no possible object in thus pressing them on me, so often, and so long, after I had quitted his house, and after he had got from me all he could ever expect.

One request he did make me, and I was happy to comply with it. After a few observations on the unsettled nature of the Persian government, and the still more uncertain tenure of property, he went on to remark, that he was no longer a young man, and his life a very poor one; that for himself he cared but little what might happen, but that he felt seriously uneasy regarding the fate of his two sons. He considered himself, he said like a servant of the English, whose character he felt perfect confidence in; and he had always kept in view a retreat to them, in case of any unfortunate occurrence in his own country; that if I had been satisfied with his attentions to myself, I should oblige him much by giving him a letter expressive of this satisfaction, which he might have to show to others of my countrymen. I most willingly complied, and wrote a letter immediately, stating how much I had been obliged to Furrookh Khan, and expressing a hope, that such of my countrymen as might have it in their power would requite the obligation to him or his. I read this note to the Khan, who was delighted with it, and swore, that though it was too late now for him to think of benefitting by it, he would give it to his sons in full confidence of its being useful to them. I sincerely trust it may.

The illness of my horse detained me until the 31st; when finding the case likely to be tedious, I resolved, on leaving him in charge of a servant, to follow me, when able, and on proceeding myself without further delay to Mushed. A bargain was made for mules, which as we discovered afterward, were the property of the sirdar, Allee Askār Khan; my good host lent me his own jeloodar *, to accompany me to Mushed, and I replaced the groom by a young man for whose good conduct the jeloodar was security. Of the discarded servants, I heard no more at the time; though not in actual confinement, they were under surveillance, and probably felt that they could effect nothing against me, so remained quiet in their caravanserai.

* Jeloodar has been already explained to mean the principal servant in charge of the horses.

On the morning of the 31st we prepared for our departure but the march had a bad commencement: all the loads were arranged, excepting that which included the horse clothing; and when the muleteers came to make this up, they objected to it, alleging that it was beyond the bargain, and would overload their mules. As these loads, with the addition of another horse's equipment had come all the way from Tehrān, upon the same number of mules, I thought it but fair to remonstrate against this imposition, and even to insist upon their taking up our goods; but the fellow refused to stir a step; telling us, that if we required to carry with us more baggage, we should hire another mule. To end the dispute I sent the jeloodar to the owner of the mules, Allee Askār Khan, with orders to mention what had occurred, and represent to him the unwarrantable conduct of his servants; but he returned after a while with no other answer, than that the loads, from what he understood, had been originally proportioned to his mules; that they could not, and should not carry more; if I required to carry more baggage I might hire more mules. This confirmation of the insolence of his servants convinced me that the sirdar himself was at the bottom of the matter, and that it was all a scheme contrived to extort money from me, against which I could in no way contend; I therefore acquiesced perforce in the gross imposition of hiring another mule, which was so quickly produced that it evidently had been kept in readiness for the anticipated result of the plot. And here I would caution all who may travel in these countries, never, if they regard their own comfort, to employ cattle that are the property of any great man: the traveller will find that khans, princes, and all, will gladly hire out their mules or camels, when not required for their own use; nay, that many keep such animals for that very purpose, as a profitable employment of their money, but it is beyond all comparison better to take those belonging to the poorest muleteer; a poor man finds it his interest to be in some measure accommodating, and however rude he may be by nature, his interest will always prove a check upon his conduct; for a present to the chief of any village through which he may be passing, will insure his punishment in case of need: but against the servants of a great

man it is hard to obtain redress ; no one chooses to interfere with, or punish the servants of one greater than, or even of equal rank with himself, and whatever may happen, should his goods be damaged, or time be lost by their negligence, or should they be ever so insolent or mischievous, the traveller will be forced to put up with the evil, if he cannot manage to frighten them into good behaviour himself ; for he need expect no assistance from others.

Sick of such meanness and extortion, we complied with all demands and at last moved on. The road skirted the slope of the northern hills, along the plain of Nishapore. As we proceeded, we enjoyed a very noble view of this fine country, running from south-east by east, to north-west by west, for full eighty miles in length, by fifty or sixty in width, and well studded with villages,which are situated chiefly in the level bottom, between the slopes that extend from the ranges of hills on either side : these slopes here, as every where else, consist of bare gravel, ploughed up by watercourses from the numerous ravines, and thickly dotted with the rows of cannaut heaps, whence is derived the water which fertilizes the plain below. Fine villages, with plentiful gardens, full of trees that bear fruit of the highest flavour, may be seen all along the foot of the hills, and in the little recesses, formed by the ravines whence issues the water that irrigates them. It was a rich and pleasing scene, and, out of question, by far the most populous and cultivated track I had seen in Persia. The cultivation in the plain was divided into little fields, varying prettily in their tints ; that upon the slope, and at the foot of the hills, was cut into terraces for the benefit of irrigation; the tillage was excellent, and great care was evidenced in the division and levelling of the beds.

After a march of six hours, and about twenty two miles, we reached the village of Derrood, situated on the side of a ravine, within the skirts of the lofty range that separates the plain of Nishapore from that of Mushed and Koordistan. It is a fine large prosperous place, containing two hundred houses, and forms one of a Ballook of twelve villages, which yield about five thousand tomauns of Irāk annually to the crown. The ploughs are taxed at twenty tomauns each,

and the fruit trees at two reals for every hundred mauns Tabreez of fruit they yield. Silk pays two reals a maun Tabreez, according to an estimate formed upon the quantity of worms that are employed.

The village belonged to the Turkish tribe of Byāt, but has of late been transferred to Abbas Koolee Khan, the prince's sirdār. * The remains of a strong fort built by Abbas Koolee Khan Byāt are still fresh, crowning a rising ground on the opposite side of the ravine; it was destroyed by his namesake, the present owner, on pretence that he wanted the wood it contained to build himself a house at Nishapore; but others say, and perhaps with more reason, that it was from dread of its becoming a place of shelter for evil disposed or refractory persons, as it was a hold of no mean strength.

Next morning, being the first of February, we quitted Derrood, and ascended along the bed of the stream by a very indifferent but interesting road, the glen being finely wooded with walnut, mulberry, poplar, and willow trees; and fruit-tree gardens rising, one above the other, upon the mountain side, watered by little rills that had been led from the stream far above, and which, after they had done their duty, found their way back to their parent rivulet in little silver threads, enlivening all the landscape with their sparkling cascades. These gardens extended for several miles up the glen; beyond them the banks of the stream continued to be fringed with white sycamore, willow, ash, mulberry, poplar, and woods that love a moist situation, nearly all the way to its source. Our path followed its windings in this manner for many miles, in a direction considerably to the north of east, till at length the stream disappeared among the snow that lay in the hollows, and upon all the dark exposures of the hills.

About eight miles from the village there is a small and ancient building like a caravanserai, and from thence a very steep *cothul* or pass commences. The road thus far had been all along sufficiently bad, and in some places very painful, from the accumulation of ice, which rendered it difficult for the mules to keep their feet; but be-

* General.

yond this point the steepness increases so much, that travellers in general allow their cattle to rest awhile, before commencing the ascent. We found it a very severe pull indeed, and the slipperiness of the ice and snow rendered it so bad, that it was all that the mules could do to gain the top, and some of the foot passengers could hardly effect it at all.

There was a great deal of snow on the summit of the hill, and it was violently drifted about by a very keen wind, from the freezing influence of which our warmest furs could not protect us; and from thence we commenced a very rapid descent, rendered dangerous from the hardness and slipperiness of the snow that covered our path; and as that lay along a very steep hill side, it was extremely difficult to keep our feet, while a false step would have precipitated us down many hundred feet. I never felt more uncomfortable than in one particular spot, where the steepness was so great that my boots could not hold, and I had nothing to trust to but my sword, which, used as a staff, fortunately supported me through. The meerza did not escape so well; he lost his footing, and rolled down sixty or seventy feet, and would have been precipitated as many hundreds, had he not fortunately caught by a projecting stone, and clung until help was afforded by some more experienced men of the party. How the mules descended in safety it is difficult to comprehend; their weight, perhaps, gave them more hold, and their wonderful instinct taught them where to place their feet securely.

After this dangerous pass we descended, for several miles, by a road so steep and bad that we could not mount our horses, till, by degrees, we reached a stream, the course of which we followed, as in our ascent. The first part was fringed with thorns and wild rose-bushes; but, lower down, these were replaced by trees and scenery similar to that on the other side, and even in greater variety. The last five miles lay through a continued succession of fruit-tree orchards, gardens and vineyards, rich in every beauty of situation and scenery, to the village Jugkerk, where, our guide not choosing to go further, we came to a halt for the night. Our ascent occupied four hours, our descent five; but as the cattle went slowly, from the

difficulty of the road, I did not estimate the distance gone at more than twenty-five miles, in a direction about east-north-east; and though I had no accurate means for measuring the height of the pass, I have little doubt, from the great length of ascent, and the rapid nature of the latter part of it, that it was full three thousand feet above the village of Derrood, and that the range is probably one of the loftiest of those that originate in the Elburz.

However pleasing the village may appear to the passenger, it afforded us but little comfort for the night; for we could procure no house, nor even a single chamber to sleep in, and were forced to put up with the open shed of an inclosure, filled with fuel, so closely piled that we did not venture to light a fire, lest we should set the whole in a blaze. Every thing was dear and bad, and we could hardly get corn for the horses, or bread for ourselves. The villagers are a wild and desperate race, who have no cultivation except that of their gardens, and they live on the produce of them, and of wood which they plant and rear for house-building, fuel, and other purposes. We were informed that the assessment upon wood was one real and a half per hundred mauns. Some of them keep cattle, and flocks too, paying a duty of half a real for each sheep, and two reals for each cow or ass. It appeared that the mountain path by which we had come was not the regular caravan road, which latter had for some time past been rendered unsafe by the Toorkomans, who had taken many prisoners upon it very lately. The former, though rough and difficult, was safe from such dangers.

The morning of the 2d dawned dark and threatening, and there was a sprinkling of snow on the hills above; but our lodging had been so comfortless as to leave no desire for delay, and we rose, after a night rendered restless by cold as well as anxiety, for our quarters were open to pilferers on all sides. The muleteers renewed their insolence here, refusing to proceed a step until they should have received their full hire to Mushed,—a demand with which we were forced to comply, inwardly determining to have them punished at Mushed, if it were possible, for their troublesome and impertinent conduct.

We continued descending the glen, among a variety of wood, which in summer must be beautiful, and through plentiful vineyards that mantled the sides of the mountain to a great height. We were struck particularly with the changeful picturesqueness of the situations in which the houses were placed, and delighted with a succession of landscape which was marked by a beauty and interest very rare in Persia. About five miles further on we reached the village Toorgahbeh, where, had our guide done his duty, we should have lodged the night before. It is a large place even yet; and if we were permitted to form a judgment from the extent and number of the burying-grounds around it, it must have been very considerable in the times of old. A date upon a tomb in one of these silent mansions showed it to be more than six hundred years old.

We descended for full nine miles from our night's quarters, and before we reached the plain, the weather, which had lowered heavily since the morning, became so dark that we could see but little around us, except now and then a glimpse of some wild and dark mountain, bursting for a moment through his shroud of storm; the whole descent, taking into account that of the day before, I should think underrated at three thousand feet.

A driving sleet blew strongly in our faces, as we reached the low country, accompanied by a piercing wind, and we could see but little as we passed along, except that there was no trifling amount of cultivation, and plenty of cannauts. At nine o'clock, in spite of the darkness, we saw the lofty gilded dome of the shrine at Mushed, glimmering dimly through the storm, but it was half past twelve ere we reached the city gate.

I had sent forward the Khan's jeloodar, in the morning, with my letters for Meerza Moossa, and a note from myself, giving him intimation of my arrival; and requesting his kind interference in procuring me a lodging to remain in during my stay in Mushed, and we hoped to have found this envoy in waiting at the gate with instructions whither to proceed; but we were disappointed, no one was there, and the prospect in our wet and weary state, was by no means cheering, for we seemed to be entering a desert, rather than a city.

On passing through the gateway, which is a mean fabric of mud, in a wall of the same material, both in but indifferent repair, nothing met our view but fragments of ruins, intermixed with empty spaces, to which the snow and wet, lying in half melted patches, or stagnated in muddy pools, gave a still more desolate character. Nothing living, or like the habitation of living beings, was to be seen; and it was only after we had proceeded for some time through the driving sleet, that we meet with a human creature to direct us to the next caravanserai, where we arrived dripping with wet. It was a large square inclosure, about as desolate as what we had seen of the city; the area in which the cattle belonging to travellers usually stand was full of dirty pools and mire, like that of an ill kept or tenantless farm-yard. There was no want of chambers, but we had hardly taken possession of one, and removed the loads into it, when the jeloodar made his appearance, and announced the wuzeer's directions to carry us and our establishment to the gardens of the Char Baugh, his own dwelling, where accommodations was to be prepared for us.

The delay we found had occurred in consequence of the wuzeer, having gone to wait upon the prince, just before the jeloodar arrived, so that he could not deliver the letters for a considerable time. We only remained to get our baggage reloaded, and to refresh ourselves with an hasty repast, after which we followed our guide to the gardens of the Chār Baugh.

Our lodging was provided in a house built upon the common model of Persian garden-houses, in the midst of a large and much disordered garden. The house itself was very much dilapidated and comfortless, being pervious to the weather in all quarters, from want of repair and broken windows. In the small chamber prepared for me, to which I had access by a narrow staircase, there were fine carpets and numuds spread, but the windows were so ricketty and unsound, that not only wind, but snow and rain penetrated abundantly; and as the frames were filled with pieces of wood, disposed in figures like mosaic work, instead of glass, it was necessary, if I wished to be protected from the cold, that I should sit in darkness.

There was no decent accommodation for my servants, and still less so for the meerza; and the parade of hospitality, without either cordiality or comfort, was upon the whole so apparent, that I saw from the first that the honour of lodging in the house of the wuzeer would be dearly purchased.

The nazir or steward of the household came soon after to wait upon me, to bid me welcome, and tell me that the house and all its contents were at my disposal, &c. &c.; and a little afterwards one of the khadums (or servants) of the shrine paid me a visit, in the line of his vocation, to offer me his services as a conductor to the holy tomb, and to enquire when and how I meant to pay my devotions. He evidently mistook me for one of his own faith, and his attentions became embarrassing enough when he began to make enquiries into the course of my supposed former pilgrimages, the time of my visits to Mecca and Kerbela, and various questions of a similar nature, for which I was by no means prepared; and I was not a little pleased when the entrance of the meerza relieved me from his further importunities.

In the common course of politeness, I had reason to expect a visit from the minister, or his brother Meerza Allee Reza this evening; but although there was some talk about it, no one came, and the time passed drearily enough: it was very cold, I had no fire, and the light would hardly burn, on account of the keen blasts that whistled through a thousand crevices: I had not even the comfort or use of my own servants about me: they were at a distance, as ill off as myself. In short, I felt that I was in the house of another, whose menials at least, cared little about me, whatever their master might do; and that a chamber in a caravanserai would have been beyond all comparison preferable. My dinner was not brought till past nine o'clock, cold, bad, and scanty, and I retired to bed in no very pleasant humour.

CHAP. XVIII.

PREFATORY ACCOUNT OF MUSHED. — THE PRESENT CAPITAL OF PERSIAN KHORASĀN. — FORMERLY A DEPENDENCY OF TOOS. — TRADITION OF ITS ORIGIN. — HISTORY. — FORM AND EXTENT OF THE PLACE. — DIVISIONS, OR MUHULEHS. — STREETS AND HOUSES. — PUBLIC BUILDINGS. — MAUSOLEUM AND SHRINE OF IMAUM REZA. — MOSQUE OF GAUHER SHAHUD. — MEDRESSA, IMAUM JAFFIER. — TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF IMAUM REZA. — DONATION OF VARIOUS SOVEREIGNS AND OTHERS TO THE SHRINE — DILAPIDATION AND SACRILEGE BY OTHERS — ITS ESTABLISHMENT AND REVENUES. — OTHER MEDRESSAS OR COLLEGES — FOUNDATIONS, REVENUES, ESTABLISHMENTS, USES. — BATHS AND CARAVANSERAIS. — ARK OR PALACE. — RUINS OF THE TOMBS OF NADIR SHAH AND HIS SON REZA KOOLEE KHAN. — POPULATION OF MUSHED. — MOOLLAHS — THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND LITERATURE — METAPHYSICS, LOGIC, MATHEMATICS, ASTRONOMY. — INTERIOR ECONOMY OF A MEDRESSA. — COMMERCE OF MUSHED. MANUFACTURES. — TOORQUOISE DEALERS AND CUTTERS. — PRICES OF PROVISIONS — VISITORS. — THE AUTHOR TAKEN TO SEE THE HOLY SHRINE BY ONE OF ITS SERVANTS — CEREMONIES OBSERVED THERE — DANGER OF THE VISIT.

Before proceeding with the journal of my residence in Mushed, some description of that city seems desirable, to serve as a *carte du pays* to the reader; and I have collected together, in the following account, such particulars as I received from the information of others, in addition to the result of my own observations.

Mushed itself, though now considered as the capital of Persian Khorasān, being the residence of a prince of the blood, who is governor of the province, can boast of no great antiquity. The plain on which it stands, with the villages that are scattered over it, and even the spot which contains the ashes of Imaum Reza, now deemed so sacred, but of old hardly thought of, was among the dependencies of the very ancient city of Toos, now gone to ruin.

The tradition commonly related of the foundation of Mushed is as follows. When Hoomayoon Shah, the Moghul emperor of India was driven from his throne, and fled to implore the assistance

of Shah Tahmaseb the first of Persia, he was struck, it is said, with the extensive plain on which Mushed now stands, and vowed that if he ever recovered his throne and power, he would lay the foundations of a city upon a spot which nature had, in his opinion, so fitted to become an emporium.

It is further stated, that after he had recovered his dominions by the assistance of the Persian monarch, Hoomayoon did actually advance as far as Candahār, with the intention of fulfilling his vow; but he found that he had been anticipated. Shah Tahmaseb jealous of the conception, had found means to get the plan of the Indian prince purloined from the architects, and the city was accordingly commenced upon the spot where Hoomayoon had intended it to be.*

As the virulence which now subsists between the sects of

* It is not to be doubted that there is some gross mis-statement in this popular account of the origin of Mushed; for the tale of one sovereign making a vow to build a city upon the territories of another, and a friend, appears too extravagant to deserve credit; but that the city began to rise into importance about the period when Hoomayoon visited Persia is pretty certain; and that Hoomayoon may have been in some way connected with this pious act seems also probable, from the fact of which we are informed in Ferishtah's history of Hindoostan (Vide Dow's translation, in the reign of Hoomayoon), that the Indian monarch professed his attachment to the principles of the Sheah faith, and even made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Sheikh Suffee at Ardebeel, previous to, and, as it is insinuated, for the purpose of disposing the bigotted Tahmaseb to yield him the promised assistance towards recovering his throne.

Hanway also mentions that the pilgrimage to the tomb of Imaum Reza was established by the Suffavean monarchs (he mentions Shah Abbas, perhaps erroneously), and inculcated with all their influence, from the political motive of diverting the large sums carried out of the kingdom by their subjects on the Hadj to Mecca, to the more useful purpose of increasing the prosperity of their own dominions.

Whatever share in the establishment, either of the present city, or of its popularity as a place of Sheah pilgrimage, may be due to Hoomayoon or to Tahmaseb, it appears to be clear that they were not in strictness its orignal founders; for according to the Rozal-ul-Suffah (Vide Price's history of Mahometanism, vol. iii. page 537), it appears that Shah Rokh, the son of Timoor, embellished the tomb of Imaum Reza, while his wife, Gauher Shahud, built a magnificent mosque close to it, and both resided there some time; so that some city or town under that name must have even then had existence. It is also mentioned in the work last quoted (vol. iii. page 840) that Homayoon remained at Mushed for some time, both on his journey to and from Persia, and paid his devotions with all due solemnity at the tomb of Imaum Reza; but no notice is there taken of his being in any way instrumental either to building or enlarging the city.

Soonnies and Sheahs did not rise to any great height in Persia until the commencement of the Suffavean dynasty, it is probable that the tomb of Imaum Reza did not become a shrine of considerable resort until after the building of Mushed, when Tahmaseb, a furious Sheah, like the rest of his race, and zealous to promote the reputations of the chief martyrs of that persuasion, decorated his tomb with royal munificence, and encouraged the rising city by his frequent presence. Mushed, thus cherished by the favour of its monarch, increased rapidly in importance and population, and many families, attracted by this growing prosperity, flocked to it from the old city of Toos, which even previous to this period had been declining.

The same sun-shine of royal favour continued during the reigns of the succeeding Suffavean sovereigns to cherish this city, now deemed so sacred, as to be on a par in that respect with the holy shrines at Kerbelah and Mushed Allee; and both the Abbasses, as well as Sooltaun Hoossain, in particular, aided very liberally, to ornament and endow both its religious and learned establishments.

But Mushed was by no means exempted from occasional reverses of fortune, it was frequently attacked along with other places on the northern frontier of Khorasān, by the marauding Tartar tribes of the desert, and in the early part of the reign* of Shah Abbas the first it was taken by the Oozbecks, and the greater part of its inhabitants were massacred, or carried into captivity. But the king hastened to the relief of this holy place, and it was gradually restored to its former prosperity.

The injuries which it sustained in the Affghaun invasion, which terminated the Suffavean line, were however not so easily repaired; the atrocities then committed are still spoken of with horror, although it is said that the invaders respected the shrine, and left its treasures unpillaged; all the munificence with which Nadir Shah lavished his favours upon the place scarcely restored it to its former state. Although the inhabitants of Mushed participated in the distress which the general cruelty and rapacity of that prince,

* A. Heg. 996.

inflicted on the country, still he protected and encouraged the city; there he often held his court, near it was his favourite fortress, and there he built his own tomb, and that of his unfortunate son. *

In the troubles consequent upon the death of Nadir, and during the stormy and ephemeral reigns of his grandsons, Mushed could not fail to suffer severely; and the dilapidated state in which it still remains may be attributed to the convulsions of that period, the effects of which have by no means been repaired by the attentions of succeeding sovereigns; and that it has made any advance towards renewed prosperity and population, is to be attributed to the comparative tranquillity it has enjoyed since the accession to the crown of the present king, together with the continual resort of pilgrims to its shrine, and not to any active efforts of benevolence on the part of its sovereign or its governors.

The city has in form been fancifully likened to that of a tiger *couchant*, though I know not if any such similitude actually exists. The wall is said to embrace a circuit of three fursungs, or twelve miles, which if the circumference bear any thing like the usual proportion to its diameter must be over-rating it by more than half, for its greatest length, which extends from north-west to south-east, does not exceed, if it even amounts to, two miles. Whatever be the extent of space inclosed, it certainly is but ill occupied; it would indeed be difficult to convey by any description, a just idea of the desolation that meets the spectator's view, when he surveys the city from an height, or when he rides through any of the approaches to that part in the centre where the inhabitants almost exclusively reside.

There are thirty-two muhulehs or divisions in Mushed, each of which should be governed by its own ketkhodah, or magistrate;

* The fate of Reza Koolee Meerza is well known; suspected by his savage father of having attempted his life, he was by that parent's order deprived of sight — "Your crimes have forced me to this dreadful measure," was the observation which he addressed to the victim of his jealousy, on this occasion. — "It is not my eyes you have put out," replied the prince, "it is those of Persia," and the truth sunk deep into the soul of Nadir. (Vide Malcolm's Persian Hist. vol. ii. p. 97.)

but of these many are totally devoid of either inhabitants or houses, and the greater part of the rest are very thinly tenanted. Large spaces in various quarters, and especially towards the north and north-west, are occupied by gardens or orchards, chiefly in decay, and even by fields, which are cultivated by the farmers. The path which leads from the Chār Baugh to the palace, a considerable distance winds entirely among the lofty but falling walls of the former, or the ruins of what once were the extensive dwellings of the nobles. On entering the Durwazeh Nō, from the north-east, the traveller passes through a desert of ruins, void of every sign of life, the whole way till he reaches the central street; and it is much the same in every other quarter, except in the cluster of buildings around the shrine; nothing is seen elsewhere but extensive burying-grounds, and endless tracts of ruins, as silent as the grave.

The whole of the city appears from the first to have been built of sun-dried bricks or mud, so that every thing assumes the monotonous grey earthy colour common to all Persian towns; and even the houses that remain entire are miserably poor and mean in their external appearance; nor, if I might judge from all I heard and saw, is their interior accommodation much better: the apartments to which I had access in the houses of the first people were plainly and even meanly fitted up; and although those which are more retired may have been better ordered, I should doubt if there be much of splendour, or even of comfort, any where to be found.

The approach to these houses in general harmonizes with their exterior appearance, leading through dark lanes and narrow alleys, guiltless of the smallest attention to cleanliness or convenience: the dwellings that are inhabited look as if they had been reared at random, among the ruins of some destroyed city; and in my walks among them I have occasionally stumbled upon the strangest holes and corners that can be conceived, where houses and huts peered out, half hid in filth and rubbish. The path among such places sometimes burrows under the earth, or beneath a heap of buildings that have been built over it, upon a floor of beams and mats; and, after thus pursuing my way in darkness, descending, as it seemed, into the

bowels of the earth, a door has opened which, instead of giving entrance to a dungeon, as might have been expected, has opened to the pure light of heaven, and I have found myself (wondering like Aladdin in his subterraneous gardens) admitted into a neat court, or small parterre, surrounded with apartments, and fitted up with reservoirs and fountains of water, trees and flowers, and the usual appendages of a Persian dewan khaneh.

The only street in Mushed worthy of the name is that which extends throughout its whole length, from north-west to south-east, as abovementioned. In the centre of this runs a canal, which is supplied, though very imperfectly, by a cannaut, and which, being the receptacle for the greatest part of the filth of the town, is sufficiently nasty: its edges once were faced with stone, and large slabs of the same were laid across, at intervals, as bridges; but many of them have fallen in, and the whole is in great disrepair. There are still some straggling trees remaining of the rows that once shaded the banks of this canal, which certainly must, at one time, have been a source of comfort, as well as of health and cleanliness, to the inhabitants. A row of houses, with shops, extends in many places along the pathway on either side; but they by no means form a continuous bazar, nor does the inhabited portion of the town by any means occupy its whole length, though this must be the bazar of which Mr. Macdonald Kinnear's informant boasted, as being three miles, or nearly a fursung in length. The chief, and indeed only bazar of any consideration, besides, is in a different quarter, extending for five or six hundred yards in one direction, from the south-western corner of the great mosque, while in another it becomes a mere lane leading to the palace.

The public buildings of Mushed deserve a more particular notice; and of these the mausoleum of Imaum Reza, with its religious and ornamental appendages, forms by far the principal object. This magnificent cluster of domes and minarets is situated in the centre of the city; to them all the roads lead, and to them the gaze of all approaching travellers, from the greatest possible distance, is attracted.

The first thing that strikes the eye on arriving at this point is a noble oblong square, inclosing an area of about one hundred and sixty yards long, by seventy-five broad, built in the manner of a caravanserai, having two stories of apartments all round, which open in front into a handsome arcaded gallery. In the centre of each side and end there is a magnificent and very lofty gateway, and the whole is completely incrusted with mosaic work of tiles, painted and glazed, and arranged in figures of the most tasteful patterns and colours. This superb square is called by the natives the *Sahn.*

The area of this court is flagged with grave-stones, which form almost a continuous, though not a very smooth pavement; under which lie interred the remains of the noblest Persians, whose bodies have been brought hither from all parts of the country, to rest under the protection of their favourite saint. In the centre there is a building called Succah-Khaneh, or water-house, highly ornamented with gilding, and surrounded by small aqueducts, filled from the dirty stream of the canal that runs through the principal street. These are for the purposes of ablution.

The gateways at either end, which contain wickets for the purposes of entrance and exit, form magnificent specimens of this style of Eastern architecture; but no description, unaccompanied with a minute drawing, can convey a just idea of them. The gate on the south-west gives admittance into the mausoleum, while that on the opposite is built for uniformity, and is in architecture and size, though not in ornament, the exact counterpart of its prototype. The former is adorned with gilding, instead of coloured tiles, in the most superb style, and the beauty of its architecture vies with the riches of its external materials.

Of the mausoleum itself, little is seen externally except the dome, which is covered with a coating of gilded tiles, relieved in some places around the neck, with bands of azure blue, bearing Arabic inscriptions in gold letters; but the most striking ornaments are, I think, two minarets of a very beautiful model; one of which springs from a part of the mausoleum itself; the other from behind the opposite gateway, each of these is adorned near the top with a handsome carved

gallery of wood work, which with the greater part of its shaft is richly gilt.

The mausoleum itself comprises a mass of building to the south west of the square, the extent or form of which it is not easy to ascertain, because the whole is most unfortunately crowded with wretched mud fabrics, that encompass it around: to judge, however, from what can be seen externally, as well as from the short view I had of the interior, the form approaches that of an octagon: and it occupies an area, little, if at all less, than that of the Sahn, which may be termed its outer court.

A silver gate, the gift of Nadir Shah, admits the devotee into a passage that leads to the centre and chief apartment, beneath the gilded cupola. This is of magnificent dimensions, rising loftily into a fine dome, like the centre nave of a cathedral, and branching out below into the form of a cross; the whole is highly ornamented with tiles of the richest colours, profuse of azure and gold, disposed in the most tasteful manner into garlands and devices of flowers, mingled with texts from the Korān. From the centre depended a huge branched candlestick of solid silver.

A doorway in the arch to the north-west, gives entrance into an octagonal room with a fine dome, which, with the walls and floor, are ornamented as richly as the first; the latter being partially covered with a fine carpet; the sacred shrine in which reposes the dust of Imaum Reza, and that of caliph Haroon-ul-Rasheed, the father of his murderer, occupies the south-western part of the room: it is surrounded by a massy grating of fine wrought steel, within which there is an incomplete rail of solid gold (both of which will be further noticed), and other glittering objects, which, with the uncertain light, prevented the possibility of distinguishing what might be thus inclosed.

At the north-eastern end, there is a door to the shrine covered with gold, and set with jewels, richer in appearance than in reality, the gift of the present king; several plates of silver engraved with writing in the Arabic character depended from the grating, and there were many glittering and showy things besides, but the dim religious

light, and the shortness of my visit, with the dangerous circumstances under which it was made, prevented me from ascertaining further particulars.

Opposite to the jewelled door, an archway, screened by a curtain, leads to another but smaller octagon, also domed, and adorned, though less richly, with coloured tiles, and in this, my conductor informed me, the bones of several great men repose, but I do not recollect who they were. There is likewise an apartment to the westward of the shrine, and several others on the opposite side of the centre room, but into some there was no admission, and through the rest I was hurried to rapidly either to remember the ground plan or their respective contents.

From the archway to the south-west in the great central chamber, a broad passage leads through the mausoleum, to a court which belongs to a mosque, by far the most beautiful and magnificent I have seen in Persia, and which owes its origin to Gauher Shahud, the wife of Shah Rokh, son of the Great Timoor; it has but one dome, and one archway, which rises to a great height, in a noble screen that conceals the neck of the dome. At either end of this screen rise minarets of a beautiful form, and the whole is richly and tastefully decorated with coloured tiles, in the same manner as the rest of their buildings. On each side of the space beneath the dome there are arcaded apartments with matted floors, for the use of the moollahs and those who retire to pray, or to read the Koran; there is also before the archway a large platform, matted for the convenience of devotees; but the greatest number of these pray under the opposite archway of the mausoleum, or the niches on either side, which are fitted up for the purpose.

Both sides of the area are formed of buildings like those of the Sahn, having two stories of niches or compartments; it is rudely paved with flag-stones, and in the centre there is a small tank, which, with several jars in different corners, is kept full of water for the purposes of ablution, or quenching thirst. The whole forms a very magnificent court, adorned in the same taste as the rest, with coloured tiles, the only species of decoration used in such edifices in this

country, and which, though certainly rich and pleasing, gives rise to an idea of fragility, and even frivolity, like that which occurs on viewing an ornamental china shop. The effect of this style of ornament may be conceived by observing the mosaic work of one of the inlaid boxes manufactured at Bombay, and imagining such an appearance applied to buildings of large dimensions.

A door in one of the arched niches on the north-eastern side of the Sahn, gives entrance to the Medressa Meerza Jaffier, which, next to the edifices already described is certainly the finest thing in Mushed. It consists of an oblong square, about sixty yards long by forty wide, surrounded like the Sahn with a range of buildings, containing a succession of chambers in two stories; each of these open into arcaded balconies, that look out upon the area; the centre of this is disposed into a little garden, around which there is a broad and raised paved way; the whole is fully ornamented with coloured tiles, and the gateways are very handsome.

The present king is building to the south of the Sahn, another square, surrounded also with a two-storied range of apartments, but on a scale of much less magnificence than that of the others, if any judgment can be formed from present appearances; it goes on very slowly, however, and it seems very doubtful whether it may ever be finished.

There are two more medressas and a set of baths attached to the mausoleum; one of the former is situated behind the new square, to the south-east of Gauher Shahud's mosque. I am ignorant of the position of the other, as well as of that of the baths.

Such is the present state of this great religious establishment, as far as I possessed the means of seeing it; and before proceeding to notice the other public buildings, it may be well to relate whatever other particulars respecting the origin or history of this shrine came to my knowledge during my stay at Mushed.

The custom of attributing to places of religious pilgrimage a very remote origin, as well as a high degree of sanctity, is so common in the East, that it is not to be wondered at if we find it adhered to in the case of the principal shrine of Persia.

It is related, that Alexander the Great (called by the Persians Secunder Roomee) in the course of his expeditions through this country, came by chance to this spot, and pitched his tent here. He dreamed a dream, or saw a vision, which gave him so much uneasiness, that he communicated it to his *wuzeer Aristotle*, who declared, that hereafter some person of holy origin should be buried there: the king, upon hearing this, determined to mark the spot, and ordered four walls to be built, inclosing the sacred space, as a memorial of the prophecy to future times.

The place remained undisturbed and unnoticed for many hundred years, when the celebrated Haroon ul Rasheed by accident obtained a book of the philosopher Aristotle, in which he learnt what Alexander had done; and when near his end, he not only left orders that his body should be interred in the holy spot indicated by that sage; but directed that it should be done in such a manner, that it might face that of the holy man who was destined to occupy it (and whom, even then, he believed would come of the line of Allee, whom he had persecuted with all possible rigor *); and he removed towards the place, that his orders might be more easily carried into effect: when he died therefore, he was interred accordingly. †

During the reign of his son Mamoon ul Rasheed, the fame of Imaum Reza, among those of the sect of Allee, as a worthy successor of the prophet, and a priest of the true faith, grew and increased so greatly, and his followers multiplied so much, as to alarm the jealousy of that monarch, who held his court at Merve; he determined to free himself of so dangerous an enemy, and under the pretence of distinguished regard, inveigled him to Toos, in Khorasān,

* The severity with which the Caliph Haroon ul Rasheed, persecuted the posterity and sect of Allee, is well known; and many are the facts or traditions of bloody treachery which the Sheahs relate of this monarch, whose name and memory it is as much a principle of their faith to hate, as those of Omar, Mouavieh, Yezed, or any of the more prominent actors in the tragedies of the death of Allee, or of his sons Hussun and Hoossain.

† The Caliph Haroon was warned in a dream (it is said) not only of his approaching end, but of the place where he should be interred; an account of this remarkable prediction, with the mode of its fulfilment, may be seen in D'Herbelot's Bibliotheque Oriental, under the article "Haroon;" and in Price's Mahometanism, vol. ii. page 38.

where he was detained for several years in a sort of honourable confinement, and restrained from so unlimited an intercourse as he had before enjoyed with his disciples, or from entertaining so large a body of dependants.

Nevertheless, a strong but secret party was formed for the Imaum; and though there is no certainty of what their intentions might have been, the fact of their existence reaching the ears of Mamoon hurried on the catastrophe; he resolved to get rid of the holy man without delay *; and this he effected by directing his nazir, or steward, to place before himself, when the Imaum should visit him, a plate of grapes, the finest of which were poisoned, and lest by any chance his victim should escape the snare, the king with his own hands presented him with a few of the envenomed grains, which, thus honoured, he could not refuse to swallow. He immediately felt that he was poisoned, and covering his face with his Arab cloak, rose up to retire. "Whither go you?" asked Mamoon. "Thither, where you "have sent me," replied the Imaum; and going out, he called to one of his most faithful servants, and said, "Abbau Sēlt, this day I am to "die; you know, that the caliph Haroon, on his death-bed, charged

* It is proper to remark, that the account thus given of the murder of Imaum Reza, by Mamoon, and which I received from the chief priest of the shrine, as historical, does not accord with the account of that prince's conduct, given by D'Herbelot; on the contrary, Mamoon is there stated (on the authority of Khondemir) to have been so partial to the principles of the Sheah faith, and so convinced, that Allee was the legitimate successor of the prophet, that he even went so far as to nominate the Imaum for his successor in the khaliphat; how this wide discrepancy has arisen, it is difficult to say, for it is not easy to believe that men of such learning as the Moojeteheds and chief dignitaries of the shrine could be so totally ignorant of its history as to mis-state a fact of so much importance, from want of knowledge: — it may probably have arisen from some jealousy connected with the hatred between the sects, of which I am not informed. D'Herbelot mentions that Mamoon was forced to recall his disposition in favour of Imaum Reza, who was *poisoned*, he says, some time afterwards. (Vide D'Herbelot, article "Mamoon.")

Major Price, in his learned work upon Mahometan history, adverts to the death of Imaum Reza, as having happened through the contrivance of Mamoon, by *eating some poisoned grapes*; but at the same time he adds, that other historians of established veracity contend, that he died a natural death, at Toos, A. Heg. 203. — He likewise confirms the the intention of Mamoon to make him his successor in the khaliphat; and suggests, that the disorders and rebellion which took place in consequence of this measure, might have induced that prince to hasten an event which was likely to end the troubles of his empire. (Vide Price on Mahometan History, vol. i. page 375. and vol. ii. page 138.)

" his son to bury him in such a manner that his body might be in " face of mine. But this must not be; the place of my repose shall be " indicated by these signs: when you shall have dug in the appointed " spot, a fountain shall spring up therein, and in it there shall be " many fish, both small and large, but one larger than the rest, and " having a golden ring in his nose, shall devour the others, and drink " the fountain dry, after which he shall himself disappear; in that " place bury my body." Soon afterwards he expired, and his servants burying his body according to his directions, it came to pass that the feet of the Imaum were placed towards the head of the caliph, and both were within the four walls built by Secunder Roomee.

Three hundred years afterwards, when Sooltaun Sanjer reigned at Merve, the son of his chief minister became infected with leprosy. It was the custom to drive from society, and abandon, such unhappy objects, when of low extraction; but in the case of one so highly born, the usage was not strictly inforced, and the young man was sent to travel. By chance he reached the plain of Mushed, and while hunting there one day, the stag which he was pursuing took refuge within the walls built by the great Secunder, and which were then all that remained to indicate the resting place of Haroon and Imaum Reza. The young man attempted to follow, but his horse resisted all his efforts, and would not enter; he then felt convinced of the presence of supernatural agency, and believed that something holy must be in the place. Springing from his horse, he prostrated himself on the ground, and wept and prayed to God, that the event might be propitious to him; when he arose, he found that his prayers had been heard, and his disease removed from him. *

* This place has by no means lost its quality of performing miracles, numbers are reported to have been restored to health, sight, and hearing, after having been long deprived of these blessings, by a proper application to the saint there enshrined; and various other tales of a supernatural agency are related regarding it. — It is said, that a camel belonging to a cruel and severe master once took refuge in this place. This animal, which had done its duty long and faithfully, and which, though old and unfit for service, its unfeeling owner still continued to load unmercifully, took an opportunity when at Mushed to escape from its keeper, and running through the town it contrived to pass the iron-chain which excludes passengers on horse-back, and reached the Mausoleum of Imaum Reza, where it lay down before the silver-gate; from thence the Khadums in vain tried to move

He sent accounts of these things to the Sooltaun, and his father, praying that means might be furnished for erecting a worthy

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it even by blows, and the noise increased, till it attracted the notice of the chief moollah, who forbad them to molest the animal, which he said, it was plain, had come to make its complaint to the holy Imaum. The owner being then questioned, could not deny that he had overloaded and abused the camel, and that this might be the ground of its complaint; upon this the moollah told the man that as he valued his own safety, he must release the animal from servitude, as he had already too severely tasked it. The owner alarmed, signified his willingness to do so, and to give it to any person who would receive him. Upon which the camel, as if it had heard and understood his words, arose and suffered itself to be led from the shrine, and the moollah himself received and took care of it, till it died.

This miraculous power is sometimes, though not always, excited to protect the property of the shrine. — A native of Candahar, it is said, having come to Mushed on a pilgrimage, was smitten with a strong desire to possess himself of part of the rich treasure, which he observed belonging to the shrine, and being particularly dazzled by a rich gold and jewelled censer, in which perfumes were usually burned, he resolved upon purloining it. For this purpose, he first became a resident in the town, and afterwards contrived to get admission as an humble servant of the shrine, where he soon rendered himself conspicuous for his zeal and activity. Having thus, as he believed, lulled suspicion asleep, he found means to enter the shrine one night by first climbing one of the buildings within its precincts, from which he ascended the dome and let himself down by a rope, through an opening, into the body of the place. He then seized the object of his desires, and was making off, when a voice from the dome called aloud to him to beware; — that if he desired plunder he should at all events content himself with something less valuable, and not deprive the shrine of a jewel, the loss of which would certainly bring heavy blame and punishment on many of the poor servants. The fellow however had the hardihood to withstand this appeal, and exclaimed, " What, shall I after sacrificing more than a year's " labour for this one object, throw it from me when it is within my reach? no! I will " dare every thing, and take it with me." — No further voice was heard, but when he went to the rope by which he had descended, he found that it had become shorter; he brought one of the ladders, used for lighting the candles, to assist his ascent, keeping the censer concealed under his arm; but he had not climbed far when the rope broke, and he fell to the ground, and broke his back. Being thus unable to rise, he was found in the morning by the chief moollah, to whom he confessed the whole story, and who ordered him into custody. On the morrow, however, the moollah related to the priests of the shrine, that the saint had appeared to him in a dream, and told him to harm the culprit no further, as his punishment had been sufficient. He was therefore dismissed, but the irritation of the populace was so great, that they seized him and cut his hands off. — The person who related the story to me, told me that he remembered having seen the man, and had heard the circumstances of his crime and his punishment from his own mouth. While I remained in the place however, there were some silver candlesticks, and other pieces of plate, stolen from the mausoleum, which proves that the vigilance or the justice of the saint is not at all times so much upon the alert as in the above case.

mausoleum over the remains of the holy person who had been so propitious to him, and the Sooltaun not only acquiesced, but gave orders for erecting the very building which now stands over the tomb, of the most durable materials, and the cement which was used being composed, it is said, of red clay (Bole Armenian) mixed with jelly of grape juice, and goats' hair, forms a substance so hard, that it is difficult to break it, or even to drive a nail into it.

When Shah Tahmaseb built or enlarged the city of Mushed, he ornamented the dome with a coating of gilded tiles, built a beautiful minaret covered with the same materials, placed a gold railing or screen around the shrine, and floored the apartment in which it is placed, with gilded tiles. It was the same prince who built the Sahn, and adorned it in the tasteful manner which we now admire.

Shah Abbas continued to the city the protection it enjoyed from his ancestor, and enriched the shrine with many donations, jewels, and plate. His successors of the Suffavean line followed the same course, but it was Nadir Shah who restored Mushed to a high degree of magnificence, which, after the miseries it had endured during the Affghaun invasion could hardly have been looked for; he ornamented the mausoleum with many costly gifts, the great gateway which is on the south-west of the Sahn was gilded by him, the massy silver door by which pilgrims are admitted to the shrine was placed there at his cost; he adorned the tomb with many jewels and expensive decorations, and surrounded it with the valuable grate of wrought steel mentioned above; and he built a noble minaret on the opposite side of the Sahn, similar in decoration and design to that of Shah Tahmaseb, but of far greater size.

With this prince the prosperity of Mushed ceased; but its shrine was preserved inviolate until his grandsons, in their various struggles for power, pillaged its treasures, to satisfy the cravings of their hungry followers, or to lavish them upon their own debaucheries. Nadir Meerza commenced the sacrilege by taking a part of the golden railing from around the tomb; the golden ball which hung above it followed, and the plunder was completed by his brother Nasr Oollah

Meerza. The gold was coined into money to pay the troops and servants; but they, less impious or more scrupulous than their master, privately returned the gold to Meerza Mehedee, the moojetehed or chief priest of the shrine, who, collecting it by degrees, formed from it the grating which now partially surrounds the tomb.

Meerza Mehedee himself was particularly obnoxious to these two princes, who feared the influence which his piety and uprightness had obtained for him among the people, and which they believed he was disposed to use in a manner hostile to their interests; and, on a day when he was coming out of the Sahn, prince Nasr Oollah Meerza meeting him, after a few high words drew his scymitar, and cut him nearly in two, with a single stroke.

It does not appear that Aga Mahomed Khan did any thing towards restoring this holy place to its former splendor; on the contrary, the severity of his conduct to the country, which he seldom visited except to crush some rebellion, must have had a depressing effect upon its religious and learned establishments, even if they were fortunate enough to escape more direct persecution. His successor, the present king, has bestowed upon it more of his favour; he ordered some repairs that were required, and presented the shrine with a door, plated with gold, and inlaid with jewels, valued at sixteen thousand tomauns. At the time when I was in Mushed the dome was undergoing some repairs; but these extended no further than to replacing such of the gilded tiles as had fallen off, or had become loose.

The revenue of this establishment, although considerable, was never by any means so large as might have been supposed from its splendor, and from the great resort of pilgrims to its shrine. Its ministers and priests,in all probability, benefited more from these than the establishment itself. Jewels, plate, carpets, and furniture were presented for the use of the shrine, but the greatest portion of the money was received and expended by its servants.

According to the account of Meerza Abdool Jawād, one of the chief priests, the revenues in the time of Shah Hoossein, the last

prince* of the Suffavean dynasty, amounted to fifteen thousand Khorasānee tomauns†, arising from property in land and buildings in every province of Persia; these, of later years, have been so much usurped, or the rents are so ill paid, that he does not estimate the present income from these sources at more than two thousand, or two thousand five hundred tomauns of Khorāsan‡ a year.

The expences attendant upon the establishment are not, however, very great; there are, it is true, about seven hundred servants, but the greater part of these give their attendance for the sake of the blessing supposed to be attached to so pious an office, and without pay, or receive but a very little money or grain for their support; the situation, however, is probably not found deficient, even in temporal advantages. Repairs are not often required, as the buildings were originally constructed in a very sufficient manner, and when such become necessary to any considerable amount, they are, in general, defrayed by the pious liberality of some rich or powerful person.

The lights, which are kept continually burning, and which are chiefly of wax, form one of the heaviest items in the expenditure; and the cost of these is defrayed from the rents of a caravanserai, and the bazar belonging to the establishment, which is marked off by a chain suspended across the street, at either end, and which no horse is permitted to pass. The lower chambers, too, in the Sahn are let out as shops, and add considerably to the income, and large sums are constantly paid for permission to inter within the square, or even under the roof of the mausoleum itself, the bodies of many of the noblest families of Persia. The price of such a grave varies, perhaps according to the presumed ability of the purchaser, from twenty to two hundred tomauns, and even larger sums are paid, when the shelter of the mausoleum itself is required. Such contingent receipts, however, are probably not always brought regularly to account of the annual

* He was the last prince who possessed any real power; his successor Tahmaseb was but a pageant in the hands of Nadir Shah.

† Three hundred thousand reals.

‡ Forty to fifty thousand reals.

receipts, but are understood to form one of the perquisites of the Mootwullee, or chief director of the Durgah*, who has the sole charge of such matters, and who is invested with considerable ecclesiastical powers.

This person always keeps up a perfect understanding with the Moojeteheds, or chief priests, who officiate at the shrine, who are the sole authorities in all religious affairs, and who consequently, in such a place, become the principal persons, equal, if not superior in influence even to the chief temporal authority, in whose hand soever that may be vested. Of the internal economy of the establishment, or the arrangement of its servants with their various duties, I learned little more; it is not, indeed, a very intelligible subject to a stranger, or one regarding which it could be easy to obtain information; neither would it prove very interesting to the reader, and I will, therefore, proceed to describe the remaining public buildings of Mushed.

There is no other mosque or religious shrine worthy of notice, within the walls; the only building of that description to attract attention, is a large ruined mosque with two minarets, once ornamented like the rest, and not far from the mausoleum; there are plenty of small ones to be found in all quarters of the city.

Next in succession to religious establishments, the institutions for learning claim attention, and of medressas, or colleges, I obtained a list of sixteen, in the following order, with remarks on the condition of each:—

1st, *Medressa Nawāb Meerza Saleh*, a considerable establishment, with large revenues from landed property, and maintaining from sixty to a hundred moollahs.

2d, *Medressa Hadjee Hussun*, maintained by the rent of a few shops, and having but few moollahs.

3d, *Medressa Moollah Mahomed Baukher*, supported by the rents of a caravanserai, and some shops, which are sufficient to keep it in excellent repair; it maintains eighty or ninety moollahs.

* Durgah, place of pilgrimage, or worship.

4th, *Medressa Fazil Khan*, a college richly endowed with revenues from land and shops, and possessing a library of books, valued at seven thousand tomauns. It was founded by a person of the same name who made his money in India. It is said that the founder laid it down as a law of the institution, which he caused to be engraved upon a stone, and placed in a conspicuous part of the building, that three classes of people were to be excluded from the college, viz. Hindoos, Mazunderānees, and Arabs; the first because they are void of truth; the second, because they are quarrelsome; and the third, because they are very dirty. It is said that an Arab arriving at Mushed, desirous to enter a medressa, unfortunately made choice of this one; and was informed by his patron that he could not be admitted, referring him for a reason to the aforesaid inscription. The Arab, when he had read it, lifted up his hands and exclaimed, "Now, God be merciful to thy soul, Fazil Khan, for thou hast "spoken the truth."

5th, *Medressa Moollah Taje*, now abandoned by its moollahs, and used of late only as a place of resort for pilgrims.

6th, *Medressa Meerza Jaffier*, which has been already mentioned. It was built by a person of that name, who also went to India to improve his fortune; and entered into the service of a rich Hindoo, who soon died, and whose property was confiscated, and sold by public sale. Among other articles, there was an old chest full of valuable jewels and money; but which being sold without examination, at random, was purchased for a comparatively small consideration by Meerza Jaffier, who knew its value well. This money he improved by trade; and when he had thus greatly increased his riches, he became desirous to return to his own land, and to transport his wealth along with him. To this, however, the ruler of the country objected, saying, "If you choose to leave us, well and good; "go; but return alone and naked as you came." "Well," replied Meerza Jaffier, "your terms are hard, but I consent to them, pro-"vided you, on your part, consent to return to me the twenty years "which I have spent in acquiring this wealth in your country." This reply, it is said, so pleased the king, that he gave permission

for the meerza to depart with all his family and property. He resolved to dedicate a part of the latter to the advancement of religion and learning in his own country; and though he did not live to return to it, the money he sent served to build the medressa which bears his name. It is a truly superb building, supported by large revenues in land, and has attached to it fifty or sixty moollahs. It was undergoing a complete repair at the time we were in Mushed, at the expence of the prime minister of Persia.

7th, *Medressa Saad-u-deen*, or *Paen Pah:* the latter appellation signifies *towards the feet* * (to wit, of the holy shrine). This is in perfect order, and has a set of baths, a caravanserai, several shops, and large revenues in land attached. It maintains fifty moollahs. There is a tradition, that the founder of this college, having, like other adventurers, gone to India in the hope of bettering his fortune, continued for a long time so unlucky, that he became a beggar, forced to solicit charity in the public streets. One day he was accosted by an old Hindoo, who told him that if he would submit to be blindfolded and led to his home, he should have work and good pay.

The poor man reflecting that his condition could not well be made worse, but might be improved, consented to the terms; and after a very circuitous course, his eyes being uncovered, he found himself in a place surrounded by lofty walls, where he was ordered to dig a large hole, in which the Hindoo buried an immense quantity of gold mohrs, and other money. This operation occupied several days, during which time he bethought himself of an expedient by which he might discover whither he had been conveyed. A cat came into the place which he caught and killed, and stuffing the skin with gold, he took an opportunity when not observed to throw it over what he believed to be the boundary wall of the premises: he listened to the sound, and judged that it fell upon clay, or some moist substance. When his work was done he received a present of a few rupees, was again blindfolded, and led to the place whence he had been brought.

He immediately began to search for his cat, which, after some

* Literally, *below* the feet.

time, he found lying in a dirty pond beside a high wall, which he recognised for the inclosure of the Hindoo's dwelling. The gold he thus obtained enabled him at the old man's death, which took place sometime after, to purchase the house from his heir, and he thus became possessed of the great mass of wealth which the Hindoo had buried in secret; with this he returned to Persia, and with a portion of it he built this college.

8th, *Medressa Bala Sir*, or that towards the head of the shrine; a small building in good repair, deriving its revenue from land and shops, and maintaining about twenty moollahs. It was built by certain Oosbeck princes, descendants of Timoor Shah.

9th, *Medressa Purizadeh**, a small building, with a revenue of the same description as the last, built by a female attendant of Gauher Shāhud, at the same time her mistress built the great mosque. It maintains twenty or thirty moollahs.

10th, *Medressa Do-Deer*, or the college with two gates, another small establishment of the Oozbeck princes, similarly endowed.

11th, *Medressa Sooleymaun Khan*, small, and of inconsiderable venues, fifteen or twenty moollahs attached.

12th, *Medressa Khyrāt Khan*, a large college, but much fallen to decay, and now not maintaining more than fifteen or twenty moollahs; its revenues are inconsiderable, and arise from the rent of shops.

13th, *Medressa Abdool Khan*. This medressa is at present deserted. It is said that its founder ordered the chambers to be built without shelves or repositories for books; "because," he observed, "a moollah's books should always be beside him, for if they be "placed upon shelves out of his reach, he will never rise to take them "down." This observation, to the justice of which I have heard many moollahs themselves assent, may serve to give an idea of the indolence of this class of men, who, are, notwithstanding, perfectly ready to presume upon their affectation of learning, particularly before those whom they believe to be incapable of detecting their deficiency.

* Or the Fairies' Medressa.

14th, *Medressa Abbas Koolee Khan*, the founder was of the Shamloo tribe; and endowed this college with large revenues, in baths, shops, and lands, in several places; it has a sufficient establishment of moollahs, and when I saw the place, repairs, much needed, were in progress.

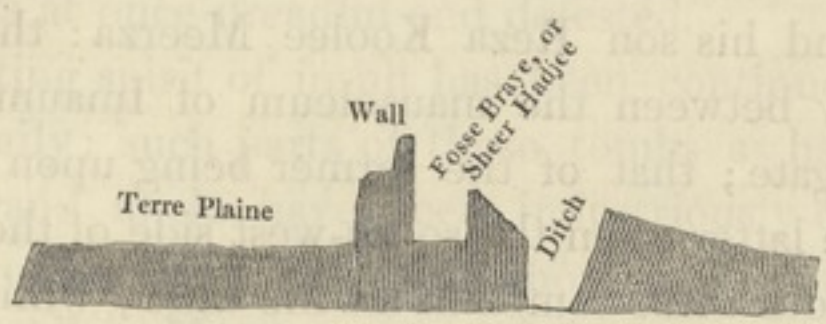
15th, *Medressa Hadjee Regwan*, a small establishment of ten moollahs deriving its support from a few shops and a bath.

16th, *A medressa near the Char Baugh*, the name of which I did not learn; but in the time of Nadir Shah it was turned into a mule stable, for which use it now serves, to the cattle of the wuzeer Meerza Moosa.

There are ten or twelve public baths in Mushed, none of which are at all remarkable; and at least twenty-five or thirty caravanserais in use, besides several others, abandoned and in ruins; many of these are spacious and handsome establishments; some belong to the learned and religious institutions, and are let out to keepers, who exact from those who lodge in them a certain rent for the use of the apartments: others are the property of individuals, and some few have been built from charitable motives; but their founders being gone, and neither revenues nor trustees being appointed for keeping them up, most of such establishments have fallen into decay.

The only building remaining to be noticed is the ark, or palace of the prince; it is so poor a fabrick as scarcely to merit it. It is situated among masses of ruins in the western quarter of the town, close to the walls, in the shape of a fortification, the exact figure of which I could not ascertain. It is surrounded by a wall and ditch, outside of which the earth has been raised into a sort of glacis, while on the inside a still greater quantity has been thrown up into a mass, sloping upwards from the edge of the ditch, so as not to fall, or be easily washed into it, and protecting the greater part of the real wall, between which and this outer mound, a road sufficient for the passage of men or guns has been preserved, as between the wall and fosse braye of a regular fortification. This seems a very effectual covering to the wall, from all that can be brought against it in this country, nor is it easy to conceive how any lodgment could be effected under

it, or upon it, from without, the whole being perfectly commanded by the wall and the flanking towers, and even passing the ditch to attempt it would be a work of no mean difficulty; the figure in the margin shows a section of this style of fortification.



A bridge, which may easily be destroyed, serves to cross this ditch, and it is defended by a sort of gate, but the real and efficient gates are inside, protected by various winding passages, as in most eastern fortifications; so that assailants are, for the most part, exposed to a destructive fire on their approach through narrow defiles, from whence they can oppose no resistance. On the outside of the ditch, opposite to this gateway, are the remains of a square, in the walls of which were chambers, serving, in all probability, as quarters for troops, now fallen into ruins. About twenty old gun-carriages, perfectly rotten, with a few guns quite unserviceable, were collected in this place, where also all public executions take place.

Beyond the gate of entrance, after traversing one or two narrow passages, an outer court is entered, from which another gateway and further succession of passages lead into a small garden, in which is the dewan khaneh, or hall of public audience; a screen is placed before the door of entrance into this garden, that the person of the prince when he comes to give audience may not be too suddenly exposed to view, for no one can enter into the presence of a prince of Persia, let the distance be ever so great, without going through the customary ceremonies of salutation. There is another small garden, or rather court, with canals and fountains in the common fashion, situated beyond that last spoken of, and in this there is a dewan khaneh, where the prince gives his more private audience; still further, and communicating with this, are the private apartments and

prince's household, and the troops, and those of the nobility who come occasionally, with their dependants, to reside in the city; the moollahs and students, who live entirely in medressas; those attached to the religious institutions, not having houses of their own, and the continual influx of strangers, pilgrims, and merchants, from all quarters, by caravans of many hundreds at a time. With these additions, it is probable that the number of souls usually to be found within the walls of Mushed may amount to thirty-two thousand, though it is more likely to fall short of than to exceed that sum. Of these, a considerable number are cultivators of the earth, who have fields without the walls, in which they labour during the day, but who return at night to the protection of the city.

The most numerous class, however, is that of the priests, moollahs, and learned men, with their scholars, this city being their peculiar climate and domain. Their habits and prospects differ considerably from those of literary men in Europe, and chiefly in this, that they have no fixed professions to trust to, and each individual who embraces a life of study has to trust wholly to his own exertions and good fortune for his prosperity, and even for his bread, through life.

The elder moollahs receive no fixed pay from the medressas to which they are attached, and many receive nothing at all. Those who can afford it maintain themselves, and do the duty of giving instruction for the sake of the faith they profess, or rather with the view of gaining a name, by their zeal and learning, which may in time obtain for them a high religious influence among the crowd of disciples and followers, and the consequent respect and riches to which they all aspire.

The poorer moollahs, who cannot support themselves, have sometimes a small allowance from the extra revenues of the medressa, when the moolwullee, or director, can prevail upon himself to part with so much for the purpose. Pecuniary remuneration for tuition is seldom expected or received; but when a moollah has

educated the children of a rich or noble family, a provision of some description is generally made for him.

The objects chiefly attended to in the Persian colleges are, first, to afford instruction on all points connected with the Mahometan faith, the study of the Korān, and all the standard theological works that relate to the doctrine of the Sheahs; then the study of metaphysics and of logic, both of which are taught in a very degraded style; the first consisting, as far as I could learn, of little more than a series of argumentative disputations, upon wild and unprofitable paradoxes; and the second, of an ingenious method of playing upon words, the object being not so much to arrive at truth, as to display quickness of mind and readiness of repartee in the formation and discussion of plausible hypotheses. Mathematics are taught upon better principles, for they are acquainted with the works of Euclid; but they are scarcely ever applied to any useful purpose.

Astronomy is made an object of study; but their views are so contracted, and their theories, founded upon the Ptolemean system, but eked out with strange additions of their own, are so wild and fanciful, that it can be turned to no good; indeed, it is chiefly made subservient to their favourite science of astrology, the value and importance of which is acknowledged by every Persian. No one will undertake the most trivial affair in life, far less those of greater importance, without consulting a professor of this science for a lucky hour or day; and thus, when a moollah becomes celebrated as an astrologer, he looks upon his fortune as secure.

The profits of science chiefly rest with those who successfully study divinity, astrology, and physic. The latter consists in practising the lowest degree of empyricism, with a knowledge of the qualities and effects of a few simples, exercised with a sufficient degree of grave assurance; and a few lucky cures, most probably the work of nature in spite of the physician, serve to establish his reputation. The medical profession, however, is but ill paid in Persia; those of divinity and astrology, which are very often combined, thrive the best; and when a man has obtained a reputation for sanctity and orthodoxy, he soon gains followers. It appears, that the priests collect around

them a flock, numerous in proportion to their estimation, among whom they perform duties nearly analogous to those of a parish priest in Europe; but they have no fixed salary, and live upon the voluntary contributions which they receive, and which often are sufficiently abundant.

Those moollahs who have succeeded in obtaining establishments, reside, of course, in their own houses; but such as attend the medressas, spend most part of their time in their chambers there, where they study their several pursuits, and give instruction to the students who present themselves. These students, particularly those more advanced, and those who come from a distance, have a chamber assigned to them in the college to which they are admitted, by the moolwullee or superior. Their hours of study are generally in the nights and mornings; during the day, they repeat their lessons to their maalims, or masters (the superior moollahs); who explain to them such things as they do not comprehend, and set them new tasks. At other hours they meet together in each others apartments, and amuse themselves, or dispute on subjects connected with their literary pursuits.

There are always certain poor students who perform for the more advanced, or richer ones, a variety of little domestic offices; such as cleaning out their chambers, fetching wood, water, and articles of food, from the bazar, and even cooking their food. For the maalims and superior moollahs such offices are usually performed by some of their scholars; but the rest help themselves, each bringing from the bazar such articles as he requires, and cooking independently in his own room.

The plan of a medressa is nearly the same as that of a caravanserai, except that there are no interior vaults to serve as stables. An area of any size is surrounded by a square of buildings, having a gateway for entrance in the centre of one side; and an arched gateway serving as a mosque for prayer, in that opposite to the kebleh*;

* All mosques are built in such a manner that the entrance shall be opposite to the point where Mecca is situated; so that the faces of those who pray may be turned to the kaaba, or sacred black stone in the temple of Mecca.

the two other sides have each an arch in the centre, to correspond; which contains better chambers, with larger balconies, generally appropriated to the superior moollahs. A range of chambers, frequently in two stories, occupies the rest of the buildings on all sides; the entrance being from a passage behind, and each opens into a balcony that looks out upon the court; these chambers are from twelve to eighteen feet long, by ten or fifteen broad. The area is often arranged into a garden, in which there is a well, for the use of the inhabitants, and the establishment is completed by a few other offices.

Such are most of the medressas I have seen in Persia, and this description of them, and of the men who occupy them, may, perhaps, not be deemed irrelevant in an account of Mushed.

There are in Mushed many merchants, with a due proportion of shopkeepers and tradesmen, to supply the wants of the population; and one quarter of the city is appropriated to the Jews, of whom there is a considerable number, who exercise their customary profession of scrap sellers, in the miserable way common to this oppressed and ill-used class of men. There are no Armenians, nor could I hear of any Hindoos, except one or two miserable wretches from Shikārpore, Candahār, and Moultaun, who had come upon petty commercial speculations.

Of travellers, whether religious, or commercial adventurers, there are always to be seen a great variety from all quarters; and Arabs, Turks, Affghauns, Toorkomans, Oozbecks, &c. &c. are to be found in the different caravanserais and bazars of Mushed, offering in their various habits and costumes a very lively and animated picture to the observer.

The commerce of Mushed is considerable; for though the consumption of foreign articles, or the export of its own, amounts to nothing large, it has become an entrepôt for the produce of all surrounding countries, and rich caravans are daily arriving from Bockhara, Khyvah, Herāt, Kerman, Yezd, Cashān, Ispahan, &c. &c. &c. and a constant interchange of commodities must be taking place.

If the amount of this trade were to be estimated by that of the duties collected, it would not appear very large; for these produce but about twenty five-thousand tomauns of Irāk, or 200,000 Persian reals; a town duty of ten per cent. being levied upon all articles of consumption imported, and one in forty (two and a half per cent.), a transit duty upon other merchandize. But as this is the sum understood to be paid to government by the farmer, who levies from the traffic just what he can, and pays in reality as little as he can, under a systematic course of smuggling and evasion, it should by no means be admitted as a just estimate of the commerce of Mushed.

The manufactures of this city are not extensive; but it still retains its former celebrity for some articles; its velvets are esteemed as the best of Persia, and sword blades of good temper, which sell at from fifteen to one hundred reals apiece, are still forged here; those of the old workmen sell at extravagant prices; two thousand reals, and even more being often demanded for a blade of known antiquity and goodness. The celebrity of the sword blades, both old and new of this place, arises from their being fabricated by a colony of excellent artizans transplanted from Damascus into Khorasān by Timoor; part of whose posterity still follow the profession of their ancestors in Mushed. Other pieces of offensive and defensive armour of a like description sell at similar rates. Silks and cotton cloths are fabricated and dyed here, as in all other Persian towns, but of these there is no export.

The vicinity of the toorquoise mines gives employment to a number of stone-cutters in this town; and rings or unset stones of this gem may be seen in every quarter. Several caravanserais are almost exclusively occupied by dealers in this commodity, who employ these artizans in preparing the stones for various markets. The machinery used for this purpose is very simple: a wheel composed of gum lac, and sand mixed while the first is in a state of fusion, from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of an inch thick, is turned rapidly, by a bow and string fitted to its axle; a broad hoop of thin wood fixed, but concentric

with this wheel, retains the spatterings of water and sand thrown off in its rapid revolutions; the whole is fixed to a board, which may be moved at pleasure, and behind it sits the workman, who gives the degree of polish required, by using wheels of various fineness.

These toorquoises, after being cut and polished, are sorted by the merchant. Those taken from the Abdool Rezakee mine, among which are found the finest stones, are disposed of for Bockhara, whence they find their way to the Russian and other European markets, or to India, where they meet with a great sale; and the quantity purchased in Persia and Turkey are of this description. But the finest stones seldom see the light in Mushed; they are most commonly smuggled out of the country, and find their way to India, by the way of Herāt and Candahār; a great number are also purchased by the pilgrims who resort to the shrine, every one of whom, according to his means, thinks it incumbent upon him to furnish himself with a ring of toorquoise from the sacred city.

Those stones which are taken from the Kummeree and Khoorooch mines, although often rich in colour, are comparatively of small value, on account of the white specks with which they are almost always pervaded; to such an extent sometimes, that they look as if the blue surface had been sprinkled over with a white powder; great numbers of these stones are, however, worked up for use all over the country, and are exported to Bockhara and Arabia. The Arabs do not consider colour so much as size; the stone possessing in their opinion a sort of talismanic virtue *, so that the large slabs, however imperfect, find with them a ready market, being used for seals and amulets, but the usual mode is, to set the stone in small rings of plated tin, which are put in parcels of a dozen or a score, upon a roll of old rags; and thus prepared, they are exposed for sale, and are usually brought in this shape from the Gulf of Persia to India.

Besides the toorquoise cutters, there are a good many people in

* Its native name, Feerozah, signifies victorious, triumphant, prosperous.

Mushed who gain a livelihood by cutting a dark grey stone of a soft texture into utensils for domestic purposes, as cups, dishes and platters, tea and coffee pots, water ewers, and the like; all of which are much esteemed, and find their way to distant quarters of the country, though it is not easy to discover in what their peculiar excellence consists.

I do not believe that there is any other article for which Mushed is at all celebrated; there are some salt mines in its vicinity, which furnish the city, and its environs with this necessary of life, but I believe the export extends no further.

The country around Mushed is sufficiently fertile, and provisions are in general plentiful and reasonable; during the time I remained there, the price of provisions, and other necessaries was much as follows: bread, sold at four and a half mauns tabreez for one real; good rice, six-tenths of a real per maun; barley, twelve mauns per real; chopped straw, twenty-four mauns per real; meat (mutton or beef) eight-tenths of a real per maun; butter, two reals and a quarter per maun; grease, for lights, one and a half reals per maun; firewood, twelve or thirteen mauns per real; vegetables of the season, as carrots, turnips, beet-root, turnip-rooted cabbages, and a few greens, were in tolerable plenty, and reasonable. Fruit was scarce, and little except half-dried grapes, pomegranates, and the dried fruits, and nuts, of Herat, were to be had; but in their season all the best fruits of Persia are to be had at Mushed, in plenty and perfection, particularly apples. Fire-wood here, as in most parts of Persia, was one of the dearest articles of life: the small dry-tufts of thorny herbs that grow upon the neighbouring hills, as also the toppings of trees that have been cut for house-timber, are chiefly made use of for this purpose; and a great portion of the neighbouring well-watered vallies, are planted with quick growing wood, on purpose to supply the city with timber and fuel; this sort of cultivation yielding them by far the best return for their labour.

To return to my journal. In the morning, while we were taking the refreshment of the bath, the meerza met with his brother, a

young man who was studying at one of the colleges here: and I mention the circumstance, chiefly for the sake of giving it as an instance of the looseness of domestic ties in this country; these brothers had not met for several years, and though only separated by an interval of five hundred miles of road, along which caravans were constantly travelling, not one letter had passed between them, nor did either of them know of the other's welfare for more than three years; yet these brothers loved each other well for Persians, and now that they had met were rejoiced at the occurrence.

The bath in the East serves in place of a coffee-room, where, in the cold mornings, people resort for the enjoyment of warmth and gossip; and we were much amused with the strange characters assembled there, with some of whom I commenced acquaintance, and even in the way of business began to seek for information relative to our future progress. After the bath the meerza was dispatched to the Oozbeck caravanserai to seek for further intelligence.

Several people called on me this day; among others, a Russian, a native of Tobolsk, who travelling upon a mercantile expedition with a caravan, had been taken prisoner and sold at Bockhara, from whence he had made his way hither and had entered the Persian service as an artillery-man. He said, he had now a wife, and family here, and considered himself as settled for life, but still he regretted Tobolsk. He brought me a present of fish, and produced, with much mystery, a bottle of Armenian brandy, which he had brought, presuming that it must be a most grateful offering to me; nor was his amazement small, when I positively refused it, and ordered him to take it back.

The meerza, upon his return, brought with him a person who startled me not a little by addressing me in English; and who informed me that his name was Meerza Youssuff; that he had held a small office under the English government at Bombay, where he had learnt a little Hindoostanee and English: and although I could not obtain from him any distinct account of how he had lost or quitted the service, I was not ill pleased to find a creature in this strange

land, to whom the sound of English and the name of their nation were familiar; and who, if he could be trusted, as I hoped, might be of essential service to me.

While I was yet speaking with this man, Seyed Hoossein, one of the khadums of Imaum Reza's shrine, entered; and after a few indifferent remarks, he turned to me and said, that *now* was the time for me to visit the Durgah in peace and safety, as this was the hour when it was generally more private than at any other of the day. I saw by his manner that he was perfectly aware of my real character, and quite willing to indulge my curiosity by a visit to the holy place, although forbidden to Christians, no doubt in hopes of a handsome consideration for his complaisance. Accordingly I lost no time, but taking my cloak and slippers followed him.

On approaching by the way already described, we entered the magnificent gilded archway; and being admitted through Nadir's silver gate, where we left our slippers in charge of the porter. We proceeded to the lofty central apartment, than which I have seldom seen a more happy union of the beautiful and the grand; it was difficult to say which was most to be admired the great size and elegant proportions of this noble hall, or the richness and beauty of its ornaments, seen as they were by a mellow and uncertain light, which veiled every thing that might have been harsh or glaring.

After viewing this apartment for a while, we approached that which contains the shrine itself: pausing on its threshold, my guide bowing himself until his head touched the ground, said a long prayer in Arabic, motioning me to follow him in action, as well as word, which I did implicitly, but, of course, without understanding one word. We then entered, and repeated forms of prayer at each of the four sides of the tomb, bowing at every time very low; after which we examined the apartment, and went through the rest of the place.

Although the meerza had assured me that this was the most private hour of the day, there was, nevertheless, no inconsiderable crowd about the tomb: a number of pilgrims were paying their de-

votions at the shrine, and performing, under the tuition of the khadums, the same ceremonies I had myself gone through. Many were seated in corners in the ante-rooms reading the Korān ; and a multitude of gowned and turbaned figures flitted about through the lofty mysterious rooms : all was silent and death-like, except the low hum of prayer, or the subdued and measured intonations of those who recited the Korān ; sounds producing an effect more striking even than total silence. I should gladly have enjoyed for a longer time the impressive scene before me ; but I could not forget that I was in a place where a Christian, if discovered, would assuredly meet a violent death. I was sensible of the intrusion which I had committed, and felt as if many of the eyes around were suspiciously glancing at me ; it was fortunate that the uncertain light aided my disguise, as the awkwardness of my movements in performing the ceremonies of the place and the common gestures that accompany their religious observances, would unavoidably have betrayed me, had any attention been paid to our party. I saw that the khadum himself was uneasy, and hurried me rapidly from place to place ; and I cannot but confess that I felt relieved, when, after having seen every thing that is shown of the place, and gone through all its ceremonies, we repassed the silver gate, crossed the Sahn, and retired from view into one of the cells of the Medressa Meerza Jaffier. Perhaps it might have been more prudent to go at a time when the place was even more fully crowded, and at an earlier moment after my arrival in the city. After it was known that I had arrived, it could not have been done ; had I lost this opportunity I should not have been able to see the place at all.

CHAP. XIX.

THE AUTHOR VISITS MEERZA MOOSSA THE MINISTER, HIS HOST. — HE DISSUADES FROM UNDERTAKING A JOURNEY TO BOCKHARA. — HIS CHARACTER. — RESOLVE TO ACCOMPANY A CARAVAN ABOUT TO START FOR BOCKHARA. — A VISIT FROM THE AMEERZADEH, BROTHER TO THE KING OF BOCKHARA. — HIS HISTORY, APPEARANCE, MANNERS, AND CONVERSATION. — INTERRUPTED BY A MESSAGE FROM THE WUZEER. — RETURN THE PRINCE'S VISIT. — HIS ACUTENESS AND KNOWLEDGE. — MUTUAL ENQUIRIES. — VISIT MEERZA ABDOOL JAWAT, HIGH PRIEST. — HIS CHARACTER, MANNERS, AND CONVERSATION. — ACCOUNT OF A WILLIAM SHAWE, OF LEAMINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE. — HIS PROBABLE FATE. — RESIDENCE AT THE MINISTER'S COMFORTLESS AND UNCREDITABLE. — REMONSTRANCES. — RESOLVES TO SEEK OUT ANOTHER LODGING. — REPORTS OF DISTURBANCES IN THE COUNTRY AROUND MUSHED. — PLUNDERERS OF VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS RAVAGE, DESTROY, AND MAKE PRISONERS UP TO ITS VERY WALLS. — VIOLENT WIND AND SNOW. — CONSULT CALEB ALLEE MERVEE, REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR PROCEEDING TO BOCKHARA. — ENCOURAGED BY HIM. — METHODS OF TRAVELLING ACROSS THE DESERT, EMPLOYED BY CARAVANS. — VISIT A CELEBRATED DERWESH, KAFERSHAH, AND OTHER DERWESHES.

We had now been guests with the wuzeer for a day and a half, and had not yet seen our host. As this was a mode of conduct quite at variance with the usual forms of Persian politeness, and even of common hospitality, in cases where it is meant to pay attention, I thought that it would be proper to show that I felt the neglect, the more particularly as the meerza had made several fruitless attempts to see Meerza Allee Reza, the wuzeer's brother, and that no one had come in return from either to know how we were, or to propose the time or the terms of meeting. I therefore directed the meerza to write a note to the minister, politely expressive of my disappointment and of a hope, that if I were to continue his guest, it might not be without an opportunity of paying my respects to my host.

The minister had been all day with the prince, and in the evening, according to his daily practice, had gone to perform his devotions at the shrine, from whence he did not return till eight in the evening. The effect of my note, when he received it, was decided enough; the Nazir, who it seems had received orders to wait on me,

and supply my wants, had neglected his duty, and now received a severe rebuke from his master; he sent for the meerza to smoke a caleeoon with him, and complained severely of the measure we had taken in writing as we had done to the wuzeer, and which had subjected him to censure. Meantime, the minister sent to tell me, that he would be glad to receive me immediately in his private apartments; and although it certainly was his part to come to me, if he considered me as upon a footing of equality, and that being already ten o'clock, I had retired to bed, I yet resolved upon complying with the invitation; for it was clearly most impolitic to run the hazard of disgusting a man like Meerza Moossa, in reality the first person at Mushed, and possessed of the greatest influence over a wild and lawless country; where, not only the safety of my life and property, but the success of my proposed undertakings might depend upon his countenance and assistance. It was to be remembered, that my situation, placed among savage tribes who cared nothing for Europeans, or even for the King of Persia himself, differed widely from what it had been at Ispahan or Tehrān, where the name of Englishman is known and respected; and that it would not answer here to stickle for the same punctilious attention, which it is proper to demand there for the sake of the national dignity: these considerations passed rapidly through my mind, as I dressed and attended the messenger, resolving, if possible, to make a friend of his master.

I found him seated in a small apartment, that overlooked the garden, poorly fitted up, with numuds and carpets, in company with three of his sons, and their tutors, with an old moollah who had been his own maalim or master, in his youth; and had continued to preserve a considerable influence with him ever since. There was a comfortable fire blazing in the fire place, and four or five large candles of mutton fat burned in brass candlesticks on the floor.

The minister himself was seated above the fire-place upon a thick numud, that stretched all along the top of the room; next him, still further from the fire, sat his old maalim; and after him, the sons in succession, from 11 to 14 years of age, who fully occupied the top of the room: below, on the side opposite the fire, sat the two tutors.

I have said so much of the respective positions of the party, because the etiquette of place is so much a matter of consequence in Persian society.

When I entered, the minister gave me the usual welcome in a kind and cordial tone, but without rising, and bade me be seated next the fire, as he observed that the night was cold; this gave me indeed a place next himself, but with the fire-place between, and opposite to the boys' tutors, a sort of equivocal situation, dividing me from the rest of the company, but not placing me below them; it was perhaps marking the line in which I was to be considered, but it was not my business to wrangle for places; so, after the "Salaam Aleikoom," I took my seat with a slight bow.

The minister then began to converse with me uninterruptedly, making the common enquiries regarding my country, and rank, my objects in travelling, and my future views; he shook his head, when he learnt my wish to proceed to Bockhara; and strongly advised me to desist; observing, that it was far too perilous an undertaking to be attempted. I endeavoured to show him, that having once determined on the step, it would be weak and disgraceful to desist without making a trial; and expressed my hope that, with his assistance, I should succeed in my object: but he persisted in declaring that it was too hazardous to be thought of; and drew a rapid picture of the state of the country, differing very little from what I had heard at Shahrood; adding impressively, that I should beware of rashness, for that though I was safe in Mushed, there was no security a mile beyond its walls. I was disappointed at the way in which he treated the subject; but desisted from pressing the matter at this time, as no good could have resulted from arguing about it before his family.

He then put to me a number of questions regarding Europe, America, and India, of a description rather calculated to show his own acquaintance with these subjects than to elicit much information from me. His enquiries regarding our relations both with the continental powers and with India, were not only pertinent but acute; and his observations respecting France and its late emperor, Russia,

Austria, Rome and its pope, evinced a greater knowledge of these countries than I had hitherto met with in any of his countrymen.

After a visit of two hours I took leave, and returned to my lodging, a good deal amused with what I had seen: and the minister took occasion to assure me of his friendship; adding, that he would be glad to see me in the evenings whenever I felt inclined to visit him.

Meerza Moossa was at this time, I should think, about forty-five years of age: his person of middle size and well proportioned; his countenance pleasing and good humoured, naturally fresh coloured, but somewhat faded by application to business; his piercing dark eyes, slightly aquiline nose, and splendid black beard, formed altogether one of the most dignified and gentlemanly figures of a Persian nobleman I remember to have seen. His manners and address were pleasing even to fascination, when he chose to charm: and his cordial tone, benevolent smile, and happy choice of expression, were calculated to win the confidence even of those who went warned and guarded against their power.

The character of Meerza Moossa, unfortunately, was not so open as his countenance; perhaps it had been warped and perverted by the infectious air of the country, and the nature of his occupations; for I believe the heart and mind were intended for better things: he had now, however, become the cold, calculating, and wily Persian politician; full of craft, flattery, and falsehood, ready to sacrifice every thing, and even person, to his selfish and ambitious schemes.

The origin of Meerza Moossa, like that of many great men in Persia, was, I believe, by no means splendid: he raised himself to the situation he now holds, by his own abilities; he is considered one of the first *writers* in Persia in every sense of the word, for the Persians attach nearly as much importance to beauty of penmanship as to that of style. After having served in several situations of minor importance, he was appointed governor of Yezd, the revenues of which district improved greatly under his management; but when Prince Hussun Allee Meerza was sent as governor to Khorasān, it

was well known at court that an abler head and firmer grasp than his, would be required to rule that turbulent province, and Meerza Moossa was selected to fill the office of his wuzeer.

But though his ability for the task cannot be questioned, the meerza is far from being the conscientious statesman that should fill a post exposed to so many temptations calculated to mislead him from his duty; and the state of the country proves how selfish a line of policy he has adopted. His influence is great with almost every chief in the province, for his courage, his resolution, and abilities, are well known and dreaded; but this influence, instead of being exerted to maintain peace in the land, and promote obedience to the crown, is directed to keep up a spirit of disaffection, and a succession of petty rebellions that distract the country and weaken the royal authority, while they create a constant necessity for his negociation, and thus always add to his power and his wealth: he fosters the jealousies of the chiefs, and plays them, one against another, so as to free himself from the dread of any combination among them that might prove inconvenient. In short, he manages them all in a greater or lesser degree, and is every thing in Mushed, while the prince is a mere cypher.

With such a character it was important to keep on my guard; conciliation was clearly the line to follow. I was quite in his power, and whatever objects I might have in view, there was little chance of outwitting him, and none of carrying things with a high hand.

February 4th, I repaired to the bazar, along with the meerza, to make enquiry respecting the departure of caravans for Bockhara; and at the Oozbeck caravanserai we learnt that there was then in the city a cāfilah, which had been detained for some time by indefinite rumours of dangers on the road, but which it was believed would now depart in a week. We came at once to the resolution of accompanying it.

On my return home I was informed that I was about to receive a visit from a brother of the present, and son of the late monarch of Bockhara, well known in the East by the familiar name of Beggy

Jan. He is here known by the appellation of Ameerzadeh *, and had, for several years, resided in this town.

This prince, whose name is Nassr-u-deen Meerza, had held the government of Merve, as a provision, from his brother Sooltaun Hyder, and had resided there for several years, till, according to his own report, he was traduced to his brother, and accused of a disposition to rebel. This slander created suspicions between the brothers, and the ameerzadeh, perhaps with reason, believed his life to be in danger, and refused to pay to the king the homage which was his due, or to approach, far less to enter Bockhara. He took as yet, however, no active part, but was contemplating an appeal to the Affghauns, when Mahomed Wullee Meerza, then governor of Mushed, alarmed at the prospect of such a coalition, and very desirous of extending his dominions in that quarter, sent to assure him of his assistance in any undertaking he might be projecting, but strongly advised him against any connection with the Affghauns.

Relying on these assurances, the prince, so long as his private resources lasted, remained in a state of inactive estrangement from his brother, at Merve, in expectation of the promised aid; and, when unable to support himself any longer, he fled to Mushed, and made application in person to Mahomed Wullee Meerza for the performance of his promise; but that fickle prince, whose views had altered, for a long time withheld any assistance, and at last only granted him a force sufficient to enable the fugitive prince to return and take his family from Merve to Mushed, where he has ever since resided upon the bounty of the Persian princes governing the province. Mahomed Wullee Meerza treated him with great kindness, assigning him a good house, and a liberal monthly allowance: but his brother, Hussun Allee Meerza, has been less generous; the allowance has been discontinued, and the house he lived in has been changed for one of an inferior description. He feels this deeply, the more so, because the greatest part of the property he brought from Merve has

* Ameerzadeh signifies "born of a chief, or prince." The abbreviation of this word is "Meerza," which is always subjoined to the name in designating a prince of the blood.

been exhausted, and it is said that he now lives chiefly by the sale of such articles of magnificence, or of comfort, as yet remain, and which he only parts with from the necessity of the sacrifice.

I heard it asserted that Shah Hyder has repeatedly made overtures of friendship to his brother, and solicited him to return to Bockhara; but the ameerzadeh, doubting, perhaps with reason, the sincerity of these advances, has hitherto refused to comply, preferring the tranquillity and comparative security he enjoys in Mushed to the uncertainty of a prince's affection, even in his native land. Many people say that Shah Hyder is sincerely attached to his brother, and, even although he refuses to return, sends him occasionally rich presents. Others again believe that if he could get him into his power he would take his brother's life. Certainly it is a rare thing to see an Asiatic prince grant unconditional pardon to a rebellious brother.

The ameerzadeh doubtless does entertain relations with his native place, and adventures a little in trade with it, to eke out his narrow income; but whether he has any intercourse of a different nature I have not the means of knowing. He employs himself here in literary pursuits, studying astronomy, history, and philosophy. He had heard of my reputed skill in the first-mentioned science, and that was made the ostensible reason for the present visit.

He entered with little state, and few attendants; he was a small man, of very ill-favoured countenance, and features strongly denoting his Tartarian descent*; small light grey eyes, drawn upwards at the corners, high cheek bones, a small nose slightly raised, the upper lip, and space between that and the nose, protuberant, as if swelled, the mouth itself very ugly, with the corners strongly drawn down. He had very little beard, only a few hairs on the upper lip and on each jaw, with a small long tuft below the under lip. His complexion was light and sandy, and his skin a good deal marked with the small-pox: the *tout ensemble* strongly resembled the countenance of a child, swelled and disfigured by accident; for the smallness of his features

* His mother was a Kalmuck.

and his want of beard gave him a very youthful appearance. But with all these advantages his smile was good humoured, and even prepossessing, his manners easy, affable, and polite, and I found him, upon the whole, one of the pleasantest men I had met with.

The subject of astronomy was very soon brought forward, and the ameerzadeh's questions were numerous and curious: he enquired into, and appeared readily to comprehend the uses of my instruments; and he explained to me his own opinions of the motions of the heavenly bodies. He believed that the earth performs two motions, one round the sun, the other round its own axis; but he could not account for the change of seasons without the intervention of another movement, which he could not explain in a very intelligible manner, nor could I learn from whence he had adopted his theory; he said he had been led to form it from the result of his observations with the telescope; but it is difficult to conceive how any observations, in his power to make, could lead to a conclusion so decided.

Our discourse had not proceeded far, when a messenger was sent by the wuzeer, to inform the ameerzadeh that he was going to hold his durbar*, and would be glad to receive him in his dewan khaneh †, upon which, the prince arose with a movement of impatience, and took his leave, pressing me to come and see him, and hoping we might often meet. I found afterwards that the wuzeer had come so far on his way to visit me; when he understood that the ameerzadeh was already with me, he took alarm at this, and sent to break off the incipient connection in the manner related.

I employed the remainder of the day in enquiries relative to the caravans for Bockhara, and in making search for certain Hindoo merchants, through whose means we hoped to establish a credit at that place; but of the latter we found only two petty traders from the neighbourhood of Candahār; and understood that we were not likely to be more successful when we should have reached Bockhara.

* The *durbar* may be interpreted the *levee* of any great man—his appearance in public, during which he transacts business, and receives visits.

† Dewan khaneh, is the hall of audience in which the durbar is held.

This was not formerly the case; at one time, Mushed was the resort of many affluent Hindoos; but oppression, and the distracted state of the country, has driven wealth and all its successful votaries far away from Persia. We met, however, with a respectable merchant in the Oozbeck caravanserai, who gave us rather cheering accounts of our intended route, and we returned to our dreary lodgings in better spirits, and with hopes of an early departure.

February the 5th, after breakfast, I returned the ameerzadeh's visit; he received me very cordially, and a long and interesting conversation chiefly relating to astronomy, geography, and science in general, was kept up; throughout the whole of which, the prince's proficiency and intelligence gave me great surprize; it, however, became clear, that he had, in some way or other, received a few hints of European knowledge, on which his own improvement was grounded. He had a book of English maps, one of a set presented by the English government to Nadir Shah, and which, with others, had fallen into the hands of a certain family here (of whom more hereafter): on these maps the names of places had been written both in Arabic and English; great part of the former having been done by the ameerzadeh himself, though how he discovered them I know not: he put down many at once from my dictation. All his observations upon astronomy were pertinent and good; and the solutions he had devised for the various difficulties that met him in his way, were ingenious and often perfectly just.

Next came the constant series of enquiries relative to my religious opinions; and, although himself a very strict observer of the precepts of his own religion, he evinced great liberality for the tenets of others, and professed himself much pleased with my replies upon the subject.

Medicine was then spoken of, and he did not seem to be quite aware of the European superiority in that art; but he admitted the probability of the fact, and the sufficiency of the several causes I assigned for it; particularly, when I explained to him the nature and tendency of our laborious anatomical investigations, a source of knowledge shut up from them by inveterate religious prejudice.

In return, I questioned him closely regarding his native place, the geography of the country, particularly respecting the courses of the two great rivers the Oxus and the Iaxartes; the manners of the people, and the government, resources, and general description of his brother's kingdom. I told him of my wish to visit Bockhara, and begged his advice and assistance in the prosecution of my design; these he cordially promised, but turning quickly to me, "What," exclaimed he, "do you propose by this journey? why do "you go thus?" These questions he followed up by a number of others from which I gathered, that he believed me to be commissioned to collect information, of a nature calculated to assist the schemes of conquest, which he chose to attribute to the British nation; and his surprize was *not* to see a subject of that nation seeking to visit these remote countries, but to see him in guise so humble, and with attendance so poor as mine. He said that an emissary from thence should have come as a conqueror, surrounded with his troops.

He said that he was himself very desirous to visit England, and to throw his cause and himself at the feet of the monarch who ruled there; he was warm in its praises, but was severe in his censure of the Russians; it was evident that he had made direct or indirect application, probably for assistance, to the nearest Russian authorities, without meeting the success he expected; and, in consequence of his disappointment, felt highly indignant against the nation, which he bitterly accused of ambition, treachery, and deceit.

I quitted the ameerzadeh strongly prepossessed in his favour as a pleasing, well-informed, and polite man; and we then went to pay our respects to Meerza Abdool Jawat, one of the three brothers who form the family alluded to above, sons of Meerza Mehdee, formerly moojetehed* in Mushed, and each respectively now holding that respectable situation, and all very highly regarded. We found him in a mean apartment, on the floor of which, poorly covered with a ragged mat, were seated several persons around him. He received

* Moojetehed, high-priest.

us politely, and soon entered into a conversation similar in its tendency to that which I had held with the wuzeer and the ameerzadeh, with this difference, that here I found by far more of the polite consideration which marks a well-bred man acquainted with the world, than in either of these persons; and an entire absence of the insolent self-importance and presumption, so constantly to be observed in the demeanor of the Persian khans. On religion we talked a little, and it soon became apparent to me that I had no bigotted violence to dread from the meerza, who had too much good taste to press a subject on which he could not, *openly* at least, admit of any approximation of opinion between himself and his guest. He evinced a strength of mind and powers of reasoning fully greater than those of the ameerzadeh, and an acquaintance at least equal to his, with scientific subjects. He asked me many very pertinent questions relating to geography and astronomy; and he pushed me so hard on subjects connected with the theory of optics, and the nature of the telescope, that I found I had neither language nor science sufficient to satisfy him. He was particularly well skilled in mechanics, and produced several very ingenious articles of his own construction, with others of European fabric, as dials, dividers, and other mathematical instruments, such as I never expected to have found in Khorasān; and the uses of which he so well understood, that he had contrived to repair some of them which had accidentally been broken. He had also a very nice set of watchmakers' tools, but these he could make no use of.

The meerza showed great eagerness for information regarding Europe, and its kingdoms, and he produced several books in the Persian language written on the subject, particularly a volume by one Moollah Mahomed Ispahānee, who visited Europe, and England in particular, some sixty years ago, and who appears to have written a fair succinct account of what he saw, with a short history of Europe and its political situation and divisions at the time; a short notice regarding America, its discovery by Columbus, and its subsequent revolutions, with various other matters that had attracted his attention. Another work which he produced, related entirely to the

discovery and description of the new world, and from this he read some extracts, which gave a favourable impression of its contents.

We quitted the meerza with very kindly feelings for his politeness and benevolence of manner, and it would have been delightful to cultivate the friendship of such a man, could we have felt perfect confidence in his sincerity; but it is seldom indeed that a Persian can be wholly trusted; and should such a rare character be found, it generally happens here as elsewhere that some kind friend steps forward, to discover and exaggerate the faults of one who has attained so high a reputation for virtue. I learnt with sorrow, from more than one quarter, that these brothers, though wearing the garb of peculiar sanctity and goodness of heart, were in reality avaricious, deceitful hypocrites, indulging, under the cloak of extraordinary austerity, in all the worst Persian vices; and although great allowance was doubtless to be made in listening to these reports, for the misrepresentations of envy and malice, I could see in the sequel that they were not totally unfounded. One anecdote which is related of these brothers may serve as a specimen of these reports; and if it be true, as there is room to fear, it indeed tells sadly against them. It is said, that when Shah Rōkh, the grandson of Nadir Shah, during the troubles of his miserable reign, was forced to fly from Mushed, he left a quantity of jewels and money in the hands of these men for security, as a provision against the evil days which were fast approaching; but they treacherously retained the whole, refusing to render any account of the deposit, and are still in possession of large sums arising from this source.

Meerza Abdool Jawat, the youngest, is considered the most upright and accomplished of the three, and with reference to the little intercourse that was likely to take place between us, I could but be upon my guard, and hope at least that I had heard the worst of a man so prepossessing in his manners and address, and so civilly disposed to a stranger and a Christian.

I learnt from the meerza that an European had passed through Mushed in the preceding month of March, whose proceedings and fate were greatly involved in mystery; he reported himself to have

come from India, by the way of Kermān and Yezd, under the order of the Governor General, which further directed him to return thither by the route of Candahār, Caubul, Lahore, &c. He remained for two or three months at Mushed, and was in habits of visiting with Meerza Abdool Jawat, to whom he had presented a book with some maps, as memorials, in which he had inscribed his name and place of birth: "*William Shawe, of Leamington Priors, near Warwick.*" The meerza did not appear to have conceived a very high opinion of this person, and spoke of him as in no respect remarkable; it appears that he waited on the wuzeer, and requested to be furnished with a sum of money, for which he offered bills either on India, or on Tehrān; but Meerza Moossa finding that he could produce no credentials from the authorities at either place, declined making the advance; he had no servant, and very little baggage, could talk a little Persian and Arabic. What became of him I could not learn with any accuracy; Meerza Abdool Jawat told me, that he had attempted to return to India in the way he proposed, by Candahār and Caubul, against the advice and remonstrances of himself and others, and that at or near Herāt he had been plundered and stript naked, since which nothing had been heard of him. The minister said, he had returned to Sheerauz, by the route of Kermān and Yezd; but I never heard anything further of him, and fear that some fatal accident must have put a period to his travels and his life.

We returned to our lodgings; the day was extremely bad, snow fell fast, and it was very cold; our cheer and welcome were quite as much so; neither the wuzeer, nor any one on his part, came to visit us; our dinner cold and comfortless was brought us at nine o'clock at night, with a bare allowance of grease for light; on the whole, our situation was rather like that of prisoners than guests.

February 6th. I sent the meerza to call on the wuzeer's brother, Meerza Allee Reza, or in his absence to see the nazir, to let them distinctly understand the dissatisfaction I felt at the treatment I had received, and declare my determination to leave the minister's house in consequence. I desired him to say, that I had by no means come like a beggar to receive my food and lodging at the wuzeer's expence;

that an English gentleman, when he became a guest, looked for the respect and kindness of his host; but that I had now been five days in his house, and had neither seen the face of my host, nor any of his family, except when I waited on them; nor were those who desired to visit me permitted to have access to me, a mode of conduct equally foreign to the rules of Persian and English hospitality, and that I was resolved to remove to some lodging, where I might live at my own expence, and be free to see and be seen.

In consequence of this remonstrance, the nazir called upon me to apologize for the neglect of which I complained, and which he pretended to assure me arose from a belief that I desired to be private. I repeated to him the substance of my message of the morning, assured him I was too well acquainted with their customs to be deceived by his pretended explanations, that visits from the family and friends of the host were among the first attentions offered to esteemed guests, and that though I did not desire that my chamber should become a lounge for curious impertinents, he might have been well assured that I would have been happy to see the respectable inhabitants of the place. To this the nazir only replied, by a torrent of false and unmeaning expressions of regard on the part of his master, who, he assured me, meant to visit me that evening, and intended to have carried me to wait upon the prince in the morning, had the snow not been so violent all day.

In spite of these professions, which I now fairly appreciated, I resolved to make good my retreat to another lodging, with all convenient speed. It was not alone the discomfort of the place, that urged me to this step; I felt it discreditable to live in the minister's house upon such questionable terms, and that the object of my journey was quite defeated, while I remained in so complete a state of surveillance. No one could visit me without the minister's knowledge and permission, and I was debarred from obtaining the information I sought, not only by the difficulty of meeting with persons qualified to afford it, but by the reluctance which such persons, when met with, doubtless felt to expose themselves to the displeasure of the wuzeer, who was plainly jealous of all communication held with me.

I felt, however, the importance of avoiding any open rupture with the minister, the consequence of which might be fatal to the objects of my journey, if not to my party and to myself, and I resolved on obtaining his permission, if possible, to retire to other lodgings, where I might be my own master, and perhaps become in some measure forgotten, and consequently less controlled; it would be at all times easy, I believed, to revive the recollection, and claim his assistance, if necessary. The meerza and I, therefore, busied ourselves without loss of time to find a house that might suit us.

There was a report this day, that Seyed Mahomed Khan of Kelaat had come down in force from his hills, attacked and plundered several villages belonging to Mushed, and carried their inhabitants into slavery, extending his ravages to within eight fursungs of the city. The accounts, indeed, from all quarters were of the most unpleasant description; the road to Herāt was overrun by the Timoorees and Hazarahs; Mahomed Khan of Toorbut, in conjunction with the latter, was plundering to the southward: the Toorkomans, emboldened by want of opposition, came in bands to the very gates of the city. It was commonly observed that it was unsafe to wander even a mile from Mushed, nor was this exaggeration; the very week before I reached the city, several prisoners were made under its walls by parties that had lain in wait at some little distance all night, until the town's people came out in the morning, and who seizing them, made off before assistance could be given. There was no doubt that the country all around was in a very disturbed state; but it was difficult to ascertain the truth; for reports multiplied in proportion to this distraction, those of the present day contradicting those of the day before, so that the public mind became quite harassed, and it was impossible to decide on any line of conduct.

February 7th. A violent storm of snow and wind: I could not stir out until late, when wrapt in our sheepskin cloaks, the meerza and I sallied out to hunt for a house, but were quite unsuccessful. We called, however, upon Caleb Allee Mervee the Bockhara merchant, with whom I became acquainted in the Oozbeck caravanserai some days before; the approach to his house formed a good specimen of the curious

manner in which the ruins of this town are perforated, or burrowed into holes and corners, for after threading several most suspicious and unseemly lanes, and descending into a hollow underground in perfect darkness, a door at the end of a long passage admitted us into a neat inclosure, from whence we followed our guide to a most comfortable room, warm and well fitted up, where we found the old man seated over a pan of charcoal. This was one of his family rooms, the *private* apartment or *khelwut*, as it is called. He received us very kindly, ordered hot water and produced some tea, which he immediately infused for us; it was excellent green tea, but it was used far more sparingly than by us; they boil it much more, and drink it with a great deal of sugar; and, in fact, it is rather like a syrup tinctured with tea, than a strong infusion of the herb; but in a cold day it is very comfortable.

We commenced the discourse by requesting our host to give us some information regarding the routs commonly taken to Bockhara; the modes of travelling, and the present state of the country through which they lead, as far as he himself could form a judgment. The old gentleman, after looking long and earnestly in our faces, asked us if we seriously wished and were determined to go to Bockhara? and upon receiving our assurances that such was, in truth our determination, and that nothing should prevent us from making the attempt but the exertions of positive force on the part of the wuzeer, or some unforeseen accident, he told us, that if we would trust to him, he would so manage it, that we should reach our destination in comparative ease and comfort; he assured us that we should be saved the dangers of the road, by being placed under the charge of two Oozbecks of approved fidelity, and that we and our baggage should, if we pleased, be transmitted to Bockhara by this or the next caravan. When, however, we began to come to details, we found several difficulties that had at first escaped attention.

Caravans for crossing the desert chiefly employ camels as beasts of burthen, and their mode of travelling is as follows: they load after dinner, and evening prayers, and march all night, until sunrise, when they halt and unload; give the camels a little food, and dress some

for themselves. After a rest of little more than two hours they recommence their march, and continue all day until sunset, when they again halt about two hours, for food and rest, and then proceed as before. Now, as this is continued for eighteen or twenty days, few horses could stand it, especially at the slow rate of a camel's pace; and the fatigue of hanging on horseback for so many hours out of the twenty-four, with so little sleep, would be very inconvenient to those unaccustomed to the labour.

Caleb Allee therefore proposed, that we should send forward such things destined for Bockhara as we did not presently require, by the caravan about to set off; and that he should send us off on horseback ten or fifteen days afterwards, with persons of trust who should carry us in twelve days to our journey's end; thus we should not only save ourselves the fatigue of travelling with camels, but gain eight or ten days of time, and the power of fixing at pleasure the period of our departure. We thought this plan more eligible than any other; and after drinking our tea, we took leave of our old friend, greatly pleased with his frank kindness. He told us that his reason for making a doubt of our determination at first, was because the year before an European had applied in the same manner for his assistance, and that after every arrangement had been made, and guides procured for him, his courage had failed, and he had declined proceeding: we understood this to have been the same William Shawe above spoken of.

Anxious as I was to obtain geographical information from every source that could afford it, and finding that the only mode to approach the truth was by collecting and comparing the routes of different travellers with each other, I omitted no opportunity of seeking out and questioning such travellers as came within my reach; of these, the most numerous, generally too the most intelligent, and by far the most amusing, were the derweshes, or wandering religionists; who passing from one country to another in the course of their profession, void of care, possessed of little, but commanding all they require, have their minds free for observation, and frequently sharpened to it by a variety of adventures, which

seldom occur to the plodding merchant, the mere pilgrim, or the careless soldier. In the hope of gleaning some information in this manner, the meerza and I proceeded to search for the dwelling of Kaffer Shah, a celebrated Sooffee, born in this place, but who had travelled much, and had rendered his name notorious by a most audacious contempt for all the forms and ordinances of the Mahometan religion. He had burnt the Korān solemnly before his disciples, for the lies which (he said) it contains; and had sent one of these deluded enthusiasts to smear the silver railing of the holy shrine with the vilest of filth, because it was the source of so much deceit and superstition. The poor disciple was put to death upon the spot, but Kaffer Shah escaped; perhaps, it was not known that he was the instigator of the act; perhaps, the superstitious veneration felt by the multitude for the character of a derwesh proved his protection, in spite of the wrath of the priesthood.

We found the house of this person among the ruins of an obscure quarter of the town, and it was with great difficulty we obtained admission; perhaps he suspected our intentions, and we should not have got in at all, had not one of his disciples accidently come to the door while we stood there, and acted as our messenger. After a good deal of negociation, we were at last ushered into a miserable, small, dark chamber, where the derwesh received us; and spreading an old numud in a corner, squatted down over a pan of charcoal, desiring us to do the same; he then turned his eyes suspiciously upon us, and evidently labouring under great anxiety and uneasiness, repeatedly demanded our business. I told him, that having heard much of his wisdom, I had been desirous to meet with him, in hopes of finding in a derwesh like him a liberality of sentiment, and a disposition to converse with strangers, particularly with an European, instead of the shyness and reserve which I was sorry to observe in him. "Oh," replied he, with a sneer, "if "you want wisdom, give me money, and you shall have enough of "it, for I have plenty." The meerza then attacked him, for a considerable time, and they kept up a conversation, but little of which I could understand; the meerza, however, at last got angry, and

told the other to leave his nonsense, and talk like a man of understanding, if such he was; for, that for his part, he was quite up to his professional tricks, which would by no means pass with us: he followed this warning up with certain cant phrases, which I could not make out, but which Kaffer Shah perfectly understood; and the effect of them was a complete change in the fellow's manners: he came to his senses at once, and began to talk reasonably. It would seem, that he believed us to be two fresh proselytes from whom he expected an ample present, and therefore deemed it necessary to play off a little mummery on the occasion; but when he saw that the meerza was at least his equal at his own weapons, he found it convenient to change his tone at once. It was a complete peep behind the curtain; and while I was astonished that deception of so low and gross a character could meet with such success, a mingled feeling of compassion and contempt arose for the miserable weakness of his followers, who could be so easily and so egregiously gulled. The fellow did not even possess the merit of shrewdness, far less could he boast of any remarkable abilities; and we gained from him nothing but the names of one or two of his brethren, who, as he informed us, had travelled a good deal through Caubul and the countries about it, and we left him to look for them.

It was now nightfall, but we proceeded, though in darkness and doubt, to the place which had been indicated. It was a large burying ground, called the Kuthulgah, or *place of slaughter*, and there, in a ruined tomb surrounded by the remains of the dead, and half buried in snow, we found those whom we sought. An old gate which still occupied the gateway of the tomb, had been closed against the weather, and worse intruders; and its occupants appeared to be extremely unwilling to admit any one, although the meerza repeatedly vociferated the watchwords of the profession "*Yah Allee*," "*Huq* *;" with the true derwesh intonation. At last, an old man

* These words constitute the usual form by which a derwesh announces his arrival or presence; the first two words are only an invocation to Allee, the third, *Huq*, literally signifying goodness, rightness, justice, is used as an appellation of the Divine Being; and the whole forms a sort of symbolic watchword common to all these licentious enthusiasts.

having reconoitred us through a loop hole, opened and admitted us to the interior; where among a whole assembly of wretched fukeers, calunders, and derweshes, Nishān Allee, the person we were in search of, held the chief place.

It was a lodging truly miserable for so dismal a night, the snow beat in, and the wind howled wildly through the ruins; there was hardly a spark of fire, no covering to the bare earth, and but little on the wretched creatures it so imperfectly sheltered. Certainly the picture here presented to us of the life of such wanderers was of no tempting description, and if that did not in general promise more exemption from privations, and more enjoyment of substantial comforts, than appeared to fall to the lot of those before us, the number of such devotees would soon be greatly diminished. We smoked a calleeoon with the derwesh, and then asked him to spend the evening with us at our less uncomfortable lodging, an invitation which we thought could not have been otherwise than agreeable, but which he did not accept without much difficulty. Nishān Allee did not, however, prove by any means the intelligent person I had expected; he called himself a native of Cashmere, but could give no very good account of the place, and though I took down from his dictation several routes through the countries lying between India and Persia, they were too indistinct to make use of with any confidence. He was by no means deficient in impudence, for, on entering my chamber, he without ceremony took possession of the highest seat, dirty, ragged, and half naked as he was, and stuffed himself most unscrupulously with every description of victuals within his reach.

CHAP. XX.

THE AUTHOR REQUESTS THE WUZEER'S PERMISSION TO REMOVE FROM HIS HOUSE TO ANOTHER LODGING. — HE KINDLY DISSUADES. — VISITS — AND INTRODUCES HIM TO THE PRINCE. — RECEPTION. — CURIOSITY OF THE PRINCE, MINISTERS, AND COURTIERS TO SEE HIS ASTRONOMICAL INSTRUMENTS. — STRANGE CONVERSATIONS RELATIVE TO ASTRONOMY AND OTHER SUBJECTS. — THE AUTHOR'S RESIDENCE IN THE HOLY CITY LOUDLY REPROBATED, VENGEANCE DENOUNCED AGAINST HIM AND THE MEERZA. — VISITS THE AMEERZADEH AND IS ASTONISHED AT HIS CAPACITY AND ACUTENESS. — REMOVE WITH THE WUZEER'S PERMISSION TO A SMALL PRIVATE HOUSE. — PLANS FOR THE JOURNEY TO BOCKHARA. — RECEIVES AS A GUEST THE SON OF THE REIS OF BOCKHARA. — FURTHER PROOFS OF FANATICAL ENMITY TOWARDS THE AUTHOR. — PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING MEDRESSAS AND BATHS. — VISITED BY MEERZA ABDOOL JAWĀT, WHOSE ADVICE HE SOLICITS, AND WHO PERSUADES HIM TO FEIGN A DISPOSITION TO ADOPT THE MAHOMETAN CREED, AND THEREBY ENABLES HIM TO ENTER THE SAHN AND OTHER PROHIBITED PLACES. — THE LICENCE HOWEVER DOES NOT CONTINUE LONG, THE DANGER TOO GREAT TO BE REPEATED. — VISITS MEERZA DAOOD — HIS FRIENDLY CONDUCT — HIS CHARACTER. — SUSPICIONS STILL ENTERTAINED OF THE AUTHOR WHO IS SUBJECTED TO MANY UNPLEASANT INTERROGATORIES. — CONVERSATION ON RELIGIOUS AND METAPHYSICAL SUBJECTS. — THE ROAD TO BOCKHARA RENDERED UNSAFE BY THE FEUDS BETWEEN THAT STATE AND KHYVAH. — VISITS THE RUINS OF ANCIENT TOOS. — TOMB OF FERDOUSEE AND OTHERS. — ANTIQUITY OF TOOS. — TOMB OF KHOJAH RUBBEE.

FEBRUARY 8th. This day I intimated to the wuzeer, in a respectful note, my wish to remove from his house, and relieve him from the burthen of my presence; but it was not until after the exhibition of a variety of petty intrigues among his servants that the meerza was invited to visit the minister at his private family party. The conference was rather curious; and it appeared to have been a thing concerted on the part of the minister's family, for the purpose of puzzling and putting the meerza out of countenance.

He was first attacked by Moollah Hussun, regarding the English system of astronomy, and the sciences in their opinion connected with it, to all which the meerza had acknowledged himself a convert, and he now had to defend this system against the vague and ignorant attacks of the moollah, who supported the absurd Maho-

metan system of the seven heavens revolving round the earth. The minister took no part, but listened to the dispute with no small amusement, while the moollah and another person present got very warm in it. The meerza, however, had so much the better of the argument, that his opponents dropt it, and commenced an attack upon his religious principles; but here the meerza was at home, intimately acquainted with the theory of his own faith, and the various dogmas on which its enthusiasts pique themselves, and little scrupulous upon such subjects himself, he could play around his more solemn and orthodox antagonists, till wearied by his desultory mode of attack and defence, they called him a *Feringhee Cootchick* (or an half European), and dropt the subject.

I was indeed clearly of opinion, from all we heard and saw, that the religious scruples of the wuzeer's family were alarmed at the introduction of an infidel within their walls; and they considered the meerza who accompanied him as little better than a kaffer*: I say the wuzeer's *family*, because I believe that the minister himself, though particularly strict in his outward deportment, would have laughed at such scruples, if he had dared; but the zeal of the city once awakened by the voice of these bigots, boded no good to me, or to my projects.

The wuzeer however expressed himself regarding me in the most friendly manner; he observed that I was his guest, and that he could not permit me to leave his house; but that if I disliked my present quarters, others should be found, until I should be satisfied. I should not (he said) go back to Futeh Allee Khān, and blacken his face by reporting that he had ill treated the guest recommended by him: he said that he had intended to visit me on the day when the ameerzadeh called, but that he being a stranger, and of royal degree, it became necessary to pay him the compliment: since that time business had prevented his making a visit out, while his brother Meerza Allee Reza had been hindered from waiting on me by illness:

* Kaffer, *unbeliever*, a term of great reproach.

that however "Inshallah *," he meant to call on me in the morning, and afterwards take me to wait on the prince, himself preparing the way for me. As to my purposed visit to Bockhara, as the meerza had declared that I stood pledged for the performance of it, and would rather (he thought) fall alive into the hands of the Toorkomans, than abandon the attempt, he promised letters, and every assistance he could command; and, added he, "He may go (Inshallah) "by the cāfilah now loading to proceed by the way of Serrukhs."

Sensible though I was, that the greater part of these professions were false, or much exaggerated, I still felt comforted by the expression of them; for though I hardly expected him to fulfil his promises, it was not probable that he would act in direct contradiction of them, and it went to prove that he felt some sort of responsibility for my safety.

February 9th. The wuzeer kept his word this day: he came to see me about nine o'clock, with so little warning, that I had scarce time to get ready for receiving him. He entered at once into familiar conversation with his usual air of benignity and frank kindness, in which none can excel him; and repeated most of what he had said to the meerza on the night before, lamenting the little intercourse that had taken place between us; apologizing for the inattention I had suffered, by referring to the mass of business on his hands, and his consequent inability to see me himself; now, however, as he assured me, he was come to make amends, and begin by introducing me to the prince.

The minister's attendants on this occasion were Moollah Hussun, and one or two other dignitaries of the same complexion, who, immediately after this apology had been uttered, set upon me like a pack of hounds, with the wuzeer at their head, calling for an explanation of our theory of the solar system, and a detail of the reasoning upon which our opinions were founded. To one so little proficient in the language as myself, even had I possessed sufficient science, and had the request been of a far less sweeping description,

* "Inshallah," please God, an expression in constant use.

it would have been very difficult to comply; but to hope for any success in explaining to them the theory of a science which has only been brought to its present state by the labours of our most eminent philosophers, during a period of several ages, would have been as absurd on my part, as it was on theirs to expect it. Luckily, the wuzeer could not remain long, so he referred the lecture until another opportunity, and begged to see the sextant, telescope, and other instruments he had heard of, and with which he was much gratified. I showed him the sun reflected in the artificial horizon, and he read the degrees of the sun's altitude on the index of the sextant, by aid of the magnifying lens, with the delight of a boy; and, after bidding me be sure to bring the instruments along with me for the prince's inspection, he rose and went to the royal durbar.

About noon we were summoned to the presence. The prince had signified his wish that I should appear in the European costume, but this being out of my power, as I had left my European clothes at Tehrān, I put on my best Persian dress, and, taking the instruments along with me, attended by the meerza, we followed the messenger.

I have described the palace already; we were taken to the dewan khaneh, where the wuzeer was seated among a number of his retainers, and the few khans that were in attendance. He honoured me now by a high seat, and I was speedily attacked by demands for a sight of my curiosities. Little time was, however, granted for their gratification, for the prince, as great a child as any of them, became impatient to see the "Elchee" and his play things, so I was summoned before him. And here followed the usual dispute upon the point of etiquette, of whether I was or was not to be allowed a seat, a point always debated, and always conceded; for to cut the matter short at once, I refused to go in upon any other terms. I believe that the only reason for bringing it in question at all is to give to the concession the air of a distinguished favour.

We entered another garden, and saw the prince seated in a dewan khaneh at the upper end, with hardly any attendants. We approached him with the usual ceremony of three obeisances, upon

coming in view of his person, and one when we entered the room where he sat. A seat was pointed out for me above the middle of the room, just below the moonujoom bashee (or chief astrologer), Moollah Abdool Wahab, and another person, the head, I think, of the law, the only persons in presence.

The prince, seated on his little musnud, in the upper corner of the window, was plainly dressed in black, his person rather full, possessing a good deal of dignity; his features were exactly those of his family, — a high straight nose, with fine dark eyes, arched eyebrows, a fine open forehead, and a full black beard. He would have made a still better appearance had he been contented with more simplicity, but these princes fancy that a constrained theatrical look, and a very loud voice, are essential to dignity. Accordingly, he strained a voice naturally rather sweet, to bid me the usual welcome, in hoarse and rough tones, and puffed out his chest, like a proud turkey-cock, to appear majestic as he spoke. He asked me "If I had "been so fortunate as to have reached the dust of the feet of the "king of kings?" To which I replied, that "when *his slave* was at "Tehrān, the *father of the world* was a mourner;" and this prevented any further queries that might have been inconvenient.

After the usual questions, touching whence I had come, whither I was going, and what my business might be, he entered upon the eternal subject of astrology, astronomy, &c. and requested to see my astrolabe; but, as his dignity forbade his moving, he directed me to show its use to the moonujoom bashee, in the sun. When he was informed that its only use was to take the altitude of the sun and other heavenly bodies, he expressed rather a contemptuous opinion of its powers; but he was very desirous to know whether the telescope did or did not show the stars at noon-day; or if there was not a description of glass that was calculated for that purpose.*

* They entertain very magnificent and mysterious ideas of the power imparted by Europeans to many of their mechanical inventions, as well as of their profound knowledge in preparing salutary or pernicious drugs; effects nothing less than magical are attributed to many of their inventions. Among other things it was believed that certain telescopes were constructed in Europe capable of viewing all that should pass within the walls of a

When I informed him that it was only intended for showing the stars *by night*, he observed that he had plenty himself which could do that. Then came another *baiting* on the subject of astronomy, the prince taking the lead, and questions innumerable poured in. The sky, what did it consist of?—The earth, of what and how was it formed?—The regions of water, of air, of fire, by which, according to their theory, the earth is surrounded, what did we think of them?—Does the earth move round the sun, or the sun round the earth?—When to the last I replied that our theory supported the former opinion, they proposed their objections, which, indeed, were of a very unphilosophical description: for instance, they enquired if it be true that the earth moves round the sun, how does it happen that so great a degree of velocity as that would imply does not cause every thing

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fortified place, even from a great distance; others, by which, if the proprietor desired it, he could, by looking at the outside of an harem, see all the women within its walls; others again (as in the text) were supposed to be possessed of remarkable powers for observing the heavenly bodies. Our fire-arms, too, were often believed to have peculiar properties, that conferred formidable powers upon their possessors. The same idea prevailed regarding our cutlery. Meerza Abdool Jawat one day showing me at least fifty very good English knives, which he had collected in a drawer, complained that there was not one of them worth a farthing. I looked at them, saw that they were of excellent makers, but had all been ill used; and on enquiring the reason, "Ah!" said he, "they are all bad, all "cheats, not one of them can *cut iron*, as they should do."—"Cut iron!" cried I, "who "ever saw a knife that could cut iron?"—"What," demanded he, "and have you not "among you knives that can cut iron?"—"No, certainly," said I; "who could have "told you so foolish a thing?"—"Look, then," said he again, "what lies are told: hear "the story that was retailed to us of you Feringhees. It was said that a certain man once "came into the court before your king's *dewan khaneh*, and, after saluting his majesty, he "offered for sale a little penknife, which he said was of wonderful powers. The king "asked the price of it, and was told by the owner that it was twenty thousand tomauns. "How," said the king, "do you dare to impose on your sovereign in that way? let him "be punished on the spot."—Upon that the man went up to a large cannon that was "lying in the court-yard, and, making a cut at it with his knife, almost divided it in two, "exclaiming, 'See there, O king! mark if I told untruths regarding the value of my "knife: but now it never shall be yours.' With that he broke the blade, and threw the "pieces away, nor would he ever make another; but," added the meerza, "although "knives of such uncommon powers are not to be had, I always believed that the good "English penknives were calculated to cut steel or iron; and you quite astonish me when "you inform me that this is not the case."

that is slightly attached to its surface to fly off, or at least to become displaced?—or why does it happen that two stones, thrown from any given point, the one towards the east, the other towards the west, fall each at its relative distance from that point, as if it were at rest?—These questions involved me in a painful attempt at explaining, as far as I could, the nature of gravitation, and those laws which regulate the motions of bodies upon the earth's surface. This constant recurrence to one and the same succession of topics was very irksome to me, and the want of a requisite acquaintance with the scientific terms of their language perplexed me sorely. There could be no hope of producing any conviction of the reasonable nature of the European theories in the minds of those who heard me, even had I possessed a very superior degree of eloquence and science. What was to be expected from men who had grown old in reasoning on and believing such childish speculations as these:—that the sky is formed of a substance which they denominate "the "origin of matter," which encompasses the earth like a hollow globe; that the stars are either portions of light from the throne of God, shining through holes like *nailholes* in this primitive substance, or glittering patches *nailed* to it as to a ceiling; or they may be glimpses of the region of fire seen through it? In fact, I never met with any one who could give a consistent explanation even of their own theory, or who could describe in what manner the seven regions of which they speak are supposed by them to encompass the earth; what positions they occupy with reference to this shell of primitive matter, or how they revolve (for it is said they *do* revolve) around the earth. Nor, although I have repeatedly and patiently pressed the enquiry upon their most celebrated astronomers, could I ever get one of them to explain to me how the sun was situated, with reference to these different regions, or shells (which some one compared to the peelings of an onion), how his light was transmitted through them, or by what means the vicissitudes of night and day were produced; so low is the condition even of their most venerated science in Persia.

I was but too happy when the prince, wearied, I have no doubt, with so much unprofitable talk, gave the signal of dismission; but the prospect of repose was fallacious, for his Royal Highness signified his desire, that the moonujoom bāshee, Meerza Allee Reza, and several others, should accompany me to my lodgings to keep up my spirits, as he kindly said, and to amuse me, by finishing the discussion there: and this order they full well obeyed; for they beset me three mortal hours, ringing in my ears the changes on the same subjects, until my mind and body were both completely exhausted.

It was indeed a most fatiguing duty, to sustain for so long a continuance a conversation of such a nature, in which the attention and imagination were for ever kept painfully on the stretch, to seize the sense of what was said; and to provide from my slender knowledge of the language, expressions fit to convey my meaning, on subjects of so abstruse a character, particularly when there was not the least chance of being recompensed for the labour by the acquisition of any information whatever. Arabic is the language of science in Persia; all technical terms are taken from that tongue, and my acquaintance with it was by far too slight, to enable me to comprehend with readiness their statements or arguments, so that it was quite in their power, as it seemed to be in their inclination to bully me out of the argument, rather than to examine it, and give due weight to the reasons on either side. Indeed the bigotry and intolerance of these people precluded all chance either of advantage or of pleasure arising from religious or moral discussions with them: in other parts of Persia, where they have had more acquaintance with Europeans, a greater degree of respect is paid, in externals at least, to their character, and their faith; they find that neither advantage nor respect is to be gained by an intemperate display of zeal; but, on the contrary, that where their resentment is not to be dreaded, it rather exposes them to contempt: here, ignorant superstition and furious zeal have uncontrolled scope; if any have glimpses of better feelings, they find that it is not the place to show them, and join in the cry, in order to share the profit, which religious cant alone can command in Mushed.

The absurd, yet troublesome effects of this fanaticism I had already experienced, and I felt persuaded, that the longer I remained here, the more thwarting and inconvenient it would become. I had been but few days in the city, when I was given to understand on the part of the mootwullee (or superintendant) of the shrine, that it had reached his ears, and given high displeasure, that Moollah Yussuff and another had taken the "Elchee Feringhee" into the Sahn; an offence they were cautioned not to repeat, while it would also be well for me not to show myself there again; it was even hinted, that I should not be admitted into the Medressa Meerza Jaffier, where Moollah Yussuff and the few acquaintances I had formed had their residence, and which I occasionally frequented, as the only amusement within my reach. The town began to talk loudly of the disgrace and even sacrilege of permitting an unbelieving European to go at large through its sacred streets. The meerza heard one of the rigid moollahs exclaiming aloud, "What! are the "skies not yet fallen, when a *Kaffer Feringhee* comes and makes "his residence in the holy city, and a mussoolmaun, a moollah, "and a seyed, lives with him, serves him, and eats with him con-"tinually, from the same dish?" Threats of vengeance too, indefinite but fervent, were vented by these zealots against us both: indeed the stress laid on the enormity of Meerza Abdool Rezak's connection with me was so great, that he found his own brother one of the most violent against him, and his friends in general outrageous to a degree, that rendered the poor man's life miserable. I had myself already observed a great difference in the deportment of many who had at first evinced the strongest disposition to cultivate my society; there were several who would willingly have received and visited me on the most familiar terms; but the cry of fanaticism alarmed them, and I was shunned like one infected. I saw that even the objects of my journey were likely to be affected materially by this perverse spirit, and I resolved, if it might yet be possible, to counteract its influence, or turn it to advantage. I had, before this time, permitted it to be given out by the meerza and my attendants, that although a Christian, I was by no means bigotted, and that I

was even inclined to favour the Mahometan creed, that one of my objects in journeying through these countries was, to become acquainted with the nature of the true faith; and that little more than encouragement and indulgence were required to induce me to become its proselyte. I saw the advantage of encouraging this belief, and in such conversations as those I have related, where religion was the leading subject, I permitted expressions to drop of a nature calculated to confirm it. In the course of this day, my friend the moonujoom bashee was so much pleased, that he exclaimed, "You "are a good and a learned man, why do you not become one of us, "and live here where you will be so much prized, and so happy?" The meerza, in reply, whispered with an air of mystery, "Have "patience, he is nearer to it than you think;" and I rejoined, with much gravity, "The thing is not impossible, but I must see more, "converse more, and become acquainted with more of such learned "men as yourself, in such holy places as these, before I can decide "on a step of so much importance." They received this effusion with great applause, called on heaven and their prophet to prosper and confirm my pious inclinations, and with many "Inshallahs" and "Alhumdoolillahs" soon after took their leave, and left me to repose.

February 10th. I visited the ameerzadeh again, and showed him my sextant and telescope; he showed great acuteness in comprehending the uses and connection of the different parts, and was particularly delighted with the action of the index, and the effect of the reading lens; he observed, that he thought he could make something like it, but that he despaired of equalling the beauty of the graduation, and added, good humouredly, as he turned to some one near him, "What clever rogues these Feringhees are!" He was greatly pleased with a small thermometer which I presented to him, explaining to him at the same time its uses, and after considering it attentively for some time, he exclaimed, "I am sure I could make "such a thing here!" "Certainly," replied I, "the ameerzadeh is "posssessed of great knowledge, and is able to do a great deal; but "it is necessary that the hollow in the glass tube should be a vacuum,

" void of air, and that is not easy to effect." " Is that the case?" said he; " then I will tell you what I would do; I would put the " mercury in, heat it greatly till it should rise to the top, and then " I would close the tube." I cannot believe that he could have read or heard of such a process, and surely it required no small degree of acuteness and capacity to comprehend and apply with so much readiness the principle upon which he had just been informed that the mercury acted.

Feb. 11th. We fixed upon a small house to lodge in during the little time we expected to remain in Mushed, and in the evening, the meerza, after various attempts, succeeded in seeing the wuzeer, and obtaining his permission for us to remove to our new quarters.

We called this day on several of those persons who had visited me, and had another consultation with Caleb Allee Mervee; the result of which was, an alteration of our former plan, and a determination to use camels for our conveyance to Bockhara; for it appeared, that if we should journey on horseback, we should require to purchase Yaboos* for our attendants, at a considerable expence, while the fatigue both to man and horse would be excessive. Four camels would be required, two for baggage, and two for carrying a sort of panniers called kajawahs†, to accommodate us when we might choose to ride; but then we should not, in this mode of travelling, embarrass ourselves with more cattle than were required; and though our journey would occupy twenty days, we should have a warm seat in the kajawahs ourselves, and our servants might be accommodated by turns. I therefore finally resolved on the camels and kajawahs, which Caleb Allee promised to have ready by the time the caravan should start, and that was expected to take place in three or four days.

Feb. 12th. We removed to our new lodging, which, though not large, and far from splendid, was quiet, and by our arrangements comfortable: it was our own too; we ran no risk of intrusion, and

* Yaboos, stout ponies, or galloways. † See note, p. 364.

were at liberty to do as we pleased. I had for some time past provided food both for my servants and myself, to eke out the scanty pittance served to us from the wuzeer's kitchen, and we could now enjoy the best of every thing in plenty, cooked by our own people; but we had a proof that whatever might be the minister's individual feelings towards us, those of his servants were not particularly favourable; for though he persisted in calling us his guests, we were denied the use of the carpets and numuds laid down for us in the rooms we had quitted; and the meerakhōr (or chief of the stables) refused to keep my horses, though I had no stalls to put them in myself.

This day, Seyed Allee, who had been left in charge of my sick horse at Nishapore, arrived; bringing the horse in a wretched state, almost a skeleton, with the loss of half its hair and skin, and one eye.

Feb. 13th. I called on Meerza Abdool Jawat, and found him seated in the midst of a large assembly, who were addressing to him petitions and complaints; soliciting the indication of fortunate days and hours, for the commencement of their various undertakings, and listening to his advice or adjudications. These, however, he dismissed very soon, and expressed himself very happy to have a little conversation with me. I sat several hours with him, during which he endeavoured to amuse me, by showing his collection of curiosities, containing many of European origin, and several articles in steel and brass of his own manufacture.

I showed him a sketch which I had made of the Medressa Meerza Jaffier, with which he was greatly delighted, and on my lamenting that the mootwullee's inhibition prevented me from taking a similar view of the Sahn (which I assured him I esteemed the finest thing in Persia), he, to my great joy, promised to procure me permission to take a view of it, as well as of the superb mosque near it.

I was also gratified by his confirming the good opinion I had formed of Caleb Allee Mervee, who had promised to forward us to Bockhara, and he gave me a good many useful cautions regarding the dangers of the road, and some information regarding the state of the country round Mushed. He talked of Kelaat Naderee, and

when I showed him my drawing of the Medressa, he produced a sort of plan of that place done by himself, adding, that I must go and see it; that he was on good terms with Seyed Mahomed Khan, and could at any time procure me a safe conduct. The plan was, to be sure, a curiosity in its kind; the meerza had thought it necessary to pourtray, as he best could, not only the lines of the country, but all that usually passes in it; and his attempts at designing villages, forts, houses, the Eels and their tents, with the Toorkoman camps, flocks of camels, seizures of caravans and prisoners, &c. &c. in the country around Kelaat, were so original and amusing, that I should have been glad to obtain possession of the work.

We made another acquaintance this day that promised to be valuable. On my way from the Medressa homeward, I was accosted by two moollahs, one of whom enquired with a smile, "if my name "were not Meerza Hamed; he was sure I was that person; that "he had heard of my arrival, and had letters for me." That there was a mistake, was evident; and I presently found that the object of his enquiries was the son of the Reis of Bockhara, who having made a journey from that place to Constantinople, was understood to have reached Mushed on his return; the moollah, who was ignorant of his person, supposed from my appearance, that I was the young man, and Meerza Abdool Rezāk, who instantly comprehended the value of such an acquaintance, immediately made enquiry, found him out, and invited him to our house, where we offered to accommodate him, till he should be ready to proceed to Bockhara. He proved to be a gentlemánly, quiet, polite lad, and his father being a man of consequence in his native city, it was not unreasonable to hope, that he would return to strangers any civility shown by them to his son.

The young man complained grievously of the treatment he had already experienced in Mushed. A merchant to whom he had been recommended, had taken advantage of his ignorance, to cheat him to a very large amount in the sale of merchandize which he had brought from Constantinople, and had charged him at an extravagant rate for all he had done or provided for him; so that the poor young man was happy to escape from his hands, and to hear the voice of kindness, unaccompanied by rapacious demands on his pro-

perty. After remaining with us for a day or two however, he preferred taking up his quarters in the Oozbeck caravanserai; whether he had been warned by any of his religious acquaintances against living with an infidel, or had taken the alarm himself, I know not, but we could not prevail on him to remain.

February 14th. Daily proofs occurred of the fanaticism and cupidity of the good moollahs of Mushed, or rather of their expertness at pressing the former into the service of the latter. The mootwullee of the medressa Meerza Jaffier, imitating the example of him of the durgah *, sent intimation to Meerza Hoossein, the brother of Meerza Abdool Rezāk, distinctly to forbid my being any more received in his chamber, or even within the walls of the place. It was asserted that I had gone to the top of the medressa with a telescope, and made use of it to look down from that height on the houses and harems of the city; and that, at all events, it was too near the Sahn for any infidel to be admitted. An intimation was at the same time made to me that this prohibition only amounted to a broad hint to offer the mootwullee a douceur; but as a measure of this kind might be attended with serious effects if discovered, and was by no means certain of being successful, particularly if the prohibition had been publicly given, I took no notice of the hint; indeed, if I had complied, it might probably have had the evil effect of awakening the cupidity of others, and bringing a whole nest of hornets upon me; so I paid no attention to the order, further than by refraining for a few days to visit the medressa.

Another effect of ill-natured bigotry became known to me today: I had proposed going in the morning to the bath which I usually frequented; but observing great delay among my servants in making the preparations, I enquired the reason; and they unwillingly told me I had better not go to *that* bath, as Moollah Hussun, the wuzeer's maalin, had discovered that I had been there before, and was violently angry with the keeper; insisting, not only that he should never again admit an infidel, but that the very stone on which

* Shrine.

I had lain should be removed as unclean. The proprietor therefore civilly requested that I should not come any more, and I was forced to attend another bath frequented by less scrupulous customers.

It has, I believe, been generally thought that the Persians are less scrupulous in matters of religion than the Turks; but such a thing as that just related would not have occurred in any part of the Turkish dominions.* I have been credibly informed, not only that in most places *Armenians* go indiscriminately into the same baths as the Turks, but that the operators in the baths throughout the greatest part of Asia Minor are of that nation, and that there is no sort of exclusion against any class of Christians there. In Turkey, too, the inhabitants make no scruple at sitting down and eating from the same dish, with such Christians as they may occasionally receive as guests. It is far otherwise in Persia, where a Mussoolmaun rarely invites a Christian guest, and still more rarely permits him to eat from the same dish. The Turks may be more open and violent at expressing their horror and resentment of any abuse or offence against their religious opinions; they may perhaps more readily shed blood; but they are not on that account to be considered more fanatical than the Persians; I am convinced that they are far less so than those of Mushed: these do not in so open and manly a manner express their sentiments and denounce vengeance; but they feel as bitterly on all such occasions, and are ready to prove it, when they dare, by acts of as deadly a character. The one is the lion, who bounds upon, and destroys his prey at once; the other is the tiger, or the serpent, who steals upon it, and seizes or stings it to death when off its guard.

Caleb Allee Mervee this day accepted my invitation to breakfast, and came, attended with a whole host of his retainers; but,

* I speak from information, never having been in Turkey; and probably Constantinople and the towns chiefly frequented by Europeans, where perhaps the authorities have been induced to draw a stronger line of distinction, and certain holy places, as Damascus, where it is dangerous for an European to go at all, should be excepted: but speaking of the interior of the country generally, I believe that which has been advanced in the text will be found correct.

although I had provided a substantial repast for them, it was hardly touched; they assured me they had broken their fast before. Whether this arose from an unwillingness to sit at meals with an infidel, I could not judge; at all events the man evidently entertained good and kindly dispositions towards me, and the more I saw of him the more I felt that he was to be trusted.

Two men came to me this day to offer us their services and company on the way to Bockhara; but from their contradictory explanations and confused proposals, I became satisfied that they came as spies, probably for no good purpose, and therefore dismissed them without their gaining any information regarding my proposed progress.

During the 15th and 16th nothing occurred, except some ugly reports of dangers on the road, and caravans plundered; but we learnt at last, that a cāfilah had actually reached Serrukhs, from Bockhara, where it was stationary; and until that should reach Mushed, there was no chance of any one setting out from hence.

February 17th. I had gone this forenoon to look at some parcels of toorquoises offered for sale, when a messenger came to inform me that Meerza Abdool Jawat had come to see me, and was then waiting at my house. I hurried home, and found him curiously examining my sextant, which was ready on its stand in the room; and we soon fell into a pleasant and interesting conversation regarding the various European inventions he had heard of; and I was sufficiently hard run for language to explain all he required. He expressed himself as much annoyed that he could not come to see me often; and hinted that he was forced to conform a good deal to public opinion. "The asses," said he, "would be alarmed and shocked, "were I to show the real extent of my fondness for the English; "but I always did admire and esteem them, as wise, learned and in- "telligent people, free from the false flattery and deceit which dis- "grace us Persians." It was this very flattery and constant disposition to eulogize every thing connected with England, that I most disliked in the meerza's manners and conversation; for however gratifying it might be to national vanity, it had the appearance of being

forced and excessive, and could not but give rise to a suspicion that some ulterior object was kept in view, which considerably diminished the pleasure I took in his society. " I have now," continued he, " taken an opportunity of coming almost secretly, to have a " talk with you at leisure, and without being constrained by the " presence of troublesome observers."

After a good deal had passed on various subjects, I mentioned to him the inconvenient prohibitions to which I had been subjected; that I had not only been forbid to go into the Sahn, but to pass along the road in front of the great mosque, or to go into the Medressa Meerza Jaffier; that the baths were shut against me, and that it was difficut to say how long I might be permitted to walk publicly in the streets, or to frequent the common bazars; I complained of this illiberal treatment, and solicited his advice as to how I should act.

The meerza affected much indignation at this detail, said that the people were beasts, asses with whom there was no dealing; they had acted, he said, utterly wrongly towards me; but he promised to put every thing on a proper footing, and to enable me to go wherever I pleased, by sending one of his own people along with me. It was settled that he should thus put it in my power on the morrow, to take a drawing of the Sahn; and he further observed, that he wished means could be taken for enabling me to pass free and unquestioned through the whole country. He then turned to Moollah Yussuf, and Meerza Abdool Rezāk, and conversed with them for some time in a low tone, after which the latter exclaimed aloud, " Then what is to hinder him from saying what is needful im- " mediately; and why should it not be said to your venerable self?" " By all means," said Meerza Abdool Jawāt; and then addressing himself to me, he continued, " We have been talking of you, and of " what you should do to be more at your ease among us; it is not " much; you need only repeat after me what I shall dictate, and " which is the Mussoolmaun confession of faith; and then you shall " be as a brother, and no one can call your conduct in question, go " where you will." I began to reply, that my mind was not sufficiently

made up upon the subject; but the meerza stopped me by a look, and a hint that my sentiments would not be too rigidly examined into; and then commenced dictating to me the Culmeh, which I repeated after him; after which he took me by both hands, and pronounced me to be a good Mussoolmaun.

The meerza was, I believe, really desirous of befriending me, and willing to do whatever might lie in his power to promote my views, without compromising his own character, or injuring that popularity which was essential to his existence; he had promised me more than was quite consistent with that necessary reserve already; and saw, that unless I could be rendered competent to profit by his good offices, this promise could not be performed. He was too well acquainted with human nature, and too quick-sighted, to credit my affected inclination to his faith; indeed it was easy to see, that he was himself by no means a sincere professor of its gross doctrines, however strictly he might keep appearance with his flock; but my profession was sufficient for his purpose, and while he deemed it necessary for my safety, was calculated to add to his own popularity.

By this time several other persons had assembled in the apartment, so that the affair had the best chance of speedily becoming public; and the meerza took leave of me with many "Alhumdoolillahs," and praises to his prophet for the deed of grace he had that day effected.

The next day I so far enjoyed the privileges I had purchased, as to be permitted, accompanied by a man belonging to Meerza Abdool Jawat, to sit in the upper row of arches in the Sahn, for the greater part of the day, and to take a drawing of that beautiful place. During this time, however, I had a specimen of what was to be expected, had I gone without the sanction that had been obtained; my appearance attracted a good deal of attention, and at one time when my attendant had left me for a little, a parcel of young boys gathering below began to throw stones, and to insult me with the vilest epithets, always adding, "A Jew, a Jew!" "A Christian, a "Christian!" and there is no saying how far the matter might have been carried, had not my attendant returned just in the moment of

need. I went on with my drawing thus, for another day; but Meerza Abdool Rezāk was so alarmed at what he had seen and heard, that he begged me to take my sword, which I seldom carried, in addition to the dagger commonly worn at the waist; and he informed me afterwards, that he felt convinced I should be attacked, and wished that I should not fall, without, at least, the satisfaction of putting some of the beasts (as he called them) to death. The influence of Meerza Abdool Jawat was, however, too powerful, not to control every disposition to such an outrage; the drawing was finished; but, I believe, he thought it best not to risk a repetition of the attempt, and I could gain no more access in this way to any of the places which I desired to see or to sketch.

In the evening I visited Meerza Daood, the brother of Meerza Abdool Jawat, who had expressed a desire to see me; and who now received me with great kindness, expressing his joy at the news which he said had reached him; he requested me to repeat the Arabic form which his brother had taught me; after which, taking my hands, with many "Mash Allahs! Alhumdoolillahs!" and other expressions of praise and joy, and with a very patriarchal air, he acknowledged me as a worthy proselyte, and hoped the good work might be completed; then turning to Meerza Abdool Rezāk, he admonished him to give me all needful instruction, and to uphold my good resolutions.

It was curious to observe the various expressions of the individuals assembled around us, upon this occasion; some saw the affair in its true light, and treated it as a farce or piece of acting; others gave implicit credit to the sincerity of the meerza and myself, during the whole of the scene; but these opinions acted on different individuals very variously: some of the first way of thinking, morose and zealous Mussoolmauns, were scandalized, and thought my profession a worse mockery than open contempt; others more tolerant or less scrupulous, considered the deceit as a resource too common among themselves to be shocked at, and troubled themselves little about my views in using it: or, if they did hate me, it was from other and more general causes; nor did the act they had

witnessed add to their abhorrence. Of those who gave me credit for sincerity, some rejoiced at so decided a triumph of their faith, and accepted the new professor with all good will as a brother; others, proud in their own sanctity, and rigid in their observances, instead of gently encouraging the convert, were disposed to press upon him with severity, the performance of every rite; and to watch with jealousy the slightest tendency to shrinking from them, as a mark of unworthiness, if not apostacy. It was easy, even already, to see, that the difficulties I had to encounter, were likely rather to be changed, than to be lessened; and that all now left for me to do, was, to watch with attention the course of events; to keep on my guard against committing myself to any one; and to trust to the management of those friends who had guided me hitherto, to steer me clear of the dangers to which the course I had followed (partly by their advice) appeared likely to expose me.

Meerza Daood did his best in the present case, to conciliate these clashing opinions in my favour; and to protect me from the perplexing queries and exhortations pressed upon me by every one present; and I succeeded in preserving the character I had assumed; but which, however essential, as I conceived, to the success of my projects, was too painful for me to sustain longer than might be absolutely necessary.

Meerza Daood, though not equal in intellect to his brother, we found to be a polite, pleasing, and well-informed man, very literary in his tastes, and, like his brother, a great mechanic, many proofs of which he displayed, with considerable pride, during the time I remained with him.

February 20. Visiting the ameerzadeh this morning, I met with Moollah Abdool Wahāb, the moonujoom bashee, and a few others of the most orthodox religionists of the place, who interrogated me, with great strictness, as to my views in professing to become a Mussoolmaun; and I found no small difficulty in shaping my answers so as neither to commit myself, nor yet to raise suspicions of my sincerity in those who were questioning me; for I could not now dare to refuse to such characters as full an explanation on all

points connected with religion as they might require. Nor was my embarrassment less in the evening, when I went to wait on the wuzeer, in whose apartment, besides his brother, Meerza Allee Reza, I found my old antagonist Moollah Hussun, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, and other furious zealots, all assembled to sift me to the uttermost. The attack soon began; Meerza Allee Reza whispered something to his brother, who enquired of me, "Whether the happy "tidings he had heard of me were true?" "Alhumdulillah!" replied I, in a solemn voice, and bowing my head. "Mash Allah! "Mash Allah! Alhumdulillah!" re-echoed me; "I congratulate you "on your good disposition, and doubt not that all will be well with "you; let me hear you repeat the Culmeh." — I begged at first to be excused, upon the plea of not being perfect, but it was insisted upon, and was the means of drawing forth further praises from the minister. He, indeed, was very considerate, and avoided pressing me in any disagreeable way, either as to my motives or opinions. Not so the rest; the wuzeer himself could hardly restrain their zeal; their curiosity was insatiable, and their desire to puzzle and perplex me sufficiently apparent. Both Moollah Hussun and Mahomed Hoossein Khan pretty audibly declared their disbelief in the sincerity of my professions; but the wuzeer silenced them by saying, "God "only knows the heart; he has repeatedly pronounced the Mussool-"maun Culmeh before the priests and before ourselves; and he "who does this we are bound to look upon as a Mussoolmaun."

I have no doubt that although the wuzeer was perfectly aware of the part I was forced to act, and of my reasons for it, he was not ill pleased to have so fair an opportunity for affording me that protection which the letter of his father-in-law enjoined him to bestow, and which the intimacy of the good old poet with the English at Tehrān gave no inconsiderable weight to. When, however, it was suggested by Meerza Abdool Rezāk that I was now qualified to visit unrestrainedly the holy shrine, the minister could not carry his acquiescence so far. "No, no," said he, in an under tone, "we must "wait awhile for that;" and Meerza Allee Reza so violently opposed

it that it was judged best not to push the matter further at this time.

But though the consideration of the wuzeer in some regards was entitled to my gratitude, it did not exempt me from a close and teasing interrogatory regarding several points upon which I would fain have been excused. He was extremely curious about the doctrines of the Christian faith, and the various sects of our religion; and, for the second or third time at least, pressed for an explanation of our opinions relative to the nature of our Saviour and the Trinity. It was a matter of extreme difficulty to speak on subjects of such solemn importance, in terms at all suitable, before such an audience; and all I could do was to offer, as well as I was able, some of the general explanations most commonly given, at the same time avowing that the mystery which envelopes some things, forms points of faith which we never attempted to explain. I must say that the wuzeer treated the subject with far greater decency than I have usually seen to be the case in Mahometan audiences, and even with respect. He made several observations, calculated to assist me when at a loss, and even offered solutions of certain difficulties *, which had been given by others in the course of similar discussions.

The rest of the party led the conversation industriously to subjects of the most abstruse and difficult nature, obviously in hopes of perplexing me, and perhaps surprizing me into some expression which might place me in their power. They enquired what opinions were held among us, of such matters as the number of the stars of heaven, of interminable space, of a future state, and even of the nature of God himself. I was exceedingly desirous to keep upon my guard, and answered to such interrogatories generally, that, in

* For instance, while I was endeavouring to collect words for expressing something regarding the Trinity, he, believing that I was seeking for an illustration, observed, that he had heard this mysterious combination compared to a cord, which consists of three parts, but which, being twisted together, becomes one; "or," continued he, "like this hand-" kerchief, which, observe, I fold thus in three plies, but, upon pulling it out straight, it " becomes one again; or like three sherbets poured into one vase, which then compose " but one." In this manner he frequently took up the discourse, when he saw me, as he thought, at a loss.

my opinion, the human mind, created and given to us for the purpose of conducting us through the path of life, was endowed with powers calculated for that end, but was not qualified (for the present, at least) to comprehend the nature of things beyond this world, or even of many things connected with it, the existence of which, however, could not be questioned. How, for instance, could it be imagined that the created and finite being should possess powers to understand the nature and properties of its Creator, or to image to itself a being whose existence has had no beginning, and can have no end? or how should its limited faculties conceive, far less describe, universal and interminable space? Powers altogether different, and a different language, appeared to be necessary for these purposes. The same might be said regarding a future state. Our ideas being but the pictures of external objects, how could we express, or even conceive, what none had ever seen? The effort was beyond us; and, therefore, if we be not contented to receive what has been written on the subject, in the only language we possess to express our ideas, we shall act wisely in giving up such things as problems, to the solution of which living man is incompetent. It was not without infinite difficulty, much circumlocution, and great assistance from Meerza Abdool Rezak, and others of the party, that I made out all this; but they all appeared to comprehend me, and, if I might judge from the observations and replies they made, they were by no means dissatisfied with me. At all events, it had the effect of putting an end at this time to, and preventing, in great degree in future, the recurrence of similar conversations.

Upon pressing the minister this evening to yield me his assistance in my proposed progress towards the north-east, he informed me that Mahomed Raheem Khan, the sovereign of Khyvah, who has a blood feud with Bockhara, had put his troops into motion against that state, and had already plundered the country as far as the Amoo, or Oxus; on the opposite bank of which he found the army of Shah Hyder encamped, to oppose his progress; that each was afraid to cross, or to become the attacking party; and that, after remaining in sight of each other for a considerable time, Mahomed Raheem

Khan had broken up his quarters and retreated, leaving some thousands of horse to plunder, who, after making many prisoners, had also retired. He had now once more dispatched a body of three thousand horse on a similar plundering excursion, of whose movements no account had yet been received. On this account the road was considered to be in a very unsafe state, especially as the Toorkoman tribes, naturally fickle and unsettled, were not to be trusted by either party. The minister, however, promised me every assistance that might lie in his power, and hoped, at least, that he should be able to forward me as far as Merve, beyond which place he could reckon upon but little influence, as the country was there still more disordered. "At all events," observed he, "you may rely on me, "for you are now one of us, a brother; and I hope to see you here "at all times when agreeable to you, like one of ourselves."

During the 22d I met with several persons natives of, or travellers from Bockhara, and collected many particulars, both regarding that country and Khyvah. The accounts given by these of the origin and progress of the feuds between those states, and the condition of the country around them, confirmed that given by the wuzeer the night before; and I have inserted the sum of this, and all further information that could be relied upon, in the notices given of these places.

February 23d I rode this day to visit the remains of the ancient city of Toos, situated about seventeen miles N.N.W. of Mushed, upon the eastern bank of a small stream, that forms a principal branch of the Mushed river, now much swelled by the melting snows. The road led us through a good deal of fine cultivation, in land capable of yielding the richest returns; and the little stream had hollowed its bed deep in a tract of rich black mould. We passed the large village Khooshmeitee about half way, but there are few others inhabited upon the road.

The walls of Toos are conspicuous at a distance upon the slightly inclined plane of the valley's eastern side. They are constructed of mud, with towers in the usual way at intervals, all ruinous indeed, but still high above the ground: they embrace a circuit of from three

to four miles, of a figure, I think, nearly square, but there is little within them indicative of former magnificence: the peasantry of a village which now occupies a mound of earth in one quarter of it, cultivate the greater part of the area, reaping good crops of wheat and barley from ground once covered with houses, and, in fact, chiefly formed from the crumbled materials of their walls. There were but three or four objects that attracted attention as reliques of antiquity; the first and most considerable of these, is a large square building constructed of burnt brick, and covered with a dome, situated nearly in the centre of the place; its height is great, and it closely resembles many of the Patan tombs near Dehlee. The exterior dome has severely felt the injuries of time, but the interior is quite perfect; on each side of the building there was a hollow, which appeared to have been artificial. There is nothing about it to indicate its date or use, a single tombstone on one side of the doorway bears an inscription, of which nothing could be made out except the word "Allah." At a little distance from the building there is another tombstone, which has evidently been removed to where it now lies from some other place.

I could obtain no distinct or satisfactory account of this tomb; Meerza Abdool Jawat says, it is reported to contain the bones of Shah Zadeh Mahrōōk; and of Boork-e-Asswud; the first is believed to have been a martyred Imaumzadeh, the word "Mahrōōk" signifying "burnt:" if the name be correctly given, it perhaps belongs to some prince of the early Arabic dynasties, that held sway in Khorasān, and who lies buried there. Of Boork-e-Asswud, I could only learn that he is supposed to have been a black slave, a friend and companion of our Saviour, who, upon his death, fled into these parts, where he died, and was here interred: he was spoken of as a well known person, to whose memory great respect was paid; but I could learn no further particulars on the subject.

Not far from this mausoleum are the remains of a minār of beautiful masonry; there is not above fifteen or twenty feet in height of it now standing, and not a vestige of the building to which it must have belonged.

A little way from the gate of entrance, there stands a dome ornamented with lacquered tiles, so small that I thought at first it must have formed a part of some private house; this dome covers the dust of the celebrated poet *Ferdousee** who after the unworthy treatment he received from Shah Mahmood Ghisnavee, retired there to die.

A brick tower, one of those which formed the principal gateway, still marks where that was situated; it was on the bank of the little stream, which flows past the walls, towards Mushed; and a ruinous bridge of eight arches, conducts to this chief entrance, through which the high road still passes. There are several large mounds within the walls, on one of which stands the village above alluded to, but nothing further remains to indicate that this spot was once the site of a populous city: like all Persian towns it was chiefly constructed with mud; one long round piece of stone like the shaft of a pillar, forming part of a bridge over a watercourse, was the only specimen of stone work that came within my view.

It might be matter of question whether the walls that now remain are or are not those of ancient Tōōs: from the comparatively small extent which they inclose, and their entire state, I was at first disposed to believe, that they must have been erected at a period considerably posterior to that of its decay, and with a view to protect the few inhabitants that still remained, after the old walls had crumbled to pieces: but this supposition is rendered improbable both by their

* Author of the Shah Nameh, a very noble historical poem; he might be termed the Homer of Persia. Ferdousee was employed by Shah Mahmood of Ghisnavee, to compile a history of Persia, from the meagre relics left by the destroying Arab conquerors of that kingdom. The monarch had promised to reward his labour magnificently, but unfortunately for his own fame, was persuaded to diminish that reward; and when completed, he sent the poet but thirty thousand silver drachmas (equal perhaps to about the same number of rupees). The bard, indignant at such unworthy usage, to teach the king a lesson of munificence, gave away the whole sum thus received, at the bath, and among his servants: and leaving along with the work some verses containing a bitter satire against the royal patron, he retired to his native city of Tōōs. Mahmood discovered the verses only some time afterwards, and stung by the justness of the reproaches they contained, endeavoured to retrieve his error, by sending (it is said) a hundred camels loaded with gold and rich goods, to appease the offended poet. They reached Tōōs, just as the mortal remains of Ferdousee were carried to the tomb. His daughter rejected the late and useless wealth; and the stain lives, and will ever live, upon the monarch's memory.—(See Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. i. page 340.)

regularity of form, and the want of any appearances beyond them, to indicate that a larger space was formerly inhabited. Plenty of mounds and heaps, it is true, are to be seen; but they are all of modern date. The remains of numerous watercourses taken from the river are to be traced; and a number of small villages, chiefly in ruins, denote that a large extent of cultivation existed here in days of yore.

Seven or eight miles nearer Mushed may be seen the remains of a large square inclosure, probably coeval with the walls of the town; possibly it may have been a royal country residence or garden; for though too small for those of a town, the walls appear to have been too massy for those of a common garden.

The town of Tōōs was of a very ancient origin; but whatever may have been its extent or importance in remote ages, it does not appear to have been remarkable for either in latter times: its foundation has by some been attributed to Jumshed, the fourth monarch of the Paishdadian kings of Persia, the reputed founder of Persepolis, and of many other ancient places in this country; but the name is said to have been given to it by Tōōs (one of the heroes of the Shah Nameh), who resided here, if he did not build it. It was destroyed by Chengiz Khan, when the rest of Khorasān fell into his ruthless hands; and it never recovered its prosperity: the population that remained gradually removed to Mushed, as that city rose in importance. My informant, Meerza Abdool Jawat, assured me, that according to the most credited accounts, the city never covered a greater space of ground than its walls now enclose, and that these walls are, in truth, those of ancient Tōōs. If this be really the case, it affords a strong additional proof of the durability of mudwalls, when only exposed to the dry climate of Persia: these in question cannot be less than five hundred years old.

On our return towards Mushed, we diverged to the left, keeping by the bed of the river, to visit a large mausoleum called the tomb of Khojah Rubbee. All I could learn of this person was, that being a friend and officer of Allee's, but related to Moavieh, when war was about to commence between these two heroes of Mahometan history,

he solicited his friend and master not to subject him to the disgrace and pain of being obliged to fight against his relation: Allee granted his petition, and detached him, to reduce the kaffers of Toorkistān; but he died at Tōōs, and was buried in the place where the present very magnificent tomb stands. It is a building of the usual construction, a square having the corners cut off so as to form an octagon, with four large and four small sides, in the former of which are arched entrances; its large dome, as well as the external walls, were once adorned with lacquered tiles of a handsome pattern; but the interior was far more beautiful, and has continued in more perfect preservation. The lower five feet of the walls are covered with tiles, stampt with a very rich and various pattern: above which, a still larger space is occupied by clusters of flowers very richly gilt, divided into compartments; a broad riband of Arabic inscriptions, in gold letters upon a dark azure ground, runs round the wall above this, and the remainder, along with the dome, is magnificently and very tastefully decorated with gilded flowers, and various fanciful devices, upon an azure ground. There has been but little stone work employed in this building; that which is required about the door, and archways, is formed of the dark grey Mushed stone, which is easy to work, and long preserves its sharpness. The dome and walls of this mausoleum are ancient, but the whole of the ornamental work was added by Shah Abbas.

CHAP. XXI.

MEERZA ABDOOL-JAWAT PRESSES TO KNOW THE BRITISH VIEWS AS TO PERSIA. — A LARGE CARAVAN FROM BOCKHARA, HELD EMBARGOED AT SERRUKHS BY THE HORSEMEN OF SEYED MAHOMED KHAN OF KELAAT. — ONE HUNDRED HORSEMEN SENT BY THE PRINCE TO ESCORT IT INTO MUSHED, RETURN PANIC STRUCK. — ONE THOUSAND HORSE ORDERED TO RELIEVE IT. — DEPARTURE BECOMES IMPORTANT; PLANS FOR EFFECTING IT. — DISTRESS OF DELAYS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS. — AN INSOLENT BEGGAR. — INCREASING CAUSES OF APPREHENSION, AND INCREASED DIFFICULTY OF PROCEEDING. — A DINNER WITH THE AMEERZADEH. — MEERZA ABDOOL REZAK BECOMES MELANCHOLY FROM THE PERSECUTION OF HIS COMPANIONS, ON ACCOUNT OF HIS CONNECTION WITH THE AUTHOR. — THE MINISTER AND MEERZA ABDOOL JAWAT SUDDENLY LEAVE MUSHED ON A MISSION. — THE AUTHOR, FROM A COMBINATION OF UNTOWARD EVENTS, IS FORCED TO RELINQUISH HIS DESIGN OF VISITING BOCKHARA, AND RESOLVES ON PROCEEDING THROUGH THE KOORDISH STATES TO ASTRABAD. — DIFFICULTIES IN PROCURING MONEY AND BAGGAGE CATTLE. — PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO THE CAPTURE OF THE SIRDAR ABBAS KOOLEE KHAN. — INTRODUCED TO AGA-ABOO-MAHUMUD, A GREAT ASTROLOGER AND BELIEVER IN MAGIC. — DINES WITH HIM. — TAKES LEAVE OF THE AMEERZADEH. — A CARAVAN CUT TO PIECES, AND A VILLAGE PLUNDERED BY TOORKOMANS IN THE LINE OF THE AUTHOR'S FIRST INTENDED ROUTE. — PERSIAN INSOLENCE. — MANY SICK PERSONS VISIT THE AUTHOR.

February 24th. Meerza Abdool Jawat, to whom I this day paid a visit in a confidential way, asked me to tell him candidly, what were the views of the English towards Irān (Persia); allowing it at the same time to be seen, that no inimical disposition would be felt by *him*, if they aimed, as he believed, at conquest. In answer, I gave him a succinct view of the British progress in India, proving as well as I could that they had never been desirous to extend their dominion, and were now still less so; for, so far from receiving any large addition of wealth from the revenues of that country, it was found, that after all expences of government were defrayed, little if any surplus remained. I then put it to himself, whether, if such were the case, when so rich a country as India was in question, the British nation

could have any motive for attacking one, so poor as Persia is allowed, and known to be. The surest way to convince a Persian, is by an appeal to motives of interest and ambition; the meerza being made sensible, that these could not be promoted by an attack upon Persia, gave a degree of credit to the kind of reasoning I made use of, which he would never have granted to any assertions; and he appeared to be convinced that the British government would not receive the kingdom of Persia, if offered, even without a struggle, to its acceptance.

February 25th. The large cāfilah which reached Serrukhs from Bockhara, some time ago, had been prevented from pursuing its course to Mushed by the report of dangers on the way; and the prince having been applied to by some of the merchants, ordered a hundred horsemen to go and escort it in. These, however, having heard that a large body of Seyed Mahomed Khan's riders were on the road, returned, panic-struck, without ever reaching Serrukhs. This band of plunderers was sent (according to report) by Seyed Mahomed Khan, from Kelaat, for the express purpose of seizing on this caravan, but nothing certain was known of their force; some said it was three hundred, some five hundred, and some three thousand. It was further reported that government had ordered a thousand horse to assemble, to form a more efficient convoy for the embargoed caravan.

February 26th. The thousand horse had not set off this evening, but a small caravan from Khyvah reached Mushed, under convoy of some horsemen belonging to Begler Khan, of Dereguz, and they reported that route to be tolerably quiet.

The daily occurrence of delay had now continued for so long a time that patience began to be exhausted, and the expence of living was so considerable as to alarm me, lest I should find my pecuniary means run short, in a country where it would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a supply. I therefore resolved upon immediate departure, provided the minister would, as I believed to be in his power, obtain for me a written safe-conduct from Seyed Mahomed Khan, of Kelaat, and that Meerza Abdool Jawat would also inte-

rest himself in my favour. I failed in several attempts this day to see the former; but the latter promised every thing: he proposed either to procure a safe-conduct from Seyed Mahomed Khan, and to send us by the way of Kelaat, or to persuade his particular friend, Killidge Khan, chief of the Timoores, to furnish me with an escort as far as Ghouriān, near Herāt; from whence, he assured me, there could be no difficulty in making our way to Bockhara. This sounded well, but nothing could be done without the minister's sanction, as he doubtless possessed the power, and would make no scruple to use it, of thwarting us in any attempt of which he might disapprove.

The next day brought us a communication from the wuzeer, strongly dissuading me from attempting to visit Kelaat; hinting, plainly enough, that the uncertain faith and temper of Seyed Mahomed Khan would render such an undertaking extremely hazardous. He observed, however, that Killidge Khan would be able to render the route by Herāt safe to us, and that the Serrukhsees were still ready to carry us by the usual road, as soon as it should be open.

February 28th. This day I was to have been introduced to Killidge Khan, but the badness of the weather prevented the possibility of going out, heavy rain and sleet falling from morning till night. The weather had, indeed, been extremely disagreeable for some days, heavy snow continued to fall, the air was cloudy, damp, and cold, with occasional bitter frosts; the earth was so saturated with moisture that there was no comfort in going out, even during the occasional fair moments. Thus I was forced to continue within doors, brooding over reflections which were as gloomy as the weather.

The delays and disappointments from which I had so long suffered, and a thousand vexations to which all are liable who travel in rude and distant lands, but with which I have not thought fit to trouble the reader, such as constant jealousies and disputes among my servants, with their most unpleasant consequences; painful and humiliating collisions, unavoidable occasionally with the lower orders; neglect or contempt from the higher ranks, although, perhaps,

veiled under an affectation of politeness and ceremony; the continually recurring causes of alarm for events of a still more unpleasant nature, and all the sickness of heart which results from hope deferred;— these, and reflections upon the nature of my position in general, would, indeed, force themselves now and then upon me, in days of solitude, and did not fail very painfully to affect the spirits. There are few whose cheerfulness can continue unvarying under all circumstances; and although it has not been my wish to obtrude my private feelings on the public, I confess that, in the course of these travels, I have occasionally experienced a languor of the mind, an oppression of spirits, a feverish and irritable anxiety, so distressing, that after seeking in vain for relief from internal resources, and applying fruitlessly to my wonted occupations, I would have given any price for the solace of friendly and confidential conversation, or even for the temporary excitement of violent motion. This confession may say little for my strength of mind, but they are not a few whose feelings will respond to it; and the hours thus spent are, perhaps, the bitterest purchase of the pleasure, or the fame for which the traveller looks. In times of danger, or of active distress, the mind rouses to meet it; nay, there is, in struggling with difficulties, an excitement, a positive charm of mingled hope and pride, that half compensates for the toil or the pain endured; it is mere passive suffering that wearies out and subdues.

I would not willingly be supposed guilty of an intention to magnify the importance of my own undertakings or difficulties, far less of bringing them into any degree of comparison, however remote, with those of our many illustrious countrymen, who have lavished or risked their lives in pursuit of useful information, or the advancement of science; yet certainly my path was not without danger, nor free from privations or perplexity. I had quitted the beaten and safer track, and, that I might be enabled to make useful observations, I had encumbered myself with an establishment that exposed me to the suspicion and cupidity of a rude, almost an hostile people, who, full of treachery and guile, exercise towards strangers a systematic course of deception, calculated to puzzle and mislead them

fatally, and who are withheld from robbery and murder only by want of confidence in each other, and dread of personal exposure. Success in the further course I had prescribed to myself was very dubious; the country all around me was filled with tumult and confusion; genuine and accurate information was not to be had; on the contrary, the very air around me was infected with deception; reports, of the falsest and most inconsistent descriptions, were circulated in profusion, and poured into the ears of my servants, filling them with alarms and mistrust: nor had I any fixed point to rest upon, or a single creature near me in whom I could repose confidence, or to whose guidance I could safely commit myself in this uncertainty. Some excuse may, therefore, be found for me, if, thus circumstanced, my reflections occasionally were of a sober, or even a gloomy hue.

As I sat in my room during one of these uncomfortable days, I had a specimen of the audacious importunity with which some Asiatics can urge their solicitations, without being professed beggars. One evening, at the wuzeer's party, I met with an Arab Seyed, who, in virtue of his holy descent, was occasionally admitted there, as an humble guest, where he flattered the great man, and applauded his conversation; he called on me soon after he learnt (as he said), the happy tidings of my disposition towards the true faith, to congratulate me upon so fortunate an event; he even proposed himself as a fit companion either to Khyvah or Bockhara; having, as he assured me, journeyed with a cāfilah to within three days of the former place, and being a most proper person to confirm my good resolutions on the way. The intent of his visit, however, soon appeared; he was a Seyed, he said, and poor, and to me as a new proselyte he looked for a liberal benefaction. I must be aware, he continued, that by a decree of the prophet (to whose name be praise!) a fifth part of all property belonged to his descendants, and that he, as one, hoped I would acknowledge the sincerity of my profession, by contributing largely from that fund to supply his wants. All this he most seriously and earnestly urged, not in the manner of a beggar, but as one who claims his right; he even endeavoured to interest

the meerza in his favour by promising him the reversion of an old Arab cloke, if he should exert himself zealously and effectually in his behalf. I lent a deaf ear, however, to his representations, and dismissing him, ordered that he might be no more admitted. Soon after, however, he forced himself into my house, and I had no means of ridding myself of his troublesome solicitations, but by saying that I was just going out, and showing him the door myself.

This day, however, he forced himself in through all opposition, determined to carry his point; and taking a high seat, as one who honoured me by his company, he called familiarly for a calleeoon, and commenced a warm attack upon the meerza, in the Khorasānee dialect; his object, and the terms in which it was expressed, were much the same as in his former visit, and he pushed his importunity so far, that the meerza unable any longer to endure his insolence, told me aloud in Persian the purport of his visit, requesting me to say what answer was to be returned. I coldly observed, that I had no money to spare, and that he had better not waste his precious time any longer in vain; on this the Arab began in the most insolent tone, but in language abject enough, to state his claims to charity; but all to no purpose, I remained very indignant, but calm, and silent, still refusing to give him any thing whatever. He then lost all patience, and his remonstrances became more ludicrous, as they increased in earnestness; he would pray for me, work for me, serve me in the meanest way, if I would but give him any thing, if ever so little; some clothes, a little money, a knife, a handkerchief, a rag; but to go empty away was what he could not bear. I repeatedly told him to go away, to leave me, that I wanted to be alone; no, he would continue to beg, until I got angry and assumed a higher tone; immediately his was changed also, he assumed an air of offended dignity, and even muttered some indistinct threats, of making me repent my conduct; and, when, no longer solicitous to keep on any terms, I ordered the servants to remove out of his reach the various articles that were lying about the room, and which he was continually handling, he turned to me with the utmost insolence, and asked if I suspected him of being a thief. So complete a sturdy beggar I never saw, and had it

not been for the fanaticism of the place, it might have afforded amusement to play him off, and then to punish him for his audacity; but any such severity would have been dangerous, and I was relieved when after a pause of indignant silence, he sulkily called for another calleeoon, and took himself away. I afterwards learnt, that this Seyed was a character notorious for this kind of behaviour throughout all Mushed.

March 1st. Again I was disappointed of an interview with Killidge Khan; the report to-day was, that he himself was to go with seven hundred horse for the purpose of bringing in the caravan from Serrukhs, for which service he was to receive a present of two hundred Khorasanee tomauns.* No man would move from hence, or permit his cattle to move, until that cāfilah should have arrived, and great anxiety appeared generally to prevail.

March 2d. I heard this morning, with no small alarm, that Killidge Khan had actually mounted, and 'gone off with his followers, to bring the caravan from Serrukhs: anxious to learn the truth, I dispatched a hasty note to Meerza Abdool Jawat, which brought the meerza himself to my house. It *was* true, he informed me, that the Khan had that morning departed, and without having made any provision for my journey to Herāt, which now could not at all events take place until his return. Here was a true specimen of the faith to be placed in the promises even of the best of Persians, and of the very loose way in which business is ever attended to by them; for three successive days I had been promised an introduction to this chief; who was disposed, and prepared (so it was said) to give me an escort through a very dangerous country, where his name was like to be my only protection; and this promise was made by the man in Persia who had been kindest to me, who had shown the greatest disposition to befriend me, and who was perfectly aware of how important in every way it was to me that the journey should soon take place. On the fourth day, it appears, that the chief had gone off in an opposite direction, and had left me without compunction to my

* Four thousand reals of Irāk.

fate. Those who know the misery of hope deferred, may appreciate the feeling with which I listened to this acknowledgement. "Oh," said the meerza, "he has gone upon the prince's business, it is true, "for some ten or twelve days; but he will return and do your busi- "ness too; you cannot, however, stir, until that takes place; un- "less you choose to take your chance of going with a caravan by "the way of Toorbut Hyderee:" this alternative was, indeed, nugatory, for, under present circumstances, no caravan would venture to start, and this the meerza knew, and he well knew how pressing were the reasons for expediting my departure. These people have no value for time — no feeling for the distress of others. I had, how- ever, no other staff on which to lean for the present, and although I now almost certainly anticipated the disappointment of my hopes, I was forced to assume the appearance of content, and await the issue.

March 3d. My money had run so low that I was forced to try the expedient of raising a supply for any sudden journey by the disposal of various articles brought with me for presents or for sale. In the belief that money might be commanded by bills of exchange, even here, I had imprudently reduced my stock a good deal by a large purchase of toorquoises for the Bockhara market, and now on endeavouring to recruit it by a sale of such articles as I could spare, I found it difficult to dispose of them even at prices far below their value; the purchasers, perhaps, guessed the motives I had for thus acting, and were quite disposed to take advantage of them.

The expediency of quitting Mushed, indeed, daily and almost hourly forced itself upon my notice, for there were few days or hours in which some disagreeable circumstance did not occur to remind me of the increasing discomfort and probable danger of my situation within its walls. I had now been a resident there for more than a month, yet my path, instead of becoming plainer and more easy, had got darker and more doubtful: difficulties daily increased on every side, and particularly in those countries where my intended course lay; so that none of the persons accustomed to travel there would venture upon the road. Where I had reason to hope for assistance, I

had met with opposition or disappointment; the timidity and distrust of my servants increased, my money was running fast away. The gleam of favour, which for a while I had enjoyed, was evidently withdrawn; those who at first had paid me some attention, had of late neglected me; the wuzeer himself, when I desired to be admitted to his presence, was not to be seen, and the people of the place, if I might judge by their actions, had renewed their dislike to me with embittered virulence; in passing through the bazar many of them would spit at me, mutter low abuse, and look at me with undisguised disgust; nay, I was made aware of several plots having been laid for my life.

The cause of this renewed feeling of hostility, I never could discover, I believe that it arose partly from a low jealousy on the part of the moollahs of the town, for had it been in consequence of any real or supposed offence against the religion, no concealment would have been sought or required. The meerza was not only pestered with solicitations to abandon me, but became informed of several of the conspiracies against my person. One junto of four or five moollahs bound themselves to waylay me in the aisles of a passage in front of the great mosque, where the common road led, and there to stone me to death; but their courage failed them, and they abandoned the execution of so open a breach of the law. On another occasion it was resolved to inveigle me beyond the walls of the town on pretence of yielding me some of the information for which it was remarked I was always seeking, and there selling me to the Toorkomans, who have agents constantly within the town; but this never was attempted. Poison was talked of, but some at least of my servants were too vigilant and faithful to permit the hope of success in that way. Mahomed Hoosain Khan, a kadjer of desperate fortunes, and an acquaintance of the meerza's brother, was heard in the medressa to say, that he had vowed the death both of the meerza and myself, and that he never would be happy until he met us in some lonely place, and there drank our blood. Threats of a similar nature were numerous in other quarters, and I have reason to think, that the chief causes which prevented their being put in execution

were the loose degree of protection which the wuzeer, for the sake of his own character, still vouchsafed to me, and the friendship of Meerza Abdool Jawat, which I believe was to a certain extent sincere; but though the latter did certainly fight some stout battles for me, he was forced to yield to popular clamour. I could never again procure the liberty of sitting to take drawings in the mosques or public places, nor the attendance of his servant with me; still less was he able, as he promised, to procure me an entrance into the shrine, and several persons went so far as to blame him much even for the degree of favour he continued to show me. His brother, Meerza Hedayut Oollah, who during the early part of my stay had expressed a desire to see me, had given up his intention of paying me a visit, in consequence of the clamour which the rumour of it had excited; all was gloomy and threatening, and in a country where the greatest revolutions are so easily affected, where the death or removal of an individual will change the complexion of affairs in a moment, the prospect was calculated to occasion very grave and anxious considerations. Where, however, there was no possibility of taking any immediate or decisive measures, the best course was to put a good face on matters, to be vigilant, but not to anticipate evil.

I dined this evening with the ameerzadeh, who, I must say, never faltered in his attentions. I had sent to beg an answer to some queries formerly proposed, and the reply was, that if I would put up with Oozbeck fare he would be glad to see me in the evening, and after dinner to answer any questions I might have to ask. I was repaid for going, by some curious information, a good dinner, and a very pleasant evening, which in the dull routine of my life in Mushed was refreshing to the spirit. The prince took occasion to enquire particularly regarding many of our European usages, and systems of government, our modes of taxation, and of collecting the revenue, and made many pertinent remarks upon my replies. He again alluded to his intention of visiting England, and requested me to take charge of a letter for Mr. Willock, stating his wishes; at the

same time urging me to say, what degree of encouragement he might expect in that quarter. It was evident that he believed the English government would seize with avidity on any encouragement to attempt the conquest of Persia, and even of Bockhara; nor, although possessed of great acuteness and geographical knowledge, did the difficulty, nay the impossibility, in the present state of things, of transporting an English army equipt for action, into these remote parts, at all appear to strike his apprehension.

After dinner, the ameerzadeh, who knew that I usually took tea, asked me if I chose to have it with or without cream; on my requesting to have it in the former way, a dish was brought me covered with the most beautiful cream, but to my surprize, upon tasting it, I discovered that it had been seasoned with *salt*, instead of sugar. I expressed my surprize at this, and was informed that it is the Oozbeck custom to sweeten only the tea which is drunk plain, but that if milk or cream be added, salt is used instead of sugar. I drank my saline beverage, nor was it very disagreeable, but I bargained for a dish with both cream and sugar, after it.

Tea is much used by the Oozbecks in various shapes; boiled with water, with a great deal of fine sugar, it is drunk in the forenoon, and presented to guests; boiled with salt, and thickened with its own leaves, and bread and butter broken among it, sometimes with the bread and butter alone, it forms a common article of diet, particularly for breakfast; and made with cream and salt as above, it is taken as a wholesome and refreshing restorative.

March 4th. For some time past I had been greatly distressed by the conduct of my companion Meerza Abdool Rezāk, who, instead of continuing to be active, useful, and good humoured, as formerly, had lost his spirits, and become thoughtful and absent, to such a degree as to be totally inefficient and unserviceable. I was aware that this change had arisen, in some degree, from the persecution he had suffered from his connection with me, and it did not certainly argue a mind of much strength to be so perfectly overcome by a temporary inconvenience; but it was no trifling aggravation to the embarrassments of my situation, to be thus deprived of

the aid he had at first yielded me, and on which I had very much relied. He had already disappointed me a good deal by failing to avail himself of opportunities for obtaining information; and now, when I tried to employ him in selling several articles, which I could not dispose of myself, he proved equally unsuccessful.

Another unpleasant surprise awaited me this day; on my return from a ride I had taken, to divert anxiety for a while, I was informed that Meerza Hedayut Oollah, and Meerza Abdool Jawat, had left the city this morning along with the minister himself, on a mission to Kelaat, to negociate with Seyed Mahomed Khan for the release of the sirdar, Abbas Koolee Khan, and the prisoners taken along with him, by that chief. Upon sending to the meerza's house I found the report was true; and I thus found myself deprived at once of the only two supports I possessed in this most inimical place. That the wuzeer should have left the town for a month at least, without paying the least attention to the wants or the safety of his protegé, and acknowledged guest, was not perhaps to be much wondered at, for his conduct had never evinced any particular interest in the welfare of that guest; but I confess that the disappointment was bitter, when I found that Meerza Abdool Jawat, who had professed so much, and certainly had shown me some friendship, had thus abandoned me without notice.

My situation had now become very perplexing, and it was absolutely necessary to determine without delay on what course I should pursue. I was almost without money, and totally without friends sufficiently powerful to be of service to me. The dangers of my purposed route had increased so much, that no one would consent to accompany me in that direction; not even a guide could be procured; my time, already frittered away by numerous delays, was already almost too short for the performance of the journey I had contemplated, even could I have been secure of meeting with no further impediments. I had now discovered, that if at this time I should persist in proceeding further to the eastward, my Persian servants were determined not to follow me; and indeed they had, at an early period, been warned against accompanying me beyond the limits of

their own country.* Even had it been in my power to have surmounted all these obstacles, it was very questionable how far the least scrupulous attention to prudence would have sanctioned an attempt to proceed. The advance of spring had already set in motion the wandering tribes of the desert; it was certain, that those of Merve and Serrukhs had commenced their predatory excursions, and had taken part, as suited them for the time, with Khyvah or Bockhara, with the view of plundering all who might fall in their way. The Hazārahs, with their allies from Toorbut Hyderee, were spread over the country towards Herāt; and Seyed Mahomed Khan had completely cut off intercourse with Serrukhs: with these and such-like reports, continually pouring in, it was generally understood that no caravan would venture, or indeed be permitted to set out from Mushed, for a very considerable time; and without a caravan no one could stir.† I had now, at all events, effected something; collected some information, made some observations; if these were of any value, was it wise or proper, however little I might be inclined to regard my own safety, to risk, in a desperate attempt to acquire more, that which had already been obtained?

Yet even were the long-cherished hope of reaching Bockhara to be abandoned, it was by no means clear in what direction I should best make my retreat from Mushed: there remained indeed but two routes to choose from; the one through Koordistan to Astrabad, and from thence along the banks of the Caspian sea, through Mazunderan, either to Tehrān or Tabreez; the other, that by which we came.

* While we remained at Shahrood, at the outset of our journey, Hussun of Jahjerm, the merchant of Khyvah, whom we met with there, sent for my servants, and made particular enquiry respecting my intended course, and views in travelling; and when he had heard all that they could tell him, he warned them, by no means to accompany me, as I certainly never would return; and that they, if they should go along with me, would as certainly share my fate. This I did not learn until some time afterwards.

† Among other discouragements to my progress, during the latter part of my stay in Mushed, it was hinted to me in pretty plain terms, that no caravan would be inclined to admit me as a fellow traveller; as the knowledge that an European, presumed to be rich, accompanying any caravan, would, it was supposed, be sufficient to draw upon it a powerful attack from the Toorkomans. Whether such an objection would really have been made to my company I cannot say.

The latter I wished by all means to avoid, and had it even been determined on, we should have had to wait the movements of a caravan. For proceeding by the former, several requisites were wanting, which I now had not the means of supplying; particularly letters for protection and assistance, to the different chiefs, through whose country we should have to pass; and cattle for carrying my baggage. Before giving the matter any further consideration, I resolved to solicit the advice of Meerza Daood, acquainting him with the dilemma in which I found myself placed, in consequence of his brother's desertion.

Meerza Daood received me with much kindness, and informed me, that not one of the parties who had gone to Kelaat had received the least intimation of the journey about to be undertaken, even an hour before they set out. The minister called early in the morning, both upon Meerza Hedayut Oollah, and his brother, informed them that the negociations with Seyed Mahomed Khan for the release of his prisoners, as well as those of a generally pacific nature, were all at a stand; and that that chief refused to proceed with business of any kind, unless the two priests should come and make themselves parties to every transaction. They had barely been allowed time to get together a few necessaries for travelling, and were instantly hurried away on the road to Kelaat.

A stronger testimony could not have been given of the high characters and powerful influence of these men, than to find a savage chieftain, who distrusted all authorities holding of the king, and even the respected and dreaded Meerza Moossa himself, receive their sanction as sufficient to give validity to a treaty with the minister of his majesty, in which, without it, he would have reposed no confidence.

I was gratified to find that the neglect of Meerza Abdool Jawat was, like his absence, involuntary; and Meerza Daood further relieved my anxiety, by promising himself to give me letters to Reza Koolee Khan, and Nujjuff Allee Khan, the principal Koordish chiefs; while he at the same time strongly advised me against attempting the road either by Serrukhs or Herāt; at all events, until the return

of his brother and the wuzeer, or even until the rumours of danger should have ceased, and caravans again begin to move.

Thus circumstanced, unable indeed to help myself, having but the choice of remaining an indefinitely long time in Mushed, where I had to contend with so much ill-will, and circumscribed both in time and in money; or of giving up the principal object of my journey, and proceeding homewards by the new route that was opened for me, I was most reluctantly forced to allow, not only that prudence pointed out the latter plan, but that necessity compelled me to adopt it. Had I possessed one friend in whom I could have reposed confidence, one companion fit to be consulted, who could have struggled on with me, yielding and receiving mutual support in danger or difficulty, I might have still been induced to wait for better times, and have endeavoured to make out my object: but unsupported, unfriended, attended only by a set of pusillanimous domestics, who would almost certainly have abandoned me in the adventure, it was not to be attempted with any prospect of success. I resolved, and declared my resolution, to proceed through Koordistan, Astrabad, and Mazunderan; and the joy with which this was heard by my people, sufficiently proved how difficult it would have been to have forced them in the opposite direction.

It now only remained to procure baggage cattle and money; many and sickening were the disappointments I met with in effecting both objects; the things which had been not only admired but coveted, when I had no intention to dispose of them, now that they were offered for sale, could scarce command an offer; and the money for such as were sold was not collected without much difficulty. There is no end to the meanness and treacherous cunning, even of the better orders in that country; I had more proofs than one of this, to my cost. After much haggling, I had sold an English shawl to a young man who kept a creditable shop; he was a seyed, and enjoyed a good reputation; and the money, all except six or eight rupees, was paid down upon delivery. These, he said, he had not by him, but would pay into the hands of any one whom I might send for them. I did call several times, but he always put me off with

some excuse; and after some days, he told me that he wished to return me the shawl, as he had no occasion for it. It was in vain that I remonstrated, reminded him that the shawl had been several days in his possession, and the money in mine; that I had made my pecuniary arrangements accordingly, and begged there might be no more delay in paying me the balance. He replied with a sneer, that it was all a mistake, that it never had been a bargain; that although the money had been paid, the price had never been concluded on, and that I should not *tell a lie*, and say so. Although this expression in Persian by no means bears the insulting and offensive signification that it does among us, I was so thoroughly provoked at his impudence, that I could hardly refrain from the most violent expression of displeasure; but there were many people in the shop, and had I given way to my feelings under existing circumstances, the consequences might have been fatal; so I restrained myself by an effort, and only replied, that if these were the manners of the Mushedees, they were very bad ones; if he were poor and a beggar, he might have taken a more respectable way of obtaining charity, than by lying, and cheating a stranger: that as for myself, I did not mind the loss of the money, of which he meant thus to rob me; and which, if he could feel contented with the mode of obtaining it, he might keep; but that I should take care to make his character well known in Mushed. The trick of offering to return goods long after they have been purchased and delivered is a common method of obtaining a reduction in price from such as are forced to make sales, and had I not already received so much of the money, the fellow knowing, I dare to say, that it was a sale from necessity, would not have been contented with so small a deduction. It was not without some management, and great sacrifices, that I raised a sum sufficient to enable me to proceed on my journey.

The affair of supplying myself with baggage cattle was hardly attended with less difficulty; but after great vexation, and disappointments, I at last found a muleteer of Tehrān, who agreed to supply me, at a very extravagant rate, with four beasts, to carry us to

Astrabad; and I resolved upon leaving Mushed with all convenient expedition.

March 7th. Meerza Daood came and passed the greater part of the forenoon with me. When he promised me the letters I required, he informed me, that not only the wuzeer and his brothers had gone to Kelaat, but that the principal Koordish chiefs were likewise to meet there, and hold consultation regarding the affairs of the country in general; from Kelaat they were to proceed to Cochoon, where probably I might see them, and that from thence they intended returning to Mushed.

I learnt several particulars to day respecting the capture of Abbas Koolee Khan and his party, from one of the released prisoners, who brought me a very kind letter from my old friend Furrookh Khan of Nishapore. It appears, that after accepting the invitation of Seyed Mahomed Khan to enter Kelaat, the whole party were hospitably entertained for the two first days; the general and principal officers were lodged in the house of the chief himself, while carpets, numuds, and other necessaries were provided elsewhere for the rest. On the third day, the general proposed to have some zumboorucks * taken up to a bastion of the fort, which overlooked the harem of Seyed Mahomed Khan, and commanded the rest of the place, upon pretence of wishing to try the effect of practice from that height. Whether or not he had any concealed motive in this proposal, does not appear; but the proposal gave the khan great disgust; he, however, only gave a slight answer, saying, "that they "would consider of it," and no more passed at the time. It probably but accelerated a plan, which had all along been in agitation: that very night, he silently gave orders for assembling his people; and sending them to the different quarters of the sleeping officers, and dispersed men, he directed them to seize and bind them all, before they should be able to fly to their arms. The relater told me, that he was awakened by a rush of thirty or forty persons upon him,

* Wall pieces, or small cannon upon swivels, commonly mounted upon camels, and worked from their backs.

who bound him and his companions in an instant, and hurried them off to a place of confinement. Horses, arms, and every thing was seized; the chiefs were selected as prisoners, the general was closely confined; and the rest, stripped to their shirts, were turned out of the place.

Those with whom I conversed could not say what might have been the motives that induced Seyed Mahomed Khan to take so decided and violent a step. It is indeed certain that the partial folly of the prince in raising a youth of no rank by birth, of no talents, and of very bad character, to the station of sirdār or general, had disgusted all the chiefs of Khorasān; and Seyed Mahomed, intimately leagued with all of these, was likely enough to be employed as their general agent in any scheme of revenge. It was also probable, that these khans might conceive this to be a good opportunity for attempting the release of their hostages in Tehrān; for the prince, madly attached to Abbas Koolee Khan, was likely enough to use his credit with the king his father, to the utmost, for their enlargement, in exchange for his favourite and his officers; this was, however, nothing more than surmise, and no one had grounds for any thing further.

The minister, indeed, it was affirmed, and I believe with truth, knew better. He was at the bottom of all, and in perfect understanding with the malcontent chiefs, whose party feuds and disaffection he secretly encouraged; playing off one against the other, and all in turn against the prince; feared, yet courted by all, he supported his own influence upon the Jesuitical maxim of "*divide et impera.*"

The king, it is said, was violently enraged when this outrage came to his ears; he ordered all the hostages of the disaffected chiefs at once to be put to death; and it required all the influence of his more prudent counsellors to obtain a reversion of the sentence: but he threatened in the highest tone, that if the prisoners and plunder were not instantly given up, he would visit Khorasān with his power, and utterly destroy the families and abodes of the disaffected: a bravado, the futility of which was too well known to leave in it much of terror.

The plunder, which was very considerable, remained with Seyed Mahomed Khan: five hundred fine horses, three hundred of which were caparisoned with gold and silver furniture, a variety of gold and silver calleeoons, dishes, cups, and equipage; a large collection of valuable armour, fire arms, swords, and mail; carpets, numuds, and tents, besides three pieces of artillery with their attendant camels, enabled the chief to satisfy the clamours of his own retainers, and of his rapacious allies the Toorkomans, with whom it is so important to his interest to be on the best of terms, that a large portion of his booty always flows into that channel. It would indeed have been impossible for the khan, even two days after the event took place, to have complied with his majesty's requisition.

March 8th. The ameerzadeh invited me this day particularly to meet with a man who enjoyed a very high reputation, Moollah Aga-aboo Mahumud, the father-in-law of Meerza Abdool Jawat, one of the chief astrologers and doctors of law, in Mushed, in high odour of sanctity. This person had signified his wish to see me, and Meerza Daood, who said I should not quit Mushed without partaking at least once of his hospitality, had engaged me to dine in his company on the ensuing evening.

I found the moollah a sharp little man, physiognomy rather pleasing; and he entered immediately into conversation with me, upon the favourite topics of astrology and astronomy. He was dogmatic enough; but the only novelty that I remarked, was a strange theory which he had got hold of, that the earth's figure is oval, having one end longer and smaller than the other, like that of some eggs; the long end being that on which America is situated: and hearing that I had been in America, he enquired with great earnestness whether the nights there were not *lighter* than in the old world, from receiving obliquely a greater portion of the sun's rays. The observation evinced more reflection than is common here; but I could not make out from whence he deduced his theory. Like most of his countrymen, the moollah was a professed believer in the science of magic; and to convert me from the scepticism I betrayed on this point he related several instances within his own knowledge

in which the phenomena, as he conceived, could not oe explained in any other way than by attributing them to the black art. These instances being rather tedious than either interesting or convincing, I omit them, but the whole company clamorously asserted their conviction of the fact; and each insisted that he had known individuals thus highly gifted, and especially possessed of the power to change the external appearance of animals; so as to make a man seem a dog or a monkey, or transform a horse into the shape of a man; nay, some of those present gravely assured us that they had witnessed the transformation. It was added, however, that such feats had nothing in common with the abominable and sinful art of magic, but were merely deceptions, produced by the influence of certain drugs and simples; in short, by what is commonly termed *natural* magic. One man assured us that he had himself seen a person thrown into the air, who came down torn to pieces, the dismembered limbs rejoining after they had reached the ground; a spit thrust through the ears, eyes, and head of another, without his sustaining any real injury; the head of a third cut clean off, and reuniting itself to the body after a while, as if nothing had happened; hundreds of fathoms of rope taken from the body of a fourth; and a variety of other and similar tricks, which savoured more of the juggler than of the magician. Another person imformed us that he had seen a man enter the body of a camel at the tail, and come out at its mouth; some of the company denied the possibility of this, and I for one could not disguise my incredulity; the ameerzadeh, however, told us, that if we had a mind to prove the truth of this last assertion it might easily be done; for that one of the attendants had informed him, that there was at this time a man in Mushed who could perform the feat in question; he therefore invited all those who chose to be convinced, to meet at his house on the morrow, for the purpose of witnessing it.

The moollah invited me to dine with him: I believe I owed this invitation entirely to his wish to see my large telescope, and to view the stars through it, rather than to any desire for its master's company. Our meal was a most frugal one, and the pride and

illiberal prejudices of the moollah might be seen in the way he treated me. My portion was served on a separate tray, that none of the company might eat with me from the same dish; they were all too jealous of their sanctity to eat with an European, in public at least; yet there was not one of them who would not have licked the dust from off my feet in private, to obtain from me the slightest benefit.

March 9th. We assembled at the ameerzadeh's to view the exhibition which had been promised us the night before. A camel was ready prepared, and, at the expence of knocking down half the wall, had been introduced into the inner court. The man was all ready; the company assembled, and all was expectation. The delay, however, still continuing, the cause was enquired into, and we were then informed that the operator was ready to perform his part, but that a particular drug necessary to the success of the charm was wanting, and had been vainly sought for in Mushed; thus, as in most similar cases, the matter ended in smoke.

I now took leave of the ameerzadeh, from whom I had experienced very great attention, during the whole of my residence in Mushed. I offered to perform any little office in my power for him by word of mouth, with the British chargé d'affaires: he thanked me, saying, that he did project a trip to Tehrān, and would be obliged by my mentioning his name there; he then presented me with a small astrolabe of remarkably neat workmanship, which he had brought from Bockhara, as a keepsake, he said, from a brother astronomer, to one whose company, he politely added, he was sorry to lose so soon; and the "*Khodah Hafiz* *," when we parted, was uttered, I really believe, with feelings of kindness and sincerity on both sides.

I also took leave of my friend Caleb Allee Mervee, a man who had been uniformly kind and obliging. It so happened, that I had no occasion to put his goodwill to any great trial; but there was a

* "Khodah Hafiz Shumah," may God protect you, or have you in remembrance, is the expression commonly used in bidding farewell to a friend.

sincerity in his manner that inspired confidence; and if it were ill bestowed, which I cannot believe, I should rather continue in an error so pleasing than be painfully undeceived. He agreed with us that the roads were not at present in a state to be attempted, and that it was impossible to say when they might be so. Intelligence had that morning been received that a small caravan, which had followed the larger one from Bockhara to Mushed, had been surprised, not far from Merve, and cut to pieces, or made prisoners; and a few days afterwards we learnt that a band of Tuckeh Toorkomans had made a dash from the desert beyond Merve, even to the neighbourhood of Ghourian, within ten fursungs of Herāt, where they plundered a village and retreated, having put fifty persons to death, and carried off about as many prisoners. The distance between these places cannot be short of four hundred miles, in parts of which they must have passed through an inhabited country. From this instance some idea may be formed of the daring courage of these people, and of the powers of endurance, both in them and their horses; for they did not, and indeed could not, have travelled at a less rate than from ninety to a hundred miles a-day for the whole distance. The Ghourianees appear to have offered some steady resistance, as twelve of the Toorkomans were killed, and three were made prisoners.

This event occurring in the very line of our intended march, and at the very time when we should have been upon the road, afforded a strong proof of the prudence of the resolution we had come to. I own it was the first thing that reconciled me to the mortifying change which I had been forced to make in my plans.

March 10th. Another specimen of Persian effrontery occurred to-day. A little while previous to this time I had been applied to by a man who had sore eyes, for a remedy, and he had derived considerable benefit from the simple application of a little Goulard water, which I had made for him. This amendment, magnified into a wonderful cure, had been noised abroad, and many persons similarly afflicted were eager to obtain a little of the specific from me. This day, while sitting in my room, engaged in preparations for my

journey, a man entered the court, and walking up stairs, without either leave or ceremony, except a slight salutation, took a seat before me, and, without any further preface, told me that he had heard of my fame, as being the possessor of a wonderful specific for sore eyes; that his own were very troublesome, and, consequently, that he would thank me to produce and give him some of this extraordinary water. An intrusion so glaring is extremely uncommon, indeed, I may say, *never* takes place among the natives of this country, so that it was plain the intruder presumed upon my ignorance as a stranger, and deserved the severest reprehension for his conduct. Keeping, therefore, my seat, and assuming as cold and stern an expression as I could, I enquired what his name was, and who he might be, who thus, unannounced and unpermitted, forced himself upon my privacy. He answered, that he was the prince's capidjee, or door-keeper, and seemed to consider the situation he held as a sufficient apology for any rudeness, and authority for all possible demands. I told him that whoever he might be, he must know full well that it was not the custom in his own country, as it certainly was not in mine, thus insolently to intrude upon any one; and that if he required assistance from me, such conduct was certainly not the best method of disposing me to afford it. That, he observed, was as I should please; but that as I was known to have no *females* along with me, he could not be considered as an intruder, particularly as he had come to see me in the character of a friend. The impudence of this reply provoked me so much that I sharply told him he could hardly have formed a worse colour for his conduct; that I had no cause to feel much goodwill towards the Mushedees, nor had I found friendship so common here as to be easily persuaded of his disinterested or friendly intentions; that were I to do any thing for him, or for others of his countrymen, it must be for the sake of God and humanity, but that he by his conduct had forfeited all claims to such charity.

The fellow then lowered his tone, and very humbly asked pardon, confessing his rudeness; upon which, after some time, I agreed

to examine his eyes. He told me that he was an Ispahānee, who had followed the prince (in whose service, and that of the king his father, he had passed many years), to this city, in the hope of promotion; but that he had full as little reason to love the Mushedees as I. He had come, he said, possessed of considerable property, in horses, arms, shawls, and valuable dresses; but so far was he from having enriched himself in the service, that he had absolutely spent every thing, and been forced to sell, piece-meal, all he had; while the Mushedees, so far from showing any disposition to assist him, had never exercised towards him the commonest duties of hospitality; and though glad to fatten upon *him* while rich, he was as much or more a stranger to the inside of their houses than I was. I have heard the same complaint from many other persons, both of those attached to the court and accidental sojourners here; so that I have every reason to believe that the character generally attributed to the inhabitants of Mushed, of self-importance, bigotry, and inhospitality, is fully merited by them.

My friend the capidjee returned, as I had desired him, in the afternoon; and it was amusing to observe his altered demeanour: he would not enter the house until repeatedly bid to do so, nor take a seat, but at the lowest end of the room. I gave him the medicine required, which I have little doubt, united to the frequent ablutions prescribed, his own confidence in its efficacy, and the powerful impression made by the interview upon his memory and imagination, would do wonders towards a cure. Multitudes in Persia are afflicted with sore eyes, merely from the irritation of accumulated dirt, which they regard it unsafe to wash away from the eyes, when they are at all tender.

This was quite a levee day of sick persons; whether it arose from a rumour of my intended departure, or whether any new incident had raised my medical reputation for the time, I cannot say, but a greater number of invalids came this day to my door than during the better portion of the time I had resided here, taken together: some came begging for assistance in the name of God and the prophet, others demanding it, like my friend the capidjee. For

some I could, for others I would do nothing. The usual pretext for their visit was that of civility; "they came from politeness, to "see how I was," and after a while let out, as if incidentally, the true motive of their coming: but whatever might be the subterfuge, or event, I always took care to let them perceive that I saw their drift. The prince's chief body-servant was among the last who came, a great man who had a sick son; but the morning's lesson had produced such an effect that he would not enter until permission had been asked and granted. This man also prated about civility and friendship, and I congratulated him on the early period at which he had felt it proper to show them towards a poor stranger. The true motive, however, soon came out, and he explained to me the nature of the relief he required. It would be too shocking to describe the diseases of both father and son; the latter, a boy, I think hardly sixteen; all had their origin in the most abandoned degree of dissoluteness: and it was, if possible, still more disgusting to hear persons in such relation to one another talk with the most shameless openness in each other's presence, both of their indulgences in vice and of their consequences, and this by no means in any tone of repentance, but regretting rather their inability to pursue their vicious pleasures, than their folly or wickedness in having indulged in them so long. It was, however, too fair a specimen of the state of individual and family morals in Persia.

I learnt this evening, that the cāfilah which was plundered upon the road from Bockhara, belonged chiefly to that place; it appears that the tribes about Serrukhs had taken part in the present war with Mahomed Raheem Khan, against Bockhara, and that a party of them, joined to the riders of Khyvah, had been attacked near Merve by a party of the tribes residing around that place; the caravan either was the cause of the battle, or came in view during its continuance; those of the Khyvah party succeeded in plundering it, but were forced in their turn to fly, and both left the field, carrying with them the heads of their slaughtered enemies.

This evening, the last, as I hoped, that we should spend in Mushed, was passed drearily enough, and in no small disquietude;

the frequent disappointments and vexations that had of late occurred, while they increased my anxiety to leave the place, gave rise to an indefinite dread, that something unfortunate would interfere to detain me ; and such gloomy anticipations now continually haunted me.

CHAP. XXII.

MARCH 11TH. QUIT MUSHED AFTER VARIOUS DIFFICULTIES. — SPRING EVINCING ITS POWER OVER ALL THE COUNTRY. — THE WANDERING TRIBES CHANGING THEIR ABODE. — REACH CHINNARAN, THE FORMER SEAT OF THE ZAFFERANLOO TRIBE. — HOSPITABLE RECEPTION IN THE LITTE VILLAGE OF BEGNUZZER. — ARRIVE AT COCHOON, RESIDENCE OF REZA KOOLEE KHAN. — LODGED COMFORTABLY WITH ISMAEL BEG. — VISITED BY MEERZA SELEEM, SON TO THE KHAN'S WUZEER. — THE KADJER DYNASTY DETESTED. — ELEVATION OF COCHOON, CLIMATE, PRODUCTS. — ARRIVAL OF THE ELKHANEH. — PARTICULARS OF THE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE RELEASE OF THE SIRDAR, FROM KELAAT. — INVITED TO MEET THE KHAN AND KINDLY RECEIVED BY HIM. — HIS APPEARANCE. — PROVIDENT CARE OF HIS PEOPLE. — THE AUTHOR PRESENTS HIM WITH A WATCH AND OTHER THINGS; HIS GREAT IGNORANCE OF THEIR USE. — DINES WITH THE KHAN, AND SHOWS HIM HIS ASTRONOMICAL INSTRUMENTS. — THE KHAN'S EXTRAVAGANT DELIGHT. — MARCH 25TH. THE FESTIVAL OF EED-E-NŌ-RŌZ.—VISITS. — BREAKFAST WITH MEERZA SELEEM. — MUSIC. — MEERZA SELEEM EXCESSIVELY MOVED BY IT. — SOOFFEEISM. — THE KHAN'S STUD. — HE SENDS A HORSE FOR THE AUTHOR TO RIDE. — THE TOWN OF COCHOON DESCRIBED. — ITS POPULATION, TRADE, MANUFACTURES. — SHEEPSKIN PELISSES. — CURIOUS AND MAGNIFICENT KORĀN. — THE KHAN VISITS THE AUTHOR. — ASKS HIM FOR THE PLAN OF AN EUROPEAN FORTIFICATION. — THE SPOT WHERE NADIR SHAH FELL BY ASSASSINATION. — CULTIVATION. — EXTRAORDINARY DEBAUCH OF THE WHOLE COURT, WHICH IMPEDES HIS DEPARTURE. — THE NECESSARY DISPATCHES AT LENGTH OBTAINED. — THE KHAN SENDS THE AUTHOR A FINE HORSE FULLY CAPARISONED AS A PRESENT, AND HE TAKES A SINCERE AND FRIENDLY FAREWELL OF HIS FRIENDS IN COCHOON.

MARCH 11th. All was packed, and ready for the marchby six o'clock, but the mules did not come until two hours after; no journey is commenced without a battle, and the moment our muleteers arrived they began to show their nature; the loads were too heavy, and they would not even try them on, until this had been provided for. I proposed hiring a pony as far as Cochoon, where it was my intention to purchase one for myself; but this was not what they wanted; they had made their calculations, and were resolved to have something more out of me; so, after allowing me for an hour to chafe, and propose expedients which they were resolved against adopting, the muleteer himself suggested, that a fifth yaboo should be hired, as far

even as Astrabad, for twenty rupees, and that no further charge, or objection, should be made. As the whole scene had been got up for this purpose, there was no difficulty in producing the yaboo, which, in fact, had been brought from the first; but the twenty rupees soon grew into three tomauns, and nothing could be done until two of them were paid down. I was hugely wroth, but it was all to no purpose, I was completely in the fellow's power; so I paid the money, the loads were bound on the mules, and off we set in bad humour enough.

But when we had passed the gates of Mushed, and got into the open country, my heart felt lighter, and bad passions by degrees subsided. I could indeed have shaken off the dust from my feet on quitting its inhospitable walls, but all beyond them was fitted to tranquillize and soothe. The day was mild, the air balmy, spring was beginning to put forth its earliest buds; the grass was sprouting beneath the dry brown weeds, wild flowers of the crocus and other early sorts peered out from amongst the gravel, tinging its grey surface with their soft and lovely hues; there was a general exhilarating and opening feeling, that forcibly brought the "Solviter acris "Hiems," to my recollection. After we had got rid of our city plagues, the ride was delightful; thousands of birds were sporting in the air, and numbers of a sort of weasel were running about the fields from one hole to another; the wandering tribes were all in motion, changing their abodes; we met crowds of men, women, and children, on foot or on camels, with their few and portable goods loaded upon them, and their flocks and herds on either side, emigrating from one spot to another, and winding picturesquely among the little hollows of the plain.

We pursued for some time the same road that leads to the ruins of Toos, but struck off at a few miles distant from them to a wretched village called Mahomedabad, where however we were lodged in a comfortable mehman khaneh. The distance from Mushed is called four long fursungs, I believe it to be nearly eighteen miles.

The soil of the plain, as we came along, was in many places

very good, and even where gravel lay on the surface, the streams cutting deeply into it, showed a richer stratum beneath. The agricultural duties of the season were every where rapidly advancing. I remarked, that not only cattle were employed to work the plough, but that mules, asses, and even men were used in dragging it: the soil must be very free where such instruments and powers can be efficient.

March 12th. This was a bleak, lowering morning, with a sharp cold wind; we got in motion a little before seven, and proceeded, with a very gradual ascent, along a continuation of the plain of yesterday, the soil every where rich and deep, and furrowed into ravines by rills that were supplied from the melting snow on either side. About eight miles W. N. W. from the village we passed a small lake, half a mile long, called Chushmahe Gilass, one of the sources of the Mushed river; it lies in a green meadow, is very deep, beautifully clear and surrounded by sandy banks; such pieces of fresh water are very rare in Persia. We were informed, that the people of the country do not bathe in it, from some superstitious apprehension; but I could hear of no story connected with it. The hills on either side the valley are lofty, and the valley itself consists of two inclined planes, proceeding from their bases, slightly undulating to the rill which runs in the centre. It is scantily sprinkled with villages, the greater part of which are ruinous, and studded all over with encampments of Eels, whose black tents spread over the ruins resemble spiders' webs stretched on the ground.

After a march of about twenty-five miles, we reached Chinnarān, a walled and fortified town, well known hereabouts as the strong hold of the celebrated Mammush Khān, who held it against the army of Ahmed Shah Abdallee*, for seven months, and preserved his independence in all the troubles that succeeded the death of Nadir Shah. It is now a melancholy ruin; the walls, destroyed by order of the present reigning family, enclose but about three hundred

* King of Caubul, who rose into power upon the death of Nadir Shah, and reduced a portion of Khorasān under the temporary sway of his grandson, Shah Rokh, whom he for some time supported.

wretched hovels, and there was but very little appearance of population. * We were comfortably lodged with the ketkhoda.

Kurreem Khan, a nephew of Mammush Khan now resides at Chinnarān, as chief of the Zafferanloo tribe, under the auspices of the king's authority: he was one of the followers of the Sirdar Abbas Koolee Khan to Kelaat, where he was stript, and made prisoner, like the rest; but it is probable that he came to some understanding with the chief of Kelaat, for he was soon dismissed, and was now at Chinnarān; perhaps Seyed Mahomed thought it politic to conciliate the acknowledged chief of a tribe once possessed of great power, and not unlikely to be so again in troublesome times. There is, however, a story, but how far entitled to credit I cannot say, that Kurreem Khan made offer to the sirdar to put Seyed Mahomed to death, when he came to meet their party, but that Abbas Koolee Khan would not permit it to be done.

Kurreem Khan enjoys Chinnarān and its dependencies on condition of holding 200 horse ready at all times for the prince's service. A horseman is therefore required by him from his ryots for every two yoke of bullocks: the other ploughs are nominally assessed in the common way, but he takes in reality just what he can squeeze. There are about a thousand houses of Eels belonging to Chinnarān and its dependencies; its *chummun* or natural meadow is celebrated for its richness, and extends from the Chushmahe Gilass to Radkān, a tract of forty miles long, by seven or eight broad. It was here that all the finest horses of Mammush Khan were bred, the most remarkable, during his day, of any in Khorasān.

Our travelling party was increased this day by the company of a moollah, who was on his way to Cochoon. I had met with this man in Mushed, where he affected to consider himself defiled, if he even smoked a pipe in my company: but his scruples appeared to vanish entirely upon the journey, when, after a hard march, he found himself seated in my comfortable apartment; and before my large and smok-

* I have inserted all further particulars respecting this place, and its chief, Mammush Khan, in the account of Koordistan, to be found in the Appendix.

ing pillaw, which he devoured without compunction. When the meerza asked him, how he, who was so fastidious, could think of eating with a person whom he had heretofore so much despised, he replied, "Oh! I hear that he repeats the Mussoolmaun Culmeh, and "of course, you know he is now one of ourselves:" "Oh," rejoined the meerza, "it is only now you have found out that." The man could not help looking somewhat foolish; but as he was a capital Cicerone, possessing a thorough knowledge of the country, I was quite contented to barter my good things for his information, and gave him but little respite during the time he remained with us.

We were teazed all this night by the intrusion of our host, and his acquaintances, either from curiosity, politeness, or on business; which, considering that we were in Koordistan, proverbially the country of thieves, and that our baggage was scattered all about the room, was by no means agreeable. But I must say it to their credit, that not an article was lost; and as our host would accept of nothing for his hospitality, we certainly had nothing to complain of.

March 13th. The night was stormy, but the morning rose bright and fine; the country, white and glittering with the snow that had fallen; the air was serene, though cold, and beautiful little clouds rested on the tops of all the mountains. We set off at half-past seven, continuing in the same direction, and in the same valley as yesterday, leaving the town of Radkān about twelve miles distant on the right. This is said to consist of three or four hundred houses, and there are several villages in the neighbourhood of Chinnarān; but as we advanced, these appearances of fixed population gave place to the black tents of the Eels, which with their large flocks of sheep and horses, asses, &c., dotted all the white earth around us.*

* In passing Radkān, though at a distance of full twelve miles, we observed by help of the glass, a lofty tower or rather thick pillar, with a conical top, built of brick, and resembling the tombs we had seen at Damghān and other places; its height might be about fifty feet. It was known by the name of Mile-e-Radkān, or the Radkān tower, but no further account of it could be obtained. I have little doubt, that it is one of the numerous Arab monuments scattered over this province, and frequently noticed in the foregoing pages.

Towards noon we descended a little, and the snow being melted by the heat of the sun, the path became so deep and greasy that it was with difficulty the cattle could keep upon their legs; the wind too had risen about ten o'clock, and blew with so much violence, as greatly to impede their course; so that about three o'clock, we were glad to take up our quarters at the miserable village of Begnuzzer, situated in a barren waste, far from any other habitation; and so small and poor, as scarcely to afford ourselves and our cattle the requisite shelter from the weather. The ketkhoda, however, very readily and kindly bustled about, gave me up his own house, got other hovels for my people, and produced provisions sufficient for us all.

Nothing more wretched can well be conceived than this place, which consisted of six or seven houses surrounded by a wall: its inhabitants can only rear three khurwurs* of grain in the year, because they have not enough of water to irrigate a larger quantity, and without irrigation nothing will grow: they possess two hundred sheep, and a few cows. The ketkhoda, a son of the man who first built the walls, and whose name the village bears, was exceedingly hospitable and obliging; and when we expressed our regrets at putting him to so much inconvenience, replied, that he would at any time turn out in the cold himself, to lodge a guest. He had, as he assured us, seen better days, and his father was a man of some consequence, but during the troubles of the times had lost every thing: he had once possessed a good house, and a comfortable chamber for his guests, but the army of the Kadjers came, and totally destroyed the village, using as firewood the timber which had been brought with great labour to build it, and scattering the houses in ruins; and "since that time," added he, "I have not had the heart to build my "house again; indeed were I to do so, what would be the use of it, "since the first army sent by the Kadjers would just destroy it again." He spoke with high regard of Reza Koolee Khan, who demands from him no rent, and indeed it were shame if he did, for he

* Three hundred Tabreez mauns, or about 2200lbs. English.

rather deserves favour and recompense for residing near the road in so desolate a spot. The poor man was ignorant to a degree beyond belief, and very amusing in his ignorance, his world having been bounded by the valley in which he was born and bred.

March 14th. About six o'clock, in a brilliant and bitter cold frosty morning, we took leave of our friend the ketkhoda, who frankly received the price of his provisions; observing, what indeed was sufficiently apparent, that he was too poor to follow his inclination by entertaining travellers. Our path still led along the same valley, which we ascended gradually to its head, a distance of about eighteen miles, in the same W.N. W. direction, the road continuing pretty good, but greasy as the sun rose, and therefore painful for the cattle; after this we reached the unmelted snow, which increased in deepness as we proceeded, so much that our beasts, particularly those loaded with baggage, got on with great difficulty. When we had reached a gradual but considerable height, a gentle descent commenced and carried us all the way to Cochoon or Kabooshan, which may be in all from twenty-six to twenty-seven miles from Begnuzzer.

The first ten miles of this road is desert; the hills on either side approach each other, appearing less lofty in proportion as the height of the valley increases, and there is at that point another miserable village called Elchee Guddan. A little further on the valley again becomes wider, villages become more frequent, and as we approached the town there was a large tract of land, which bore the marks of former cultivation; ruins of villages were frequent, and the country rather bore the aspect of one that had been, than was now prosperous.

We suffered greatly this day from the dazzling reflection of the light from the snow, which burnt and blistered our faces, affected our own eyes extremely, and nearly blinded our horses. It is not uncommon for these animals even to lose their eyes from this cause, when not properly guarded against upon a journey, by hanging a veil of some sort before their faces, and bathing them with warm water when they reach their resting place.

As I had resolved to await the khan's arrival, it became necessary to secure some comfortable lodging, a thing by no means to be had at all times in the common caravanserais; and I therefore sent forward Meerza Daood's letter to announce my approach, and to beg that some of the Eelkhaneh's people might be directed to procure me a lodging. Accordingly, when we reached the town, I found that a very nice apartment had been prepared for me, at the house of Ismael Beg*, an officer who acted as sirdar of the khan's troops, when he does not go along with them himself, and who was generally appointed mehmandār to such guests as the khan cannot accommodate in his own house: thus I discovered, that it was intended I should remain absolutely the khan's guest. It appeared that Meerza Daood in his letter had styled me "Elchee Feringhee," and this title had probably induced the khan's officers in their master's absence to treat me with a greater degree of distinction than they would otherways have done. The khan himself, I found, was expected in a day or two, along with the wuzeer and his party from Dereguz, whither they had gone from Kelaat; I could not, however, learn the success of their negociations.

Soon after my arrival, I received a visit from Meerza Seleem, son of Meerza Reza the khan's wuzeer, and right-hand-man; he honored me with an embrace, and a kiss on both cheeks, and spoke of the pleasure which his father as well as the Eelkhaneh should feel in rendering my stay at Cochoon agreeable to me. Meerza Abdool Rezāk, whose friend I understood the young man to be, went with him to dinner, which meal I shared with my host, Ismael Beg; it was a frugal one, but it was seasoned with kindness and attention; indeed, the civility of my host was pushed even to an embarrassing degree, for he staid so late with me, that I was forced to mention my

* This man was formerly possessor of the village, and Ballook, of Sooltaun Meydān, containing about 30 villages; but when the king's army, some years ago, took and destroyed Baum, and carried off its chief, Saadut Koolee Khan (who was afterwards poisoned at Tehrān), they destroyed Sooltaun Meydan also; and having put a number of the inhabitants to death, appointed a governor from Nishapore. Ismael Beg then fled to Koordistan, with ten or twelve families, and was kindly entertained by the Eelkhaneh.

fatigue and sore eyes, several times before he took the hint, and left me to repose.

During the course of our journey from Mushed there was no thing that struck me more forcibly than the violent hatred borne by all ranks of people to the reigning family of Persia; they were never spoken of without detestation, and their name appears to be identified with all that is cruel, tyrannical, and unjust. In truth, the people of this district have suffered severely in all the struggles for dominion that have agitated the country, and they feel it the more, because acknowledging no authority but that of their own chiefs, they look upon all other rulers in the light of interlopers; then they consider the occasional visits of the king and his troops, exactly as they would the incursion of an enemy, and certainly they too much resemble such; the inhabitants are plundered and insulted in their own homes, their houses pulled down about their ears for the wood they contain, their corn is cut, trampled down and destroyed, their cattle killed and devoured without the smallest compensation being made, and outrages of every kind committed by the troops and followers, exactly as if they were in an enemy's country. It was only this day that a villager came up and addressed me in Turkish as I was passing, and begged me if possible to prevent the "Kadjers" and their army from coming here this year; they had ruined him last year, he said, as well as all his neighbours, and the whole district was in terror for another visitation. Almost the first question put in every village when we chanced to enter into conversation with the ryots, was, "Do you know whether the Kadjers are to be here this "year?" and the anxious expression, and contracted brow, bore witness to the interest they felt in the answer. Well may they dread the presence of their tyrants; there needs no other tongue to tell its destructive effects, than the appearance of the country, where the scourge has been lately felt.

March 15th. My good host came to see me very early, and most pertinaciously sat with me the whole morning, until other visitors came, and completely frustrated my intentions of taking a set of observations for ascertaining the situation of the place. Among other

visitors, I was honoured by a call from Khānlar Khān, a nephew of the Eelkhaneh, who was remarkably civil, but very stupid.

March 16th. I occupied myself this day in returning visits, and collecting such information as was to be had, regarding the country around, in which I was kindly assisted by Meerza Seleem, whom I found to be a young man of liberal mind, and very superior abilities; the Eelkhaneh's continued absence, which was still to be protracted for some days, gave me further time for my enquiries, the result of which have in great part been given in the description of Koordistan.*

The town of Cochoon appears to lie about a thousand feet above the level of Mushed; that is to say, water boils at 204¾ to 205, two degrees of temperature, lower than at the latter place; the highest part of the valley may be 500 feet higher still. The climate is temperate and delightful; for though the cold there is greater than in the vallies of Mushed and Nishapore, it has in return fewer days of oppressive heat than these places. As a proof of the moderation of the summer heats, Ismael Beg assured me that the inhabitants do not sleep in the open air above one month in the year; now in most parts of the country they are forced by the heat to have recourse to their terraces, and house tops, for several months successively. Neither is the cold very severe, and they are seldom troubled with storms or high winds. The air, indeed, is said to be remarkably mild and salubrious, and in so far as we could judge from what we felt, and from the healthy appearance of the inhabitants, there was every reason to believe the character a just one.

This valley produces wheat and barley in great abundance; a little silk is made, but neither rice nor cotton are cultivated. Fruits of all kinds grow; sweet and water melons, apples, pears, apricots, &c. come to full perfection, but grapes, although they are cultivated, never are good of their kind. The trees do not come fully into leaf until two months after the Nō-Rōz*, nor are the hills in full verdure until a month after that period; but they continue long green, and

* See Appendix B. † The festival of the Nō-Rōz, or vernal equinox.

give excellent pasture. The harvest is much later here than in the lower plains, insomuch that the new wheat is frequently brought from Nishapore, or Subzawar, as seed to Koordistan, and is sown and reaped the same year; for the soil is so good and vegetation when it has once commenced so rapid, that even should the seed not be put into the ground until sixty days after the Nō-Rōz, they reap the crop almost at the same time as that which has been earliest sown; that is to say, about 110 days after the Nō-Rōz.

March 17th. I returned the visit of Khānlar Khān, at the ark, or palace, which has nothing about it very remarkable. It is surrounded by a lofty and strong wall, the entrance being by a well-defended gateway, which opens into a small inclosure, at one end of which there is a dewan khaneh; and beyond this are situated the private apartments of the khan's family: the whole extent is small, and occupies the site of an ancient fort. In one of the apartments in the square I observed a small brass gun, and learnt that there were several more in the town.

March 18th. The Eelkhaneh, accompanied by the wuzeer, the sirdar, and his father, reached Cochoon this day. I have not taken notice of the contradictory reports that have daily poured in, regarding the business transacting at Kelaat: but this day I obtained authentic accounts of the arrangement entered into with Seyed Mahomed Khan; and it affords a curious specimen of Persian politics. The wuzeer, on the part of the prince, consented to pay into the hands of Seyed Mahomed Khān, a sum of 2500 Khorasanee tomauns*; in consideration of which that chieftain agreed to release the general and his officers, the three guns, fifteen camels, and a few horses: and the Eelkhaneh became bound for the fulfilment of the conditions upon the prince's part.

It appears that the king, when he heard of the capture of Abbas Koolee Khan, wrote to the Eelkhaneh, declaring, that he should hold him as chief of the Eels, responsible for the persons and property of the captains; and threatened if these were not instantly given up, to

* Equal to fifty thousand reals of Irāk.

send an army in spring to enforce his mandates. There can be no doubt, that his majesty would have been quite in the right, thus to throw upon the Eelkhaneh (who was in fact the chief mover of the plot), the whole responsibility of the affair, had he possessed the power of carrying his threat into effect; but Reza Koolee Khan had little of a serious nature to dread, from any effort on the part of the king, and Seyed Mahomed Khan, in his fortress of Kelaat, might have laughed all Persia to scorn. It was, however, neither the wish nor the policy of the Eelkhaneh to exasperate the king, and bring upon his country a swarm of locusts, who would desolate and devour it for the time, should they even be unable to make any permanent impression; nor was it intended, that the sirdar should long remain in unprofitable captivity at Kelaat. What the true leading motives for the enterprize could have been, I never heard distinctly explained; for, it is certain, that nothing appeared to be gained to any of the parties concerned, beyond the booty at the time, and the ransom afterwards; a very inadequate object for so violent a measure. No hostages, as far as I could learn, were ever given up; and it afterwards appeared, that Seyed Mahomed Khan, so far from having entered willingly into the transaction at first, or being desirous to retain his prisoners, was only a tool in the hands of the Eelkhaneh and others; and so much alarmed at the probable consequences of the outrage, that he was continually soliciting permission of his colleagues to release his prisoners.

By affecting readily to obey the king's orders, and appearing to take so active a part in effecting the release of the general and his train, Reza Koolee Khan no doubt purposed to ingratiate himself with his majesty, and preserve his country from being overrun by his army; but so determined were the confederates to secure the ransom, that they instructed Seyed Mahomed to refuse complying with his part of the treaty until pledges for the full payment were placed in his hands; and the weak prince, childishly anxious for the return of his favourite, in time to be present at the festival of the Nō-Rōz; collected all the money he had, and made up the deficiency by jewels, arms, and plate; even the clothes and ornaments of his

women, I have been assured, were given up, and sent to Kelaat; and upon receipt of these, the prisoners were liberated, and the negociators returned.

It is not to be credited that the prince can be blind to all this shuffling and unworthy conduct; but totally devoid of any independent resources, or real authority, how can he help himself? Meerza Moossa, his minister, who possesses all the real power, not only was aware of, but was probably an instigator of the measure, and certainly a participator in its profits. The king himself may suspect the parties, but he cannot punish them. Meerza Abdool Wahāb, his minister, without doubt, is aware of every thing that passes; for his judgment is too acute, and his information too accurate, for him to be misled: but he is also quite aware, how useless, nay, how impolitic it would be, as things are situated, to bring the conduct of the various parties too strongly to the notice of his majesty; for where, in the first place, could be the proof, and where the remedy? It is true, that the son of Reza Koolee Khan resides at Tehrān as hostage for his father's good conduct, and that the other chiefs of this district have relatives in the same situation, who might all be put to instant death; but such a measure, by at once exasperating the chiefs, and snapping the only tie that binds them to preserve appearances, would render them irretrievably and actively hostile, and therefore would be highly impolitic; there remained no other course, therefore, either on the part of the prince or of the king, but to accept in good part whatever could be gained by fair means; and it is thus that deception and double dealing have become so universal and irremediable in Persia; that by a curious re-action they have settled into a tolerated and organized system, which the rulers, as they can not control it, and indeed practise unlimitedly themselves, are fain to shut their eyes against, and to turn as they can to their own behoof.

March 19th. Understanding that the Eelkhaneh had expressed a wish to see me this forenoon, I remained at home the whole day, in expectation of a meeting; but he was so much occupied with his guests, who filled every room in his house, that he could not receive

me until evening, when he sent to let me know he would be glad if I would come and dine with him. He received me in a miserable room, in the outer square, fitted up on the spur of the moment, being the only place he could command, and embracing and kissing both cheeks, he bade me welcome, and we sat down to converse near a cheerful fire; but just then a message from the wuzeer arrived to say that he wanted particularly to speak with the khān, and although very ill-pleased at the interruption, he was forced to attend his troublesome guests. He expressed a hope, however, that I would stay some time with him; adding, that when "these Kadjers and their train" should have departed, he should be able to pay me more attention. We therefore eat the dinner prepared for us, along with Meerza Seleem, and retired to our lodgings.

The Eelkhaneh was a man of middling strength and stature, a countenance rather grave, but not remarkable either for good or for bad expression. He has the character of a generous and liberal master, not covetous or grasping, except in times of danger; and when such are anticipated, he takes largely from his ryots, that he may lay up extensive stores of grain and provender against the day of need. Were it not for this prudence, indeed, the country would frequently be subject to the miseries of famine. As an instance of this may be quoted the three last years, during which hardly any harvest was gathered in. The two first of these crops were ruined by the king's troops, and the husbandmen would neither risk their seed nor their labour a third time; so that the people had been living, as I was assured, for these three years, chiefly upon the hoarded superabundance of former crops. In this way, too, was accounted for the large quantity of abandoned land and ruined villages which we had observed on our approach to the town. The khan distributes these hoards of grain to the people at a very easy rate, and feeds his servants and troops entirely at his own cost.

March 20th. Desirous of conciliating the Eelkhaneh, whose goodwill was essential to my safety in passing through the dangerous districts which intervene between this place and Astrabad, I made up a small present of articles, the manufacture of England, and sent

it to him with a complimentary note, regretting its trifling value, but begging his acceptance of it as a mark of respect. The whole consisted of a silver hunting watch, three excellent knives, of various and complicated kinds, a pair of fine scissors, and three pieces of fine muslin.

In the evening, while sitting with Meerza Reza (the Eelkhaneh's minister), the khan's peish khedmut came in with the watch, which it seems had puzzled them all. The Persians, who reckon their days as at all seasons continuing from sun-rise to sun-set, too often expect that their watches, instead of measuring the day regularly into twelve equal parts, should at all times indicate the hours of sun-rise and sun-set, by pointing to six o'clock when those events take place, otherwise they believe their watch to be incorrect. Now, although the watch which I had sent to the khan must, at a period so near the equinox, have nearly done this, he was not satisfied with its accuracy, and he sent his servant to enquire regarding this point, as well as to receive a lesson in the art of winding it; and it was no easy matter to persuade the man that the machine went as well as possible, too well, indeed, for the rough usage it was likely in future to meet with. The peish khedmut further brought me an invitation to dine with his master, and a request to bring all my curiosities, of which he had heard a great deal, along with me, to show him.

The khan, when we arrived, was at his evening's devotions, by no means the affair of a moment, and we were accordingly shown into the chief dewan khaneh until these should have been completed. This was by far the handsomest room I had seen since quitting Tehrān, large, well proportioned, finished with the finest plaster, and beautifully carpeted. We waited near an hour, until the prayers and business of our host was concluded, and were then admitted into the *khelwut*, or private apartment, which was equally well fitted up, but smaller, and well warmed by a blazing fire.

At this interview the khan made all the enquiries which the interruption of the wuzeer prevented at the last; but he hurried them over, impatient for the show which he expected; nor did he

appear to be disappointed. I showed him the sextant, placed the artificial horizon so as to let him see a star reflected in it, the altitude of which I took before him; then my thermometers, telescopes, &c.; and afterwards I permitted him to look over my book of sketches, with figures of camels, horses, men, and women; with all of which he was hugely delighted. He kept constantly exclaiming "Barick "illah! barick illah! (Bravo! bravo!) what strange things these "Feringhees have got!" At last his dignity quite deserted him, and he absolutely shouted aloud, clapping his hands, like a child, with surprize and joy. Then came his own display of curiosities, which he made with considerable pride, chiefly consisting of scraps of English articles, among which was a small dressing case, sent by some of his friends from Tehrān, containing razors, tooth-brushes, knives and forks, spoons, boot-hooks, &c., the uses of which he was most profoundly ignorant of, but very desirous to learn; and I think his delight when I did explain them was hardly less than his former ecstasies, and lasted till the graver business of dinner put an end to the display and the mirth together. The conversation afterwards was common-place enough, turning chiefly on subjects relating to Europe, particularly its governments, armies, revenues, &c.; but his questions showed no great acuteness, and more than common ignorance. I was well satisfied with the visit on the whole, however; for though, as in all his countrymen, there was at first some disposition to act the great man, he could not long continue it, and soon became natural and easy enough.

March 21st. This was the festival of the Eed-e-Nō-Rōz, which in Persia is kept like our new year, and is, indeed, regarded by them as the commencement of their year. Every one on this day puts on his gayest dress; friends visit one another, to wish, as we do, a happy season; presents are interchanged, and sweetmeats sent in quantities to all acquaintances; it is the season of universal mirth and festivity. It is on this day that the king of Persia receives in presents an amount nearly equal to all his revenues besides, and sits to receive them, clad in his most gorgeous jewels, so bright that the eye, it is said, can scarcely endure his splendour.

The khan this day received all his officers, and his subjects in general, each of whom makes an offering according to his means; but the value of the presents given, I was informed, generally exceeds that which is received. This, however, was the statement of one of his officers, and may be partial.

Meerza Seleem, with his father, Meerza Reza, and his uncle, Meerza Caussim, a fat goodhumoured man, came early to call on me, and were followed by my host, Ismael Beg, who, in his best dress, and with a great retinue, had just returned from paying his respects to the khan. A continual succession of company then poured in, all glittering in their holiday garbs, careless and happy for the time at least, during the whole morning. It was really a cheering and refreshing sight, the more so, because so great a contrast to what usually meets the eye.

After breakfast, that is afternoon, I went to spend the rest of the day at wuzeer's house, and particularly with Meerza Seleem, for whom I felt a strong and increasing regard; indeed the whole family were so kind, that it was impossible not to be grateful to them; and whenever I became wearied with my solitary room, or felt a desire for the excitement of society, I went to their house, and always found in it a welcome and a home.

At this place, among the amusements of the season, we had music of various sorts, and particularly from a boy in the service of the khan, remarkable for a fine voice; the Persian method of roaring and screaming out their songs, in general renders the best voice and sweetest air abominable, but when this boy did not strain his voice, it was by no means deficient in sweetness or in compass.

In the midst of the music I was surprized to observe Meerza Seleem burst out a weeping; but though he continued apart, shedding floods of tears, and quite absorbed in grief, it did not appear to excite any attention, far less to occasion any emotion in the rest of the company. Upon enquiring of Meerza Abdool Rezak with no small interest for a solution of this extraordinary scene, I learnt that Meerza Seleem was a Sooffee; and I was aware that, among these devotees or enthusiasts, such fits of agitation often

burst forth without any apparent cause, although it had not been my fortune to witness so striking an instance of it before now. This Sooffeeism is, in truth, a very strange, unintelligible thing; its disciples, nay, its adepts themselves, can give no clear definition of it. It owes its origin, I think clearly, to a disposition for metaphysical enquiry, operating upon a very ardent and enthusiastic temperament; a longing of the mind, to penetrate deeper into those mysterious and remote things, which have often employed but uniformly baffled human comprehension; a dissatisfaction with all that has been taught, or written, on religious subjects; and a powerful desire to frame opinions and a theory of the relations between the Creator and created, reconcileable with human reason. In short, to construct a natural religion, to study and comprehend the nature of God and man.

The success of such aspirations, laudable though their motive may appear, has in all ages and countries been uniformly the same; it has multiplied doubt and uncertainty, but never led to any satisfactory result; and while strong minds may have stood the conflict, submitting at last to the mystery they found it impossible to penetrate; those of a weaker conformation have yielded in the struggle; their workings have degenerated into hallucinations of a mystical and totally undefineable description, and approaching in various degrees to absolute insanity.

But the fame and consideration acquired by these sincere enquirers, naturally encouraged and created a far greater number of pretenders; who, unable or unwilling to follow the painful steps of their prototypes, imitated their habits, their austerities, and their language; to deceive the world, and enable them to share in the profit as well as the fame, yielded to the wisdom and sanctity of the true philosophers.

Between these classes of sincere and pretended enthusiasts, there were many others whose degrees in the scale it might be difficult to fix; desirous to share the profits and privileges of saints and sages, and not unwilling to become so in reality, provided the distinction

could be obtained without any extraordinary degree of suffering or self-denial, they hold a middle place, between the other two. From the labour and study of the true enthusiasts, and the grimaces of their imitators, however, a technical cant has arisen corresponding in some degree to that used by the old alchemists, and not dissimilar in tone and character to that of the Methodists in the present day. Thus, whatever was praiseworthy and valuable in Sooffeeism, was speedily overwhelmed by a mass of extravagant and mystical chimeras enveloped in an uncouth and unmeaning jargon.

To become acquainted with the origin and history of those sects of Sooffees that most deserve attention, with the names of their saints and teachers deservedly celebrated for virtue, learning, and talents, or to acquire a knowledge of the various disguises assumed by the pretenders to this kind of philosophy, would have required a far greater degree of attention than I could bestow, or, perhaps, than the subject might be thought to merit; and to detail them, would be as unprofitable as tedious to the general reader; but as my friends, Meerza Seleem and Meerza Abdool Rezak, were certainly no impostors, however great might be their mental weakness, I shall endeavour to transcribe the substance of the vague and mystical answers which they gave to my enquiries on the subject.

It appears, that the ardent love for the Divine Being, which always accompanies the ardent desire to comprehend his nature, and which is, in fact, the essence of Sooffeeism, often breaks forth, as if to relieve itself, in a passion for some visible object, in which the image of the Divine Being is believed to be peculiarly reflected. This passion is neither restricted to age or sex, and may as probably be excited by an old man of seventy with a white beard, or by any creature that under other circumstances would be considered ugly and disgusting, as by a lovely young woman, or a beautiful youth. But this passion, which amounts to devotion, and which according to the Sooffees, is, in truth, inspired by the divinity himself, is represented as perfectly pure and untinged by gross desires; and never aspires to the possession of its object, even though that should

be a female, further than to remain in its presence, watching over it, and contemplating its imaginary excellencies; a reverential awe is experienced, which shrinks at the idea of familiarity or defilement. Were the adored object a female, and were she herself to invite less hallowed communications, the spell would be broken, and the love that had been felt, instead of seeking such a consummation, would vanish, or change to disgust. In short, nothing in the slightest degree sensual must mingle with this passion; any such feeling would be the test of its falsity.

This species of rapture is quite involuntary; and so far from being a sensation of gradual growth, that it is wont to burst forth in a moment, and to strike the imagination when least expected. Sometimes it is conceived in dreams, when the future object is pictured forth with such impressive fidelity, that when afterwards seen, it is certain to be instantly recognized. Sometimes, however, the object is entirely a creation of the imagination; and the unhappy dreamer wanders on through life, for ever enamoured of a phantom.

Several instances of such passions were related to me; Meerza Seleem told me, that he once conceived so strong an attachment for a boy by no means handsome, that he would sit for hours gazing on him, playing with his hands or kissing his feet; at night he would put him in his own bed, and sit by the side of it, watching, sighing, bursting out into tears, and occasionally stealing a kiss. How the matter ended, I do not know; but I suspect that great constancy is not the marking characteristic of these extraordinary passions.

Meerza Abdool Rezak, in like manner, related to me the history of his love for a young girl, whom he saw by accident; a swoon of ecstasy proving incontrovertibly the character of the passion with which he was thus suddenly overwhelmed: he found means to be introduced to her, and for two years, I think, they met continually. He told me, that she would play upon a reed for hours, and enchant his soul; while he would sit and watch her, totally abstracted from all beside; he averred, that not one impure thought, with her for its object, ever entered his mind during the

whole of that time; and that had he succeeded as he wished, in obtaining her for a wife, his familiarity could never have increased, nor his respectful adoration suffered the smallest diminution. That he did entertain that wish, however, is sufficient to give rise to a suspicion of the immaculate purity of his passion; and he confesses, that his heart was well nigh broken, and her's little better, when she was carried suddenly off to the harem of Prince Mahomed Koolee Meerza, governor of Mazunderān, who, hearing of her beauty, had demanded her of her father. "Oh," exclaimed he, "how I cursed that villain, "when I heard how she struggled and wept as they were carrying "her away; the tears streaming from her beautiful black eyes, as "she fell back fainting into the tucht-e-rowān that bore her from "me!" and his own eyes streamed as he spoke. There is reason to think, however, that the lady's passion was not quite so disinterested as that of her lover; for it was one part of her sovereign pleasure, to issue orders in the style of firmauns, to her slave, for the supply of various articles for her convenience; as, so much sugar, so much silk, so much gold brocade, so much fur, all which demands if not immediately complied with, produced, as he confessed, a degree of ill-humour, or anger, very undignified in so adored an object.

Whatever be the cause, all who are victims to these moods of the mind, become strangely affected by them; they will sit for hours and even days, in reveries, absorbed in the contemplation of their own "thick coming fancies," or lost in the maze and ecstasy of this wild passion; they will burst out into floods of tears, without any apparent cause, and become as causelessly elevated; at times, if spoken to, they will answer in the style and strain of a king, at others, they affect the lowest tone of humility, and contemn themselves as viler than the vilest of mankind.

It is impossible, I think, to hear these people discourse, without being struck by the resemblance which this irregularity of mind, with its fits of absence, despondence, and extravagant exultation, bears to the corresponding moods observable in some of the more stern and gloomy sects of Methodism; and it is probable, that the causes of each, if strictly examined, might be traced to the same

source; the mind at least appears, in both cases, to have been unsettled by dwelling too intensely on the contemplation of things so mysterious and perplexing as quite to baffle the human understanding.

It is a remarkable thing, that although the doctrines of Sooffeeism are so abhorrent to those of Mahometanism, that the orthodox supporters of the latter have at all times persecuted the votaries of the former, and continue still so to do when they dare, and that the epithet *Sooffee* is as much a term of reproach among Mussoolmauns, as Infidel among us, or Heretic among Roman Catholics; still the Derwēshes, who seek the Almighty after this fashion, are highly esteemed all over the east; and in Persia meet with particular respect; indeed, those of high character enjoy a degree of attention, more resembling that which is paid to lords and princes of the earth, than to fanatic wandering mendicants, which for the most part they are.

After remaining in the house of Meerza Reza for the greater part of the day, I went in the evening to pay my respects to the Eelkhaneh, and wish him an "Eed-e-Moobārik."* This gave me an opportunity of seeing part of his stud, which he was examining at the time. I have elsewhere mentioned that, besides a regular number of about a thousand horses which he maintains in his stables, the khan keeps seven or eight hundred brood mares, which throw nearly that number of foals every year; besides which he yearly purchases a number of horses from the Toorkomans of the desert. He was this evening selecting stallions for his brood cattle, which he does at the rate of one to every twenty mares; and they continue together in the meadow, where they have grass breast high, for two months after this period. Many of the horses were uncommonly fine animals; he had them of all breeds, Arabian, Toorkomān, Koordish, common Persian, all selected for blood, bone, or some valuable quality. I remarked particularly regarding the Toorkoman horses, that however fine in the legs, and well shaped in the quarters they might be, they all had large and uncouth heads; one was

* A happy Eed.

brought to show me, which had lately been purchased from the tribe of Tuckeh, bearing a very high character for strength and speed; I was informed, that in a late rencounter, this animal had borne off not only his master, but a prisoner seated behind him, although pursued by many, well mounted upon capital horses; he was a large mouse-coloured horse, at least sixteen hands high, with fine and powerful limbs, but a very ugly head. The khan had given for this animal a sum equal to about fourteen hundred reals of Irāk.

I dined this night with my friends, and passed a really pleasant evening. It is a privilege of Sooffeeism to drink strong liquors, smoke bang, and use every other means of intoxication, at their pleasure; and of this privilege Meerza Seleem had long availed himself; but his father who was more lately initiated, retained more of the superstitions of Mahometanism, and hardly dared to indulge in such generally forbidden delights, even when but a few friends were present: but he and some others of tender consciences had contrived to provide a means of thus enjoying themselves, without, as they chose to believe, transgressing any law. They had a spirit distilled from various substances of a saccharine nature, with oranges and other fruits; nor do I believe that either grain or sugar themselves were quite excluded from the composition; and to this they gave the name of Mā-ul-Hiāt, an Arabic expression signifying "the water "of life." It was very strong, and reminded me of whisky, highly flavoured with oranges and aromatics. This they persuaded themselves was lawful, because it was not made from any of the substances expressly prohibited by the Mahometan law, and a flask of this spirit was produced this day after dinner, for the use of Meerza Reza, and others of the more timorous Neophites; it was highly amusing to see Meerza Reza taking the flask in his hand, assume a most puritanical air as he turned to me, and explained the wide difference there was between this valuable liquor of life and that abominable and prohibited trash, called *wine*, and *brandy*, which he never allowed himself (he assured us) to taste. "This," continued he, as he tossed off a well-sized glassful, "is lawful; and very, very good; "and I am particularly directed to drink it, on account of a weak-

" ness of stomach with which I am distressed." His son, Meerza Abdool Rezak, and some others, did not think any such explanation necessary, they drank as they felt inclined, like hardened sinners, and it evidently was no novelty to them; for though their potations were deep, they produced no effect whatever on their heads; nay, Meerza Seleem having got hold of a bottle of fine old brandy (a few of which I carried with me in case of illness), he got so fond of it, preferring it even to the delicious " water of life," that it very soon was exhausted, and it was only by concealing them that I preserved the one or two bottles, which still remained.

In the midst of our conviviality the hour of prayer arrived, and Meerza Reza, with his brother, Meerza Caussim, instantly arose from the fire-side, round which we were seated, and going a little to one side, kneeled down and commenced their forms of worship; never at the same time, abstracting themselves in the least from what was going on among us, or even dropping their share in the conversation; one moment they uttered " Allah ho Akber!" " La illa he-il-ullah!"* and all the rest of it; and the next, turned round to us with a joke, and a loud laugh; then would they rest upon their heels, combing their beards, and continuing their conversation, instead of meditating in silence, and abstraction, as prescribed by their law. Such is the practice of religious observances in this country, or wherever Mahometanism exists, and such must be the fate of all religions which rest on ritual and observance alone, in which morals are totally neglected, and which, addressing itself only to the imagination or senses, leaves the attention unfixed, the understanding unsatisfied, the soul uninterested and debased.

Before I went away, Meerza Seleem, on some occasion when we were sitting together, after looking earnestly at me for a while, broke out as it seemed involuntarily, with an earnest declaration of the deep interest he felt in me, an interest he assured me far surpassing what he felt for the man who introduced me to him, or even for his own family. They had friends to assist and protect them; but

* " God is great!" — " there is no God but God."

I, a stranger, far, very far from my home and friends, and exposed to a thousand dangers, from which a native ran no risk, who had I to take my part? and again the tears flowed from his eyes in abundance. Whether the mā-ul-hiāt had any share in this ebullition of tenderness, or whether it was the commencement of one of his pure and philosophical attachments, I cannot pronounce: I was naturally suspicious of professions so very strong from one on whom I had not the smallest claim, yet certainly the attentions paid to me by this young man, and his father were a sufficient proof of no common politeness and goodness of heart, and that it was disinterested was sufficiently proved in the sequel; for though I offered to both presents of considerable value, neither would accept of any thing beyond a knife, or some trifle, as a token of remembrance; and the young man forced upon me a very handsome jubba, or cloak of fine camel's hair, richly trimmed, because he had heard me express a wish for such a thing. There is no doubt that he was an enthusiast, and what opens the heart more than enthusiasm? indeed I have found all those who were imbued with the true spirit of Sooffeeism, before their ardour became checked by the worldly spirit in which it too often ends, benevolent, kind-hearted, and liberal.

March 22d. The day was beautiful, and the khan sent me a horse to ride, and a guide to show me about the town and its environs; I was indeed privately given to understand that it was the chief's intention to present me with a horse in return for my little offering; as he had heard of the accident that befel my favourite at Nishapore, and I believe the horse in question was sent for me to try.

The country around the town had nothing to attract; but I viewed the fortifications of the town, which were tolerably sufficient, the wall being ten or twelve feet thick at its base, well flanked with plenty of towers, and defended by a formidable ditch; between which and the wall itself the earth has been thrown up to defend the latter. On our return I rode through the whole of the bazar, and viewed it more completely than before; so far from being a mean and petty place, as I had been informed, it contained at least from two to three hundred shops of various sorts; it is customary to keep them shut

for several days after the No-Roz, so that we could not judge of their contents; but all looked comfortable and well-ordered, as if plenty reigned there. The bazar is indeed not vaulted over, and the streets are narrow; but the area of the town was well filled with houses, all inhabited, nor were there any ruins to be seen; and I became convinced that the minister was not far wrong, when, in speaking of the density of its population, he estimated it at from fifteen to twenty thousand souls.

The trade of Cochoon, consists chiefly in the supply of its inhabitants and those of the valley around it, with such articles as they require: it has no great foreign trade, and its exports are principally wool and its fabricks, tallow, ghee, and such articles as from the surplus produce of a pastoral country. The only manufacture for which the place is remarkable, is that of sheepskin pelisses called poosteens, which are acknowledged to be the best of Persia. The sheepskins, properly dressed with the wool on, are cut into long stripes of an inch broad, rejecting the coarser and more imperfect parts, and these being sewed together with the wool inside, are formed into a long and ample gown with large sleeves, which are used as one of the most common exterior coverings for winter throughout the country. There are three sorts commonly made; the most valued is formed from the skins of unweaned lambs; and some of these are so fine and light, that they can be folded and wrapt up in a small handkerchief: these cost as high as sixty or eighty reals, and are made chiefly for the use of great people, and sent in presents to the king and princes: the next quality is made from the skins of chosen sheep, not exceeding a year old, the wool of which is fine and light in its texture, and these sell from twenty to forty reals a piece, being those of commerce, and in general use: the coarser skins are made up for the poorer classes, and cost from ten to twenty reals. The number annually made of all sorts is very large, and great is the slaughter of lambs and sheep in the season.

In this wild district they have little knowledge of European manufactures; the great objects of their ambition, as must be the case in all unsettled and lawless countries, are horses, and offensive and

defensive arms. To procure these of excellent quality they will give the most extravagant prices. They are not so well acquainted with fire-arms, and consequently do not value them so highly. I was told that the greater number would not give a dozen tomauns for the finest of Manton's double-barrelled guns: they place far greater confidence in the sword and the spear. The great mass of the people are, indeed, most wild and ignorant, and no wonder, for I saw many that had never been out of sight of Cochoon.

Returning from my ride, I went to see an imaumzadeh, the only piece of antiquity in Cochoon; and, in truth, it would not merit notice at all, except upon one account. There are still preserved there, though in a very careless manner, some leaves that belonged to a Korān of the most magnificent dimensions, perhaps, of any in the world, the history of which is not less interesting than its size is extraordinary. It was written by Boi Sanghor Meerza, the son of Shah Rokh, and grandson of the great Timoor, and laid by him upon the grave of that mighty conqueror, at Samarkand; from whence it was most sacrilegiously taken by the soldiery of Mahomed Khan, grandfather of the present Eelkhaneh, who accompanied Nadir Shah in his expedition to Toorkistān: the soldiers broke it up, and each took what leaves he choose to carry, as tokens of his triumph, back to his own country. Meer Goonah Khan, the son, collected about sixty of them, and placed them in this imaumzadeh, where they lie upon a shelf quite neglected and covered with dust. These leaves are formed of a thick wire-wove paper, evidently made for the purpose, and, when opened out, measure from ten to twelve feet long, by seven or eight broad; the letters are beautifully formed, as if they had been each made by a single stroke of a gigantic pen. The nooktas, or vowel points, as well as the marginal and other ornaments, are emblazoned in azure and gold; but few of the leaves are perfect, having been mutilated for the sake of the ornaments, or the blank paper of the immense margin. It is pity that so curious and splendid a work should go so carelessly to decay, and it shows how imperfect and inconsistent is the reverence, even of the priests, for the most sacred emblems of their religion.

March 23d. I was detained within doors for the greater part of this day, in expectation of a visit, which I was informed the khan intended to honour me with; and I was well pleased to receive it, although it was quite unexpected, because it showed the respect with which he was disposed to regard the nation to which I belonged, and which he really believed me to represent; and it established the custom of returning the visits of any Englishmen who might in future pass through Cochoon. This, in the eyes of the natives, is a great matter; for the Eelkhaneh in Cochoon is full as great a person as the king at Tehrān; or, to give a more characteristic illustration, as the most powerful Highland chief, upon his own land, in the days of the Stewarts. We dined with him in the evening, in company with the wuzeer and his family, and I tried hard to obtain the letters which he had promised to give me for Nujjuff Allee Khan and other chiefs, along with leave to proceed on my journey on the following morning; but although the khan would not absolutely refuse it to me, I clearly saw that the point was not to be gained. He first threw out several objections to my plan, and when I had overruled all these, he changed the subject, by asking me if I had looked at and approved of the fortifications of the town, begging me to state such faults as they appeared to me to have. I mentioned some that occurred to me, and hinted that a European engineer would have made different dispositions in several respects: but it was an unlucky observation for myself; for he immediately insisted upon my making out a plan of a fortification according to the principles of European art, and I was obliged to promise this, stipulating for receiving my leave and dispatches in the morning. I returned home accordingly, and employed myself till past three in the morning in delineating the plan of a square fort with bastions, on the common principles of fortification; after which I retired to rest, determined that if earnestness and firmness could gain the day, I should leave Cochoon on the morrow.

March 24th. Still hoping that the dispatches might arrive, we got on foot at an early hour, and had every thing packed up for our departure. I gave my plan into the hands of Ismael Beg, requesting

him to deliver it into those of the khan, with my respectful compliments, and to solicit the letter for Nujjuff Allee Khan without delay. He did not return for a long time, after which he informed me that he had met the khan just mounting to ride out; that he had received the plan graciously, and promised to examine it upon his return; but that he had understood me to have given up all thoughts of going this day, and had, therefore, given no orders to the person who was to accompany me to Boojnoord: besides this, he said that he wished to see me once more; "therefore," concluded the sagacious Ismael Beg, "it will be impossible for you to leave us to-day." I now saw clearly that there was some secret reason for all this, against which it would be in vain to contend; but as it was important that the same vexatious conduct should not be repeated, I made no hesitation in showing how much hurt I felt; and, after sitting for a while, looking as black as night, with my host and his people in profound silence around, I rose, went to breakfast with Meerza Seleem, and then rode out to view the place where Nadir Shah was assassinated.

There is nothing, either natural or artificial, to mark the spot where this mighty conqueror and cruel destroyer was cut short in his bloody career by a violent death; the place, as yet, is well known, but its traces will, in all probability, soon be lost, and when the present generation shall have passed away, men will in vain enquire where it is.

In the course of this ride, too, we saw the various posts occupied by the king, during his memorable siege of Cochoon; the situations of his batteries, from which he used, now and then, to fire a gun to intimidate the besieged, the only mischief done by which, according to the account of Ismael Beg, was to kill a dog, and frighten an old woman. He showed me some posts which had been rather warmly disputed; and pointed out the space between the lines where champions used to come forth from either army, and challenge opponents, as in times of old, to single combat.

We rode through a great deal of excellent cultivation this day, which now that the influence of spring began to be felt, showed itself

in a lovely green tint over the fields. Irrigation is carried on to a great extent, a number of cannauts were in perfect order, and we observed some men in the act of conducting one stream of water thus obtained *over* another, which run upon a lower level. I discovered this day that the farmers here are in the habit of allowing their land a year's fallow, after either one or two crops; and this was one cause of the appearance of abandonment which we remarked in the cultivated ground near Cochoon.

I found also that although it was generally given out, that very little land had been put under cultivation this year, there had, in fact, been a great deal of seed put in the ground; the reason of this false report is, to discourage as far as possible, any disposition on the part of the king to bring his troops into the country, which, if it were believed they could find subsistence, he would be apt enough to do: perhaps, too, the khan rather chooses that a deplorable account of his country should be circulated, than that its full prosperity should be known; because the former always serves in some degree as an excuse for failing to offer a large amount either in tribute or "peishcush" to the king. Horses, mares, poosteens, Toorkoman carpets, and such gear, he sends to his majesty at this season, along with abundance of fair words, and lamentations for his impoverished condition, to conciliate and lull his suspicions until the harvest has been secured; but as soon as that has been effected, he cares not how soon he becomes "Yaghee" again, until the next spring.

After our return from riding, I made another effort to obtain the necessary dispatches for our journey on the morrow; messenger after messenger was dispatched, but no one belonging to the court, neither the khan, his minister, nor any of his officers were to be found; Ismael Beg was sent upon the same errand with no better success, and the day passed in fruitless anxiety. At last the truth came out, and the real reason of our detention appeared, the whole of the court, khan, minister, officers, and servants, were dead drunk, and perfectly unable to transact business of any kind. It appeared, that after we left

the ark on the night before, the khan had set-to to drinking with some of his familiars, and had taken such a dose of his favourite cordial, that he fell a dancing with the singers and dancers who were exhibiting before him, after which, while still perfectly intoxicated, he had gone out to ride for an hour or two (at which time Ismael Beg had met him), and upon his return he had retired into his private apartments to sleep it off, and was not to be seen. This debauch, was all the effects of the mā-ul-hiāt, of which he had sent a plentiful supply to Meerza Reza, with a strong recommendation to make free use of it, but he, less addicted to it, became soon totally overpowered: and even Meerza Caussim, and others who were better able to bear it, had exceeded so much, that not one of them was fit to write a letter, had the khan been able to dictate it; and this was in reality the reason why we could not make good our journey this day. Late in the evening, Meerza Seleem made his appearance at the house of Meerza Caussim, where we dined, bringing with him a supply of this mischievous liquor, and every one seemed ready to repeat the scene of the night before. But I made an early retreat, that there might be no excuse made upon my account, if in the morning the letters should not be forthcoming.

March 25th. Again we were this morning early in order for the journey, but for more than two hours no dispatch arrived, while we sat in anxious impatience, the precious day going fast by. At last, Meerza Caussim made his appearance, with the news, that the khan, the minister, and his son, had all gone to the bath, in order to recruit and repair the mischief effected by the evening's debauch. This was but a wretched bad omen for us; but I persevered in my preparations, declaring that I should set out even without the letters, if they did not arrive soon. After a considerable time, however, the minister himself came, bringing the letters, and conducting a horse caparisoned with silver-mounted furniture, body clothes, &c., complete; which was presented to me in the name of the khan, as a mark of his esteem and friendship, &c. I rewarded the messenger handsomely, as is usual in all such cases, and being soon ready, we took a kind leave of the minister and

his family, as well as of my good host; and with the best and, I believe, the sincerest wishes on both sides, sped away, accompanied for a while by Meerza Seleem, and his uncle, Meerza Caussim. They soon parted from us, and we bade a final adieu to Cochoon. I sincerely wish that every traveller in these parts may meet with as much hospitality, and ready kindness, as I did there. It was impossible to refrain from contrasting in our minds the scene which had just passed, with our late departure from Mushed, when all was anxiety, suspicion, meanness, and enmity; here all was frankness, cordiality, and good will; the very delay which we had to complain of proceeded from motives of mistaken hospitality.

But from whatever source the friendship of the wuzeer and his family arose, there is no doubt that the consideration with which I was honoured by the khan proceeded in good measure from his internal belief that I was not a mere traveller, but an emissary from the government of my own country, to make observations upon those of which they meditated the conquest. These people cannot conceive that any one should travel for pleasure, or from curiosity; who, argue they, would voluntarily undergo the fatigue and dangers, not to mention the heavy expense of a long journey, merely for the sake of collecting useless information? for pleasure they can see none. If, therefore, there be no ostensible motive for the journey, as that of business or of traffic, they at once assign the one in their opinion most likely. The khan, like all the semi-independent and discontented nobles of Khorasān, hating the reigning family of Persia with the most inveterate energy, yet unable entirely to emancipate himself from the galling fetters of occasional obedience, is continually turning in his mind the means of relief, and would hail the appearance of an invading foe as the dawn of his own perfect independence; for their short-sighted political vision does not contemplate the obvious chance of a more painful oppression, a severer exaction of obedience, from the next sovereign who may rule over the land in right of conquest. I have not entered into a detail of the various conversations, in which the hope of deliverance from their present

bonds by British interposition was more than hinted; but these would continually occur, and the hatred felt by every class of the people towards the Kadjers, that is, the king and his family, and troops, was re-echoed from mouth to mouth in the most striking language, and explained by the most powerful relations of individual misery resulting from their wanton ravages.

CHAP. XXIII.

STATE OF THE THERMOMETER AT COCHOON. — REACH SHEERWAN, FERTILITY OF THE VALLEY THROUGH WHICH THE ROAD LEADS. — SHEERWAN SMALL AND MEAN. — REACH BOOJNOORD. — VALLEY AND TOWN. — RECEPTION. — VISITS. — DINE WITH NUJJUFF ALLEE KHAN ITS CHIEF. — HIS APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER. — CONVERSATION WITH HIM. — PRESENT HIM WITH A TELESCOPE, AND OTHER ENGLISH ARTICLES. — RECEIVE A YOUNG HORSE IN RETURN.—LEAVE BOOJNOORD, AND REACH SAREEWAN.—KALLAH KHAN OR SEMULGHAN. — HOSPITABLY RECEIVED BY BEDER KHAN BEG. — GENERAL HATRED TOWARDS THE REIGNING FAMILY.—LEAVE KALLAH KHAN AND ENTER ON THE DESERT.—DEHINAH DERKISH.—BANSKALLAH. — ROBAUT-E-AISHK.— A BOAR HUNT.—DANGEROUS PLACES, AND PASSES FREQUENTED BY TOORKOMAN PLUNDERERS. — REACH THE LOFTIEST PART OF THE MOUNTAINOUS DISTRICT, AND COMMENCE DESCENDING TOWARD THE PLAINS, BY A ROUGH AND WOODED GLEN. — BIVOUAC FOR A SHORT TIME IN A GRASSY DELL. — WAKE NEARLY FROZEN AND RENEW THE JOURNEY. — CHANGE IN THE SCENERY. — FIND A PARTY OF TOORKOMANS, BIVOUACKING NEAR OUR STATION.—VARIOUS, MAGNIFICENT, SAVAGE, AND LOVELY SCENERY. — NOBLE FORESTS, RICH NATURAL MEADOWS. — PLAINS OF GOORGAUN, STRETCHING TO THE CASPIAN SEA. — TOORKOMAN CAMPS. — REACH THE CAMP OF KALLEE KHAN, WHO GIVES AN UNCEREMONIOUS BUT CORDIAL RECEPTION TO THE PARTY. — THE DINNER, THE MUSIC OF THE TOORKOMANS.

Before finally quitting Cochoon, I may observe, that during the time of my stay, the weather was mild and temperate; the thermometer in the shade ranging from 40° to 50°. The air was kept so constantly loaded with moisture by the melting of the snow, that Leslie's hygrometer never sunk below 50° in the shade; in the sun it fell sometimes to 95°. The sky was for the most part clear, and the air balmy and mild.

We rode for twenty miles through a country, with little interruption, finely cultivated. The valley opens out beyond Cochoon, presenting a surface gently declining to the north-west, of from thirty-five to forty miles broad, including the skirts of the hills on either

side very little interrupted by irregularities, and nearly level, all capable of the finest culture, though a great deal lies waste; but villages are so thinly scattered over it, that one wonders at the quantity cultivated, and is at a loss to conceive whence all the labourers come.

At twenty miles from Cochoon, in a N. N. W. direction, we passed a ruined fort, which had belonged to Ismael Khoordeh Ymāk, an independent chief who long resisted the arms of the king; until Reza Koolee Khan, perhaps jealous of his power, went himself, and reduced the place. Beyond this, cultivation diminished until near Sheerwan, in the vicinity of which there are abundant proofs of the industry of the inhabitants.

The whole soil of this valley is of a rich, light coloured clayey loam; its surface slightly diversified by a few earthy hillocks, and some artificial mounds, the sites of ancient forts. A stream of no great size naturally, but now swelled by the melting snows, winds through it, and the hills undulate and retreat on either side into bays, terminating in fine vallies, which are filled with villages, and rich cultivation. I was assured that these glens produce crops, returning from thirty to forty, and even a hundred for one, without the need of artificial irrigation. The main valley is less productive, yielding at the best from twenty to thirty returns, but in most places from ten to fifteen for one. Upon the whole, the fertility and plentiful appearance of this valley, from Cochoon to and considerably beyond Sheerwan, far exceeded anything I had hitherto seen in the country, and gives credibility to the almost extravagant accounts of its produce. It is asserted, that when the king was at Cochoon, with an army, and its followers of all sorts, amounting to not less than three hundred thousand souls, with nearly as many head of animals, baggage cattle included, corn and straw were so plenty, that barley sold at the rate of twenty mauns for a rupee, and that in fact provisions were so abundant in the camp, as hardly to be of any value. This continued for fifty days, after which the army decamped, leaving the country, no doubt, in a very exhausted state. After making all possible allowances for exaggeration arising from national vanity, enough will remain to prove the existence of great

fertility of soil and industry in the people, and there are probably few parts of Persia that could boast of as much.

Near to Sheerwan we remarked a small range of rocky hills, that presented a singular appearance; the strata dipt from the horizon towards the north, and north-east, their edges in many places projecting from the less inclined slope of the hill, in waved lines, according with its inequalities; in others, the whole slope was formed of one stratum, presenting a surface of stone, quite denuded of soil, which had once been entire, but had been shivered, by the effect of time and weather, into pieces, that lay like the fragments of a mirror, broken, but continuing undisturbed in their position on its frame.

We reached Sheerwan at five in the afternoon, having gone on at a brisk pace; and I calculate the distance from Cochoon to be from thirty to thirty-two miles in a W. N. W. direction. The town, with its raised citadel of mud, situated in the plain and surrounded with corn fields and gardens, had rather a picturesque appearance There are several villages with well-filled gardens in its vicinity, and to the north, at no great distance, there is an imaumzadeh of some celebrity.

The town, although populous, is by no means so large as Cochoon, and the houses are all mean; our lodging, however, in that of Reza Koolee Khan's naib, would have been comfortable enough, had we not been plagued by the presence of several other guests who slept in the same chamber with us; one of these a Cashmirian Seyed, a pretender to the art of medicine, was most tedious as well as vociferous, with his prayers, not confining them to the stated periods, but every now and then bursting out into ejaculations, very edifying, no doubt to him, but exceedingly disturbing to us. His companion, however, was even worse, for he not only talked but absolutely roared in his sleep, so that what with them and the constant movement of some of the company, together with the attacks of a whole host of more agile enemies, who had previously been in possession of the apartment, I could hardly shut an eye during the whole night, which was the more distressing, as we had suffered much upon our march from a most violent and freezing wind.

March 26th. We rose early, but the day was dark and threatening, heavy clouds overhung the whole landscape, and shrouded the tops of the hills, which, deeply purpled, lowered under their heavy veils; the scud flew fast and low, and showers of hail and rain frequently fell. I was almost afraid to load the cattle and tempt the impending rain, but encouraged by a blink of sun, we ventured to set forth, in the teeth of a furious wind.

We were detained for some time by getting the Khan's horse shod. It is curious to observe how strange a degree of incompleteness, savouring even of meanness, almost always characterizes the most liberal and generous acts of these people; this horse, a fine one of its kind, well fitted up with a suitable caparison, and, as might have been presumed, complete in every respect to go upon a journey, was certainly, as it was intended to be, a very handsome present, yet, when we came to examine it, we found that it wanted two shoes altogether, the others were old and useless; and it was galled, though slightly, in the back, so as not to be fit for mounting for a considerable time. All this might have been the meerachor's* fault, but with us, and in most countries, the master would have taken care that no blemish existed in such a present before he made it.

We pursued our course in the same direction as yesterday, through the cultivated plain, to which the rising corn had given a beautiful emerald hue; even the hills themselves began to show the influence of spring. The valley terminates some miles beyond Sheerwan, in a large round basin of rich level land, surrounded by hills, through which there is an opening that gives vent to its waters, and they form a feeder of the river Attruck. We quitted it about five miles from Sheerwan, ascending the western heights, and after a various course of hill and valley, upon a road where carriages might have run, we reached the summit of a mountain, from whence we enjoyed a very extensive prospect on all sides, and could see Boojnoord, the place to which we were proceeding, in a valley, apparently at our feet. It was a fine Highland scene, by far

* Meerachor — master of the horse; chief groom of the stables.

more interesting than such in Persia generally are, for it consisted less of rocky ridges, and brown plains, than of a country diversified by mountains and vallies, and undulating ground well sprinkled with cultivated tracks.

A various and very tedious descent proved to us how much we had miscalculated, when we believed ourselves to be close above the valley of Boojnoord, along which we rode for three miles, through well cultivated ground that extends to the very ditch of the town; we reached it at six o'clock, having been about eleven hours on the way, and I estimate its distance from Sheerwan at about thirty-six miles in a direction nearly W. N. W.

The valley of Boojnoord, as seen from the height above, appeared nearly circular, but extending rather further towards the S. W., in which direction the surface is a good deal undulated; in other parts it is very level, and the cultivation with which it is almost entirely covered, varied in its hues by the lively green of the young corn, the yellow of the stubble, and the dark brown of the ploughed lands, contrasted sweetly with the dark and snow-tipped hills around. The town with its tower denoting the residence of its chief, and its lofty and bastioned walls arising from the midst of its fine valley, had a very metropolitan look, and formed a happy centre for the eye to rest upon. The scenery of this day's march was altogether more various and pleasing than any we had seen for a long time; and the valley, with its town, its villages, and gardens, wound up the whole in a very striking way; nothing was wanted but wood, and where is wood to be found in Persia?

The Eelkhaneh in his kindness had appointed Hoossain Khan, a person of respectable station, to carry the compliments of the season on his part to Nujjuff Allee Khan, and to act as our mehmandar to Boojnoord. He had, however, been one of the jolly party at the khan's, on the night before we quitted Cochoon; and detained, perhaps, by the effects of the *mā-ul-hiāt*, had only joined us late at Sheerwan: indeed, from what ensued, it seems probable, that he carried along with him a supply of that delicious cordial; for during this day, having lagged behind for awhile, he rejoined

the party in a state little short of intoxication. Thus, when the meerza repeatedly begged that he would ride forward and present our letters to the khan, so that he might be prepared to receive us, he was either unable, or unwilling, to perform this obvious piece of duty; and the consequence was, that when we reached the gate of the ark, we were forced to remain a long time in waiting before any shelter could be found for us; and, after all, to take up our abode in a house hastily emptied for the occasion, full of dirt, and discomfort Every thing was in confusion, and the khan himself, no doubt displeased, and out of humour at this rude and unusual conduct; while our stupid mehmandar sat like a drunken idiot, biting his whip and drumming on his saddle, without ever dreaming of offering either apology or assistance. Our dinner, late and cold, was sent to us by the khan, and we went to rest very little pleased with our entertainment.

March 27th. In the morning, met with one Moollah Murād Allee, a person in good credit with the khan, and a man of information, who had been sent by the Koordish lords upon a mission to Mahomed Raheem Khan, of Khyvah: by him we transmitted to the khan the letter of Meerza Daood, and expressed our hopes that he would furnish us with the means of safely crossing the dangerous tracts between this place and Astrabad.

This person returned after breakfast, bringing the ketkhoda of the town with some others of the principal persons, to wait upon me, on the khan's part: and in the afternoon I received a visit from a moollah of some consequence in his family, with a Hindee seyed, a native of Ajmere, and a descendant, as he assured me, of Moeen-u-deen Auliah, the well known saint of that place. From each of these persons, as well as from Moollah Murād Allee, I gathered some interesting particulars regarding the countries to the north and west of Caubul; and the chief part of the forenoon was occupied in conversation with them, and in making the observations necessary for fixing the position of Boojnoord.

In the evening the khan sent to request my company to dinner, and I went accordingly. We were conducted through various courts

and passages, calculated to impress us with a high idea of the extent and accommodation of the ark, to a well proportioned and handsomely fitted-up apartment, in which were seated the khan and several guests. He did not rise to receive me, nor was his reception either so gracious or so attentive as that of Reza Koolee Khan; but his manners were more dignified, and the first glance was sufficient to show that he was a man of far higher talent, and much greater knowledge of the world, than his neighbour chief. His stature was tall, and his person fine; his countenance handsome, with features strongly marked, intelligent, and thoughtful; his expression was pleasing, his smile particularly gracious, and his manners, in general, gentleman-like and easy. Many of these advantages were doubtless owing to his residence at Tehrān, where he was detained for sometime as hostage for his family, and where he must have improved greatly in politeness, and knowledge of the world; but he is a man by nature far superior in every respect to Reza Koolee Khan. He has the reputation of being a very strict, and even severe, but impartial observer of justice, of high courage, and perfectly skilled in all warlike exercises.

Although at first not over charmed with my reception, I replied to the khan's interrogatories in a way that soon brought on a close conversation, in the course of which we became, I think, mutually better pleased with each other; and soon after dinner (which was excellent and well served) I left him; certainly with very favourable impressions of his sense and judgment.

March 28th. My experience of the delays that constantly occur in this country, had induced me at an early period to announce my wish to proceed immediately towards Astrabad; and this morning, Moollah Murād Allee called to say, that a party of Gocklan Toorkomans, who had come from Goorgaun on business with the khan, were just going to set out on their return for that place; and that it would afford us an excellent opportunity of reaching that part of the country in safety, as the khan would place our party under their special protection. This, however, was sooner than I had calculated on, or was able to prepare for; one or two of my

cattle were rather lame, and as the journies of the next two or three days were to be severe ones, I was desirous to give them a day or two more to recruit; besides, the series of astronomical observations I had undertaken was not completed; and, on the whole, I thought there was something like a want of hospitality in the khan's behaviour, thus to thrust me, as it were, out of doors upon the sudden. Part of these reasons for remaining I declared to the moollah, who returned to me after breakfast with a message from the khan, importing that he had only given me the information, from being impressed with the idea that I was in great haste to proceed; but that he, for his own part, was very desirous to have some more conversation with me, and should be glad, if I would remain here many days; in the mean time, he invited me to come, and see him in his *khelwut**, and give him some more information respecting the situation of Europe, and regarding my own travels.

I went accordingly, and in the course of conversation, which turned upon the usual topics, I discovered that he entertained the same belief and the same hopes, regarding the views of the British nation towards Persia, as did his neighbour the Eelkhaneh, although he was more cautious in the mode of expressing his sentiments. He repeated to me the same explanation which he had sent in the morning by the moollah, of his suggestion regarding the Toorkomans, whom he said he had detained on our account for another day; but added, that he should be glad if I would remain a month with him, and that he would show me the Koordish style of hunting, and amuse me in the best way he might be able.

With a view to disposing the khan to yield us efficient assistance in crossing the dangerous part of our route, I had sent him in the morning a present consisting of a very good silver-mounted telescope, some English knives, muslins, &c., all of which was graciously received, with an assurance, however, that no such offering was expected; that on the contrary he was ashamed to accept of any thing from his guest, and several similar expressions. While I remained with him

* Khelwut, private apartments.

this forenoon, he sent for the telescope I had given him, and produced a fine large English day and night glass, which had been sent him, he said, from Tehrān, partly, I think, to contrast with mine; for his was certainly the best, though not so portable; but he praised the beauty and convenience of the former, and again thanked me for it.

I here saw another of those noble animals, the wild sheep of the mountains; it was a male with fine horns; its hair, however, differed somewhat from that which I had seen at the mines near Nishapore, being exactly similar to that of the burrul of the Himalah mountains; in so much, that I felt disposed to believe, that if they are not exactly the same animal, there is a very near approximation in the species of the latter to the sheep of the mountains of Khorasān.

It was intended that we should have dined this evening also with the khan, but the hour having passed, a peshkhidmut arrived with dinner, and a compliment from him, intimating that he had been desirous of our company, but as we had purposed to depart on the morrow, he did not wish to give us the trouble of moving, and therefore had sent us our repast. He had promised to give us letters for Beder Khan Bey, an officer residing at Semulghan, on the borders of the desert, in the quality of warden of the marches of that quarter, ordering him to provide us with an escort as far as Gourgaun; but no letters came, and therefore we retired to rest, dubious at least as to the chance of our moving in the morning.

March 29th. The morning brought with it an explanation of the khan's extraordinary conduct the night before; he was desirous to make me some return for the present I had made him, and could think of nothing but a horse: all that he had in town, however, being either too valuable, or too indifferent, in his opinion, for the purpose, he had sent into the country for one of a more suitable description; this, however, not having arrived by dinner time on the previous evening, and consequently not being able to present it to me on taking leave as he wished, he preferred not seeing me at all, and sending it to me in the morning along with his dispatches. It was one o'clock, however, before the khan's peshkhidmut arrived with a young and rather vicious colt, of no great value, along with his

master's compliments, a letter for Beder Khan, and a guide to the next stage. He said we might either proceed at once, and sleeping at a village about four fursungs distant, go on the next morning to Semulghan, or remain where we were until morning, and then march to Semulghan, a distance of nine fursungs, at once. As our baggage was all packed, and every thing ready, I resolved on pursuing the former plan, and accordingly about half past two we left Boojnoord.

Our road lay almost due west, across the fine and richly cultivated plan, which even now was green and lovely, but which, in a few days more, would become all like emerald; we then ascended the western hills, chiefly composed of earth and gravel, by a gently winding path: the descent upon the other side is much steeper and longer, evidently leading to a valley lower in its level than that of Boojnoord. Sareewān, the village to which we were proceeding, is situated on the bank of a little rill, a good way down this valley, and about fifteen miles from Boojnoord. The march was pleasant, the scenery highland, and not uninteresting; a great deal of cultivation appeared on the faces and skirts of the southern hills; those to the north were more lofty, and capt with snow: flowers were every where springing, and the green herbage on the bank of the little rill was particularly pleasing. We reached the village just as the sun set in great glory, and were hospitably entertained by the ketkhodah, who is a servant of Nujjuff Allee Khan, to whom the village belongs. The cultivation here, as in many other places, appeared to be out of all proportion to the number of inhabitants; but we were informed that the village had been almost totally destroyed when the king's troops last overran the country; that their gardens had been rooted up, and all their fruit trees cut down. Is it wonderful that these poor creatures should detest the Kadjers?

March 30th. A very high wind tormented us all night, filling our sleeping place with clouds of dust; but the morning broke serene and lovely. The spring here became sensibly felt; the willows were budding, and a bush exactly resembling the black thorn, was covered with beautiful blossoms of red and white; thousands of flowers, of

the lily and crocus species, were springing under our feet. It must have been this season to which the Persian * alluded, in which, when boasting of the beauty of his country, he said, that you could not make one step without treading on flowers. The insect tribe were abroad, thousands of beetles were seen upon the road pulling to pieces every little heap of dung that had dropt there; and the air glittered and resounded with myriads of winged creatures, rejoicing in the beams of sunshine.

As we left the village, and threaded down the glen, it was delightful to observe the quantity of cultivation that every where appeared, and when we entered the larger valley of Semulghan, we observed a very great extent of natural meadow land, part of which still bore its thick but dry coat of herbage, while part had been burnt to bring on an early and rapid vegetation: we saw several villages, but the ruins of many more which had been destroyed by the Toorkomans, were scattered about the plain. Here also, for the first time, we remarked wood in considerable quantity, upon the right hand hills, which, indeed, were a part of the great Elburz range: the trees were bare of leaves, and we could not determine of what species they might be.

About noon we reached the fort of Kallah Khān †, where we were hospitably received by Beder Khan Beg, the naib, or deputy of Nujjuff Allee Khan, who holds the border post between the Koords and Toorkomāns. He commands a party of horse, and places watchmen upon all the advanced heights that command the passes, to give notice when any party of the marauders is seen approaching. The fort is situated upon a hillock of earth, crowned by a wall and a few towers, possessing but little strength beyond

* This is not an uncommon figure used by the Persians in describing their country to a stranger — the very words were made use of to the late Dr. Jukes by a Persian attending the first mission which he accompanied; and when they landed on the barren sandy waste about Bushire, and saw the bare rocky hills at a distance, without a single blade of grass upon them, he could not help turning to the subject of Irān, and asking him if these pebbles and that sand were in Persia called flowers?

† I believe this is the place of Semulghan, which gives its name to the valley. The fort receives its appellation from being the residence of the khan.

that which depends upon its elevated position. Below it is the town, a miserable collection of huts, also surrounded by a wall, for without such a defence there would be no safety here. I computed this place to be from thirty-six to forty miles west, and a little to the north of Boojnoord.

Beder Khān Beg is a Koord of respectability; he had been deputed by the chiefs of Koordistan to wait upon Mahomed Raheem Khan, sovereign of Khyvah, who carried him as a prisoner to that place; and I learnt from him many particulars regarding both the country and the sovereign, which have been related in another place. He appeared to be a plain blunt soldier, very open in his manners, and a violent hater of the king and all his tribe. He soon caught the idea that I was an emissary of government, and immediately expressed his earnest hopes that some attempt would soon be made by the British nation for the relief, as he called it, of Persia. He assured me that if one thousand men of any European nation were to make their appearance, no matter who or from what quarter, from Russia, from India, let them be French or English, they would be joined by twenty thousand Koords. They had, he said, turned their eyes on all hands for aid against the Kadjers, but in vain. All their neighbours were as bad or worse than they: they had invited the Affghauns, but that had failed; the Affghaun general was beaten and had fled*; nay, they now had neither head nor regular government themselves. Hyder Shah, of Bockhara, was a derwesh, he said, a fanatic, who rather employed himself in reading to the people from the mosques, converting Jews, and putting Sheahs to death, than in projecting schemes of conquest; so from him there was no hope. Mahomed Raheem Khan had likewise been put to the proof, but had proved quite unworthy, a traitor and a madman, in whom no confidence could be placed, and who, had he possessed but common prudence, might, ere now, have been ruler over all Khorasān. Thus their only hope rested on the Feringhees, who, they trusted, would de-

* Alluding to the defeat and flight of the wuzeer Futeh Khan, followed by his ruin and death.

stroy the Kadjers, and establish some degree of confidence and order.

Wild though these expressions might be, there is no doubt but that they tell the sentiments of a great majority of the country. The hatred of all, and particularly of the higher ranks, to the reigning family is so great, that, thoughtless and uncalculating of consequences, they would readily take part with any invader who should promise them deliverance from their present bondage; but each would do so only in the hope of advancement for himself. There is not one of these discontented chiefs, who, if circumstances gave the most distant degree of encouragement, would not aim at the chief power, and, consequently, no one would agree to be subordinate; so that, however easily they might at first be induced to assist an enemy of the reigning family, they would be still more ready to abandon him, the moment they found all hope of extraordinary personal advancement vain; or, rather, that they were likely to be reduced to a more perfect state of subordination than before.

The dangerous part of the journey commences immediately on quitting this place: there is a tract of more than ninety miles, totally desert, through which various passes lead, by which the Toorkomans ascend from their plains below, and carry their depredations into the northern provinces of Persia. It was therefore necessary that an escort of some sort should accompany us through this dangerous tract; and it was with that intention the khan proposed my going along with the Gocklan Toorkomans, who being at war with the tribe of Tuckeh, and tributary to Persia, might be depended upon to protect such persons as the frontier chieftains should place under their charge. I learnt that these Toorkomans, not caring to remain in Kallah Khan, had left it, promising to halt for me, if I should choose to join them, a little way on, towards the throat of the pass: but as our cattle had already marched twenty miles this day, and the next journey would be one of at least ninety miles without a halt, I determined to remain where I was this night to refresh both man and beast, and on the afternoon of the morrow to take my chance with

an escort of a few horsemen, which the khan was to provide for the purpose.

March 31st. The morning was dark, the clouds descended to the feet of the mountains; every thing threatened heavy rain, and I meditated continuing where I was for the day, rather than proceed on so long and desperate a journey under the disadvantage of bad weather: but for this my friend Beder Khan gave me no encouragement; on the contrary, he seemed to feel it his duty to expedite every thing for my departure; and, accordingly, about ten o'clock in the forenoon we loaded, and left the fort; but just as we cleared its gate a shower of rain and hail came down so heavy that we were nearly wet through in a moment. I never saw a more lowering aspect, and, fearing lest the baggage might become so heavy from wet as to disable the cattle by the way, I almost decided on returning; but the horsemen that formed our escort cried out that it would be most unlucky, indeed, to turn back, after having once set out; and my servants seeming to be of the same opinion, I was unwilling to wrestle with feelings of a superstitious nature, which might be turned to my disadvantage, and therefore persevered and rode on.

For about five miles the road lay in a direction nearly south-west, along the level plain, to the foot of the Dehneh Derkesh, a narrow and rugged pass in the hills that divide the great Elburz range from the smaller mountains and vallies on the north. There is a good deal of stunted wood about this pass, particularly a species of cedar, evergreen and very much tufted, the leaf of which, when rubbed, gives forth an aromatic or terebinthine smell: a quantity of thorns, brambles, and other mountain shrubs grew about the rocks, and several glens of most imposing wildness opened out as we passed along, the natural effect of the scenery being, doubtless, heightened by the driving mist, and the showers of snow and sleet, which now fell fast, allowing glimpses only of the tall fantastic cliffs to burst like giants on our view.

An irregular and winding ascent brought us to the Chummun-e-Bansh Kellah, a plain of considerable extent, which is entirely desert, and, sloping towards the west, opens into a still larger one, called, I

think, the plain of Armootullee. Desert as it now is, there are scattered throughout it many burying-grounds, whose tombstones, rising among the long sere grass, vouched, in a dreary way, for the existence of men long since passed away. Many of these tomb-stones were placed upon platforms of mason-work, curiously raised, but I could not examine them closely, for the snow fell thick about us, the wind blew hard, and it was no place to linger in; for through it lay two of the roads most frequented by the Toorkomans on their plundering excursions to Subzawar, Jahjerm, and Shahrood. We could not see the passes themselves for the mist, but the paths worn bare were easily to be traced over the plain.

We reached the large plain of Armootullee, crossing an elevated pass, through which, as we rode, the mist cleared up for a moment, and permitted us to see the hills to the north, very lofty, and covered with snow. After this we descended, keeping close to the right-hand range, to a fountain which sends its stream into the valley to the left; this, like all watering places, was one of the most dangerous spots on the whole road; for if the Tuckeh Toorkomans are abroad at all, it is here they are sure to rendezvous, because here they find forage, water, and fuel in abundance, and all travellers must pass in sight of them. Somewhat less than two months before they carried off seven or eight persons at this place, and here we found a skull, recognized by the breadth at the cheek bones for that of a Toorkoman who had fallen in a skirmish: the horsemen in company said that twelve or fourteen of them had been killed by Nujjuff Allee Khan's people in a recounter during the preceding year.

We hurried by this dangerous spot rapidly, and upon our guard, leaving on our left a valley of thirty miles broad stretching to the southward, until we entered a narrow stripe that conducted us, about seven in the evening, to Robaut-e-Aishk, a ruined caravanserai, situated on the slope of the right-hand hills; it is a dismal and a dangerous place, but as we had now travelled eight hours and a half, or about thirty-two miles, and as the snow continued to fall accompanied with a keen wind, we were glad to halt for awhile, and take shelter from the cold in one of its ruined archways.

Just before we reached this place, during a short space of clear weather, the horsemen in advance observed a parcel of wild hogs feeding in a marshy hollow upon our left; and half-a-dozen of them immediately spurring off towards them succeeded in cutting off their retreat and driving them up the slope towards us: they selected one larger than the rest, in particular, and a grand chase commenced, every one who was mounted on an unloaded beast setting off full tilt, pricking it with their spears and cutting at it with their swords, whilst the hog trotted sulkily on, seeking to join his companions, but churning with his tusks, and now and then attempting to rip with them, such as ventured to approach him too near. But neither spears nor swords made much impression upon his well defended hide, and he seemed in a fair way to escape; as he passed near me, I could not refrain from joining in the cry, and drawing a double-barrelled pistol, I rode up alongside of, and fired both at him; one of the balls missed him, the other took place; but although enfeebled by loss of blood, he still kept moving towards his morass, when an old man mounted upon a powerful grey Toorkoman horse rode up, and wheeling rapidly round, gave his steed an opportunity which it seemed fully to understand, of launching out its heels at the hog: they struck it on the side of the head, and tumbled it over, dead upon the spot. It is a common thing for these people, and still more so for the Toorkomans, to teach their horses thus to kick at, and bite their adversaries, by these means rendering them powerful auxiliaries in the day of battle.

When the hog was dead, one of the men dismounting drew his sword, and made two or three cuts at its side, but he could not divide the hair, far less penetrate the skin; some idea may be formed of the toughness of this animal's hide, from its resisting completely a sword so sharp as those used by the Persians, wielded by a very powerful man. I asked the people, why they took so much pains, and blew their horses on a long journey, for the sake of putting to death an animal, which, after all, they could not eat. "Is he not an "enemy?" replied they, "and must we not always endeavour to "to put our enemies to death, when we meet them?" I had, however,

strong suspicions, that they had their views upon its flesh, and that on their return, when no stranger should be present, the tempting though unlawful morsel would not remain untasted. Meerza Abdool Rezak who had no prejudices on the subject, and who was very hungry, lamented sorely to me the necessity of leaving it behind, and I cannot deny that I sympathized with him.

We remained two hours in the Robaut-e-Aishk, fed our horses, warmed ourselves at a fire made of dry weeds, refreshed ourselves with a little tea and bread (when again we regretted the excellent *pork* we had just abandoned), and, as the caravanserai was by no means a safe place, we again mounted, and procdeded at a brisk pace in a direction nearly W. S. W. The night had now become clear, frosty, and bitter cold, and we had occasion for all our covering, as we ascended a pass about twelve miles further on, at the top of which there was a hollow containing a quantity of stagnant water. This was the highest point we reached, for the road, after running along this marshy pool for some distance, became very rough and rocky, and descended rapidly for three hours, the water acompanying it in a small stream. By this time it was three in the morning, the moon had gone down, the road was exceedingly rugged, and the cattle, buffeted for upwards of sixteen hours by the wind and rain, began to show symptoms of weariness; so, finding ourselves in a spot where grass was plenty, we took off the loads, unbitted the horses that they might help themselves to food, and taking what loose clothes and numuds we could muster, to defend us from the bitterness of the night, we lay down to sleep.

To sleep was, however, not so easy; we were still in a dangerous place: I was startled by some noise near us within the first half-hour; and the cold was so intense that I could not again compose myself to rest; the first peep of dawn was therefore most welcome, and upon rousing the people I found them hardly able to move, almost frozen stiff, themselves and clothes congealed into a mass of hoary ice. It was six o'clock before we could get ourselves and our cattle reanimated and into motion to proceed down the glen.

The scenery around us, so different from any thing we had hitherto seen, soon arrested my attention. I had indeed remarked the grandeur of the cliffs that rose above us in the pale moon light, and regretted that it was not day: but now, as the dawn advanced, every thing emerged from the darkness with the most striking effect; stunted wood had made its appearance, and the spot where we halted was surrounded by thickets. Brambles and thorns of various sorts were matted together in abundance with other stunted bushes; and we had not gone two miles further before the road became difficult from the interlacing branches of the small trees that grew on either side; the rocks thinly sprinkled with trees, shot aloft from the glen in fine fantastic spires, and snow lay thick upon their summits, although there was none in the hollow below.

A little further down we found a large party of Gocklan Toorkomāns, who had encamped there the night before, under some overhanging rocks; their wild costumes, mingled with abundance of camels, horses, asses, and their loads, were admirably characteristic of the place, as they met the eye gathered together in groupes around a fire which threw up its small spire of thin blue smoke, or stood in advance gazing upon the travellers. Had *we* known, however, of their vicinity, we should not so readily have halted where we did, and had *they* known of it, our cattle and property would not certainly have remained unmolested: in the day time, however, there was no danger; they were Gocklans, allies, and knew the guides of Nujjuff Allee Khan, so we passed on in peace. They were very inquisitive about our business and quality, chattered at a great rate, and laughed loud and long, when one of our party in fording the little stream stumbled and fell into it.

Beyond this place our progress was much impeded by the increasing thickness of the jungle; but as we descended the cliffs became more majestic, the precipices more lofty, and the wood larger and more beautiful; the right-hand bank was particularly imposing, often presenting a wall of rock that rose almost perpendicularly from the glen to a height of six or seven hundred feet, its top crowned with shaggy wood and varied in outlines of the grandest character,

while fragments here and there half detached from the mass, looked like the buttresses or towers of some mighty fortification. There was plenty of subject for the pencil, but neither time nor weather would permit it to be used; our cattle too were far from fresh, and our resting place still very distant. The stream, the course of which we had followed all along, increased by tributaries from every ravine and glen, had now become important*; and as the road from the nature of its banks necessarily crossed and recrossed it continually, was no trifling cause of delay, and even of dread, on account of the baggage cattle, which if they had once stumbled, would, with their loads, inevitably have been swept away.

We continued in this manner threading the intricacies of the glen for about five hours, when it gradually opened; leaving upon the wooded banks of the stream patches of fine meadow land, covered with rich pasture; as we descended from the more elevated tracts, the foliage became greener, the trees, which hitherto had been brown and bare were now bursting into bud and blossom; and the scene from being one of savage desertness, became beautiful and lovely. It was a striking change in a single night; it seemed as if we had reached another world, blessed with a happier climate. Spring here claimed and enjoyed her full sway; the wood in many places lofty and magnificent, consisted of oak, beech, elm, alder; with thickets of wild cherry, and thorns, which were covered with a sheet of white and maiden blush blossoms; large luxuriant vines climbed up almost every tree, hanging in wild festoons from one to another; flowers of various kinds, primroses, violets, lilies, hyacinths, and others no less lovely though unknown, covered the ground in the richest profusion, and mingled with the soft undergrowth of green herbage. The wind, which, though the sun shone bright, still roared above, could not penetrate the thicket below, so that the air was calm and delightful. Every step we advanced increased the charms of the landscape; all that was savage became confined to the summits of the mountains, which might still occasionally be seen overhanging

* It was the commencement of the Goorgaun river.

us, rocky, bare, or thinly sprinkled with leafless trees: lower down their sides, wood increased in abundance, but was plentifully interspersed with stripes of green, where the old grass had been burnt to hasten the young growth; so that the tints were beautifully varied. But it was only at their feet and on the swelling ground, and sloping banks, which now occupied the bottom of the glen, that the foliage shot forth in all the luxuriance of spring; tender and bright in general, it was here and there varied by the darker shade of a tree more advanced, or the soft but pure white of the wild cherry blossom; and the forests, groves, clumps, copses and belts of lovely trees, intermingled with glades and natural meadows of the richest emerald, clothed and diversified the landscape in a manner which art would vainly seek to rival.

A little after noon we stopped and pastured the horses for half an hour in one of these charming meadows, and then resumed our course; the valley opening wider and increasing in beauty as we advanced: the river was now seldom seen, but its course was marked by the line of trees and groves that fringed its banks, and occasionally mingled with the rich masses of the surrounding foliage; many smaller glens poured their tribute of waters in torrents and cascades, to swell its stream, now become large and powerful, and each as it opened out gave a glimpse of some new and striking beauty; the variety was inexhaustible, the charm unceasing: but all was lonely, untenanted; and in the midst of such loveliness, the heart felt oppressed by the perfect solitude, and sighed for the sound and the sight of human beings.

It was three o'clock ere we caught the first view of the level plain below us at the mouth of the valley, and the blue smoke curling upwards from the dark tents of the Toorkomans, with their cattle feeding in the pastures, gave us the first indications of approach to man's abode; but we had still far to go, and were it not for the fear of tediousness I could still dwell with delight on the lovely scenes through which we passed, and which neither the weariness of our cattle, nor our own fatigue could prevent us from enjoying: even the rudest of the servants were loud and rapturous in their praise. We

felt, indeed, at every step, that we had quitted the brown and arid plains of Khorasān; and had reached the richer and more verdant districts that border the Caspian on the south; for there lay the plains in all variety of wood and pasture, stretching away, till lost in the blue haze of distance.

At four o'clock we reached the first Muhuleh or encampment of the Gocklan Toorkomans, and saw their numerous flocks and herds, grazing on all the hills and meadows around. Their houses at first sight appeared to be formed of reeds covered with black numuds, and they were ranged so as to form a street, through which our road led us, so that we had full opportunity to gratify our curiosity: but I should in vain attempt to describe these places, or their inhabitants; the perfect novelty of feature and costume, the wild uncouthness of the figures both male and female, that rushed forth to salute us, mingled with a variety of animals hardly more wild than they; the multitudes of children that ran screaming from every tent, and frolicked naked about, formed a scene that baffles delineation. A camp of Indians, a horde of gypsies, a group of the wildest north of Scotland or Irish fishing huts, with their inhabitants, were the recollections rapidly suggested by what we saw; there was something of all of these, and yet none of them can convey any just idea of a Toorkoman camp.

We passed through several of these wild societies, which but for the presence of our guides would not have hesitated a moment, to take violent possession of ourselves and our effects, and crossing the river (Goorgaun) for the last time, we advanced into the open plain, where, after a ride of two miles further, we met the son of Khallee Khan, the chief of this horde, who came to conduct us to his father's tent. We reached it at sun-set, having been on horseback just twelve hours from our last halting place, with the exception of the little rest at noon; but as our beasts were tired, and the road for most of the way was very bad, I do not believe the distance gone was more than thirty-six miles. Our previous march from Semulghan occupied about fifteen hours, and as we went at a brisk pace, I calculate it to be about fifty-six miles, making the whole distance from

Semulghan to Goorgaun, or rather to that part of it where the tent of Khallee Khan was pitched, about ninety-two miles, which we travelled in thirty-two hours, nearly six of which were occupied in halting. This, considering that the weather was rough, and the road bad, with the incumbrance of baggage cattle in company to boot, was no bad performance.

The khan received us with little ceremony; it is the thing of all others of which the Toorkomans have least, and after a short conversation in the open air, he showed us to the tent, or house in which guests were received and lodged, where we seated ourselves, along with a plentiful company who had flocked together to gratify their curiosity, by staring at the strangers. We were agreeably disappointed by the tent, for it was by no means deficient either in space or in comfort, but I have described its construction in another place. When we entered it there were on one side women engaged in working at looms, making carpets, I believe, but they soon quitted the tent; this did not proceed, however, from any dislike to being seen, for they made no scruple at showing themselves freely, and the khan's mother, a very old looking person, with long silver hair, a death-like yellow countenance, and glassy eyes, came out and laying hands upon me, bade me welcome in her son's name. I was not sorry when she retreated. A variety of domestic apparatus was removed from the quarter opposite the door, where a white numud was spread above that which usually covers the floor; on this our beds were spread, and on this we seated ourselves.

Soon after we arrived, dinner was brought, and the khan's eldest son came to eat it with us; it was a coarse and simple meal enough, both in manner and in substance; the cloth spread before us was of coarse woollen, which bore the marks of having seen mighty service*,

* Many of the eastern nations, particularly the Arabs, the wandering tribes of Persia, and even the stationary population of that country, have a strong superstitious aversion to washing the cloth which is spread before them (like a table cloth) at meals — it is reckoned unlucky, and as many fragments of every meal are wrapt up in it, when the dishes are removed, not to speak of the stains occasioned by accidents, some idea may be formed of the greasy, filthy condition, to which such a cloth in a hospitable house in time attains.

on this a cake of coarse bread, an inch and a half thick, was placed before each person, and a mess of boiled rice, with a small quantity of meat in the fashion of a pillau, but far, far from approaching that respectable dish either in quality or flavour, was set in the middle; we all fell upon this most greedily; we, ravenous from long fasting, and little caring with what our cravings might be satisfied, the others, little accustomed to better fare, esteeming it a sort of feast. Our drink was butter milk and water, seasoned with a little salt.

After our meal, we fain would have been left to our repose, but no such comfort awaited us; the tent was thronged with people, among whom there appeared to be little or no distinction of ranks: every one came in, and sat himself down where he could, without in the least disturbing the others, and even when the khan himself made his entry, it was done with so little noise, that we did not know of his coming, till I chanced to see him seated at my elbow; no one rose to receive him, nor was there the least bustle created, as is always the case when a man of consequence enters a Persian assembly. Even his son appeared to pay him but small attention, although the patriarchal authority is that to which all rude tribes pay most deference. The only act of common courtesy I observed on the youth's part, was that of handing his father a dish of tea, which I had presented to him, and he did not rise from his seat any more than the rest.

A while passed in conversation, chiefly in the Toorkee language, or that of Koordistan (which is a mixture of Koordish, Toorkee, and Persian), of which I could understand but very little, and then the khan asking me if I should like to hear some music, two men were introduced, each carrying a musical instrument; one of them resembled what I have seen in India called a *Bean*, and consisted of two hemispheres of gourds or hollow wood covered with skin, and united by a bar of wood, along which a string passed from one end to the other, the gourds acting as sounding boards; the performer upon this, who also sung, used it like a tambourine to beat time. The other was a stringed instrument of the kind called tarr, upon which the performer thrummed not disagreeably.

They sung several airs, which consisted of but a few words set to simple notes, and the measure was always closed by a single line or chorus that died away in a very sweet and singular cadence, infinitely more agreeable than any music I ever heard in Persia, for the singer did not strain his voice in the way usual in that country, but taught it most curiously to follow the inflections of the tarr, imitating the sound and undulations of the wire, in a manner resembling the low warblings of an Eolian harp; and he continued this for an almost incredible time, without drawing breath. If, however, he did not roar like the Persians, he compensated for it in some sort, by making the most violent contortions of body, throwing himself into attitudes the most extravagant, shaking his head most violently, and rolling about upon his seat, until his sides nearly touched the ground. These movements appeared to proceed from a degree of ecstasy inspired by the music, and which affected every one in the assembly more or less, for at every close some or other of them expressed their delight in a very audible and even boisterous manner; but I could obtain no satisfactory explanation of the songs which excited this emotion.

This concert continued until past twelve at night, when observing no symptoms of any intention to move, I hinted, through the medium of a Persian who was near me, that travellers who had journeyed so far, might be supposed to desire repose; upon this the music was dismissed, but no one else appeared inclined to leave us, curiosity was insatiable, and the company continued still to gaze, make their remarks, and discuss their opinions, in the most audible manner before our very faces. When after a tedious while, the greater part of the assembly had withdrawn, I found that so far from being the only guests, and having the tent to ourselves, it was intended that we should share it with five or six others, and among them a Yamoot, who having been taken prisoner in an attempt at stealing from the horde, was detained, ironed and bound, until his tribe should decide his fate, by either sending an adequate ransom for his release, or by refusing it, assent to his death. This was no agreeable addition to our party for the night; but as there was no avoiding it, we spread our bed-clothes and retired to rest.

CHAP. XXIV.

TOORKOMĀN DOGS. — THE BEST WATCHES OF THE NIGHT. — A TOORKOMAN CAMP IN THE MORNING. — THE CAMP BEING ABOUT TO MOVE, THE AUTHOR IS FORCED TO CONTINUE HIS JOURNEY. — THE KHAN WISHES TO EXCHANGE A HORSE FOR THE AUTHOR'S SWORD. — SINGULAR TRAIT OF FEELING IN A KOORDISH HORSEMAN. — GUIDED BY THE KHAN'S SON TO THE VILLAGE OF PISSERUC. — ROAD THROUGH RICH MEADOWS AND BEAUTIFUL SCENERY. — PASS HYDRABAD, A VILLAGE DESTROYED BY THE TUCKEH TOORKOMĀNS. — TRACES OF FORMER POPULATION. — CURIOSITY OF THE VILLAGERS. — DINE WITH ISMAEL KHAN, THE HAKIM OF PISSERUC. — VISIT THE RUINS OF THE ANCIENT JORJAUN. — GOOMBUZ-E-CAOOS — FURTHER TRACES OF FORMER POPULATION. — LEAVE PISSERUC, AND TRAVEL THROUGH RICH SCENERY AND DEEP FORESTS, TO FINDERISK. — PEECHUCH MUHULEH. — UNCIVILIZED STATE OF THE PEASANTRY. — LEAVE PEECHUCH MUHULEH BY THE LOWER ROAD, LEADING THROUGH THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE YAMOOT TOORKOMANS. — REACH ASTRABAD. — OBSERVATIONS UPON THE CONDITIONS OF THE PLAINS OF GOORGAUN AND ASTRABAD.

APRIL 2d. Weariness does not always insure sleep, and so I found it this night; the excitation experienced during the whole preceding day, the novelty of situation, nay, the inordinate time for which we were detained from repose by the pertinacious curiosity of our hosts, joined to the howling of dogs, the bleating of sheep, and the lowing of cattle in the inclosures around, prevented me from sleeping till near daylight. I would fain have quitted the tent to take a quieting stroll in the refreshing breeze without, but I found that egress as well as entrance was entirely prevented (unless at the expence of wakening some one of the inmates of the tent) by the huge and wary dogs that kept watch without: the moment any one stirred, they growled a warning note, and any attempt at quitting the tent would have been forcibly resisted by these faithful but savage guards. I found this to be the case even after the night was done, for taking a short turn in the morning, and attempting to pass the boundary ditch of the camp, I was attacked by five or six of these powerful

animals, which set open mouthed upon me; and badly enough I should have fared, had not a very old and wrinkled hag slowly arisen from behind a heap of earth, where she had been arranging her few grizzled hairs, and used her influence most powerfully with the assailants, who retreated growling a surly displeasure.

A strange scene we gazed upon when the early morning induced us to arise and go forth; the camp, a square, in the south face of which our tent formed the centre, surrounded a space of perhaps a hundred and fifty paces long by a hundred wide; and this was filled with horses before their owners' doors, camels standing or kneeling down in circles at their food, with grotesque figures in the Toorkoman costume, all hurrying to and fro, preparing for a march; women in the picturesque head dresses which have been already described, sitting at the tent doors, occupied in their various household duties, arranging their habiliments, or bringing water from the river, and surrounded by groups of almost naked children; sheep and cattle of all sorts pouring out of their inclosures and making the best of their way to the pastures, followed or accompanied by shouting herds and barking dogs in abundance. If there was nothing imposing from its brilliancy, the scene still pleased from its animation, and interested by its unwonted peculiarity; a piercing cold wind, however, as well as the curiosity of the people, and the danger of incurring their suspicions, prevented me from using either pencil or instruments here.

I found, too, that though I should have been glad to remain among these people for a day or two longer, to have become better acquainted with the economy of a Toorkoman camp, under circumstances so favourable, even at the price of suffering considerable inconvenience, yet that it would be very difficult to effect it. My establishment was by no means small, and as we were entertained by these people on the footing of guests, paying nothing even for the keep of our servants and horses, I should have considered it as highly improper to remain chargeable to my entertainers a moment longer than necessary. In truth, it clearly appeared, from the slight preparation which had been made, that it never was intended we should

remain more than one night; there was no kind of accommodation for my cattle, which had stood chained under a guard at the door all night, without either grass, or straw; nor had they after their long journey, got any thing to eat except a little barley. We also discovered that forage and pasture having become scarce in the neighbourhood, the camp was to be removed this day to a fresh spot; so that I found it would be necessary to conclude upon marching without delay, at least as far as the village Pisseruc, which was distant about twelve miles.

We had this morning a proof of the passion which these people have for valuable arms: the khan, while examining my guns, pistols, and other accoutrements, paid particular attention to the sword I wore, which was a highly watered blade, made at Dehlee, but which originally had not cost more than twenty rupees; he examined it over and over, poising it and wielding it, and at last enquired if I would dispose of it, offering in exchange a very nice horse, which I had admired just before. He pressed this bargain closely, but his brother, I believe, remonstrated against it, for they talked long apart: at last it was decided among them, that if I chose to give a hundred rupees, and the sword, the horse, and his furniture should be mine. I had previously had occasion to know that this animal was valued at three hundred and fifty rupees in the camp; so that the khan was willing to part with that which was worth three hundred and fifty rupees for about a third of the money. I did not accept his offer, because, in the first place, I really had more horses than I required, and not only was their entertainment expensive, but the risk of carrying them through a wet and swampy country like the Mazunderan, intersected by deep and rapid rivers, without either bridges or boats, was very great; in the second place, I had a particular value for my sword, and money was so scarce, that I could not conveniently part with it; but the disappointment to him was great, and I think had his family permitted him, he would have had the sword at any rate.

I had indeed a narrow escape from bargains in horse-flesh at this time. One of the horsemen who accompanied me from Semul-

ghān, an old man with a white beard, but a keen eye, and a fresh, vigorous complexion, rode a chesnut horse, which though small, had more strength, beauty, and action, than are often met with together in the same animal, and which was so well trained and good-tempered, that it might have been depended upon under any emergency. I took a great fancy for this horse, and even went so far as to ask him what he would take for it. For some time he refused to sell it, without giving any reason; but upon being pressed, he said, that not many months before, having followed the khan to repel an attack of the Toorkomans, his son who rode the horse in question was speared by one of the enemy, upon its back; the horse bore him off, but he died immediately, and the father swore he never would part with it. I had not a word more to say; there was no pressing the matter further, and it was refreshing to find among so much selfishness and disgusting vice, one trait of kind and natural feeling.

We breakfasted lightly enough upon a little bread and *māss* (sour curd) to which, at my request, was added a little fresh butter and sweet milk. It is strange, that although milk and all the produce of a dairy abounds in the camps of these people, they seldom use any of it as food, except butter-milk mixed with water; mass, or sour curd, which they also press and dry to mix with water, when the fresh is scarce, and cheese, which is extremely poor and bad; of the quantity of rich butter which is made, they seldom use any, except occasionally in a pillaw, but keep the whole for sale in the villages around.

After our sober meal we mounted and left the camp, accompanied on our way by a son of our host, who was to serve as guide to the next stage, a very necessary piece of attention in so devious a country. The path lay through fields and natural meadows of the richest verdure, and among groves of oak clothed in their young leaves of the most delicate hues; broken into glades and lawns like velvet. On our left were mountains of the noblest forms, covered with wood, or diversified with rocks, glens, and vallies, and green sunny slopes, speckled with scattered trees; on our right were the boundless plains stretching away to the north

and north-west, all rich with verdure, and covered with Gocklan encampments, whose smoke arose in the mid-day sun, and whose flocks and herds were scattered widely over the surrounding pastures. A more perfectly pastoral, peaceful, and delicious scene could not be imagined; and it was melancholy to reflect, that this, the fairest spot of the Persian dominions, instead of supporting a rich and happy peasantry, should be usurped and retained by hordes of lawless robbers, who, incapable themselves of appreciating the blessings they have seized, prevent all others from turning them to better account, commit outrages of all kinds upon their neighbours, and make a trade of plundering both property and person. Were any proof of the weakness and misrule of the Persian government required, in addition to those that everywhere met the traveller's eye, a view of the state of this country would furnish a most conclusive one.

There exists between these tribes and the villages nearest the plains, which they occupy, a kind of conventional intercourse, the result, doubtless, of mutual necessity, by which the former find a sale for their superfluous produce, and supply the latter with various articles of which they stand in need; as butter, cheese, carpets, numuds, horses, camels, and cattle of all sorts; and they take in return the few articles they require; but the whole traffic is small, and forms no compensation to the country for their occupation of such a district.

At a short distance from the camp we passed the ruins of some huts, which were pointed out to us as those of a Gocklan settlement called Hyderabad, which had been destroyed by a party of the Tuckeh tribe, while we were at Shahrood in January, the report of which had occasioned us so much alarm. A little more than half way, in traversing a grove of oak, we found a large square inclosure, consisting of a ruinous wall and ditch, which had once been the chief strong hold of a tribe of Eels called Gereilee, that inhabited these parts, but were expelled from it, and removed by the present king a few years ago: we remarked the traces of a bazar, and several buildings of solid fabric, but all had been completely destroyed. On every side, were to be seen tuppehs (or little mounts), the sites of former villages, with which this lovely country once was

covered; and we frequently passed through the remains of gardens that had belonged to them, where the vines and the orange trees were still struggling among the weeds and grass, that had usurped their place. As we approached the village, I stopped for awhile to sketch the varied and lovely landscape before me, and upon entering found that we had been put in possession of a very decent lodging in the dewan khaneh of Ismael Khan, the Hākim of the district, now residing at Pisseruc.

We had frequent occasion in the course of this day to remark with interest the extreme contrast in every particular between the country we had reached, and that we had left behind; and in arriving at Pisseruc, the first village we had seen below the hills, it was not less striking: instead of the dull mud walls and flat mud roofs, corresponding exactly with the colour of the ground, to which we had been so long accustomed, we found here every thing made of wood, and surrounded by a sheet of cheerful varied green. The houses were constructed of posts planted in the ground, wattled and plastered with mud; or of framed walls, either finished in the same way, or with slabs on the outside and clay within; the roofs were raised on rafters and thatched with rice straw, over a matting of reeds. Lofty stages here and there were to be seen, raised high on posts, and thatched in the same manner, serving as store rooms to protect the corn or cotton which they contain, from the depredations of animals. Instead of a wall to protect the place, a deep ditch had been dug, the banks of which were overgrown with brambles, and through which a stream of water had been turned, while a hedge of reeds matted together with creeping thorns, constructed in the inside, served to render the defence more perfect, and it was, indeed, impenetrable to cavalry. Almost every house had some defence of this kind, and instead of being huddled together into narrow filthy lanes, they were built at a distance from one another, each surrounded by its own bit of ground, and shrouded among lofty trees. The gates, portals and all, were constructed of wood, and a wooden bridge was thrown across the ditch: the very domestic implements, instead of being formed of earthenware, or metal, were here made of wood. We saw trays, platters, calleeoons, cups, and bowls of this material; the

floors were of plank, split trees were laid down wherever an absence of moisture was required; the fewel consisted of large logs of wood, and every thing proclaimed, that we were in the " land of the forest and the flood."

Of the latter fact, with its inconveniences, we had experienced sufficient proofs even already; several streams, feeders of the Goorgaun, had impeded and even endangered our cattle, the roads in many places were deep and miry, and the approaches of the village were all one mass of mud, trampled into thousands of holes by the feet of cattle in their going out to pasture in the morning, and returning at night. As these animals move at a regular pace, the ruts or holes which they have occasioned, assume a degree of regularity also, and run *across* the road in alternate ridges of hardened, and hollows of soft mud, like the furrows of a ploughed field, and the foot of every animal, as it makes a step, strides over, or slips down from the firm ridges, thus sinking into the miry hollows. This appearance is to be remarked in all roads and alleys, to a considerable distance round every village, as well as in the spaces which divide the houses, and the lanes between the inclosures; and the inconvenience increases to such a degree in rainy weather, that it is hardly possible to move out at all.

I found the villagers at least as full of curiosity as the Toorkomans, hundreds crowded around the open apartment in which I sat; and whenever I attempted to take a sketch, they pressed close upon me to see what I was about, so that privacy was out of all question. But their wonder and curiosity was unmixed with insolence; and although they appeared to be fully more wild and uncivilized than the inhabitants of Khorasān, they were certainly less mischievous and ill-disposed; they crowded forward most unceremoniously, filling my chamber at all times, and would sit down upon their heels at a little distance, staring wildly, and occasionally laughing one to another; but it was mere gaping wonder, for when desired to retire, they obeyed at once, although perhaps it was but to return again as soon as they dared. One old man, who seemed to be a sort of oracle among them, having seen me sketching, turned to his fellows and gravely told them, that by thus taking the likeness of all that pleased me,

I was, in fact, taking possession of the country; and so far was this idea from being disagreable, or alarming, that he declared he would leave the service of the khan, and follow me wherever I might go; nay, he became so fond of me, that he solicited permission to sleep beside my couch.

I did not see the khan himself until the hour of dinner, when I went and found him seated with several other persons in his dewan khaneh. He received me very civilly, and appeared to be rather a well meaning person, though extremely ignorant of the world; and very much disposed to affect airs of greatness which sat but ill upon him. There were at least twenty persons present at dinner, which was a comfortable meal; a copper tray containing a dish of pillaw, a stew of meat, a small saucer of vegetables and truffles stewed in milk, with a bowl of sherbet, was placed before me; another of the same, but of larger dimensions was allotted to the khan and the meerza; and to each pair of the other guests, a dish of rice, some meat or stew, with a bowl of butter-milk and water for sherbet: every one seemed inclined to do honor to the khan's hospitality, and upon the pronunciation of the usual "Bismillah*," all fell to voraciously. The room was spacious, and open all round except at the upper end; the floor of clay raised, in the upper end of which a fire place had been constructed, and kept constantly filled with blazing logs, which served for light as well as heat: the latter was not much required indeed; and the former object was aided by a large lamp or vase full of grease, in which a large wick was burning, which was guarded from the action of the wind, by a circular shade of thin muslin.

April 3d. I halted here this day for the sake of the cattle, and took the opportunity to visit the ruins of the ancient city of Jorjaun, together with a very singular and lofty tower, called by the people of the country Goombuz-e-Caoos, which were stated to be about two fursungs distant; the latter, indeed, was to be seen from the village rising above the intervening forests.

* The Persians, as well as most Mahometans, are scrupulous in asking a blessing before meals; by pronouncing the "Bismillah," that is, "In the name of God, the most powerful and most merciful."

We rode for some miles through the most luxuriant pastures intermingled with groves of oak, resembling the scenery of a noble park, among which were scattered the encampments of the Gocklans with their numerous flocks and herds; and we could hardly get our hungry steeds along, so much they longed to feed on the rich green grass in which we rode, often up to the saddle girth. The remainder of the ride was in the open plain, which was all equally covered with verdure; but the great height of the tower deceived the eye so much, that what we believed to be distant but a very few miles, proved to be ten at least: we were sufficiently rewarded, however, for our ride by a view of the remarkable building to which it conducted us.

The Goombuz-e-Caoos is a circular hollow tower, built upon an elevated mound of earth, and rising to a height which cannot, I think, be less than a hundred and fifty feet from its base; the interior diameter, taken a little above the level of the mound, is about ten paces; the walls are about ten feet thick, and it required fifty-two paces to go round them externally. The diameter of the tower gradually diminishes towards the top, so as to give the walls a slight degree of slope; and though circular within, they are divided externally into ten salient and recentering angles, like the mosque at Bostam, to which, indeed, the tower, though upon a far greater scale, bore a strong resemblance; its top, however, was different being a lofty and pointed cone. Its appearance within is striking; for there evidently never was either staircase, or division, in any part of it; so that the circular walls rise smooth, and without break to the very top of the cone, in which a single window gives light to the whole. It has been built of the finest fire-baked bricks, large, square, and about two inches and a half thick, with which also, placed flat, the roof has been covered; and so well have they stood, that not above one or two of the whole have been yet displaced. The whole is cemented with lime, and of the most excellent masonry; indeed, except for about twelve feet above the foundation, the whole building is almost as perfect as the day it was finished; but just to that height, the bricks have been picked out by force, to a considerable depth, as if with an intention to undermine it; but the

tower still stands secure, and apparently proof against the effects of time.

The tradition in the country relative to this partial dilapidation is as follows. They say that a certain king marching with his army in these plains, was asked by his officers where he would choose to halt at night; the tower still at a distance being in view, the king said that he should encamp at the foot of that tower, and not nearer. The deception of distance was so great, that the journey proved a very long and fatiguing one, and the king in anger swore the tower should never be the means of deceiving travellers again; so he ordered his miners to pull it down and destroy it. By the time, however, that they had proceeded so far as to effect the injury that still appears, the troops had encamped all around it, and the engineers desired to know his majesty's pleasure as to the quarter towards which they should cause the tower to fall: but the troops, and their tents and baggage swarmed on all sides, nor could they throw down the tower without destroying multitudes; so the monarch took further thought, and ordered them to let it remain standing, in consideration of his army.

The architecture and style of this tower agrees exactly with that of the buildings described at Semnoon, Damghān, Bostam, &c. and appears, like them, to be of Arabic origin; there was a belt of Arabic characters around it, about thirty feet from the bottom, and another just below the roof; but they were so much defaced, or so difficult to be read, that the meerza who was with me, though a good Arabic scholar, could make nothing of them; and although certain numerals could be traced that evidently referred to a date, they were too imperfect to lead to any conclusion.

The hillock upon which this tower stands appeared to have been formerly surrounded by a broad channel for water; and near it are several hillocks of a similar description, at this time so completely covered with grass and herbage, that it is impossible to guess at what they may have been; probably the whole formed a part of the old city of Jorjaun, in which the tower is supposed to have been situated; a deep hollow, which is close to it, appears to have been a former

bed of the river Goorgaun, which now runs not far distant, and on the banks of which, tradition tells, that the tower was situated. Around the hillock might be seen unequal mounds and hollows, said to be the ruins of Jorjaun, but from all I could see or learn, they consisted of nothing more than earth mingled with broken bricks and pottery, like the ruins of all other ancient eastern towns. It would have been impossible, however, to have taken even a view of all the mounds and other vestiges of this ancient city, far less to have examined them with any degree of minuteness, without devoting to the task a considerable number of days; and this the state of the country entirely forbade, for parties of the Yamoot and Tuckeh Toorkomans are constantly in the practice of frequenting the ruins in the course of their predatory excursions against the Gocklans; and we had been strongly advised against the degree of exposure we had already run, so that I was forced to content myself with what information I could pick up about the matter from the people of the country, which amounted to very little. That the vestiges of a large city do exist here is certain; and also that they are much more easily to be traced in the fall of the year, when the grass, which at this time covered them, is dried up or devoured; but I could not find that a single building, or fragment of a building, besides the Goombuz-e-Caoos, was any where to be seen; certainly, there was nothing of any considerable height above the earth, as from the elevated station of the Goombuz we must have observed it in the level plain around.

We had abundant evidence during our ride this day, had such additional proof been required, that this district had once been thickly peopled; for we saw the sites of numerous villages, and plenty of gardens, all overrun with grass; and I learned that, even as late as the reign of Nadir, the whole was well inhabited, and thickly studded with towns and villages, which the Toorkomans, by their frequent incursions, have gradually destroyed. Not far from Jorjaun, a ruined square building, with numerous bastions, was pointed out to us as the seat of the Hadjillars, a powerful tribe who possessed this part of the district, but who had at last been driven from it to Pisseruc,

by the persecutions of their inveterate enemies. We remarked several other evidences of human industry during this ride, and, among others, our road led for several miles along an elevated mound, which might have been a wall, but which rather resembled the embankment of a canal; and there were several remains of a similar description in other parts of the plain.*

On our way home we overtook a Toorkoman sportsman, who had been fortunate enough to kill two fine cock pheasants, a bird which abounds in the woods of this country. He was hunting them with dogs, which point the game, and, stealing upon it, catch it if they can; if not, the sportsman endeavours to shoot it, in which he very seldom succeeds if it takes wing. We saw and heard a number of pheasants during our ride; they are called by the natives *kara goul.*

April 4th. We had a little difficulty this morning about guides, without whom none can venture to travel in so intricate a country. The first part of our ride being among a succession of beautiful groves and meadows, was delightful, the cuckoo singing and the doves cooing as we passed along, enjoying the delicious freshness of the still morning air. The quiet beauty of one valley particularly arrested my attention; the feathery wooding of the hills, the rich pastures at their feet, with the clear stream winding among them, and the sheep and cows roaming over it, with here and there a light blue smoke curling upwards, all reminded me of the happiest vales of our own lovely land, and I could fain have believed that the people were happy as their country was fair; but the illusion could not last, on every side was evidence to the contrary, and the frequent occurrence of abandoned fields and ruined gardens, where the fruit-trees and vines were struggling with the weeds, pressed on

* It is said that this rich tract was once separated from the desert beyond it, and protected from the incursions of the Tartar tribes by a wall of great strength, which ran from the mountains to the sea. I believe, however, this great work is attributed to some of the fabulous kings, and is probably fabulous itself. The mound or embankment mentioned in the text was said, in the country, to have some reference to this ancient wall.

my mind the misery and desolation which it must too often have witnessed.

After a while we plunged into the deep forests, where the path was intricate and bad, the underwood so close and tangled that the baggage cattle could hardly pass along, and the ground so moist, and even swampy, that the horses sunk up to the girths, and the loaded beasts could scarcely get through at all. We had enjoyed several days of fine weather, so that in other parts the roads were tolerable; but in these deep jungles where the sun never penetrates and the moisture never is exhaled, the ground is always soft and swampy, and in heavy rains it becomes quite impassable. There was, I understood, another road which passes near the open plains, and which would not only have been better but nearer, but it was reported so dangerous, from the close vicinity of the wandering tribes, that the khan directed his guide to carry us by the more difficult but safer route through the forest. In truth, the roads in and about the village Finderisk, which we could in no way have avoided, were worse than in any other place, and the cattle sunk so far, and struggled so severely in the deep stiff mud for the last mile, that I thought more than once we should have lost some of them, and we formed a terrible anticipation of the travelling to be expected in Mazunderan, where, as we were informed for our comfort, the roads were even worse than here. We were ten hours upon the march, but as we could only travel slowly, I did not estimate the distance between Pisseruc and Finderisk at more than thirty miles.

The village of Finderisk boasts more of its antiquity than of its size, and has been celebrated as the birth-place of a sage contemporary with Shah Abbas, named Moollah Abool Caussim. It is the chief village of the ballook in which Pisseruc, our last stage, is situated; and no part of this ballook pays any thing to the king, but it keeps up a certain number of horsemen ready to act against the Toorkomans, from whose depredations, in common with the whole country, it has suffered most severely. The governor, Ismael Khan, however, extorts from the people to a considerable amount, both in

money and goods. Rice is the chief produce of this ballook, but a little barley and wheat are also cultivated.

April 5th. We quitted Finderisk by a most miry path, passing through several patches of jungle and fields deep in mud; and we could not restrain our surprize that the villagers, for their own sakes, should not establish some kind of more passable road. We only marched about twelve miles, through a country little varying from that of yesterday, to Peechuck Muhuleh, a large village, and chief of another ballook, under the government of Nuckud Allee Khan, whose brother received and accommodated us very comfortably. We found ourselves, however, still very unpleasantly exposed to the intrusion of the inhabitants, who, thinking of nothing but the gratification of their own curiosity, constantly pressed in upon me, nor was it till late in the day that I could retire to rest.

Certainly the men of this district approached more nearly to the condition of savage nature than any I had seen in Persia. They did not appear to have any idea of that respect for rank which other Persians so implicitly yield; and few of them having travelled out of their own district, they were, for the most part, totally uninformed of all things beyond it: even Meerza Saduck, the governor's brother, was profoundly ignorant; he had never seen an astrolabe, nor did he know the use of it, even as used among his countrymen; but he and his companions gazed with stupid wonder at my apparatus for observing with, as well as my writing, and were mightily astonished that *they* could not understand what I had traced on the paper.

April 6th. As the Yamoots (to whose range of country we had now approached) are nominally at least, tributaries of the Persian government, and, as such, it was presumable they would not be inclined to practise open violence upon persons travelling under its protection, we resolved to quit the upper road, leading through jungle, villages, and mud, and to take that by the plains, which, leading through some of the Yamoot camps, would give us an opportunity to see more of that singular people. It was also proposed that, under the guidance and protection of a person travelling that

way, we should visit and sleep at the tent of Nadir Khan, one of their chiefs, whose friend our guide professed to be, and whose camp was not more than ten or twelve miles from Astrabad. We therefore sent our baggage forward to Astrabad direct, by the upper road, with a note to Mustapha Khan, the prince's naib, requesting that he would direct his servants to assist ours in procuring suitable lodgings for us.

Our path led through a country entirely resembling that which we had for some days past been accustomed to, until leaving the more wooded tracts, we entered the boundless expanse of verdure which covers the open plain. There is no describing the beauty and richness of these pastures, all is like velvet, soft and smooth, varying only in the height, not in the thickness of the sward. Numerous camps of the Toorkomans spotted it with their black tents, in parties of fifty, sixty, or a hundred together, in every direction. We halted at several of these, and refreshed ourselves with butter milk and bread; in one particularly, where our guide had some business, we remained for near two hours, and I had an opportunity of sketching several of the figures both of men and of women, in their peculiar costumes, with some of the tents and various other things. The women neither retired nor moved while we staid, but continued at their several occupations, and ever and anon stealing a look of much curiosity at the strangers; nay, some of the elder ones came up and examined very inquisitively ourselves, and our equipments. But it was our arms that attracted most observation, and my sword, pistols, and gun, were so often called for and earnestly examined, that I began to fear the consequences of a breach on their part of the last commandment.

When our guide had finished his business, we urged him to proceed towards the camp of Nadir Khan; but we found, that having made a convenience of us, in availing himself of our company so far, he not only did not *now* intend, but never *had* intended proceeding to this chieftain's tents; nay, he now informed us that he did not actually dare to go there, because, having purchased or received certain cows that had been stolen from the people of that camp, he feared

they would detain his horse and furniture, nay his person until the loss should be made good. He, however, consented to guide us for a certain distance, and we advanced till close to Āk Kallah (or the white fortress), a ruined fort near which the tents of Nadir Khan were situated, but I had by this time heard enough to convince me, that it would be more than imprudent to trust ourselves and our cattle, unintroduced and unprotected, to the dubious hospitality of a Toorkoman chief, and therefore I determined to pursue my way at once to Astrabad.

Around Āk Kallah there were plenty of hillocks and mounds, certainly the remains of former forts and villages; but the green and rank vegetation had quite usurped the place of population. Āk Kallah itself appeared to have been an extensive square strong hold, the walls and bastions of which were easily to be traced by heaps of mud and bricks; but no fragment remained, the examination of which could lead to any interesting result, nor could I learn that any such existed in its vicinity.

From this place we passed through a great deal of low and swampy ground, very dangerous without a guide; and, in fact, we lost our way several times while up to the girths in water, nor did we recover it without much risk and great difficulty. As we left the plain, the country decreased in beauty, the jungles became more intricate, the pasture more rank and reedy, and a very dense thicket of wild pomegranates, brambles, and other thorny bushes, covered the ground up to the very walls of Astrabad, which we reached a little after sunset, wearied and spent. Our troubles for the night were not however ended with our arrival, for after wandering near an hour through the town, in search of our people, we found them well lodged indeed; but not expecting us, they had prepared nothing for us to eat, so that we were forced to retire hungry and supperless to bed.

Thus, then, we reached Astrabad, journeying through a country which for beauty and richness I have seldom seen equalled, and never surpassed. The former I have made some attempts to describe; of the latter some idea may be formed when it is stated on the authority of all those of the country with whom I conversed on the

subject, that the wandering tribes, whose culture it may be presumed is not of the best description, reap full forty and fifty returns for their seed. These, however, have their full choice of the plains; the villagers are more circumscribed in their range; they cannot venture to cultivate in the open plains, or far from their villages in any direction, consequently their land is more exhausted, and the return is less, although every where it is abundant.

But what paradise is perfect? This splendid country is afflicted by the heavy calamities of disease, and constant insecurity. The quantity of rain that falls in the season, and which stagnates in the deep forests, turning them often into impassable morasses, becomes putrid from the quantity of decayed vegetable matter it receives, and in the heats of summer and autumn exhales a most pestilential vapour. The wandering tribes fly from the influence of this, beyond the Goorgaun, or the Attruck, where they prefer living on the verge of the burning sand, and carrying from the distant river the water required for each day's consumption, to the least exposure to these noxious effluvia. But the inhabitants of the village have no such resource; those, indeed, who can afford it, retire from the intense heats of summer to their Yeilāks* in the mountains; but the great majority continue exposed to all these inconveniencies, and suffer severely from sickness. The chief diseases they are subject to, are said to be fevers, both intermittent and putrid (as I judge from the description given of them), dropsies, and what the inhabitants call *Baud*†; that is, all ailments which they attribute to the effects of cold, or of unwholesome air, as rheumatic pains of all kinds, palsies, &c. Sore eyes, too, are as common here as in other parts of Persia. If, however, a judgment were to be formed from the appearance of the people, I should not have taken them to be a very unhealthy race; they have not, indeed, the ruddy brown hue of the Koords and Khorasānees, but they were, for the most part, stout and athletic, and many of them exceedingly dark.

* A Turkish word signifying a cool residence for the summer months.

† Baud literally signifies *wind*, and from thence the effects of wind.

But the heaviest curse they labour under, is their vicinity to the barbarous tribes to whom the fertility of their country has been a lure, that has drawn down upon them rapine, misery, and ruin: the frontier has at all times been exposed to invasions of the most terrible nature, and for many years past it has been the scene of constant predatory warfare, in which of course, those who possessed property and fixed habitations, suffered the most: there is not a village on the skirts of the hills that has not been frequently surprised and plundered; thousands of the inhabitants belonging to Pisseruc, Finderisk, Peechuck Muhuleh, and other villages in the same line, have been killed and made captives, and all those more exposed to the attacks of their enemies have been gradually abandoned, the few remaining inhabitants retiring to the mountains: even Finderisk itself, though considerably removed from the plains, and tolerably well secured against surprize, was so much harassed by the attacks of Khaujeh Kashgāree (the celebrated Eeshān), and his Toorkoman bands, that its inhabitants seeing no chance of safety, abandoned it, and retired to the hills; and it is only of late, since the death of that active leader, and the consequent diminution in the frequency and violence of their attacks, that the village has been re-inhabited.

Persia, to live secure from internal and external foes requires the control of a warlike and determined sovereign; the sword must be ever in his hand to protect or to punish. A weak or pacific king, however good his disposition, has always brought distress and ruin on the country. The restless lust of conquest, and atrocious cruelty of Nadir Shah, or the jealous activity and grinding cupidity of Aga Mahomed Khan, produced less of public and private misery than the supine meekness of the weak but rather amiable Shah Hoossain; and if the country has not suffered so severely under the avarice and inefficient sway of the present monarch, it is more to be attributed to the political situation or the weakness of his neighbours, than to the wisdom of his councils, or the decision of his character.

I now take leave of my readers for the present: it has been announced in the preface, that another volume will soon be published, containing the sequel of this journey along the banks of the Caspian sea, through the provinces of Mazunderān and Gheelān; to that I must refer those who have had the patience to follow me thus far, for all the information which was collected regarding these provinces, so different from the rest of Persia, as well as that which relates to the city of Astrabād, to which we had thus safely arrived.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

AFFAIRS OF THE PERSIAN GULF, AND CAUSES OF THE MISSION TO PERSIA.

RESOLUTION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SEND A MISSION TO THE COURT AT TEHRĀN. — STATE OF THE PERSIAN GULF. — PIRATES — WHO. — THEIR INDISCRIMINATE MASSACRE OF THEIR PRISONERS. — THEIR DARING COURAGE. — AN EXPEDITION SENT AGAINST THEM IN 1810. — ANOTHER IN 1819. — ITS OPERATIONS. — TREATIES MADE WITH THE PIRATICAL TRIBES. — TROOPS STATIONED AT RAUS-UL-KHYMAH. — REMOVED TO DARISTAN, IN THE ISLAND OF KISHMEE, AND FINALLY TO A POINT NEAR THE TOWN OF KISHMEE. — EXPEDITION AGAINST THE TRIBE OF BEN-I-BOO ALLEE ARABS, NOV. 1820. — ITS DISASTROUS ISSUE. — ANOTHER SENT TO REPAIR THIS MISFORTUNE, JAN. 1821. — EXTRACTS FROM AN OFFICER'S MSS. JOURNAL. — NIGHT ATTACK UPON THE BRITISH POSITION NEAR SOOR. — MARCH AGAINST BALAD BEN-I-BOO ALLEE, ON THE 21ST FEB. — THE ARABS ATTACK THE BRITISH FORCE, BEFORE THE TOWN, WITH GREAT GALLANTRY AND COURAGE — BUT ARE FINALLY DISCOMFITED AND THE TOWN TAKEN. — BEHAVIOUR OF MALE AND FEMALE CAPTIVES. — SINGULAR ATTACK BY ONE MAN UPON THE BRITISH SENTRIES. — THE WORKS OF BOO ALLEE DESTROYED. — THE EXPEDITION RETURNS TO BOMBAY. — COMPLAINTS OF THE PERSIAN GOVERNMENT. — THEIR CLAIMS UPON KISHMEE. — THE JUSTICE OF THESE CLAIMS CONSIDERED. — DR. ANDREW JUKES APPOINTED AS ENVOY TO THE COURT OF PERSIA.

In the year 1821, the government of Bombay determined on sending a mission to the court of Persia. The objects of this mission were to explain the motives of certain measures adopted by the British government, which had given anxiety, if not umbrage, to the court of Persia; and to negociate for their concession of certain points, which the British government was desirous to gain. Both these objects derived their origin from events which occurred in the Persian Gulf; and, with a view to their being understood, it may be useful to observe on the situation of affairs in that quarter for a few preceding years.

The attention of the Indian government had, previous to this period, been frequently attracted to the state of the Persian Gulf, which had for many years been infested by hordes of desperate pirates. These robbers, in large and well armed boats, attacked indiscriminately every merchant vessel they met, com-

mitting the greatest atrocities on the crews of such as they took, very seldom sparing a captive, but putting to death with ceremonies of a horrid nature, those who fell alive into their hands, even when they surrendered without resistance.

These pirates were of no class of men distinct from the people of the country they inhabited*, although a portion of their enterprize and skill may have been imbibed from adventurers, forced by their misdeeds, to seek a refuge upon their barren shore: they were, for the most part, men of the Arab tribes, who settled on or near to the sea-coast, became naturally addicted to seafaring occupations; and accustomed to a predatory life among themselves, carried with them the same dispositions upon the element which had become to them a second home: they plundered to enrich themselves, and plundered all nations alike, because they had neither community of interests, or friendly relations with any, to restrain them.

It is not so easy to discover their reasons for their indiscriminate massacre of their captives; it has been attributed variously, to a wish for inspiring terror, and thereby lessening the chance of resistance; to the dictates of religious fanaticism; and to the difficulty of maintaining, or in any way disposing of their prisoners, because of the poverty of their country: but none of these motives seem sufficient to explain the difficulty. With regard to the first, if they succeeded in inspiring a great degree of alarm, that would naturally tend to diminish the number of vessels disposed to run the risk, or induce their owners to arm them more completely; and the crews knowing that there was no chance of safety but in victory, would fight more desperately; all of which would operate against the interest of the pirates. The second is not more satisfactory; for, although chiefly Wahabees, many of the pirates were Mahometans; yet they put to death men of all religions, without any attempt at making proselytes. Nor does the third seem more conclusive, for many methods might have been devised for disposing of their captives without having recourse to the knife; they might have been kept and used as slaves like the natives of Africa, whom they import for the purpose; they might have been turned adrift in the boats of captured vessels; they might have been set ashore on the first land, if their captors had been merely indifferent to their fate: but the horrid coolness, and even solemnity with which they were wont, after a capture, to take the survivors to the fore part of the ship, and cut their throats upon the gunwale, with their crooked knives, uttering a prayer the while; and the formal purification of the vessel afterwards, evinced a seriousness of purpose, that rather bore the character of some dreadful reli-

* These pirates have been generally known by the name of Joassmees: this term is a corruption from Gohafsin, or Johafsin, the name of a tribe, which was particularly notorious for their piracies. They have also been vulgarly termed Wahabees; which appellation has, in the apprehension of many, become synonymous with that of a Gulf-pirate; this has arisen from the majority of these plunderers professing the Wahabee religion.

gious rite; and had there not been strong reasons to the contrary, would have led to the conclusion, that the practice had originated in religious zeal. It would be difficult now to determine how the custom first began, but its continuance, if not its origin, may most probably be referred to that cruelty of disposition and wanton wastefulness of human life which results from a familiarity with scenes of blood and violence, and which is to be remarked in buccaneers and pirates of all ages and countries.

The daring spirit, and dauntless bravery displayed by these robbers, on most occasions, was very remarkable; and if exerted in a better cause, would have commanded universal admiration. Not content with engaging the armed cruizers of the Honourable East India Company, they, not many years since, had the boldness to attack his Majesty's ship Lion, of fifty guns; in which enterprize, though they sustained a signal discomfiture, they yet evidenced what their courage was capable of attempting.

The serious injury suffered by the Gulf trade, however, induced the British government to have recourse to vigorous and expensive measures for freeing their subjects from such serious evils, and for maintaining the national character. In the year 1810, Lieutenant-Colonel (now Major-General, Sir Lionel) Smith, and the late Captain Wainwright of the Chifonne frigate, were sent to act against these depredators, with a considerable armament, which was successful in all its immediate objects*; but no permanent political settlement having been made, the piracies were subsequently renewed, attended with the usual atrocious circumstances.

The termination of these outrages, and the introduction of some arrangements for maintaining future tranquillity, were imperatively required by both humanity and policy. Another expedition was therefore fitted out, and sailed from Bombay on the 1st November, 1819. The naval part of it consisted of several of his Majesty's ships of war, and Company's cruizers, under the command of Captain T. A. Collier; and the land forces amounted to about 3000 European and Native troops, under the command of Major-General Sir William Keir Grant. This expedition reduced Raus-ul-Khymah, the principal strong-hold of the pirates, which had been carefully fortified, and was vigorously defended; and also the hill fort of Zyah, which was likewise well defended by a veteran Wahabee, deeply imbued with the boldness and character of that sect.

During the operations at Raus-ul-Khymah and Zyah, the Arabs maintained their usual character for courage and pertinacity, and excited the wonder and admiration of the troops opposed to them; indeed, some affairs took place during the service, that would have done credit to the bravery of any nation. The bold manœuvre of their vessels entering the harbour of Raus-ul-Khymah,

* Viz. the destruction of Raus-ul-Khymah, and some other strong-holds, with the boats and naval resources in general, belonging to the piratical tribes.

whilst blockaded by our squadron, and their night attack upon our trenches before that place, deserve to be recorded, and are worthy of being admired, both for their conception and execution.

The immediate effect of the operations at Raus-ul-Khymah and Zyah was, the consent of the piratical chiefs to surrender to us their remaining vessels and fortifications; two hundred and two of the former, including those taken at Raus-ul-Khymah, fell into our hands or were burnt, and the fortifications of Jezeerut-ul-Humra, Um-ul-gaween*, Fusht, Shargah, and Aboo-Helee were blown up or destroyed. A considerable number of Indian and other captives were released from slavery; and it is gratifying to know, and creditable to the government, that their emancipation was one of the objects for which the armament was fitted out.

A difference of opinion appears to have existed at first, as to the line of conduct most likely to suppress, permanently, the piratical habits into which the Arab tribes had fallen; some being of opinion that rigorous and retaliating measures were called for towards a race of men, not, as was believed, likely to be won by mildness; others again, thought that humanity, as well as policy, prescribed a conciliatory system: the latter was adopted. Irritation was as much avoided as was consistent with the objects of the expedition; the path of reformation was pointed out, and a friendly intercourse with a civilized nation commenced. Something yet more was however necessary; and advantage was taken of the moral influence produced by our military successes, to bind the predatory chiefs, in a treaty calculated to promote the interests of humanity and policy.†

* Vulgarly called Margavine.

† There were several treaties of an individual nature, referring only to particular chieftains. The substance of the general treaty was as follows:

" There shall be a cessation of plunder and piracy by land and sea.

" Any of the Arabs attacking in the way of plunder and piracy, and not in that of acknowledged war, shall be accounted enemies of all mankind, and held to have forfeited life and goods.

" The Arab vessels to carry a particular flag, and to have a register, and port-clearance.

" If any tribes shall not desist from plunder and piracy, the others shall act against them.

" The putting men to death, after they have given up their arms, is an act of piracy, and not of acknowledged war; and, if any tribe shall put to death any persons, either Mahometans or others, after they have given up their arms, such tribe shall be held to have broken the treaty.

" (Article 9th.) The carrying off of slaves, men, women, or children, from the coast of Africa, or elsewhere, and the transporting them in vessels, is plunder and piracy; and the friendly Arabs shall do nothing of this nature.

" The vessels of Arabs are admitted into British ports, to buy and sell."

The ninth article of this treaty will be noticed with peculiar satisfaction by all who feel interested in the cause of humanity; and it must be gratifying to see our countrymen in the remotest regions, acting with one accord, using every effort to promote the happiness of their brethren, and being the first to banish slavery, and the trade in slaves, from every part of the earth where the national influence extends.

After the execution of the articles in this treaty, which related to the surrender of the vessels, and destruction of the fortifications of the different chiefs, this expedition returned to Bombay, leaving a force of 1200 native troops and artillery at Raus-ul-Khymah; but the occupation of this particular place was never meant to be more than a temporary measure, for the object of the British government being to establish a commanding position in the Gulf of Persia, it was necessary to select some other station, that would combine greater advantages than Raus-ul-Khymah offered.

The health of the troops thus left, soon began to suffer greatly, and much difficulty was experienced in keeping them supplied with a sufficiency of fresh water even to drink; they were therefore removed to Daristan, on the island of Kishmee, one of the longest islands in the Gulf, not far from its entrance, and upon its northern side, separated from the Persian coast by a narrow channel. Daristan was likewise found deficient in fresh water, and the troops were therefore removed to a place on the north-east side of this island, and somewhat less than two miles from the Arabian village, likewise called Kishmee.

The position chosen was difficult of access; and defensible with a small body of men; it was high, and if any part of this island be healthy, which there is every reason to doubt, this place had the best chance of being so: it moreover commanded some wells, a most important consideration in these countries, where rain is a blessing that can hardly be reckoned on, twice in the year. But, this place seems destitute of every thing that would render it desirable, as a permanent settlement: it is out of the way, has no certainty of a sufficient supply, even of bad water; and is equally destitute of a good soil, and a good climate.

No application was made to the court of Persia, upon the occupation of Kishmee, although so close to its shores; in the first place, because the island was found in possession of the Imaum of Muscat, who readily granted us permission to occupy it; and in the second place, if government were at that time aware of the claims which Persia lays, to this and all other islands in the Gulf, it probably considered them as nugatory; the more so, as that power never took the smallest part or interest, in the late operations, or in the affairs of the Gulf.

Shortly after the change of position to Daristan, it was considered necessary to detach from Kishmee, a small body of troops, amounting to between three or four hundred men, to act against the Ben-i-boo-Allee tribe of Arabs. The existence of this tribe had but very lately been made known to the British government; and then chiefly through complaints made against it by the Imaum of Muscat, our ally; and from being situated outside the Gulf of Persia, near the Cape Raus-ul-hud, in latitude twenty-two degrees north, it was distant from the scene of the operations of the last expedition.

The detachment above mentioned, commanded by Captain Thompson, the acting political agent at Kishmee, landed at Soor, within a few miles of Raus-ul-hud, where it was joined by a body of men belonging to the Imaum of Muscat, and commanded in person by that prince, at whose instance, the British government had directed this service to be undertaken.

About the 5th of November 1820, the British troops and those of the Imaum of Muscat quitted Soor, to march on the town of Ben-i-boo-Allee, the chief place belonging to the tribe of that name. This advance was not opposed till the morning of the ninth; when, within sight of the town above mentioned, a sudden and overwhelming attack was made on the detachment, by the assembled force of the Ben-i-boo-Allee tribe; and it was destroyed totally. Seven officers,* and two hundred and forty-nine men fell dead, out of a total of three hundred and eleven that went into action; hardly a wounded man escaped, as the *Khunjur* (or dagger) finished what the sword began.

To repair this disaster, an expedition was fitted out at Bombay, with great promptitude and efficiency. By way of illustrating, in the most satisfactory manner, the operations carried on by it, I have been enabled to give some portions from the manuscript of an officer employed on that service, who enjoyed the best opportunities, both for observation and information; and to whose kindness I am indebted for a great many of the facts and particulars I have collected regarding the expeditions to the Gulf.

" Embarked at Bombay on the 10th of January, 1821, and sailed on the 11th for the coast of Arabia. The fleet consisted of sixteen transports, and eleven horse-boats, containing 1282 Europeans, and 1718 native troops, under command of Major General Sir Lionel Smith.

" Arrived during the night at Soor, in latitude about 20° 40′ N. on the coast of Arabia, near Raus-ul-hud, or Rasselgate.

" The troops commenced landing on the 29th, some of the boats had difficulty from a heavy surf, which is frequent upon this part of the coast, from its being so much exposed.

" As soon as all the troops were landed, the camp was established on the

* The seven officers were, Surgeon Wigham,
Lieut. Price, (Engineers.)
Do. Lawrie,
Do. Perrin,
Do. Walsh,
Do. Short,
Do. Otté, (Artillery.)

southern side of the village of Soor, on account of water; and at a distance of three miles and a quarter from the beach.

" On the night of the 11th of February, about half past eleven o'clock, the camp was vigorously attacked. The enemy advanced through a hollow way, and date grove, on the left picket; drove it in, shouting 'Allah akbar,'* and ran into the camp with great rapidity. The Bombay European regiment was on the left of the line, and the enemy were among its tents before the regiment had fallen in; there was consequently great confusion, many men being wounded as they came out of their tents; which the enemy did not enter, but watched at the doors sword in hand, occasionally driving their spears through the canvass: part of this regiment, and part of the 7th native Infantry were formed, and commenced firing, as did the quarter guard; upon which the Arabs retired. Our loss on this extraordinary affair, was one officer killed, three officers wounded†; total killed nineteen, total wounded twenty-six. Many horses and other animals on the left flank were killed and wounded.

" The attack was made almost entirely with the sword and spear, and I felt at a loss which most to admire, the boldness of its conception, or the gallantry with which it was executed. The credit of both is given to Kadeem-bin-Allee, brother to Mahomed-bin-Allee the elder Sheikh, or chief of the Boo-Allee tribe. They were both present; Kadeem led, and escaped perfectly unhurt; Mahomed remained in the rear, and received a shot in the arm. The attacking party was probably of about five hundred men, and they came by footpaths through the mountains in about thirty hours, from Ballad Ben-i-boo-Allee, the town.‡

" We found in the morning, that almost all our dead had their throats cut from ear to ear, which made them look unusually ghastly; and I really think that more horror was excited by this, to us somewhat uncommon circumstance, than if double the number had been slain, without these 'Coups de grace à L'Arabe.'

" We changed ground on the 21st, half a mile in advance, for the purpose of getting rid of all superfluous people and baggage; the means of moving the division, so long expected, and promised by the Imaum of Muscat, having at length arrived. They consisted of about eleven hundred men, eight hundred camels, and two hundred asses; these will be considered as scanty enough, when it is recollected, that all the provisions and stores to maintain the division, during the whole time of its absence from

* Allah akbar! — God is great!

† Captain Parr, Killed.
Lieut. Col. Cox, } Wounded.
Lieut. Watkins, }
Lieut. Burnet, }

‡ A distance of about fifty miles.

the fleet, were to be transported though a country, in which we could not expect to find any supplies whatsoever. The troops that proceeded in advance, were as per margin. *

" We were at Ballad (town) Ben-i-boo Hassan, on the 1st of March, where we left all our heavy stores and baggage; and we reached Ben-i-boo-Allee, on the 2nd.; the whole distance from Soor beach being fifty-two miles.

" Shortly after coming in sight of Ben-i-boo-Allee, we passed the ground on which the unhappy affair of the 9th of November last, and the cause of this expedition, took place : numerous half-decayed bodies, skeletons, and small shreds of cloth, testified this to have been the spot; we moved slowly to maintain order, as the enemy seemed to meditate an attack upon us also in this spot; although our more powerful array must have been distinctly visible. They were assembling behind a rising ground, and we could see their broad swords gleaming brightly in the sunshine as they came out of the town.

" There was something peculiarly striking in our advance over the remains of many that had been known to us, but whose bones now lay bleaching beneath our feet, with the mortifying shade of defeat upon them ; the whole scene gave ample room for individual feelings, and few indeed could cast a glance of cold indifference, whilst passing over the field of disaster.

" Our march soon led more to the left, by which we gained a plateau that commanded a view of the works of Boo-Allee. As we passed to this position, the enemy saluted us with a few cannon shot from the captured guns, but with little effect. It was ascertained that considerably nearer the fort, there was favourable ground ; and the division was in consequence, shortly afterwards moved up to that place, being a range of low sand hills, with a date grove on the left. The date grove was occupied by the Bombay European regiment and pickets, the rest of the division was assembled behind the sand hills, in contiguous columns of companies at a quarter distance, which kept the whole under cover.

" The enemy saw this movement in progress, but did not offer to interrupt

* MEN.		GUNS.
Artillery, horse and foot -	200	1 Eighteen pounder, drawn by men.
His Majesty's 65th Regiment -	475	2 Twelve pounders, drawn by horses.
Bombay European Regiment -	400	2 Six pounders, drawn by horses.
Flank batt. Native Infantry -	630	1 Heavy howitzer, drawn by men.
Detachment batt. Native Infantry	450	
1st batt. 7th Reg. Native Infantry	450	
Pioneers, (Native) - - -	90	
Total	2695	6

it; and they soon appeared to be occupying in force, a date grove to the left of the one held by us. It was scarcely conceived probable, although numbers were seen gliding out of the fort into the grove, that an offensive movement against us could be in contemplation; it rather seemed to be thought, that the enemy might be trying to get off; such were, even then, our incorrect notions of these extraordinary men. The enemy assembling thus in force on our flank, it became necessary for us to change our position. The left brigade, and two six pounders were ordered round the rear of our date grove, which was not very deep; and the four twelve pounders subsequently passed round its front; the right brigade proceeded by a road of communication cut through the grove. The four twelve pounders soon opened, and part of their fire was directed upon such of the enemy as could be seen crowding into the grove, which runs close to the flank of their most southern outwork: part was also directed to try the strength of a tower or two of the outworks.

"The right brigade (consisting of the 65th regiment and 1st battalion 7th regiment) under Lieutenant Colonel Warren, when passed through the grove, was formed, one battalion in rear of the other, and was ordered to advance with two six pounders on its left (the 65th leading) to drive the enemy out of their grove. In advancing, the 7th regiment was directed to oblique to the left, to uncover its left wing; but only about two companies were so uncovered, when part of the light company of the 65th thrown out to observe, retired; and the enemy, probably from eight hundred to a thousand in number, with their characteristic gallantry, came bounding out sword in hand, to anticipate our attack: they were received with a rolling fire that destroyed numbers, but which had no perceptible effect in checking the advance of those who did not fall; who continued to press on chiefly towards the left of the brigade, passing along the whole line of its front to do so. Their gestures, their flourishing of swords, their shouting, their energetic movements, were barbarously magnificent, and as full of the 'circumstance' as destitute of the 'pomp of glorious war.' I know not what to compare this attack to, unless it be worthy of being placed by that of the Highlanders at Preston Pans; the same mode of warfare was followed, and the same admirable weapon, the broad sword, was used with mortal effect.*

* All who witnessed this extraordinary attack, concur in declaring, that more determined courage, and self-devoting resolution, never was displayed by any men than by the Ben-i-boo-Allee Arabs on this day. Not only were they totally unchecked in their advance, by the heavy and well sustained fire, which mowed them down in multitudes every instant, but despising the lines of bayonets opposed to them, they threw themselves upon the troops, seizing their weapons with both their hands to break the ranks, and sacrificed themselves to cut down their enemy, even with his bayonet sticking in their bodies. That they partially succeeded in this daring purpose, is sufficiently clear from this, that all of our troops who fell were cut down with the broad

" When the vigour of the attack was exhausted, the enemy withdrew; but there was no precipitation, no undue haste, to offer a contrast to their advance: before the firing had entirely ceased, women were to be seen walking among the dead and dying, totally regardless of the danger that surrounded them; their object was to drag off their friends, who had been killed or wounded; an office almost invariably performed for each other by the Arabs. It seems probable, that some women were actually engaged in the attack, for there were two or three among the killed, and many were wounded.

" This splendid effort was the last made by the Ben-i-boo-Allee for the preservation of their families and homes; our toops soon had possession of the outworks; and, as some of the enemy were seen trying to escape by the back of the inner fort, it was surrounded, and firing commenced close to the walls. There being now no room to hope from resistance, there arose a piercing and universal wail from the women within, and loud supplications for 'Amaun' or quarter: this was instantly granted; but the troops were happily not permitted to enter until men's blood had cooled, and there was little chance of any outrage occurring; a most praiseworthy precaution on the part of the commanding officer; and it was properly seconded by the troops: indeed, throughout the whole service, I have neither seen nor heard of any acts stained with the slightest degree of cruelty.

" A few officers went in to disarm the men: Mahomed-bin-Allee the elder Sheikh of the tribe came forward to give up his sword with perfect firmness and a most impenetrable countenance; his arm was in a sling from a wound received in the affair of the 10th of last month. His brother Kadeem lay near him wounded through both legs and in great pain; Kadeem seems to have been deservedly the favourite as a soldier; he was always foremost in danger; he led the two attacks on our division, and that which annihilated the detachment on the 9th of November. In the very remarkable countenances of both brothers, we might fancy that we could perceive the enduring spirit of the solemn league and covenant, or something of an equally stern and determined nature.

" In the fort, were found 236 men, nearly half of whom were wounded; 561 women, and 447 children: probably 300 men escaped. The Boo-Allee according to one calculation, lost about 300 killed; but the Imaum of Muscat, who directed the bodies to be counted, affirms that 500 fell on the

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sword, the match-lock being scarcely used during the whole affair. It is no slight proof of the steadiness and discipline of our Indian troops, that although out flanked, broken, and pressed back, under the uncommon vigour of the attack, with their furious and powerful foes using their weapons with tremendous effect among them, they never showed the slightest disposition to disperse or retreat, even for a moment.

field, or near it. We lost one officer killed, and five wounded. * Total killed 27. Total wounded 169.

" The women of this remarkable race seem deeply imbued with the enduring, as well as the active courage of the men ; many must have lost husbands, or children, yet they bore no outward signs of grief; and with the exception of the wail before-mentioned, when they believed that the very moment of their destruction had arrived, neither they nor their children uttered one lamentation, or shed openly one tear of regret or of apprehension. The men went to prayers at sunset as usual, arranged in ranks on their knees, with their right arms folded across their left, and their heads inclined to an attitude of humiliation ; they looked perfectly abstracted, as if they took no thought of the victims of mortal strife with which they were surrounded. From what can all this proceed, but from the influence of their lofty and warlike religion, and their firm belief in predestination, " as it is written, so will it be." " Allah akbar, God is great!" The men of Muscat, and many other subjects of the Imaum, who are not Wahabees, although to all appearance the same description of people, having the same habits, living in the same climate, and upon the same food, are utterly destitute of the high courage that has characterized the Wahabees, in the plenitude and even in the present decline of their faith. Looking at the extremely debased state of morality in Persia and its neighbouring countries, I cannot help lamenting, that we should ever have had cause to contribute so materially as we have done to the destruction of reformers like the Wahabees. The offences of such as we have come in contact with, proceeded, in all probability, mainly from their poverty and necessities, for they have never been desirous of waging a religious war with us. They frequently said, " we *can* remain at peace with you, for the war that was between us, was not that of religion ; but with the Imaum of Muscat, who is fighting us on account of our faith, it is impossible to make peace." There appears good ground to believe, that the practice of the Joassmee Wahabees putting their prisoners to death, originated in the extreme difficulty of supporting, or otherwise disposing of them*, and not from any idea that such barbarities were in conformity with their religion ; nor is there necessarily an identity between piracy and Wahabeeism, as is vulgarly believed and affirmed.

" Such of our prisoners as were wounded were dressed ; but they universally refused, in the most complicated cases of fracture, to submit to any

* Assistant Surgeon Gordon, - - Killed.
Captain Stewart, 7th Native Infantry,
Lieut. Thurnham, Do.
Do. Cuppage, His Majesty's 65th Reg. } Wounded.
Do. Madden, Do. Do.
Do. Malkern, Do. Do.

* This mode of accounting for the cruel massacres of their prisoners by the Wahabee pirates, has been already remarked upon, as insufficient for the purposes.

amputation, saying, that they preferred death to the loss of a limb. It was early intimated to the women that they were at liberty to go away, where and whenever they pleased; they at first hesitated, but all went off during the night of the 6th.

" Rather a singular occurrence took place two nights after we got possession of the place of Boo-Alee. The sentries outside the gate of the inner fort saw a man approaching their post hastily: they challenged, and he immediately sprang forward upon them; they fired, a shot passed through his heart, and he fell dead at their feet, with a drawn sword in his hand. We ascertained him to have been a Boo-Allee Caffre (African born); but none of the tribe would account for this strange circumstance, nor could we even conjecture the cause of his having sacrificed himself thus, unsupported.

" A detachment of the second regiment was sent to inter the remains of that part of their regiment which suffered on the 9th November: some fancied that they knew the skeletons of particular persons, more especially that of Lieutenant Lawrie, from his light curling hair: numbers of the skulls were cut very deeply, and had large pieces sliced off them, which showed plainly that the sword had here also done its office too well. The first of the dead lay at about four hundred yards from a small rising ground, from behind which the enemy sallied.

" Not aware that we should be for so many as five days at Boo-Allee, our camp was pitched on the morning of the 3d near the field of battle of the day before; and as we had not leisure to clear it, more senses than one were offended by the stark and bloated carcasses that lay around. This was truly viewing war in its least inviting aspect; and what a stretch of the imagination was required to identify such corruption, with 'a fiery mass of living valour, burning with high hope.'

" The works of Boo-Allee were blown up; and such guns and heavy stores as we had not the means of carrying back with us, were destroyed. When the mines were preparing, the prisoners and women had an idea, that they too were to be included in the work of destruction, and some of them even enquired when it was to take place.

" We commenced our return to Soor by Ben-i-boo Hassan on the 7th of March. We had considerable difficulty in moving our own wounded, and those of the enemy: all suffered greatly; some came in doolies; some on hurdles made of date-trees, and many on camels.

" All the women from Boo-Allee came to Boo-Hassan, although the tribes professed to be at war; probably, as we and the Imaum were in force, the people of Boo-Hassan wished to be thought ours, and his Highness's very devoted friends. When we passed through this village on our advance, it had many of the signs of war about it; people were gathered together in groups, some looking from the tops of houses, others running from place to place with arms in their hands, and disquiet in their countenances; there was

an occasional dropping shot heard at a distance; and on the side of the town towards Boo-Allee, the women screamed occasionally in a most barbarous manner, which caused all the men to run to their posts, as if an enemy were at hand."

"On the 11th we encamped within half a mile of Soor. Such of the prisoners as were aged, wounded, and not desperate characters, such also as were very young, were here delivered over to the Imaum of Muscat, under the strongest assurances that they should not be maltreated. The two chiefs, and the more lofty spirits, about an hundred and fifty in number, were sent to Bombay."* Thus far these extracts.

It was about the commencement of this year that the discontent which had for some time been felt by the court of Persia at the British operations in the Gulf, became more openly expressed. The chief grounds of complaint were, the occupation of the island of Kishmee by our troops, and the destruction in various parts of the Gulf, of certain boats, which although understood to be piratical vessels, and the property of Arabs, the Persians claimed as belonging in reality to merchants of that country. The other causes of dissatisfaction were of a different nature, and require no notice here.

These complaints originated with the government of Sheerauz, which is under the charge of Prince Hoosein Allee Meerza. There were several reasons why that prince or his ministers should view with uneasiness our occupation of Kishmee; perhaps the strongest of these, was the belief entertained, that the British factory would be removed from Bushire to that place. Bushire, from being but a wretched fishing village, had increased, in consequence of our trade, to a prosperous and considerable town; the customs from which, annually received by the government of Sheerauz, amount to a very large sum. While the British flag remains there, the influence which the British resident always possesses, must diffuse a great degree of confidence and security: but were that flag to be removed, these would cease, and with them, the trade and prosperity of the place. Of this, the government of Sheerauz is perfectly sensible; and it would, of course, oppose any measure tending to such an event.

There has existed moreover, for some time past, in every Eastern court, a strong degree of anxious jealousy toward the English nation, arising from their rapid acquirement of territory in India; each, however distant, however poor their country, fears that its own time will come; and the Persian court has fully participated in these alarms. The prince of Sheerauz, whose government is nearest to the point in danger, and who probably contemplates enjoying the sovereignty of that province, if not of the whole kingdom at the death of his father, naturally feels alarm at any demonstration of approach on

* The gallant Kadeem-bin-Allee died on his passage to that place, after suffering greatly from his wounds. A great many of the others died, chiefly of small-pox. The few survivors have since been returned to their native shores.

our part, and communicates his fears to the court of Tehrān. Besides, as the chief object of every governor in Persia is to evade as much as possible the payment to the king's treasury, of whatever revenue he may collect; so good an opportunity for promoting this end, was by no means to be neglected; the alarm created by the approach of the English troops, afforded excellent grounds for requiring an increase of the military establishment of that government; the money required for this service was retained from the revenue, but not a man was raised.

The court of Persia, however, objected to our occupation of Kishmee on different grounds; it asserted its own claims to the sovereignty of that island*, as well as every other in the Gulf; and remonstrated against a step

* As a good deal of discussion and diversity of opinion has obtained on this question, the decision of which, was of such consequence to the objects of the mission, it may not be deemed uninteresting to give the result of those enquiries, which were instituted by the envoy, to ascertain the truth as far as possible.

The Ben-i-maainee tribe of Arabs originally resided at Koong, on the Persian shore of the Gulf; but about 80 years ago, they took the island of Kishmee from Moollah Allee Shah, Koongee, who was its chief on the part of the Persian government; and they rented Bunder Abbassee, and its dependencies from Nadir Shah (who then swayed the sceptre of Persia), in the same manner as the Imaum of Muscat does at the present day; while Sheikh Mahomed of the Bustuck tribe, who till then had been in possession, was removed from thence. It appears, however, that Sheikh Abdoolla Maainee was unable to retain possession of the places thus rented, in consequence of the enmity of the Bustuckees, who had by his influence been removed; and he was forced to go to the Persian court to obtain additional and stronger firmauns of possession, which having received, he became enabled to retain his farms.

It has been asserted, nor as far as I have heard, has it been disproved, that the islands of Kishmee and of Hormooz, were enumerated among the dependencies of Bunder Abbassee, in the firmaun granted by Nadir Shah to Sheikh Abdoolla Maainee, and it seems equally true, that after the death of that prince, some of the Ben-i-maainee tribe still residing at Kishmee, did continue to pay tribute to Aga Mahomed Khan, his successor, and uncle to the present king of Persia; in fact, neither of these sovereigns were likely to have permitted them to continue in possession, had they not strictly performed their engagements; they were too powerful, and too fond of money, to have submitted to any defalcation.

Sheikh Suggur Maainee, the father of the present Sheikh, was for some time chief of the island of Kishmee, and was succeeded by Moollah Hoossain Mainee, who rendered himself so odious by his tyranny and oppression, that the inhabitants applied to the Imaum of Muscat, and begged him to come to their relief.

Seyud Sooltaun, then Imaum, came accordingly, and about twenty-eight years ago, took possession, not only of Kishmee, but of Hormooz and Bunder Abbassee, with its dependencies; and since that time, he and his successors have paid to the Persian government the same rent as Moollah Hoossain Maainee had previously done.

The Ben-i-maainee tribe still reside at Kishmee and Bunder-Abbassee; and one or other of its chiefs have, till lately, been governors of these places, subject to the orders of the Imaum; at present, however, Syff-bin-Nubham of the Imaum's own tribe, is chief of Bunder-Abbassee, and his younger brother resides at Hormooz.

That Bunder-Abbassee (or Gomberoon) and its dependencies on the Persian main-land have ever been, and continue to form a portion of the Persian dominions, and are now only held from that power, upon payment of a stipulated rent or tribute, none, not even the Imaum himself, attempts to deny; but he asserts, that the islands of Hormooz and Kishmee were conquered by the Ben-i-maainee tribe from Persia; and that he, by force of arms, in his turn, took them from that

of so suspicious, if not hostile, a nature on the part of the British government, as the establishment of a military force upon the territories of a neighbouring and friendly power, without her permission asked and obtained. Rumours, too, of an armed force being collected on the mainland near Kishmee, to observe the movements of the British force, at this time reached the political agent there, and from hence were conveyed to the government of Bombay, which decided on dispatching to the court of Persia an envoy especially empowered to treat on these subjects of umbrage.

Dr. Andrew Jukes, who had been lately appointed political agent in the Gulf of Persia, was selected for this service. This gentleman had resided long in Persia; he had accompanied two missions to that country in different capacities; he was perfectly master of its language, and understood Arabic also; and from his knowledge of the Persian character, he was well fitted to conduct the business now committed to his charge; while his mild urbanity of manner, united with perfect firmness of purpose, eminently qualified him as a negociator, with a court so deceitful and capricious as that of Tehrān.

A principal object of this mission, therefore, was to quiet the alarms of the Persian government, with regard to our intentions in the occupation of Kishmee; to shew that that measure, as well as all our operations in the Gulf, had not only been free from hostility, or intended slight to Persia, but were at least as much calculated to promote her interests as our own: and to explain the

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tribe; not only without any opposition on the part of Persia, but without remonstrance, or any notice whatever taken of the transaction: that these islands are not, and never were included among the dependencies of Bunder-Abbassee, nor are mentioned either in the firmaun by which they are held, or in the receipt which is annually sent from the court of Sheerauz, on payment of the rent for Bunder-Abbassee. Finally, that these islands are his by conquest; the Persians being unable to retain them, and that the present king might, with equal propriety, lay claim to the sovereignty of India, of Egypt, or Syria, because some of the former kings, at different times, had extended their conquests over these countries, however unable their successors have been to retain possession of them.

Those, on the contrary, who take the other side of the question, affirm, that not only were the islands in dispute mentioned in the original firmauns, as among the dependencies of Bunder-Abbassee; but that both the chiefs of the Ben-i-maainee tribe, and the late Imaum, considered them as such; the rent for the whole being paid to the court of Persia under one head.

The decision of the question may be considered to rest on two points: first, whether the firmauns granted to Seyed Sooltaun, when he obtained possession of Bunder-Abbassee and its dependencies, do really enumerate among these dependencies the islands in dispute; and whether the Imaum agreed to hold them upon these terms. Secondly, whether the Persian government could be considered as in possession of the disputed islands, or capable of maintaining them, for some time previous to their capture from the Ben-i-maainee tribe.

The original firmauns have not as yet been produced, to clear up the first point; and, with regard to the second, it may be observed that Persia has at no time possessed a naval armament, by means of which she might acquire or retain transmarine possessions; this being particularly the case in the present reign: and from the time of the expulsion from Kishmee, of Moollah Allee Shah, it has had no footing whatever, on either of the disputed islands.

reasons of the British government for considering the island of Kishmee, as not belonging to the Persian crown; but if this should prove to be the case, to obtain permission for our continuing to occupy the station we possessed, for the purpose of preserving the peace of the Gulf, and protecting alike the trade of Britain and Persia. In all this, Dr. Jukes was instructed to act in co-operation with, and in conformity to, the further directions of Henry Willock, Esq., Chargé D'Affaires from the British government, and agent for the Honourable East India Company, at the court of Tehrān.

Every thing was in readiness towards the middle of May; and the Francis Warden, a private ship taken up for the conveyance of stores to the garrison at Kishmee, was further appointed for the conveyance of the envoy and his suite to Bushire.

APPENDIX B.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE PRINCIPAL DISTRICTS OF KHORASAN.

DISTRICT OF BHEERJOON AND KAYN. — POPULATION, MANUFACTURES. — CHIEF MEER ALLUM KHAN. — RUINS OF KHUBBEES. — YEZD, ITS SITUATION, AND THE NATURE OF THE DISTRICT. — PRODUCE. — TOWN, OLD AND NEW. — POPULATION. — GHEBRES, OR FIRE WORSHIPPERS. — SUBJECT TO A HEAVY TAXATION. — CHIEF OF THE GHEBRES. — THEIR COSTUME. — PROSPERITY OF YEZD OWING TO ITS COMMERCE. — MANUFACTURES. — BEASTS OF BURTHEN. — REVENUES. — CLIMATE. — TUBBUS. — TOON. — GOONAHBAD. — MEER HUSSSEIN KHAN, CHIEF OF THE DISTRICT. — TOORSHEEZ. — TOORBUT, AND MAHOMED KHAN KARAOEE. — ISSAW KHAN, HIS HISTORY, AND RISE TO POWER. — HE PLACES MAHOMED WULLEE MEERZA, GOVERNOR OF KHORASĀN, UNDER RESTRAINT. — IS AFTERWARDS PUT TO DEATH BY THAT PRINCE. — CONDUCT OF HUSSUN ALLEE MEERZA TO HIS SON, MAHOMED KHAN KARAOEE. — CHARACTER OF THAT CHIEF. — SUBZAWAR AND FURRAH. — HERĀT, AS IT WAS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY, AND AS IT WAS WITHIN THESE FIFTEEN YEARS PAST. — ITS PROSPERITY ARISES FROM COMMERCE. — PRODUCTIONS OF THE COUNTRY. — HISTORICAL NOTICES REGARDING THE AFFGHAUN MONARCHY. — CONDUCT AND FATE OF FUTEH KHAN, THE CHIEF MINISTER OF CAUBUL. — HIS BROTHERS. — MAHOMED SHAH DRIVEN PROM ALL HIS OTHER TERRITORIES, IS CONFINED TO HERĀT. — ATTEMPT MADE BY HADJEE FEEROZE MEERZA, AND HUSSUN ALLEE MEERZA UPON HERĀT. — ITS ISSUE. — GHORIAN TOWN AND DISTRICT. — KAFFER KALLAH. — TOORBUT-E-JAMEE. — SHEIKH AHMED-E-JAMEE, AND OTHER SAINTS. — SERRUKHS. — BALAI MOORGHAUB. — HĀZĀRAH AND OTHER TRIBES, WITH THEIR CHIEFS AND PLACES OF RESIDENCE. — SEMNOON, DARUGHAN, &c. — A KOORDISH COLONY TRANSPLANTED BY SHAH ABBAS FROM KOORDISTAN TO KHORASĀN. — COUNTRY ASSIGNED TO THEM AND A CHIEF APPOINTED. — MANNERS OF THESE KOORDS — COSTUME, &c. — CHINNARAUN AND MAMMUSH KHAN. — BAUM AND MIANABAD. — KABOOSHAN, AND MEER GOONAH KHAN. — HIS HISTORY AND LIFE. — REZA KOOLEE KHAN. — EELKHANEH. — HIS TERRITORIES. — TOWN OF KABOOSHAN, ITS POPULATION. — INCOME, EXPENDITURE, MILITARY FORCE, AND POLICY OF THE EELKHANEH. — BOOJNOORD AND NUJJUFF ALLEE KHAN. — KELAAT NADEREE. — SEYED MAHOMED KHAN, HIS CHARACTER, MILITARY FORCE. — MERVE. — SITUATION, ANCIENT MAGNIFICENCE. — PRESENT DESOLATION. — RIVERS OF KHORASĀN.

A GENERAL outline of the province of Khorasān having been given in the text, I shall proceed here to give such particulars as I have been able to collect of the districts there enumerated, together with some account of the circumjacent countries, and the few statistical or historical facts that came to my knowledge. As, however, several of the districts in the northern part of

the province will be incidentally described in the course of my journey, I shall begin with those further to the southward.

The district of Bheerjoon and Kayn, which lies about an hundred and twenty miles south-west of Herāt, three hundred from Kerman, and nearly the same * from Yezd, although sandy and ill watered, is yet fertile both in grain and in fruits. It takes its name from the two principal towns; the first of which, Bheerjoon, is stated to be of great antiquity, and once of no small importance; even at the present day it is by no means contemptible, although we must refuse credit to those who would persuade us that it contains thirty thousand families: perhaps, as it is a manufacturing town, the seat of government, and situated in a fertile country, we may safely presume that it contains somewhat more inhabitants than it is pretended there are of houses.

Kayn, thirty or forty miles distant, is a smaller and more recent town, chiefly inhabited by manufacturers of numuds (or carpets of felt), and similar fabricks; it is surrounded by fine villages, and extensive cultivation both of corn and orchards; so that taken together with its dependencies, it does not contain fewer inhabitants than Bheerjoon. The district is celebrated for its felt manufactures, which supply a great part of Persia with the most beautiful numuds. Many articles are also made of Khoolk,† such as coarse shawls, pieces for lining winter garments, wrappers of various sorts, caps, stockings, gloves, &c. &c.; and it is alleged that in Kayn, and the villages around, there are eight thousand families of these weavers alone.

This district produces no revenue to the crown of Persia: its chief, Meer Allum Khan, who is of an Arab tribe, is one of those who scarcely acknowledge a nominal subjection to the authority of the king; or who, at most, send him an occasional present in token of their obedience: and even to this formality he is held chiefly by the fear of a quarrel with Ibrahim Khan, the governor of Kerman, and son-in-law to the king, who, in case of more declared rebellion, might give him trouble. The amount of his revenue I had no means of ascertaining.

The ruins of the town of Khubbees, are found, as we are informed by Lieutenant Pottinger, surrounded by a desert, on the direct road from Kerman to Herāt; but the only fact we learn is, that the place, once flourishing, has fallen quite into decay, and become the haunt of banditti; though it still has to boast of a verdure unknown in other parts of the desert, and is surrounded by many fine orchards of fruit trees.

These distances are not to be depended upon as correct; they are assumed as the nearest results to be obtained from the information that was procured; but so much of the way lies through a desert, that no route, with correct distances, was to be had.

† Khoolk is the down which grows under the hair of the mountain goat; it is of this down that the shawls of Cashmere are fabricated. It is of various degrees of fineness, according to the breed of the animals, and the nature of the country and climate where it is produced.

The city and district of Yezd, if they be included, as should certainly be the case, within the limits of Khorasan, occupy the south-west corner of that province; being encompassed on all sides by salt desert, which separates it from Kerman and Fars upon the south, and from Ispahan of Irāk upon the west. The soil is dry and sandy; it has no streams of natural water; all that is applied to the purposes of agriculture being procured from cannauts and wells: nevertheless so fertile are certain parts of the soil, and so well situated is the city for commercial purposes, that it has at all times been a rich and rather a flourishing place.

The city of Yezd is built in a large sandy plain, encompassed on most sides by hills. In the direction of Ispahan, the country is well peopled, and towns and villages occur upon the road as far as Auk-Deh, a distance, according to Captain Christie, of fifty-four miles; except for about twelve miles between that village and Myboot, when a stripe of the desert intervenes. The former is a ballook, or division of twenty villages dependent upon Yezd, celebrated for their pomegranates and figs. In other directions the plain of Yezd is chiefly encompassed with sand.

In spite of the scarcity of water with which this district is affected, it produces fruits of the best flavor, a good deal of silk and corn; the latter, however, does not suffice for more than forty days' consumption of the city, and all the rest is imported from Ispahan.

The city itself is of considerable size, and consists of two parts; the first of which called the old town, is said to be little inferior in size to that of Tehrān; it is well fortified with a wall, ditch, and a Sheer Hadgee*; and has four gates. The governor and garrison reside there, and it has a population of from six to eight thousand houses, with excellent bazars, &c. &c. Around this, his arisen another straggling town, containing the population that cannot be accommodated in the fort, and to this there are no walls. About a mile to the north of the old town, there is another old fort called Naringe kallah, which Meerza Moossa, when governor of Yezd, repaired for his own quarters, and in this also, there are a few inhabitants. In all, the population of Yezd may amount to fifty thousand souls, which, although under the number assigned to it by Captain Christie, is, I apprehend, not far from the truth.

In this town and district are found a far greater number of Ghebres, or followers of the ancient fire-worship, than in any, or perhaps all, other places in the empire; there are three thousand families in Yezd itself, inhabiting a Muhuleh, or division of the city called Pooshte Khaneh Allee, near the

* A Sheer Hadgee, is something like what in European fortification is called a fosse-braye; it consists in a part of the earth from the ditch, being thrown up on the inner side to a considerable height, so as to protect the wall (for there is seldom any glacis), between which and the Sheer Hadgee there is a path of more or less width, sometimes sufficient for the passage of a gun.

Kerman gate, apart from the rest, and they form a great proportion of the ryots in the surrounding village.

They are subject to a heavy taxation, the exact amount of which however, I could not ascertain, but are said to be an industrious and patient race, turning their attention solely to agriculture and commerce. Their chief at Yezd, at the time I was in Khorasān, was Moollah Mazbānee, a man whose credit was so high, not only with his own sect, but with the whole city, that he had influence enough on one occasion, even to effect a change of governors.

The dress of these Ghebres is most commonly a short jubba or gown, reaching just below the knee; a turban of various shawls, with a girdle of the same. The females wear a long loose shirt, and are not concealed like the Mahometan women; in other respects their manners and customs resemble those of the Parsees at Bombay.

I could not learn that there were many remarkable buildings in Yezd; there is a Musjid-e-Jumah (or principal mosque) in good repair in the old town, and a large Mosselleh, or place of prayer, with a Medressah, in the outer town: a place is likewise pointed out under the name of Zendan-e-Secunder, or "the prison of Secunder," in a hillock of earth where there was an opening, leading (as was asserted) to numerous subterraneous passages, in which, of old, many persons would enter, and wandering about, some would find articles of value, as coins, bits of gold, or jewels; others, less fortunate, never returned; and to prevent such accidents, the opening was closed by order of government, and no external sign remains of what this hillock is said to contain.

Yezd owes its prosperity chiefly to its situation, which constitutes it a good entrepôt for the commerce and produce of the surrounding countries. Situated on the edge of a desert, it forms a convenient resting place for the caravans from Kerman, Herāt, Mushed, Tubbus, which bring to it all the merchandise of India, Caubul, Cashmere, Bockhara, &c.; and are met there by merchants from Ispahan, Sheerauz, Cashan, Tehrān, and other parts of Persia; and the advantages arising from such a mart to the state, would seem not to have been overlooked by government; for Yezd has been remarked as affording, at all times, a greater degree of security and liberty than most other places in Persia; and this immunity has doubtless had its effect in attracting a greater quantity of traffic, than otherwise would have frequented it.

The manufactures of Yezd, and particularly those of silk stuffs, have obtained great celebrity; its aleedjahs*, cassubs, dereis, taftehs, mookhyyehs,

* These are all the Persian names for stuffs used for different parts of dress. The aleedjahs and cassubs are used for shirts and trowsers. The dereis for the kabbas or gowns worn by men, and the others resemble our taffetahs, lute-strings, and sarcenets, &c.

handkerchiefs, and other articles of women's attire, far excel those made in any other part of Persia; a little of the silk from which these are made is raised in the district, but the greater part of it is imported from Gheelān. There are also manufacturers of cotton stuffs, sugar candy, and sweetmeats, that are highly esteemed. Numuds also are fabricated in the vicinity, and those of the village of Tuft, are famed for being equal to the finest of Bheerjoon and Kayn, or of Kerman.

Captain Christie remarks upon the numbers of camels that are kept at Yezd, as well as on the high prices given for asses. Captain Macdonald Kinneir confirms the latter remark, stating that an ass will sometimes sell as high as fifty tomauns. As this is a most enormous price, considering the cheapness of the animal in other parts of the country, and the facility of transporting them to Yezd, I made particular enquiry on the subject, and found that baggage cattle of all sorts, horses, mules, camels, asses, and bullocks, are always in plenty, and generally cheaper, at Yezd than in other quarters; from this cause, that the great number brought there with loads must, if not disposed off immediately, be maintained at great expense, from the high price of corn and straw, until an opportunity offers for them to return loaded. This induces their owners to part with their beasts at easy rates. The mistake has probably arisen from the high prices that are really given for a particular breed of asses brought from Lahsa in Arabia, which are scarce, and remarkably large and fine; the best breed will, it is said, carry their rider, on a very easy pace, at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour; and such an animal will, indeed, command the high price of fifty tomauns: the same price, or even more, is not unfrequently given for a fine easy and fast going mule; but this has nothing to do with the prices of common beasts of burthen.

Yezd has for several years past been constituted into a separate government; some ten or twelve years ago, it was held by one Abdool Raheem Khan, who oppressed the town severely, till he was removed on the representation of the most respectable inhabitants, and his place occupied by Meerza Moossa, a very able and intelligent man, since appointed Wuzzeer to the Prince Hussun Allee Meerza, at Mushed. This person, by degrees, and without distress to the inhabitants, raised the revenue remittable to the king's treasury to 60,000 tomauns; but above seven years ago he was removed to Mushed, and his place supplied by Mahomed Zemaun Khan, the son of the Sudr Ameen, who raised the revenue to 70,000 tomauns; but who was so exorbitant in his private exactions, that the inhabitants arose in tumult against him, and nearly murdered him. About two years since, the king appointed his son Mahomed Wullee Meerza (of whom further mention will be made, when we come to treat of Mushed) governor of Yezd; and Mahomed Zemaun Khan was recalled. This prince, extremely impetuous and self-willed, has rendered himself not merely unpopular, but detested for his tyranny

and extortion: he only pays 54,000 tomauns to the king; but it is asserted, that he raises four times that sum by one means or other, under the colour of taxes from the town and districts; and not finding this sufficient to satisfy his cupidity or extravagance, he seizes and confines individuals, from whom large sums of money are squeezed by means of tortures. The degree of distress, and outcry arising from this conduct, while I was in the country, were said to be so great, that it was supposed the Prince could not long be continued in his government at the rate he was proceeding, as he would soon be unable to remit to the crown even the stipulated revenue.

The climate of Yezd is said to be extremely hot in the summer, and cold in winter; influenced, no doubt, by the extent of desert with which it is surrounded; however, snow does not lie long there.

There are several mines in the vicinity of Yezd; one of lead, remarkably rich, on the road to Kerman at Baft, is particularly mentioned, as that from which the greater part of Persia is supplied with this metal. There is also a quarry of greenish marble about seventy miles from the city; and some mines of fine rock-salt, which is exported to the countries around.

Leaving Yezd, the next considerable town and district is that of Tubbus. My information regarding this district is very limited; the towns of Toon and Goonahbad are mentioned as among its dependencies; and a good deal of the intervening country on each side of the road, is reported to be well inhabited. On the way to Toon is found the fortified town of Bushrewgah, which is said to be as large as Kabooshān in Khorasān; and must, in that case, contain from twenty to twenty-five thousand inhabitants; but two stages, entirely desert, interpose between this place and Toon.

Toon is a large ruined city, once of importance, stated to lie south-west from Mushed, which place it equals in size, although it now contains but a few families, not exceeding in all fifteen hundred souls; it is still surrounded with numerous orchards, but beyond these the country is very desolate.

From Toon to Goonahbad the road lies chiefly through deserts, till within twenty miles of the latter town, which is said to equal Nishapore in size, but has no regular wall; it is also surrounded by numerous orchards, and its pomegranates are remarkable for their goodness; its population, with that of the dependant villages, may amount to thirty or forty thousand souls. It has no produce or manufactures of consequence, except that of painted tiles, dishes, bowls, &c. which are in some estimation.

The town of Tubbus, itself, was formerly of far greater consequence than now: it contains but a small population; its gardens produce dates and oranges, which proves the heat of its climate; and its tobacco is esteemed as almost the best in Persia.

Meer Hussun Khan, who was chief of this district, and whose authority extended, at the time Captain Christie travelled through the country, to within a day's journey of Yezd, yielded to the crown the same occasional and imper-

fect obedience as most of the chiefs of Khorasān. His son Allee Nukee Khan, who succeeded him, keeps up the same system; occasionally sending *Peishcush** to the king, to quiet any movement to his prejudice; he remains secure in his deserts against any effectual attack, and neither the king nor the Prince of Khorasān receive any addition to their treasury from this district. His brother Meer Allum, is in possession of Goonahbād and its dependencies, but whether independent of, or on terms of subserviency to his brother, I cannot say.

Toorsheez, an hundred and fifty miles north-east of Tubbus, like that city, has fallen from its prosperity, and is now a ruin, containing but three or four thousand inhabitants; when Mr. Forster passed through it on his way to Mazunderān, it consisted of two divisions; the old town, called Sultaunabād, and a new one built by Abeidoolla, the then reigning chief; at present the government has been bestowed as a provision (I think) for a son of Hussun Allee Meerza who resides there; but his presence has only had the usual depressing effect that attends the residence of any member of the royal family; he exacts more than any other governor or chief would do, and the arbitrary nature of such exactions are greatly adverse to every kind of prosperity.

The country around Toorsheez is described as of an unfavourable soil, and poorly cultivated; the district has but few exports, there is, however, a good deal of assafœtida and some gum ammoniac gathered in the hills around; but its chief commerce consists in a transit trade between Herāt, Mazunderān, and the north-western parts of Persia.

About fifty miles to the eastward of Toorsheez we find Toorbut, the chief town of a well cultivated district, now possessed independently by Mahomed Khan Karāoee. Issaw Khan, the father of the present chief, was a person of no family, and originally of low consideration, who served as yassawul† to Nujjiff Khan, chief of the Karāoee tribe, and descendant of a long line of hereditary chiefs of Toorbut: but the natural abilities and respectable conduct of Issaw Khan, raised him by degrees so high, not only in the confidence of his master, but of the tribe, that upon the death of Nujjiff Khan (who was put to death by Nasr Oolla Meerza, at Mushed), he married the daughter of that chief, and was immediately recognized as his successor.

In this situation he used every means to increase his power and wealth, and was so successful in accumulating the latter, by farming and commerce on his own account, as well as by plunder (for which the disordered state of the country afforded great facilities), that as an instance (greatly

* Presents.

† Yassawul is an officer of the household, who acts in the capacity of usher in the families of chiefs.

exaggerated no doubt) of the large establishment he kept up, it is said that eighty mauns * of flour were daily made into bread for his dogs.

When Mahomed Wullee Meerza was sent to assume the government of Khorasān, and its chiefs for the first time were in some measure overawed by this shadow of the royal authority among them, Issaw Khan entered his service, and was found to possess so much influence, that he was constituted Sirdar or general of the prince's army, and very soon became so powerful, that he controlled the prince, who found he could do nothing of which his general did not approve. This rapid rise had upon Issaw Khan the usual effect of stimulating his ambition, and he soon aimed not only at rendering himself independent of his master, but at establishing himself as chief of the northern parts of Khorasān. To this effect he intrigued with the discontented Khans of that quarter, and offered to deliver them from the yoke of the reigning family, by seizing and confining the person of the prince, if they would consent to recognize *him* as their chief. It appears that they were induced at first to consent to this proposition, for Issaw Khan having taken the necessary precautions, which, as the troops were all at his orders, he was with ease enabled to effect, went one day suddenly to the Ark with all his attendants, and entering the presence of the prince, informed his royal highness that he was his prisoner; at the same time following up his words by placing guards upon his apartments to prevent his escape. I was informed, that so far from endeavouring to mitigate the distress and mortification which so violent a measure could not but have occasioned to his royal captive, he behaved with great rapacity and brutality; he deprived him of all privacy, by placing furoshes in his apartment night and day; he stript him of every thing, money, clothes, jewels, equipage, that he could lay hands on; and he permitted his two sons to carry off two young and beautiful Jewesses that had been purchased and made Mahometans by the prince, who had intended to marry them himself.

While the prince was thus critically situated, the rebellious Khans began to dispute about the plunder; and the question of superiority was revived: The Koordish chiefs in particular, taunted Issaw Khan with the lowness of his birth, and each asserted his own rights to supremacy. Issaw Khan thus opposed in his course of ambition had recourse to another expedient; he sent to the Affghaun chiefs, and offered to do homage to them, if they would yield him assistance in gaining possession of the country. In this also he was disappointed, the Affghauns could give him no assistance, and fearful of the consequence to himself of what he had done, he resolved to make his peace if yet possible, with the prince, and thus to fortify himself against his rivals. In pursuance of this design, and in spite of the opposition of his two sons, who strenuously urged their father to put the prince to death, the Khan

* Between 500 and 600 lbs. English.

set him at liberty, replaced him on the Musnud, and brought all with whom he had influence, to swear to him allegiance; intimating that all he had done was but to convince his royal highness of his power, which he signified should now be directed to protect him against all the machinations of his enemies; making a merit of having withstood the bloody proposals of the rebellious Khans who wished his death; and finally bestowing upon him his daughter as a wife, and protesting that he himself was now the humblest of his slaves.

Mahomed Wullee Meerza, unable effectually to show his resentment of insults offered to him, received the Khan's explanation apparently in good part, and remained quite tranquil for two years; during which time, Issaw Khan repaired to Tehrān, and representing to the king the inefficiency, as he chose to term it, of the prince his son as governor of the province, and at the same time vaunting his own services, he managed his affairs in so effectual a way, that it is asserted, he obtained from his majesty a firmāun constituting him Hakim of Mushed, thereby leaving to the prince but a shadow of authority, and in reality, making him a cipher in the hands of Issaw Khan. The Shahzadeh could offer no resistance to this arrangement, however surreptitiously obtained, but he took the first opportunity to escape himself to Tehrān, where making the king acquainted with the true state of the case, and the danger not only to his own life, but to the interests of the crown, from the ambitious views of Issaw Khan, he obtained private instructions to put that chief to death in any possible way; and thus empowered, he returned to Khorasān.

Issaw Khan had created so many enemies by his haughty conduct, that the prince found no difficulty in collecting a small band on whom he could rely, to execute his orders, and gratify their own malice, when opportunity should offer; and on a day, soon after his return, while he sat in his dewan khaneh, surrounded by these adherents, as one of the sons of Issaw Khan entered to pay his salutation, the prince gave the signal for executing his scheme, by asking him in a stern voice, "Where is that old dog, your father?" The young man astonished and indignant, exclaimed, "Have a care prince of what you say; speak of my father in more respectful terms." "What says the fellow?" cried the prince at this implied threat, and at the same time giving a private signal to those around him, "Seize," added he, "and strangle him immediately." At the word he was seized, and the rope applied to his neck, just as his father, void of all suspicion, entered the area alone; and while he, struck with astonishment and rage at the scene, drew his sword, and hastily demanded what it meant, several persons rushed upon him; and although he wounded two or three before he was secured, others succeeded in binding him, and applying the fatal cord; thus, while his attendants remained without, ignorant of their lord's extremity, both father and son soon lay corpses on the floor.

Thus fell this ambitious, though able man, in a moment of careless security, but for which the prince might have found it for long impossible to free himself from his trammels, or to execute the sentence which the king had pronounced against him. The moment the event was known, his enemies took advantage of the panic that seized his adherents, stript them of their arms, and turned them out of Mushed. *

Mahomed Khan succeeded his father as chief of Toorbut, and taking warning by his fate, kept aloof from danger in his own dominions. When Hussun Allee Meerza was sent to replace his brother in the government of Mushed, he determined, if possible, to conciliate this powerful family; and, in the hope of removing the anger of Mahomed Khan, he went, accompanied by his wuzeer Meerza Moossa, to Toorbut, to condole with him upon the fate of his father and brother, disclaiming all knowledge or intention of the events which led to it, on the part of the king his father. Whether Mahomed Khan was in truth persuaded of the prince's sincerity, or only affected to be so, is uncertain; he, however, received the prince's visit, but would only admit himself and the minister within the walls of Toorbut; and while the latter remained in the dewan-khaneh, the prince was taken into the private apartments; it is, indeed, saying not a little for the courage and firmness of his royal highness, that he dared to place his person in such eminent jeopardy. Mahomed Khan, however, probably did not deem it politic to make use of his advantage; on the contrary, the matter ended in his professing obedience to the king of Persia, and giving the prince his sister (another daughter of Issaw Khan) in marriage. He has never since come to Mushed, but for some time observed a sort of neutrality, abstaining from open acts of violence, but paying nothing to the crown, except occasional presents. Of late, however, he has leagued with Bunyad Beg of the Hazārah tribe; in conjunction with, and in the name of whom, he plunders the country, and robs caravans, by which means he has added considerably to the wealth left by his father; and ap-

* After this event, the whole of Khorasān fell into such confusion, and complaints poured so fast on the court of Tehrān, that the king deemed it expedient to deprive Mahomed Wullee Meerza of the government, and to send his brother Hussun Allee Meerza with an army of 10,000 men to restore the province to order. It was necessary to preserve appearances with the discontented Khans, and Mahomed Wullee Meerza was unscrupulously made a political sacrifice. He returned to Tehrān in disgrace, and was suffered to remain neglected so long, that losing patience at what he conceived to be such unmerited treatment, he one day burst abruptly into his father's presence, and with his sword drawn, remonstrated loudly against it, upbraiding the king with having first ordered him to put Issaw Khan to death, and then disgracing him for it. The king greatly alarmed, spoke gently to him and soothed him, until some of the other princes came in, and they summoning the guards, seized the unfortunate Mahomed Wullee Meerza, beat him most severely with sticks, and turned him out of the palace. After this, he remained unemployed for two or three years, almost in want of necessaries, till lately, when he was sent as governor to Yezd, where he was at the time I was in Khorasān. He is a prince of a violent and uncertain temper, and by no means well calculated for the charge of a troublesome government.

pears, like others, to be waiting the great struggle, which cannot be far distant, in Khorasān.

The character of this chief is variously represented; by his friends he is stated to be noble, open, generous, hospitable; by his enemies, treacherous and deceitful, cruel and rapacious; truth, as in most such cases, may be between; nor is it difficult to conceive, that a chief situated as he is, may give occasion for both descriptions. Those who appeared least prejudiced, spoke favourably of him, as a man disposed to justice, and a good master, but admitted his fondness for wealth, and the little scruple he might feel to render himself master of whatever might be placed in his power; strongly advising me to run no such risk.

Of the revenues of Mahomed Khan, I know little; indeed, they arise from sources so various and uncertain, that it would not be easy to estimate them. The town of Toorbut is said to contain thirty or forty thousand souls, and enjoys a considerable transit trade; being like Tubbus and Toorsheez, on the road by which a portion of the commerce of India reaches the north-western quarters of the kingdom.

In giving an account of Khorasān, I would not willingly pass by Herāt and its dependencies, without adding to that which is already before the public, the little I have collected; and, as connected with the subject, it shall be followed by the few particulars that came to my knowledge, relative to the state of the kingdom of Caubul, since the period to which its history has been brought down by Mr. Elphinstone.

The towns of Subzāwur and Furrah may be considered as amongst the dependencies of Herāt; and caravans from Candahār to that city frequently pass through these places, although there are roads more direct. Captain Christie on his way from Dooshāk to Herāt, passed by the latter, but did not enter it; he describes it as a large walled town, situate in a fertile valley, watered by a stream from the mountains, and surrounded by extensive gardens; it had also, as he was informed, a good bazar.

Mr. Forster did not go to Furrah; he passed to the north-east, through a desert, but more direct road, by Ghurmow to Gheeraunee. The information I have obtained serves for little more than to confirm what Captain Christie says. The town is stated to be as large as Nishapore; the country around it fertile, but merely a spot surrounded on all sides by deserts; the river (Furrah rood) which my informants passed early in spring, was fordable for horses and camels, and joins the Helmind. The distance from Furrah to Herāt is stated by Captain Christie to be about a hundred and forty-five miles.

Neither Captain Christie nor Mr. Forster mention Subzawur, both these gentlemen having taken the more desert route among the hilly country on the right. The little information I possess regarding it, goes no further than to say, that it is an old and ruinous town, once of importance, and situated in a large,

fertile, and populous plain. There are no other considerable places between Furrah and Herāt.

The accounts we can collect regarding the city of Herāt,* agree in placing it in a rich well watered valley; the length of which, according to Captain Christie, is about thirty miles, and the breadth fifteen; the whole being covered with villages and gardens. The area which the city covers he estimates at four square miles, and he observes, that in his approach he rode for four miles through the suburbs: the accounts I have confirm all this, and agree so nearly with those of Captain Christie, that I can do little more than quote the information he has afforded.

The city is surrounded by a lofty mud wall, with numerous towers, and a wet ditch; it has a gate in each face, and two in the northern one; in which also, upon an elevated mound in the same line with the wall, has been erected a small square castle of burnt brick, with towers at each angle, and surrounded by a wet ditch, over which there is a draw-bridge: an outer wall and dry ditch have been constructed in addition, beyond these works.

In the centre of the town there is a large market place called the Chār-soo, to which lead four bazars, one from each gate; the principal one, extending from the south gate to the Gunge Bazar, or cattle market, in front of the citadel, is covered with a vaulted roof. These bazars, with the Char-soo, are so filled with people on market days, as to be scarcely passable. On either side are spacious serais where merchants have their chambers of business; each serai having an Hauze or cistern of water, independent of the public reservoirs on either side of the bazars.

The residence of the prince is a mean building, of which nothing is seen except a common gateway with a Nokārā Khaneh above for the royal band of music, in front of which there is an open space.

* The reader who is curious to learn more respecting Herāt, will find in the 3d vol. of Price's History of Mahometanism, a detailed account of its principal buildings, as they stood at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, in the reign of Sooltaun Hoosseen Baicara, the great grandson of Timoor. Major Price translates from a still more detailed account contained in the Kholaussut-ul-Akbar of Khondemir; but as this consists of little more than an almost endless enumeration of magnificent buildings, mosques, medressas, and caravanserais, which would hardly be interesting to the general reader, I merely refer to the passage, which will be found at page 640 of the 3d vol. Nothing is said of the population or of the revenues of the empire of which Herāt was the capital; and as Khondemir was a native of that place, and high in the favour of the sovereign, and his liberal and enlightened minister, Allee Shere, there is reason to presume, that in drawing this picture of his native city, he has not made use of the least flattering or least brilliant colours. Certain it is, that whatever Herāt may have been in those days, its glories must have sadly departed; for whatever degree of prosperity it may have to boast of, we have but little of the superb and numerous edifices of which this author tells us, and most of which are not to be traced now even in ruins.

The Musjid-e-jumah *, or chief mosque, has been a magnificent edifice, ornamented with domes and minarets covered with lacquered tiles, and comprising, with its courts and reservoirs, an area of eight hundred yards square; but it is fast going to decay. The private buildings in Herāt, Captain Christie remarks, are by no means in the same situation; for no city has less ground unoccupied, or can boast of greater population for its extent. He estimates its inhabitants at about one hundred thousand, of which ten thousand are Affghauns, about six hundred Hindoos, a few Jews, and the remainder Moghuls †, &c. &c. The Hindoos, he adds, are rich and much respected.

The gardens of Herāt are very extensive; the Baugh Shahee, planted by the order of Timoor Shah Abdallee, and the Oordoo Shahee, as being places of public resort, are particularly mentioned; but they are now only attended to for their produce, which is sold in the bazar. An avenue of fir trees, a mile in length, leads to the former; adjoining to which are four minarets of a mosque, said to have been intended for the tomb of Imaum Reza, who, however, died near Mushed.

The information I collected, while it confirmed these accounts, tended to prove, that notwithstanding the various unfavourable revolutions which have desolated the country, Herāt continues to prosper; indeed, every one agreed in assuring me, that no place in Persia, except Ispahān, could at all compare with it in size or population.

Herāt owes its prosperity to the great commerce it enjoys, being the only channel of communication between the east and west of Asia; all the trade and produce of Caubul, Cashmere, and India from the one side, and of Bockhara, Persia, Arabia, Turkey, and even Europe on the other, must pass through this city, and, consequently, the richest productions of all these countries centre and are exchanged in its bazars. Its exports are silk, saffron, assafœtida, pistachio nuts, almonds, and dried fruits; its principal manufactures are silk stuffs of various sorts, only some of which are much

* Of this building, Khondemir gives a most magnificent and detailed account, it was repaired and beautified by his patron, Meer Allee Shere, A. Heg. 903. Its total length within the walls, is said to have been 466 feet; its breadth, 275 feet; it was surmounted by 408 domes or cupolas, and was supported on 454 *Pheel Payah* or columns (probably so called from resembling elephant's legs). It had six magnificent entrances; and the whole fabric was adorned in the most finished and elegant manner that the architects of the age could devise, with sculpture, mosaic of gold, azure, and various coloured stones, and painting of the most elaborate kind.

† The meaning of Captain Christie in using this appellation is not clear, but it is certainly inserted erroneously here. Moghuls are, in truth, a certain tribe of Tartars, very few of whom could possibly be in Herāt as part of its permanent population. Probably Captain Christie inserted this word in his journal somewhat loosely, annexing to it the same meaning which is given to it in Hindostan, where it is often applied to Mussoolmans in general, many of these being descendants from the Moghul conquerors of the country. The people Captain Christie meant to describe were most probably Persians, and the natural inhabitants of the country, Khorasānees.

esteemed; carpets both of silk and wool, celebrated and in high demand over all the East, for beauty of pattern and brilliancy of colour; sword blades and cutlery, the former of which are equal to those of Mushed, and owe their excellence to the same cause, the transportation of a colony of sword cutlers from Damascus, by Timoor Shah.

Besides abundance of the finest fruit trees, the mulberry bush is cultivated to a great extent in the gardens of Herāt for rearing silk worms; wheat and barley are plentiful; pasture of the best quality abounds in the mountains, and all the necessaries of life are cheap and plentiful. The assafœtida plant grows in great quantity upon the plains and hills all around the city.

The duties on merchandize, according to Captain Christie, are one ana, or one-sixteenth part of a rupee upon every twenty rupees-worth of merchandize sold in the city, levied upon the purchaser; there is likewise a toll of two rupees upon every camel's load that leaves it; and taxes are imposed upon all serais, shops, and gardens; the aggregate amount of all, is estimated at four and a half lacs of Persian rupees. *

The city of Herāt is of great celebrity as well as antiquity; it is mentioned by the earliest writers, and more than once served as a residence to the greatest conquerors of the East, and was the capital of their empire. † Shah Ismael, the first monarch of the Suffavean race, took the city and province from the descendants of the great Timoor, about the year of our Lord 1509; and it remained attached to the Persian crown until the celebrated Affghaun invasion, which put an end to the dynasty; when Herāt fell into their hands about the year 1715. It was retaken by Nadir Shah in 1731, but fell to the arms of Ahmed Shah Abdallee in 1749, and has ever since been the residence of an Affghaun prince. The government of Herāt was held by Timoor Shah Abdallee‡, in the lifetime of his father; at a later period it was conferred on Shah Mahmood, and subsequently on the brother of that monarch prince, Feeroze-u-deen, now usually termed Hadjee Feeroze Meerza, from his having performed the Hadj or pilgrimage to Mecca, at an

* Mr. Elphinstone observes, that the revenues of Herāt amount to 1,000,000 rupees; but this sum, no doubt, includes those of the districts attached to the city as well as those of the city itself.

† This city shared the fate of many others, the fairest of the East, when the murderous sword of Chengis Khan laid waste the greater part of Asia. It was at first spared by his son Tuli Khan; but certain of its inhabitants having rebelled, and put to death his officers and garrison, it was besieged, taken, and totally destroyed, A. Heg. 619-20. The slaughter was said to amount to the fearful aggregate of more than 1,600,000 persons, forty individuals alone escaping, by lurking among the ruins until their savage enemies had retired. The city was rebuilt by his son Octai Khan. It was taken by Timoor in person, by capitulation, after a gallant defence, A. Heg 783, and became the capital of his wise and virtuous son Shah Rokh.

‡ Timoor Shah was the son and successor of Ahmed Shah Abdallee, the founder of the Dooraunnee monarchy in Caubul.

early period of his life. In the revolutions that have taken place since the period to which Mr. Elphinstone's history descends, Herāt fell into the hands of Futeh Khan and his brothers, and finally into those of Shah Mahmood, and his son Camrān Meerza, being the only part of his once large dominions now in his possession, and for which he is fain to pay the king of Persia an annual subsidy, for the sake of quiet though nominal possession.

The history of the Doorāunee power in Caubul, from its rise under Ahmed Shah Abdallee, until the year 1809, when Shujah ool Moolk was yet struggling with his brother Mahmood, has been ably given by Mr. Elphinstone; and it is well known to those who have attended to the subject, that the contest ended unfavourably to Shah Shujah, who forced to fly before the rising fortunes of Mahmood, sought protection with Runjeet Sing, chief of the Sikhs; and after having been unworthily and inhospitably plundered by that prince, threw himself on the generosity of the British government, which afforded the royal fugitive an asylum at Loodheana.

Mahmood Shah, in the meantime, although acknowledged as king of Caubul, paid dearly for his success by the absolute control which was exercised over him by Futeh Khan, through whose assistance he gained the throne; this active but ambitious nobleman and his numerous relations became in fact rulers of the country, leaving to the king and his son Camrān Meerza, hardly the shadow of power.

Mr. Elphinstone observes, that Futeh Khan was a Barukzei, and the chief of that clan; according to the information I received, he was one of a very large family, his father having six wives, by whom he had twenty-one sons. * These brothers united in family interest, were spread over the country high in authority, and by their influence increased the power of their elder and chief, to a degree that none could venture to withstand.

I could not obtain a detailed account of the events which occurred for several years, during which the authority of Shah Mahmood was sustained throughout the kingdom by the influence of Futeh Khan, but in so imperfect a manner, that it was continually disturbed by rebellions; and its weakness

* The father's name was Poyundah Khan, Barukzei,
The sons' were

Futeh Khan,	Jumak Khan,
Timoor Koolee Khan,	Yar Mahomed Khan,
Mahomed Azēēm Khan,	Sooltaun Mahomed Khan,
Nawāb Assud Khan,	Peer Mahomed Khan,
Dost Mahomed Khan,	Poor dil Khan,
Ameer Mahomed Khan,	Sheer dil Khan,
Jubbar Khan. (It was he who lost Cashmere to the Sikhs),	Khon dil Khan,
Sunnud Khan,	Rhem dil Khan
	Mehr dil Khan

on the eastern frontier was such, that the Sikhs made alarming progress in the Punjāb.

Camrān Meerza who is described as of a fierce, tyrannical, and impatient disposition, had lived chiefly at his government of Candahar, with the king his father; they both viewed with an eye of desire the rich possession of Herāt, where Hadjee Feeroze had from the period of his return from Mecca quietly resided; taking no part in the disturbances of Caubul, and occasionally paying a small tribute to the king of Persia, as the price of tranquillity. This understanding with the reigning family of Persia awakened the jealousy of Shah Mahmood and his son, who sent Futeh Khan to gain possession of Herāt, and of the person of the prince, by any means whatever.

It may be presumed that this order was quite to the taste of Futeh Khan, who appears even to have entertained some enmity to the person of the Shahzadeh; he lost no time in proceeding to Herāt, and requesting a conference with the prince without the walls, treacherously seized him, while his followers, unexpectedly entering, surprised the town; not content with this, his property was plundered, his women, among whom was a daughter of Mahmood Shah, and wife of his son, were insulted, and even violated; and excesses of every kind were committed: the prince himself was sent prisoner to Candahar, and the town remained in the possession of Futeh Khan, who continued to reside there: but however jealous Shah Mahmood might have been of his brother Hadjee Feeroze, the affronts offered to the family in his person sunk deep in the minds of himself and his son, and they determined to avenge it.

Not long after, Mahomed Khan Karaoee of Toorbut, cherishing implacable, though concealed, resentment against the reigning family of Persia, for the murder of his father and brother, intrigued with Futeh Khan; inviting him to bring his Affghauns further into Khorasān: the wuzzeer, who had his own objects in view, and who knew that he should be joined by many malcontents, did not wait for instructions from Shah Mahmood, but raised a force upon his own authority, which joined by ten thousand disaffected Khorasānees, moved from Herāt upon the way to Mushed. To oppose this formidable armament, prince Hussun Allee Meerza (who is by no means deficient in personal courage,) could raise but six thousand men, with which he marched to meet his enemy; but although so far inferior in numbers, he possessed one advantage in a few pieces of artillery commanded by Furrookh Khan, topchee bashee *, who with the artillerists had been instructed in their duty by the English officers at Tabreez: the prince too was accompanied by Meerza Abdool Wahab, who, if not eminent in the field, is at least the first statesman in the service of the Persian monarch, and had been sent into

* Commandant of artillery.

Khorasān by the king, to effect the difficult task of bringing the province into order.

The armies met near Kaffer Kallah, three days' journey from Herāt; the Affghauns charged with impetuosity, and the prince's army soon began to give way; but the cannon which had been well posted, although it commenced firing at too great a distance, was also well served, and checked the advance of the enemy; from a deficiency of grape, the cannoneers made use of large bags of copper coin, one of which striking Futeh Khan upon the mouth, as he was urging on his men in front, threw him from his horse: those who saw him fall imagined that he was killed; the panic spread, and the gleam of victory which had broke upon the Affghaun army was instantly overcast; they fled in all directions; and though Futeh Khan soon recovering, remounted his horse and endeavoured to restore order, it was in vain; he was borne away by the tide of retreat, and forced to return to Herāt. The prince's army, however, reaped no advantage from the route of their enemies; the disorder that had commenced among them soon increased to a rapid flight, and the whole of them also were soon dispersed. The prince himself took refuge in Kaffer Kallah; and Meerza Abdool Wahab fled towards a body of men whom he took for friends, but who proved to be some hundreds of Hazārah horse belonging to Bunyad Beg, who had come at the request of Mahomed Khan Caraoee, but without any intention of taking part on either side; on the contrary, determined to await quietly the issue of the conflict, and plunder the beaten party, or act as circumstances might suggest. The Meerza was quickly seized, dismounted from his own fine horse, and placed upon a sorry Yaboo, in which situation he was brought to Bunyad Beg. He, however, found means so to improve the accident that he gained the confidence of that chief; and so far effected a negociation between him and the prince, that had the latter listened to the councils of this able and upright minister, Bunyad Beg, instead of continuing to be a plunderer and rebel, would, in all probability, have become a peaceable subject and a useful servant. *

* The Meerza, who from his well-known character for integrity had gained great influence among the rude chiefs of this province, succeeded in bringing many of them to terms of allegiance upon certain conditions, for the fulfilment of which, by the prince, he pledged himself. It was upon the same conditions that Bunyad Beg, listening to his arguments, was induced to desist from certain hostile measures which he had in view, and even to give up some advantages which he had gained. The prince, however, faithless to his word, took many of these chiefs at an advantage, and succeeded in reducing them to temporary obedience by force: but Meerza Abdool Wāhāb, full of indignation at this conduct, informed the prince that he should warn Bunyad Beg of his danger, which he accordingly did; but that chief, probably not taking sufficient precaution, was discomfited, and forced to fly to the hills. Meerza Abdool Wāhāb then left Khorasān, and protesting against the conduct of the prince, and disavowing in the strongest way he could, all concern in his measures, returned to Tehrān.

Sometime afterward the prince wrote a letter to Meerza Abdool Wāhāb, but he would not receive it; he even returned it unopened in the presence of all his people; for he would not, he

This event seems to have been the turning point of Futeh Khan's fate, his good fortune deserted him, and returned no more. Mahomed Khan, disgusted at the authority assumed by his wuzzeer, and incensed at the affront he had offered or permitted towards the royal family, dispatched his son Camrān to Herāt, with orders to seize the city and the wuzzeer, if possible. The prince, who was a most ready instrument for such a purpose, reached Herāt without delay, and strange as it no doubt appears, succeeded in enticing Futeh Khan without the walls, and in seizing him as he had done to Prince Hadjee Feeroze. I never could learn any further particulars respecting the seizure of Futeh Khan, still less could any one account for the want of common caution that occasioned it. "It was his fate," said all to whom I spoke, "and the victims of fate, when their hour comes, rush with eyes open into the snare."

The prince, when Futeh Khan was brought before him, upbraided him with his conduct, and particularly with his unwarrantable attempt upon Khorasān; an attempt that had ended so disgracefully to the Affghaun arms. To this the wuzzeer only replied, that he had acted to the best of his judgment for his majesty's interest, and was not master of events. The order was then given to deprive him of his eyes, and this was executed on the spot.

The wuzzeer's brothers, Poordil Khan, Mehrdil Khan, and Kohndil Khan, were in Herāt when this took place; the former was taken, but the other two drawing their swords, rushed out, and seizing the first horses they met, bore down all opposition and fled. Poordil Khan was ordered for immediate execution; but his earnest assertions of innocence prevailed, and the prince, after giving him a khelut, permitted him to depart, and he immediately joined his brothers.

These brothers now had no occasion to preserve appearances with Mahmood Shah; each flew to his strong hold; and the kingdom was speedily in rebellion. Mahomed Azēēm Khan, Timoor Khan, and Sunnud Khan, who had remained in Caubul, set up the Shahzadeh Ayoob Meerza, a descendant of Timoor Shah, as a pageant of royalty, and proclaimed him king. Yar Mahomed Khan, governor of Peshawur, held that place independently; Rehmdil Khan established himself in Shikarpore, and Poordil Khan, Sheerdil Khan, Kohndil Khan, and Mehrdil Khan, set up another descendant of Timoor Shah Abdallee, as heir to the throne: the bond of union that had

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declared, permit even the appearance of holding any communication with a man, whatever might be his rank, who had falsified *his* word as well as his own, and had been the occasion of his being dishonoured and branded as a deceiver: he never would again interfere in the affairs of Khorasān, unless the prince, seeing his folly, should give up the government; and that then, as a servant of the king, he should be ready to act as might be most expedient for his sovereign's interest.

kept the brothers together was broken, and each individual, or party of them, pursued a separate interest. But though the country was thus divided and intrinsically weakened, Shah Mahmood and his son were too unpopular and too inconsiderate to avail themselves of these occurrences; they set off for Caubul, and on hearing of the preparations against them which they had no means of resisting, they endeavoured to prevail on the blind Futeh Khan whom they always carried along with them, to use his influence in forcing his relations to return to their allegiance; but he refused to take any concern in their affairs. "When I had my eyes," said he, "by them you saw; the light they gave led you to a throne, and maintained you there; you have deprived me of them, I am now useless, and you are weak; I can no longer support and guide you, and you will fall." His continued refusal at last so provoked the king and his son, that they ordered the blind man to be tortured, and then to be put to death; some say, that the act was performed by them in person; that enraged at his obstinate resistance of their commands, they fell upon him and deliberately hacked him in pieces.

The consequence of their improvident conduct was easily to be calculated; unable to make any head against the rebels, Mahmood and his son were driven by degrees from all their dominions, except Herāt and its dependencies; to which, when I was in Mushed, they had been for some time confined, and they pay to the crown of Persia a small annual tribute for the privilege of remaining there unmolested. Prince Camrān, far from being schooled by adversity, continues to act in so arbitrary and tyrannical a manner, that the trade of the town has been considerably injured: he exacts large sums of money from travellers; occasionally plunders caravans; and not long ago seized a consignment of shawls and other goods belonging to a merchant of Ispahan, worth, as the owner himself informed me, full thirty thousand tomauns.

When Mahmood Shah was forced to quit Candahar, Hadjee Feeroze Meerza made his escape, and fled; first to Bhirjoon and Kayn, then to Toorbut Hyderee, where he staid but a short while, and subsequently to Mushed, where he arrived, while I was there, a wretched fugitive, destitute of almost every thing, forced to depend upon the precarious and very limited bounty of Hussun Allee Meerza. He is an old and very infirm man, seldom going out, and admitting but very few people. I was very desirous of visiting him and conversing with his attendants, but found that so jealous a watch was kept, and that such alarm might be taken, and even such unpleasant consequences ensue from any attempt of the kind, that I was forced most unwillingly to abandon the idea of it, and gather as I could from one or two of the people the particulars I have related. I was given to understand, that there were several more descendants of Shah Timoor, as well as of other princes at this time in Mushed, which the Persians them-

selves, with their usual arrogance, affect to call the "asylum of fugitive princes."

Before I quitted Persia, intelligence was received from Mushed that prince Hadjee Feeroze had prevailed with Hussun Allee Meerza, once more to try his fortune against Herāt, in order to recover it for him from Shah Mahmood; that four thousand men had been provided by the prince and the authorities at Mushed, which, increased by two thousand Timoorees under Killidge Khan, and the junction of other petty chiefs upon the road, to the amount of eight thousand men, had marched for Herāt, full of sanguine hope. Bunyad Beg of Hazārah, however, got wind of the expedition, and being on terms of good understanding with the Herātees, having also a blood feud with Killidge Khan, glad too of any means to distress the reigning family, and not averse to avail himself of an opportunity that promised plunder, he gave notice to Shah Mahmood and his son of the preparations that were going on; advising them when the enemy should appear, to come out as if to give battle, but soon to give way, and make a feint of retreat; when he, who would hover near the field with two thousand horse, would fall on the rear of the Persians, when disordered by the pursuit, and who placed thus between two fires would easily be destroyed.

There is little doubt that Bunyad Beg was encouraged and assisted in this plan by Mahomed Khan Karaoee of Toorbut: the arrangement proposed by him was strictly followed, and the statagem appears to have succeeded better than these things frequently do; the horsemen of Bunyad, which had dogged the prince's army at a safe distance, fell upon the Persians with a shout; the Affghauns rallied, and the former confounded at the double and unexpected attack, were cut to pieces. Four thousand men were killed on the field, among whom was Killidge Khan himself, slain it was said by the hand of his inveterate foe, Bunyad Beg; fifteen hundred were made prisoners, and not more than fifteen hundred made good their retreat to Mushed. Such was the account that reached Tabreez; it is possible that the loss may have been overstated, but there can be no doubt that the attempt miscarried; and it is seldom that the disasters of a despotic monarch are exaggerated in his own country, almost in his own court.

Ghourian or Ghorian, is the name of a district and considerable town, west-north-west from Herāt; between thirty and forty miles on the road to Mushed; the town is situated in a fertile country, and with the district yields to the government of Herāt a revenue of fifty thousand tomauns. The capital of this district was once Ahengerān, a fortified town, the hereditary governors of which, till the time of Bahram Shah Ghiznavee, were said to be descendants of Zohāk, so celebrated in the ancient history of Persia; it is further said, that the town never fell into the hands of the Arab conquerors of Khorasān; and there is in the district, a fort called Chōnār, so strong, that they assert in the country, it never was taken except by Solomon

the son of David. Of this district neither Captain Christie, nor Mr. Forster make much mention; but the latter observes, that he saw there *wind-mills* on the same construction as those in Europe.

About twelve or fourteen miles on from Ghoriān is the ruinous fort of Kaffer Kallah, to which the Prince Hussun Allee Meerza fled after his rencounter with Futeh Khan. There is no other place worthy of remark from thence to the town of Toorbut Sheikh Ahmed-e-Jāmee; a great part of the road lies through a desert country, and on the right hand are seen the mountains of Kohistan.

Toorbut, about half way between Mushed and Herāt, is the chief town of a fertile and well peopled district called Jām; and is chiefly remarkable as being the birth-place of the poet Jami *, author of the poem of Yussuff and Zuleika, whose tomb may here be seen. Tradition also speaks of a saint or sage to whom this place gave birth, and whose memory and story, as well as his name, was in some degree confounded, in my informant's relation, with those of the celebrated poet. He is said to have been cotemporary with Hudjaje ibn Yussuff, an Arab commander of great celebrity in the early days of Mahometanism, and who greatly esteemed this person. The circumstances which occasioned the death of this eminent saint or sooffee † (for such we are told he was), afford a curious proof of the superstitious reverence in which this class of half-devotees, half-infidels were held, and of the extraordinary powers attributed to them in the earliest times. Hudjaje ‡, the Arab

* Ahmed-e-Jami (or of Jam) flourished in the fifteenth century, dying about the year 1486; he was contemporary with Sooltaun Hoossain Baicāra a prince of the descendants of Timoor, who reigned in Khorasān, and whose capital was the city of Herāt. This celebrated poet and sage was author of many works of high estimation. His romance of Yussuff and Zuleika, so much admired in the East, is taken, as is well known, from the story of the Patriarch Joseph and Potiphar's wife.

† The celebrity of this person (whose name I cannot distinctly make out) for sanctity and austerity of prayer and fasting, was exceedingly great. He is said to have passed days, and even weeks, in a desert, absorbed in contemplation, and without food. One of his friends having written him a long letter, which from his holy occupations he found himself unable to answer, he requested another of his friends who was by to do it for him, commending himself to his correspondent, and beseeching him to occupy himself with thoughts of God, and not in writing vain and unprofitable letters. His sanctity gave him the power of working miracles, and dominion over most of the animate and inanimate world. On a certain day, a follower of his having called at his house, found only his wife (who, like the spouse of Socrates, was a shrew, and) who abusing him, told him to go about his business, for that her vagabond husband was abroad in the desert: the disciple went thither, and soon met the saint bringing home a load of wood bound upon a lion, which he was driving with a large snake instead of a whip. He told his follower that he knew where he had been, and all his wife had said, adding, that she was always thus ill-disposed; "but," said he, "although she abuses and maltreats me, I am the more patient and kind to her, the worse she is to me." In consequence of the circumstance related in the text which occasioned his death, the saints' name was afterwards distinguished by the epithet, "Zindeh-Pheel, or Animater of the Elephant."

‡ This chief was notorious for his severity, and, indeed, for his blood-thirstiness and cruelty. Many anecdotes illustrative of his character are given by D'Herbelot, in his valuable Oriental

commander, being incapable of riding on horse-back, in consequence of a natural defect, made use of an elephant to carry him. This elephant chancing to die, and Hudjaje being thereby put to much inconvenience, he sent to the saint, whose reputation for working miracles was high, and desired that he might exert his power to restore the animal to life. The saint long resisted his importunities, but at last consented, adding, "My time I see is come; I foresaw that this act should cause my death; and sought to avoid it, but it may not be: I shall be put to death, and you yourself will give orders for my execution." "That," replied the astonished chief, "can never be; I admire and respect you; you are to do me a service; how then can it be that I should be the author of your death?" The saint merely replied, that it was in vain to struggle against destiny; that which was written would come to pass, however mortals might strive against it; and, with these words he approached the carcase of the elephant, and called with a loud voice, "In the name of God, arise!" but the animal continued lifeless. "In the name of God's prophet," repeated he, "arise!" but the elephant still paid no attention, and the saint lost his temper; "Then," said he (giving it at the same time a kick with his foot) "in my own name, I say, arise!" This effort was successful; the elephant arose in life, and the chief rejoiced; but the Moollahs and doctors of the law cried out, "He is an infidel, he is an infidel! he has sinned against the faith, and must die." The saint being called on for his defence, could urge nothing against the award, so that Hudjaje, who was a rigid Mussoolman, did not dare to protect him, and he was put to death. His tomb, an huge slab of marble, is situated in a large garden of Pistachio-nut trees, not far from the fort of Jam, which is much resorted to by the inhabitants, as a place for meditation as well as of recreation.

Between Toorbut-e-Jamee and Mushed there is nothing deserving of notice.

The next division of the country that claims attention, according to the order we have pursued, is that to the east and north of Mushed.

Serrukhs*, the remains of a very ancient town, is situated on the north

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Dictionary. He was a rigid Mussoolman, but intolerant of hypocrisy and cant; a disposition which he is said to have evinced in a very bloody manner towards the multitude of pretenders to the sacred distinction of Seyed, or the descendants of the prophet. It is said that he published throughout his dominions that it was his intention to make a large distribution of charity among this holy tribe. and to that end solicited their presence on a particular day. The real Seyeds either having intimation of what was to happen, or suspecting it, kept away; but the impostors flocked in great numbers to the snare which was most fatally spread for them; for the ruthless chief ordered a general massacre, and the multitude was so great, that, according to the current tale, a mill constructed for the purpose ground three maunds of corn by the stream formed of the blood which flowed from their bodies.

* The fort of Serrukhs is said to have been built by Afraziāb, but is now, I believe, a mere ruin. It is mentioned continually as a place of importance in the various struggles which this part of Asia has witnessed.

slope of the hills, about one hundred and twenty miles east-north-east of Mushed, the road to it passing through a country only inhabited by a few wandering tribes. It is the principal residence of Hakim Khan, chief of a branch of the Sullur or Salera tribe, many of whom pitch their tents around the few inhabited houses that remain. A few Oozbecks, and merchants of various countries have settled there, and furnish the tribes with such articles as they require, in return for the surplus produce of their flocks and looms.

Serrukhs being upon the principal road from Mushed to Bockhara and Balkh, caravans from all these places generally pass through it, and even those from Khyvah, when they go by the way of Mero, frequently make the angle, and take this route. It is a great mart for horses and camels, and there are fairs held at stated times where may be had the choicest animals from the best breeds in the desert.

Hakim Khan and his clan pay a nominal and very imperfect obedience to the Persian authorities at Mushed; but he possesses little influence with his own people, and the best security for their conduct is the residence of several members of the principal families in Mushed and Tehrān; but in spite of this, they frequently join in predatory excursions with other tribes, and it would not be easy to their prove delinquency, while it might be impolitic to urge them to open rebellion by using violence to their hostages.

The road from Serrukhs to Balai Moorghaub leads for more than an hundred and twenty miles through a mountainous and desert country, inhabited by none save by the wildest Eels. From the description I could obtain, the district of that name appears to consist of a valley with its tributary glens; in the upper or south-eastern part of which the river Moorghaub takes its rise. There are several villages in these vallies, but they are poor, and rather form fixed points, around which the wanderers of these savage regions occasionally collect and cultivate a little land, than a regular establishment occupied constantly by peaceable inhabitants. The fort of Moorghaub is remarkable neither for size or strength; it belongs to Bunyad Beg, chief of the Hazārahs, but he lives in Kallah-nō, or the new fort which he lately took from the Timoorees.

The greatest portion of that very little known tract, which has upon the north the great desert, the province of Balkh on the east, the districts of Mushed, Toorbut, Ghoriān, and Herāt, upon the west and south-west, and those of Subzawur, and part of Candahār on the south, including a large part of the Paropamisan hills, is thinly inhabited by the Timooree, the Feerozekooee, Jumsheedee, and Hāzārah tribes; according to one of my informants (Adinaverdee Khān, of the Salera tribe), all these are but subdivisions of great tribe called Ymucks, the respective strengths of which were stated to be as follows: the Feerozekooees consists of about 26,000 families, their chief, Bahram Khan, resides at Beloolh, near the district of Moorghaub; the Jum-

sheedees reckon 12,000 families, the name of their chief, Derweshān; the Timoorees amount to 20,000 families, their chief, Killidge Khan, resided at Mushed while I was there, in the service of the prince, who owed his obedience to the enmity he bore to Bunyad Beg, for he appears to have dreaded that chief, although his tribe (the Hāzārahs) do not amount to more than 4,000 families.

Our route lying through the districts to the west of Mushed, viz. Semnoon, Damghān, Shahrood, Muzeenoon, Subsawār, and Nishapore, they will each be particularly described as they occur; but, as the tract to the north of the line which these occupy is, from its position, of considerable importance to Persian Khorasān, and is interesting in other respects, I shall endeavour to make the reader acquainted with it, preparatory to passing through the country.

When Shah Abbas, the first of Persia, had reduced the greater part of his dominions to subjection, he, as a measure of policy, calculated to preserve tranquillity, and to weaken the power of troublesome or arrogant tribes, occasionally, upon various alleged grounds, transplanted a colony from one part of the kingdom to another.

The province of Khorasān was at all times liable to the incursions of hostile tribes, particularly on the northern frontier, from which quarter the Oozbeck princes, or the Toorkoman tribes, were ever dispatching marauding parties to plunder the country, and carry its inhabitants into slavery. With a view to check these depredations, and to protect the more peaceable part of the population, the king determined to transplant from the Turkish frontier 40,000 families of Koords, and to settle them upon this northern frontier of Khorasān: 15,000 of these were actually removed, but some of the chiefs becoming aware of the intention of Abbas to weaken their power, resisted, and that monarch either could not, or did not choose to compel their obedience. That portion which had been removed were settled in the district bordering on the desert whence the plunderers made their attacks; comprehending the series of vallies that extend within the Elburz range, from a point near Chinnarān, to the district of Astrabad, a country not dissimilar to their native land, well suited to a pastoral people, but abundantly fruitful if cultivated. The chiefs of the transplanted tribes held these lands at first upon condition of repelling the incursions of the Toorkomans, and keeping the frontier free of enemies; and this duty their habits well fitted them to perform; but ere long their own turbulent dispositions made them such troublesome subjects, that the governor of the province was forced to apply to the king for orders regarding his rebellious colonists. He was ordered, in reply, to constitute by royal authority the most powerful of their chiefs, head of all, by the title of Eelkhāneh *, or lord of the Eels: to make him answerable for

* Or Eelkhānee.

the conduct of the rest, and to give the other chiefs importance and responsibility in proportion to the influence they might be found to possess.

It appears, however, that these Koords continued always prone to rebellion and strife: they even braved the wrath of Nadir Shah; and that monarch appears to have used conciliatory rather than harsh means to control them, and even to have carried his favour and countenance so far, as to take a daughter of the Eelkhāneh's to wife. This, however, had not the desired effect; for when Nadir was absent in the west, during his Turkish wars, the Koords again became so rebellious, that the king in his wrath swore to exterminate the race; and he arrived within a few miles of Kabooshān with that intent, when he was murdered in his tent the night before he was to commence putting his threats in execution.

These Koords, like their brethren of the west, were formerly simple in their manners, and rude in their habits; but their more settled modes of life, and the various temptations to which they have been exposed, have by degrees taught them wants, and removed all scruple as to the means of supplying them. An old Koord, speaking to me of the change which in his memory had taken place in the habits of his nation, observed, "We were in former days hardy soldiers, frugal in our personal expences, but liberal to our retainers, and hospitable to our guests; our food was bread and sour milk, with the produce or the flesh of our flocks rudely prepared; when we travelled, no greater preparation was thought of than a numud for our horse and another for ourselves; we went from tent to tent, sure of plenty and welcome; in these tents we had always a warm side for a friend: it was our phrase to say, that there were two doors, one for our friends to enter by, and one by which we left it to meet our foe, that strife might not be within the walls. We had few possessions besides our flocks, our horses, and our arms; in these two last lay all our pride. Money and jewels were unknown among us until the days of Nadir: when that king was murthered, and his camp plundered, the peacock throne and the tent of pearls fell into our hands, and were torn in pieces and divided on the spot, although our chiefs themselves little knew their value; many of us threw away the pearls as useless, and our soldiers, ignorant of the value of gold, offered their yellow money in exchange for a lesser quantity of silver or copper. * From this time, the wisest of us date the fall of our character and our fondness for plunder; and the cruelty and rapacity of the Kadjers have made bad worse. We have abandoned our tents, and must have walled villages and fine houses; we must have fine clothes and glittering ornaments; of late, even pillaws and rich dishes have been seen at our meals, and our chiefs and nobles, instead of protecting their poor vassals, have become rapacious and haughty."

* This will bring to mind the expressions used on a similar occasion, when the rude Arab conquerors of Persia first saw its gold. Instances of this sort, illustrative of national or individual poverty and simplicity, are not unfrequent.

There is much of truth in the old man's observations; the habits of the country have changed with the times; although it is much to be feared that the Koords never were precisely the upright and disinterested people he fain would have made them out to be; situated in a border district, and naturally warlike and active, when not struggling with external foes they were ever ready to encroach upon their sovereign, their governors, or each other; under a peaceful king they were rebellious and turbulent; more warlike monarchs recruited from their hordes. Thus totally removed from scenes of grandeur and riches, they for the most part remained simple, like their ancestors; but when the court of a powerful monarch, glittering with the riches and spoils of India, was brought into their close vicinity, their eyes were opened, and subsequent events completed the change. They still retain a blunt simplicity of manner, and love of hospitality; but circumstances have destroyed much of the good that may originally have belonged to their character, and the majority are now little less interested, deceitful, cold blooded, and cruel, than the other inhabitants of Persia. They are less observant of polite or ceremonious forms, but are more cordial in their modes of salutation: when equals meet they make use of the *Bughulgeeree*, or embracing and kissing the cheek; they take the hand of a superior, and sometimes kissing it, carry their own to the heart: in other respects their habits and customs differ little from those of other Persians. In appearance, too, there is little dissimilarity between them and the other inhabitants of Khorasān; wild and uncouth, but ruddy and robust, perhaps a shade darker, they dress for the most part in the common Persian costume; in a brown or grey gown of coarse woollen stuff, with trowsers and girdle of various coloured cotton cloths; they use caps of all fashions, most commonly those formed rudely of sheep-skin, with the wool outwards; frequently a sort made of cotton quilted stuff, consisting of a round skull-cap, with a band four inches broad, is worn by the lower orders: poosteens or cloaks made of sheep-skins are worn by all ranks, and of all degrees of fineness, and the brown Khorasānee jubba or cloak forms a very common and excellent defence against the weather. The Toorkomans, too, bring in barter plenty of their gowns formed of camels' hair, or of silk and cotton stripe.

There were in this district originally five Koordish states; Chinnarān, Baum or Meānabad, Kabooshan, Dereguz, and Boojnoord; at present the three last mentioned alone remain.

Chinnarān was once of consequence, and its chief, Mammush Khan, of the Zafferanloo tribe, in the troubles after the death of Nadir Shah, was powerful and celebrated in these parts: he was brave, and possessed a considerable and well organized military force, with which he kept the country around in awe, and held out the fort of Chinnarān for seven months against the Affghauns of Ahmed Shah Abdallee, who desired to reduce it under obedience of Shah Rokh, the grandson of Nadir. He had a breed of horses

particularly celebrated for their strength and swiftness, two of which, more remarkable than the rest, it is said, were ridden every day during the siege to Mushed, a distance of forty miles, and back, to communicate with his friends and bring intelligence; nor could all the efforts of the enemy succeed in preventing or capturing them. This breed of horses continued to be long preserved in the country; and although, by the time I passed through it, it was extinct, still its fame survived, and the horses of Mammush Khan continued to be remembered as the *ne plus ultra* of good and noble steeds.

Mammush Khan preserved his independence during his life, but he had no sons; and his two nephews, who succeeded him, appear to have inherited neither their uncle's abilities nor independent spirit. They were persuaded to go to Tehrān and throw themselves upon the clemency of the king, who blinded them, and sent them back to their government. Hussun Khan, another nephew, then seized on the place, and putting his cousins to death, attempted to establish himself in their room; but being ill supported, he fell into the hands of the reigning family, and, with Khojah Khan, chief of Radcan, a retainer of the family, was sent prisoner to Sheerauz, where he still remains.

Kurreem Khan, a fourth nephew, had fled to Herāt; but the prince of Mushed, of late, feeling the necessity of giving a chief to this branch of the Zafferanloo tribe, if only as a counterbalance to the power of the other Koordish chiefs, recalled Kurreem Khan, and re-established him in Chinnarān and its dependencies, on condition of keeping up two hundred horse for service; and he now resides there, a retainer of the royal family, without either power or respectability. The fort of Chinnarān was destroyed, when it fell into the power of the royal family, and the town has followed it into complete decay.

Baum and Meanabad with their dependencies Sooffeeabad and Sooltaun Meydān, &c. &c., formed a state of less importance; its last possessor was Saadut Koolee Khan, who falling into the king's power, was sent to Tehrān, and poisoned by his order: his nephew was placed there as governor in his room, but at the time I was in Khorasān he too had rebelled, and (in the phrase of the country) was "yaghee".* Baum is a miserable little village; Meanabād is of greater extent, though not much less ruinous: near it are the ruins of an old city called Isferian, founded, as tradition tells, by Afrasiāb; I could not visit it, but was informed that some extensive heaps of ruins may yet be seen; and two fragments of minārs, under one of which the superstition of the country has supposed a treasure belonging to one of the preadamite kings, guarded by a dragon that vomits fire, which may be seen by men every Thursday night (Shub-e-Jumah). Sool-

* The word Yaghee, which is Toorki (rebellious), is applied to such chiefs as refuse their obedience and homage to government, even though they accompany this refusal with no violent act of rebellion. It is best rendered, perhaps, by the English word *refractory*.

taun Meydan and Sooffeeabad, are both considerable villages, and the district is capable of being well cultivated.

Of the Koordish states that remain, as well as those that have fallen, Kabooshān (commonly called Cochoon) has always been considered as the principal; the title of Eelkhaneh was originally given to its chief, and has descended in the family to its present representative, Reza Koolee Khan.

I could gather little worth recording of the family, until the time of Meer Goonah Khan; his father Mahomed Hoossain Khan resided at Sheerwān, a fortress of considerable strength near the western part of his dominions; but Meer Goonah Khan, finding that place not sufficiently centrical, removed his residence to Kabooshan where the Eelkhaneh now always resides. This chief, of a generous and warlike disposition, kept up a military establishment which his means could never have supported without the resources of rapine and plunder so universal in the country; he laid all the surrounding country of the Kadjers under contribution, and waged continual war with the Toorkomans of the desert, from whom he took much property and many prisoners. Besides the troops he could always command upon emergency, he maintained a body of twelve hundred horsemen equipped and mounted at his own expence, of which five hundred were completely clothed in armour, and furnished with horses of superior strength: with these he ever and anon made incursions so rapid and unexpected, that he baffled the vigilance and celerity even of these desert tribes, and became the object at once of their terror and bitterest enmity.

About twenty years ago, the tribe of Tuckeh Toorkomans resolved to attack this chief, and came in great force, bringing their wives and families; and they sat down around the old town of Mehīne upon the Attock, at that time belonging to Meer Goonah Khan, determined to destroy it, and carry its inhabitants into slavery. The chief was at Cochoon when the news of this attack was brought to him; and he instantly dispatched messengers for assistance to Hoossain Khan, Sirdār at Mushed, and to Begler Khan of Dereguz; but as he received only excuses from these quarters, he was forced to go alone to the relief of Mehīne with what force he could at the moment command, not exceeding eight hundred men, among whom however were the greatest part of his *corps d'elite*. He sent notice to the town of his approach, and mentioning the time by which he hoped to reach it, ordered a sally to be made upon the enemy by the garrison, while he should attack them in the rear. The intelligence, however, was so ill preserved, that the garrison did not obey the orders they had received until a day too late, so that Meer Goonah Khan was received by the undivided Toorkoman force, who cut his party to pieces, almost to a man; between six and seven hundred of his best and bravest being killed on the spot, while their master with great difficulty escaped. The garrison fared no better; their sally was met by

their enemies, flushed with success, and every soul was put to death or taken prisoner: the town has ever since remained in possession of the tribe, and the power of Meer Goonah Khan received a shock which it never quite recovered; for though in time he recruited his armies, he could not replace the complete equipment of arms and horses that were lost, and still less the faithful and chosen servants who had fallen.

Some time after, the same tribe of Toorkomans in like manner attacked Begler Khan, and summoned his chief town, Dereguz, expecting to succeed as they did at Mehīne; but Meer Goonah Khan scorned to repay that chief's ill conduct in kind; he instantly sent to assure him of aid, adding, "It is true you refused it in the hour of need to me, but I will never see a neighbour in distress without an attempt to succour him!" This message he followed up in person with all the troops he could muster, with which he relieved Dereguz, and forced the Toorkomans to fly to the desert.

This chief, in the latter part of his life, became cruel and capricious, putting to death his dependents, and even the chiefs of the Eels, on the slightest pretences; he even became jealous of his son, Reza Koolee Khan; and, as they pretend, wished to lay hold of him to put him to death; but the young man, attended by his friend Meerza Reza (his present minister), fled to Sheerwān; where he remained a year, during which time the father became so odious from his tyranny, that his son was induced to proceed to Cochoon, declare him deranged, and taking him prisoner, by the assistance of the people to assume the government of affairs. This occurred about seven years before I visited Cochoon. Meer Goonah Khan, after a short imprisonment at that place, was sent to Sheerwān, where, about three years afterward, he died a natural death.

About two years after, the present king of Persia entered Khorasān with a large army, intending to reduce the rebellious chieftains to obedience, and to regulate the affairs of the province; and, perhaps, believing that the youth and inexperience of Reza Koolee Khan afforded him a good opportunity for gaining possession of Cochoon, he laid siege to that town at a time when its master was absent at Toorbut, endeavouring to effect a pacification between Mahomed Khan Karaoee of that place, and Bunyad Beg Hazārah; and the country remained in a very unprotected state. But although the multitude of men and cattle which his majesty brought along with him destroyed the whole harvest, and committed all manner of outrage in the country around, they failed of making any impression upon Cochoon. The wuzzeer Meerza Reza, in hope of effecting some sort of accommodation with the king, went and waited on his majesty in his camp; but he was seized and detained. In the meantime, Reza Koolee Khan, aware of what had happened, made a circuit to avoid the royal army, and reached Sheerwān; from whence, being unable openly to resist the force opposed to him, he wrote the king to say, that he was quite disposed to obedience, and that if his majesty would but

release his minister to act as his envoy, he trusted that an accommodation might soon be effected. The king, who by this time probably saw that he was neither likely to gain honour or profit by the expedition, took the khan at his word, and released Meerza Reza; but the khan, whose only object was to obtain the release of his minister, was about to send a defiance to his majesty, when Meerza Reza, less hasty and more politic, persuaded him to temporize, and by conciliatory means to rid the land of the great army that was destroying it. He accordingly returned to the king, excusing the khan for not attending in person, but tendering hostages for his fidelity, upon condition of his majesty's retiring from the country: the terms were agreed to, the wives of Meerza Reza, and of his brother Meerza Caussim, with Meerza Selēēm, son of the former, were delivered up, and the king with his army departed. The truce, however, was clearly considered on both sides as but a mean for saving appearances; for Meerza Selēēm, at the instance of the Moatimud-u-Doulut, was soon permitted to return from Tehrān, and the ladies were only sent to Mushed; whither also went the Eelkhaneh himself, remaining in attendance on the prince, until the latter, either convinced of his good dispositions, or seeing no end in longer retaining them, released the women at the khan's request. Some time afterwards he departed for Cochoon on pretence of making certain needful arrangements there; since when he has neither attended on the prince, nor paid any thing to the king beyond a present of a few horses, or sheep-skin pelisses, at the time of the Noe Roz.

The prince, supplied by the king with an army, has, since then, made another attempt to reduce Reza Koolee Khan; but after desolating the country for fifty days, he was forced to retire without effecting any thing; and though an attack has every year since been threatened, the whole has ended in a treaty effected within this last year, which includes all the Koordish states.

The possessions of Reza Koolee Khan extend from the village of Begnuzzur on the south-east, to those of Feerozah, Germ-Ab, and Goolphooloo, bordering on the Tuckeh Toorkomans, in the north-west; a length of about 130 miles, and varying in breadth with the hills that inclose them, from 20 to 40 miles. According to the best accounts I could collect, this tract contains a population of twenty-five or thirty thousand families of various tribes, among which the Koords predominate; two-thirds of these are Eels, living in tents, the rest have fixed habitations in towns and villages.

The town of Cochoon, or Kabooshan, contains at present about 4,000 families, or from fifteen to twenty thousand souls. The present town can boast of no antiquity, but the ruinous old castle which occupied part of its site when Meer Goonah Khan removed thither from Sheerwān, had been undoubtedly of some consequence; for in digging the foundations of a building within it, a small collection of pearls, and other property in jewels was found,

of fabric very different from those of the present day, and denoting its possessor to have been opulent; and the year before I arrived, when, by the Eelkaneh's order, a ditch was dug round the walls of Cochoon, the workmen discovered a smith's shop under ground, in which were found a number of steel caps, sword blades, and other pieces of offensive and defensive armour. I could not see any of these things: the jewels had long since passed into the possession of others, and the armour had been made use of. The ark or citadel now occupies the site of the old castle, which was attributed to Ghebres.

When Meer Ghoonah Khan removed his residence from Sheerwān to Cochoon, he built the present walls, which are from ten to twelve feet thick, and flanked with numerous towers; his son Reza Koolee Khan has lately strengthened the fortifications by adding a deep dry ditch, the earth of which is thrown up like a fosse-braye to protect the wall, so that he may safely bid defiance to the king's power, however large a force he may bring against him.

Sheerwān, about two and thirty miles to the north-west of Cochoon, is greatly smaller than the latter, though populous; it has a raised citadel, and is surrounded by a wall and ditch, but the fortifications are not nearly so complete as those of Cochoon.

The income of the Eelkhaneh arises from the duties collected in the town, those collected from his vassals, whether Eels or villagers who cultivate the ground, and the revenues he derives from his private landed property. The first consists of about 1,000 Khorasānee * tomauns, raised by tax upon 300 shops and 4,000 houses, of which the town consists; this assessment is distributed among the householders in proportion to their known ability, a strict account of which is purposely kept. From the cultivators of land he receives but 5,000 Khorasānee tomauns, levied chiefly upon the yokes of oxen employed, and 6,000 more are gathered from the Eelhaut population. From his own lands he receives about 2,000 Khorasānee tomauns, making an aggregate of 14,000 Khorasānee tomauns, or 280,000 reals of Irāk, which is said to be the amount of his income.

His sources of outlay are not trifling. Though he continues to avoid paying any regular tribute to the king, the presents he finds it politic to make, to guarantee his country from invasion, those he must give occasionally to the Toorkoman tribes, the chiefs of Koordistan, and even to his principal Eels, all of whom must be kept in good humour, amount to no inconsiderable sum; then the expences of his family, officers and servants, great and small, are very heavy; as an instance, his minister Meerza Reeza receives no stated salary, but his family, which is a very large one, expend not less than 4,000 Khorasānee tomauns a-year, all of which is drawn from the khan's treasury.

* A Khorasānee tomaun is worth two and a half of Irāk, or twenty Irāk rupees.

Large sums are also expended in the purchase and keep of horses, which, including those he gives away in presents, amount fully to three or four thousand Khorasānee tomauns; these, with repairs of fortifications, the occasional erection of public buildings, and many other incidental but inevitable items, form an aggregate of not less than twenty to twenty-five thousand Khorasānee tomauns a year, in the time of peace; and when he is engaged in war with the Toorkomans or the king, it is said to be nearly double. This statement of accounts leaves a large balance against income, which I was assured that the khan makes up by borrowing from his subjects; but I am inclined to believe, that in the account of his income and expenditure which I procured from the wuzeer, the former was underrated, and the latter exaggerated; and that whatever deficiency may exist, is more probably made up " a la mode de Perse," by *squeezing* than by borrowing. That system cannot, however, be carried to any great length; for, situated as he is, for ever opposed to the king or the Toorkomans, he dares not to risk disgusting his subjects; on the other hand, it is hardly to be supposed that he would venture to divest himself altogether of the means necessary for defence, or to embarrass himself by debt.

The military force of this chieftain consists of from 1,000 to 1,200 horsemen, chiefly mounted on his own horses, a great number of whom, like the chosen troops of his father, are clad in mail, during their expeditions against the Toorkomans; besides which, he can command from among his vassals several thousands more, and from ten to twelve thousand common foot soldiers; his stable contains about 1,000 good horses, and he keeps seven or eight hundred brood mares to recruit his stud.

Reza Koolee Khan is a man of amiable dispositions, a good master, liberal and honourable in his dealings, though neither endowed with great courage or talents. Several of his servants took delight in telling anecdotes of his honour and generosity, and the minister, among others, related the following: " When Mahomed Wullee Meerza was made prisoner by the discontented lords of Khorasān, he continued to gather together from among the money and jewels he possessed, a considerable sum to provide against contingencies; but uncertain how to conceal or dispose of it, he found means to address the Eelkhaneh by letter, stating that although he (the prince) was sensible that he had not conducted himself in a manner calculated to merit the khan's assistance, yet had he so high an opinion of his honour, that he was about to intrust him with a secret deposit of the greatest importance; that although he then was a prisoner, he did not yet believe that his death was the object of the conspirators, at all events while his father lived, and that probably he should be released after a period, and permitted to return to Tehrān; in this hope he had collected and concealed treasure to the amount of fifty or sixty thousand tomauns, which he desired to deposit in the khan's hands, to be returned to him in case he escaped with life, and if he should not be so for-

tunate, to remain with him, which was preferable to its falling into the hands of Issaw Khan. The Eelkhaneh, after some deliberation, replied, that although he was very willing to assist the prince, yet that he did not think the money could safely be trusted to him, as Issaw Khan might hear of it, and would surely insist on an immediate division of the spoil; his advice to the prince would rather be to bury the treasure in a particular part of the palace (which he indicated), so that if he escaped, or was sent to Mushed, *he* should take care to have it safely transmitted to him. The prince took his advice and deposited the money, which was recovered after his liberation."

Although not a man of exemplary courage, the Eelkhaneh is well skilled in warlike exercises, an excellent horseman and master of the sword; and he takes all opportunities of impressing his enemies with a high opinion of his prowess. One day, while hunting near the desert, he met with a Toorkoman of the Tuckeh tribe, mounted on a stout galloway, with whom he entered into conversation, and taking his opportunity while the man was off his guard, with one blow of his sword he cut off the head of the horse, to the horror and astonishment of the unsuspecting owner, to whom, when he had disengaged himself from the fallen beast, he presented one of three times its value, with a dress of honour, and sent him back to his tribe full of the prowess and munificence of the khan. I have, however, heard it asserted by the khan's officers, that had the king or his troops possessed common courage or conduct, Cochoon might easily have been taken when they first appeared before it, even had Reza Koolee Khan himself been there.

The Koordish states, by an agreement negociated on the part of Prince Hussun Allee Meerza with Meerza Moossa, again bound themselves in lieu of tribute to the king, to keep in check, as far as they should be able, the Toorkoman tribes of the Attock, to give notice of the expeditions made by these tribes, and to assist the governors of threatened districts in driving them away. But although the Koordish chiefs recognized and acted upon this agreement, which not only freed them from a more inconvenient tribute, but encouraged them to keep on foot an independent force; and although they look upon the desert tribes as their natural enemies, prudential considerations on both sides kept them at peace during my residence in Khorasān. The Toorkomans, who have more than once been oppressed by Mahomed Raheem Khan of Khaurezm, have of late shown a disposition to shelter themselves from the power of that monarch, by an union with the chiefs of Koordistan; and these chiefs have found that such an union operates powerfully in checking the disposition of the king to annoy them with demands for tribute; for his majesty, whose arms are neither very efficient nor dreaded, will rather come to easy terms than drive to desperation men who have the means of letting loose upon his dominions the armed plunderers of the desert. The king, indeed, views this good understanding with a jealous eye, but so weak is his influence in this quarter, that whatever he attempts by arms or negoci-

ation, is baffled, more by the intrigues of his servants than by his avowed enemies; for the former find it their interest to keep up, and play one party against another, thus creating difficulties, and enhancing the value of their own services, so that under existing circumstances it might be the king's best policy to permit unopposed the independence of these border chiefs, to preserve the peace of the country. But such far-sighted policy is not to be found in the councils of Futeh Allee Shah, and if he could, he would gladly extirpate the whole race of Koords, and reduce the country to temporary obedience, even at the risk of exposing all Khorasān to the unrestrained incursions of the Toorkoman savages.

It is, however, with great impatience that the Koords see themselves forced to a pacific intercourse with their hereditary enemies; the hostile relations in which they stood to each other had given rise to blood-feuds of the most deadly nature; and although in the skirmishes and "raids" that constantly occurred, many of the more peaceable inhabitants were led into perpetual captivity, or held as prisoners at large ransoms; still, if we may believe the Koords, this plundering system was so much in their favour, that they greatly regret the stop that has been put to it. The Toorkomans, it is asserted, are so jealous of leaving any individuals of their tribes as captives behind, that they will give whatever sum may be demanded to redeem such prisoners, in camels, horses, or money; the Koords, aware of this, ask and obtain from one to two hundred Khorasānee tomauns readily for each prisoner they can take, while the Toorkomans can only obtain the market price of Bockhara or Khyvah, varying in some measure according to rank, from fifty or sixty to a hundred tomauns of Irāk, the Persians being far less anxious about the fate of their relatives than their enemies are. Thus the Koords looked upon their war with the Toorkomans as a sure source of profit, and even the Eelkhaneh calculated on his share of the plunder as equal to from two to four thousand tomauns a year. It may, therefore, be presumed, that the first fair opportunity will be seized by either party to break so unnatural a union.

Next in importance to the Eelkhaneh, among the Koordish chiefs is, Nujjuff Allee Khan, lord of a tract of country stretching from twelve miles east of Boojnoord to a point south-west of Semulghan, being a length of about fifty miles, varying in breadth from fifteen to thirty, including the two vallies of Boojnoord and Semulghan. In the former is situated the principal town and residence of the khan, bearing the same name, and said to contain 3,000 families. The country around is as well peopled in proportion as that of Cochoon, but I could procure no estimate to be relied on of their numbers. The khan's income is said to be about 25,000 tomauns of Irāk * a-year, of which only 1,000 are raised from the town, the rest from the farmers, Eels, and his private landed property. He can command the service of 2,000 horse, among which

* A tomaun of Irāk contains eight Irāk rupees or reals.

are five or six hundred mounted by himself; and if any man lose his horse in action, it is replaced by the khan.

I learnt but little concerning the family of Nujjuff Allee Khan: when a boy he was carried as a hostage to Tehrān, where he long remained, and acquired an address and manners very superior to those of his countrymen in general. He is a man of high courage and military talent for the country; noted for firmness and decision, a strict, but not capricious ruler, and highly respected, though not a little feared by those around him.

Nujjuff Allee Khan is bound by the same treaty, and placed in the same circumstances with regard to the Toorkoman tribes as the Eelkhaneh; but although inferior in power, being highly superior in talent and conduct to that chief, he maintains his relation with the desert hordes on a higher and more dignified footing.

Dereguz, situated about twelve fursungs north-north-east of Cochoon, among the hills that divide that valley from the Attock, is the chief town of a small district possessed by Begler Khan; it is considered as one of the Koordish states, because the greater number of its inhabitants are Koords, although their chief himself is of a Toorkoman tribe. I gathered few particulars worth recording of this state or family; the chief is entirely under the influence of the Eelkhaneh, and is not very highly esteemed: he can command from six to seven hundred horsemen, and two or three thousand foot soldiers; and the population of the country may amount to five or six thousand families of all descriptions. One of the easiest passes leading to the desert lies through the territory of Begler Khan; and this facility of approach makes it the interest of the tribes that frequent it to keep on good terms with that chieftain.

It would be inexcusable to quit this part of Khorasān without taking notice of the singular strong hold of Kelaāt, the favorite of Nadir Shah, and intended depository of his vast treasures. It has generally been supposed, that this place is situated *upon* a mountain resembling some of the remarkable hill forts of India, or like the Kallah Suffeed, Istakhr, &c. &c.; but this is not the case: the following account has been made out from the various information I received from those who were perfectly well acquainted with the place, circumstances having effectually prevented me from visiting it myself.

Kelaāt, or "the fortress," emphatically, is a valley extending in a direction nearly east and west, in length from fifty to sixty miles, and from twelve to fifteen in breadth, situated among the hills that divide the plain of Mushed from the desert: it is surrounded by mountains so steep and difficult by nature as to be almost impassable, and they have been rendered completely so by art: the rocks are scarped on the outside, presenting a mural appearance, so that there is no possibility of scaling them; and beyond these, there is a lesser range, with an hollow between, which the natives

call the Sheer Hadjee *, and ditch. Not less care has been taken in the inside, to increase every natural difficulty, so as to render a descent into, or an escape from that valley, equally impracticable.

There are two openings to this valley, one at the western and one at the eastern extremity; by which last, a stream that rises among the hills to the west, enters; and after flowing through the valley, escapes into the desert. These openings, which are both narrow and intricate, are called the *gates* of the fortress, and have been built up and fortified in such a manner, that it is impossible to force an entrance: on these fortified gateways there are towers, where watchmen continually are posted, to give warning of approachers; and none are admitted but those who can show that they have business with, or passes from, the lord of the valley. There is another pathway on the north side, not far from the Mushed (or western) gate, by which men and unloaded animals can with difficulty ascend, and several other foot-paths of more or less practicability once existed; but Nadir Shah, who delighted in supplying by art the natural deficiencies of this fortress, completely destroyed or rendered impervious all but the first, which, like the two principal gateways, is so well guarded by towers that no one can pass without permission from the warders.

It appears evident from all that I could gather on the subject, that the valley of Kelaāt, so far from being situated on a height, is upon a level by far lower than that of the plain of Mushed; the distance from that capital to the western gate is about fifty miles in an easterly direction; a pass with considerable ascent, but far greater descent occurs in the way, the latter lying in the bed of the stream which passes through the valley. There is no ascent in quitting the valley by the eastern gate, which opens almost immediately upon the Attock. The distance between Kelaāt and Dereguz is about sixty-five miles, and the direct road leads from thence immediately to the small foot-path spoken of above.

Within the valley there is a great deal of cultivation, and fifteen or twenty fine villages; in one of which, not far from the Mushed gate, of considerable size and well fortified, Seyed Mahomed Khan the present possessor of this strong hold resides. The population of the valley is said to amount to two thousand families, but a good deal of the surrounding country and its inhabitants, particularly those in the neighbouring hills, is dependent on Kelaāt, and obeys the orders of its chief. The face of the valley is rich and verdant, and from a rough Persian drawing of it which I saw, I am led to believe that it contains some wood; it has excellent grazings for horses, abounds in game, and besides the river which runs through it, there are several lesser streams that flow from the mountains around. It is remarkable that the water of all these streams is unwholesome, particularly in the fall of

* Sheer Hadjee, — Fosse braye.

the year, and it sometimes effects strangers so severely as to occasion their death. To remedy this evil, cisterns have been excavated in the rock to collect the rain water for the use of some part of the inhabitants, and a few wholesome fountains have been found to supply the rest.

Seyd Mahomed Khan is of the Jalloyer tribe, his father Futeh Allee Khan was placed in command of the fortress by Allee Shah after the death of Nadir, and was killed in one of the numerous subsequent brawls by a blind man, who in revenge for some similar act to one of his relatives, took an opportunity to enter the governor's apartments with some armed adherents. Seyed Mahomed Khan, however, succeeded in putting the murderer to death in his turn, and has ever since kept possession of the fortress. He has neither the reputation of much talent or judgment; and indeed, he chiefly acts under the guidance of Reza Koolee Khan of Cochoon. He can with ease muster a thousand good horse, and two thousand foot soldiers, or by raising his Eels, and male villagers, a considerably greater number; besides which he always keeps on good terms with the Toorkomans of the desert, and can thus at a very short notice command a large force of their cavalry.

We have now taken notice of every district included within the limits which were assigned to Khorasān; it was remarked that Merve Shah Jehān, could hardly be included in these; but as a royal city of great celebrity, it seems proper, before quitting the province, to insert the few particulars that were gleaned regarding its present state; they are derived from the information of a respectable moollah, a native of the place, from the prince who resided there for many years, and from the accounts of various merchants and travellers who had passed through its ruins on their way to other places.

Merve is situate in the desert that stretches from the feet of the Elburz and Paropamisan range of mountains to the banks of the Oxus, about half way between the cities of Mushed and Bockhara. The river Moorghaub flows past its walls, and fertilizes a small track of land along its banks; but except this insulated and very limited spot, there is no place fit for the habitation of man to be found within a great distance around. Merve is said to be sixty fursungs, or about 240 miles distant from any well inhabited district, and particularly from five principal cities, viz. Khyvah or Ourgunge, Bockhara, Balkh, Herāt, and Mushed, from each of which places the road to it lies through a perfect desert; the distances may be erroneously equalized by those who tell this, for the sake of point; but it is a fact, that so much or nearly so much of desert is spread around Merve, once the seat of splendor, luxury, and power. Serrukhs, indeed, intervenes between it and Mushed, but the road makes a considerable bend to go there, and Serrukhs itself is in a desert.

It is difficult to conceive how a situation so unfavourable could have tempted a mighty sovereign to fix his residence there; yet the Seljook princes

made it their residence, and in the time of the Caliphs it was one of their eastern capitals.* The soil in its immediate vicinity is fertile, and as far as irrigation can be carried, produces abundantly: the fruits of Merve are said to be particularly delicious; but this fertility is confined to a distance of twelve or fourteen miles around the city; and it seems hardly possible that it could ever have been greatly more extended, so that Merve, in its best days, could have been but an Oasis in the desert. If, however, we may judge from the accounts we can obtain of its present appearance, the ancient magnificence of Merve has been greatly overrated, for there are no ruins to prove the existence of the marble palaces, and baths, and tombs, which have been vaguely attributed to it; the chief remains are those of a fine large mosque, with a medressa, built by Timoor Shah; of the mausoleum of Sooltaun Sanjer, and of a fine arsenal, all of which having been constructed of burnt brick, have partly escaped the ravages both of time and of the destroyer. There are also to be seen the ruins of a fine arched Bazār, and the tomb of a celebrated pehlewan, who is said to have thrown a weight of forty mauns† to a distance of some ten or twelve fursungs. No one could tell me any thing of the tomb of Alp Arselan; indeed, few except those well read in history remember the name of such a monarch, and all denied that any monument bearing the celebrated inscription‡ attributed to it exists at Merve.

The city continued to be a royal residence, or at least to enjoy royal protection, until the decay of the successors of Timoor, after which it appears to have fallen into neglect and ruin. It frequently changed masters, as the various sovereigns in its vicinity rose or fell in power; and it was finally taken and pillaged by Shah Murād of Bockhara (also known by the name of Beggy Jan), and has since remained, at least nominally, attached to the sovereignty of Bockhara.

Before concluding this sketch of Khorasān, it will be proper to say a few

* This noble city underwent the common fate in the invasion of Chengiz Khan. Its inhabitants were massacred, and even hunted out, so that none might escape, and all its buildings were levelled with the dust. It is impossible, however, to read of the prodigious multitudes said to have been put to death on this and other occasions, without feeling some doubt as to the correctness of the authors who have furnished us with these details. The population in these countries must have been greater than now, in a degree we can hardly conceive possible, to have furnished the numbers which we hear of being slaughtered. In the three great cities of Herāt, Nishapore, and Merve, alone, all of them within a short distance of each other, we hear of near 5,000,000 of persons being massacred in cold blood. This probably exceeds the aggregate population of Persia as it stands at this day.

† About 300 lbs. English.

‡ The fate of this great conqueror, with the remarkable incident that occasioned it, is too well known to all readers of oriental history to need repetition here. The striking inscription, "You, who have seen the glory of Alp Arselan exalted to the Heavens, come to Merve and you will see it buried in the dust," which the hero ordered to be engraven on his tomb, will also be fresh in their remembrance. Those who wish to enquire further, may consult Sir John Malcolm's History of Persia.

words respecting the rivers that occur in its extent: these are only the Moorghaub, the Herirood (or river of Herāt), the Tedgen, the Attruck, and the Goorgaun. The Moorghaub rises in the district of Balai Moorghaub, among the Hazarah mountains; and joined by several streams of a similar character, keeping a north north-west direction, flows by Merve, and disappears in the sands, seventy or eighty miles further on, in the same direction: it neither debouches, as has been supposed, into the Oxus or Caspian Sea; the concurring answers I received to all enquiries on that subject seem perfectly conclusive.

The Herirood, or river of Herāt, which takes its rise to the south of that town, flows in a northerly direction, till, not far from Serrukhs, it joins the Tedgen, and both streams joined by the waters from the plain of Mushed, and the mountains that bound it, flow through the desert in a northerly course until they form a junction with the waters of the Moorghaub, and all are lost a little further on, in a marshy pool, which is finally absorbed in the sands, so that none of these rivers reach the Caspian.

The Tedgen, until it receives the waters of the Hevirood, appears to be an inconsiderable stream, that takes its rise in the hills south of Serrukhs; even after this junction, it was described to me by a native of Merve, well acquainted with the whole of the country, as a small and unimportant stream, flowing through reeds in the desert, except in spring, when from the melting of the snows it swells to a considerable size.

The formation and course of the Attruck and Goorgaun have been spoken of above; the former receives all the streams that flow from the hills into the desert from Dereguz, to the valley of Sarasoo inclusive; and flowing in a westerly direction, they enter the Caspian Sea at a place called Kooroosoofee, about forty miles north of Astrabad. The latter, draining the valleys to the west of Semulghan, and the numerous glens on the north face of the Elburz, from the debouche of the Sheheruc to Astrabad, taking the same westerly direction, enters the sea eight or nine miles north of that city. I am not aware of any other streams that deserve notice, within the boundaries we have assigned to Khorasān.

APPENDIX B.—PART II.

NOTICES REGARDING KHYVAH, THE ANCIENT KHAUREZM.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE COUNTRIES CONTIGUOUS TO KHORASĀN, VERY LITTLE UNDERSTOOD.— KHYVAH THE REMAINS OF THE ANCIENT KHAUREZM.— THE FERTILE TERRITORY OF KHYVAH SURROUNDED BY DESERTS.— SITUATION OF THAT TERRITORY.— HISTORICAL NOTICES.— NATURE OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT.— MAHOMED AMEEN KHAN EINAK BY THE HELP OF THE YAMOOT TOORKOMANS, USURPS THE SUPREME POWER.— SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON ILTENUZZER EINAK.— HE LOSES HIS LIFE IN AN ATTEMPT TO INVADE BOCKHARA.— SUCCEEDED BY HIS BROTHER MAHOMED RAHEEM KHAN.— HIS INTRIGUES WITH THE KOORDS OF KHORASĀN.— IMPRISONS TWO OF THEIR ENVOYS SUCCESSIVELY.— HIS CHARACTER.— OFFICERS OF STATE, REVENUE, POPULATION, AND MILITARY FORCE.— CHIEF TOWNS.— EXTENT OF CULTIVABLE COUNTRY.— PRODUCTS.— DESCRIPTION OF THE OOZBECKS OF KHYVAH.— THEIR COSTUME.— RUSSIAN VIEWS UPON, AND NEGOCIATIONS WITH KHYVAH.— MR. MORAVIEF'S ACCOUNT OF HIS JOURNEY TO KHYVAH.— TRADE WITH RUSSIA.— TRADE IN CAPTIVES.— NATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS AND RECEPTION OF THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY.

THE geography and description of the countries which surround Khorasān upon the north and east, are desiderata, which it was my wish in some degree to have supplied; but baffled in my attempts to penetrate either to Bockhara or Balkh, I have been able to collect but few particulars: such, however, as I did obtain, are here inserted, believing that any thing tolerably authentic from countries so little known may be considered interesting.

On quitting the habitable country on the northern frontier of Khorasān, and traversing the desert in that direction, the first tract of country fitted for the residence of man, which occurs, is that which is now called Khyvah, or Ourgunge; the cradle and remains of the once mighty empire of Khaurezm, now dwindled into the dominions of a Tartar chief, Mahomed Raheem Eināk, who resides at the modern town of Khyvah.

Little need be said of the desert itself, in addition to the frequent notices regarding it above. It has been observed, that so far as we may rely on the concurring testimony of the natives who frequently traverse it, it consists of sandy wastes, occasionally raised into hillocks, quite destitute of vegetation, but interspersed with small patches, which afford water and a little grass for

the flocks of the tribes of Toorkomans who frequent it. That these comparatively fertile spots are neither so rare nor so confined in extent, as is generally imagined, may be inferred from the number of families of which the different tribes consist, that find the means of life among them (as will hereafter be shown); but it may be deemed politic in these to keep them little known, and the track of caravans accordingly lies through deserts that hardly afford water for the living beings that traverse them, and the wells of which are only known to the guides by particular marks.

The march of caravans from Khyvah to Mushed, occupies from eighteen to twenty days; and no spot fitted to supply the necessaries of life is mentioned in the route, unless they go by Merve. The same account is given of the caravan route from Astrabad to Khyvah, and all who have gone by this route as well as from Koordistan, agree that no stream is passed, nor does any fresh water fall into the Caspian, or occur at all after passing the Attruck.

The territory of Khyvah* extends upon, and near the banks of the Oxus, for between one and two hundred miles, and on all other quarters is surrounded by the desert. The town of Khyvah is fifteen miles distant from the Oxus, and ten days journey of about six fursungs each, or two hundred and forty miles† from Mungushluc, a bay upon the banks of the Caspian Sea. It is difficult to conceive how so confined a space and unpromising a situa-

* A work has lately appeared, entitled, "Voyage en Toorkomanie," translated from the Russian of Mr. Moravief, an officer in the military service of that nation, who was intrusted with the charge of a mission to Mahomed Raheem Khan, of Khyvah; and to it I have made constant reference in the subsequent account of that place; but as my sources of information are quite distinct from this, and as the information itself is often at variance with that furnished by Mr. Moravief, I have not quoted from the work as an authority, preferring to lay, unmixed, before the public, what I myself collected on the subject from sources of a totally different character; as in cases of this nature, it is only from a comparison of such accounts that we can hope to arrive at the truth. I was not myself at Khyvah, but my information was received from a variety of respectable persons; among them I may mention a prince, the brother of Hyder Shah, the reigning monarch of Bockhara; Hussun Jah Jermee, a merchant residing at Khyvah, but native of Jahjerm, in Khorasān; Caleb Allee Mervee, Hussun Mervee, Selim Beg, of Bockhara, and other merchants at Mushed, in constant trading relations with Khyvah; Beder Khan, and Moollah Moorād Allee, both envoys from the Koordish states to Mahomed Raheem Khan; and several others of less name, but constantly in the habit of journeying through those parts, and including so great a variety of interests, that the errors occasioned by the prejudices of each were likely to be counteracted by the diversity of accounts. Captain Moravief was a prisoner closely confined, and jealously guarded during the time of his stay in the territories of Khyvah, and could personally have seen but little, while what he heard must have been through channels not the most likely to be free from prejudice. I say this without the least intention to reflect upon the testimony of Captain Moravief, but to state the case as fairly as I am able; the public will form their own judgment of what claims each account may have to authenticity.

† It will be seen further on, that some doubt may possibly be entertained regarding the accuracy of this statement.

tion could have given rise to the flourishing empire of which it was the seat, if not the centre; but what circumstance can check the genius of man, or what space can bound his ambition! The power and glory of the Khaurezmean dynasty is well known to the readers of Oriental history; the city of Khaurezm, or Ourgunge, was the capital of an empire which embraced the principal part of Western Asia, and the country around it was populous and prosperous; all now is changed, — Ourgunge, like most ancient celebrated cities of the East, has become a ruin, and the seat of the petty power that now exists has been transferred to the mean and modern town of Khyvah.

It would be difficult and unprofitable to collect materials for a history of Khaurezm, from the destruction of Sooltaun Mahomed and his son Jelall-u-deen, by Chengiz Khan, until the present time: it never since then has made any conspicuous figure among the states of Asia; but was possessed in sovereignty by the various succeeding monarchs who raised themselves to power, in its vicinity, although the immediate authority was often in the hands of chiefs of its own. It was overrun by the Oozbecks, in the sixteenth century, along with Bockhara and the neighbouring states; and has continued in their hands ever since, though frequently and severely visited by the conquering princes of the countries around.

The modern city of Khyvah was totally ruined by Nadir Shah, at the time he overran all Toorkistān, after his return from India. The frontiers of Khorasān had been severely pillaged by the governor, or chief of Khyvah, Ilburz Khan Eināk, who made frequent incursions in that quarter, emboldened by the hope that the Persian monarch would never return from India. The anger of Nadir was raised by this presumption, to the highest pitch; he left the territories of Bockhara, with the monarch of which he had made a treaty of peace, and crossing the Amoo (or Oxus), he drove the Khaurezmean Oozbecks, with their chief, from one strong hold after another; and having taken him and his two brothers prisoners, he put them to death, by burying them, with a number of others, with their heads in the earth: a mode of punishment far from uncommon in the bloody annals of Eastern tyranny. The city was destroyed, part of its youth were enlisted into the armies of Nadir, a great many were put to death, and the greater part of the remainder he transported to a place between Dereguz and Kelaat, where he built them a town, and called it Khyvahabad.

It appears that though the Oozbecks obtained the real power in Khaurezm, they nevertheless continued to maintain upon the throne a cypher* of the race of Chengiz Khan, the hereditary princes of the country; and

* Mr. Moravief, in describing the rise of the present government of Khyvah, mentions that the Kirgeesh, profiting of the weakness of the kingdom, used to send a chief of their tribe, who sometimes was obeyed, and sometimes sent about his business: this may be a different edition of the same story which is related in the text.

their mode of choosing and treating this pageant is described as curious enough. When the throne became vacant, a boy was taken from some family among the Kuzāks (or Cossacks), that inhabit the country to the north of Khaurezm, and which, perhaps, might be traditionally believed descendants of Chengiz Khan; he was carried to Ourgunge, and forthwith shut up in the ark or citadel, where an allowance was given for his support, and a wife provided for him; but he was neither permitted to go out nor to be seen, neither were any of his posterity allowed to succeed to his miserable state; the chief uttalugs of the Oozbecks held the real authority, and transacted all public business in the name of the khan. When any question of consequence occurred in the divan, they proceeded in due form to the palace, and, entering, were understood to lay the case before the imprisoned monarch, whose decision upon their return was duly reported. The situation, however, it would seem, was not one of great attractions; for there were several instances on record (as I was told), of attempts on the part of the captive khan to escape; in which case he was always pursued, caught, and brought back to his prison.

It was some years after the destruction of the city by Nadir that the chief of the Einaks (one of the branches of the Oozbeck tribes), Mahomed Ameen Khan, aspired to the supreme power; and a circumstance occurred about the same time which gave success to his intrigues, and enabled him to carry his designs into effect. A portion of the Yamoot tribe of Toorkomans, who inhabited the desert between Astrabad and Balcān, being pressed by the rest, and by other tribes, migrated in considerable numbers northwards, towards the territories of Khyvah. Mahomed Ameen Khan, who must by this time have been high advanced in power, received these people with kindness, giving their chiefs presents, and assigning to the rest a district of land; so that they became subjects of the state, and strongly attached to the khan, whose party was thus greatly strengthened; and by their assistance, with that of his own clan, he broke the power of the Oozbeck chiefs, putting some to death, and otherwise disposing of the rest, till he got himself recognised as chief of all the tribes.

Mahomed Ameen Khan was succeeded by his son, Ewaz Einak, who followed his father's example in oppressing the Oozbecks, and bestowing his favour upon the Yamoots; but his son Iltenuzzer, who succeeded him, adopted a very different policy, protecting the Oozbecks from the insolence of the Yamoots, while he attempted, but in vain, to effect a reconciliation between the two tribes: indeed, his measures were probably injudicious; for he was particularly severe upon the Yamoots, and upon one occasion he ordered a man who had been detected in thieving from an Oozbeck to be led around the market-place by a rope drawn through a hole bored in his nose; the Yamoots, provoked at this, behaved in so violent a manner, that, disgusted with their conduct, Iltenuzzer commanded them to quit his territories. This

order occasioned a meeting of the reish-suffeeds of the Yamoots, who decided on obeying it without delay; for, said they, the khan has evinced so hostile a disposition towards us, injuring and maiming individuals of our tribe, that in all probability he will not be contented until he shall have quite broken or even exterminated it. They, therefore, departed towards Astrabad once more, reoccupying their ancient haunts unmolested for two years; during which the Oozbecks sought to regain their power, and their chiefs to infringe upon the prerogatives of the crown, until the khan, alarmed at their conduct, sent a message to the Yamoots, who took him at his word, and returned again to his dominions.

Iltenuzzer, sometime after this, accompanied by two of his brothers, went to plunder in the territory of Bockhara, with three thousand men; but having passed the Oxus for that purpose, he was opposed by a party of Shah Hyder's troops, and forced to make a precipitate retreat; in which movement, while recrossing the river, he unfortunately perished with many of his troops. He was succeeded by his brother Mahomed Raheem Khan, who continues to maintain the sovereignty, and the blood feud with Bockhara, which originated in his brother's death.

About six* or seven years ago, Mahomed Raheem Khan encouraged by the disturbed state of Khorasān, and the disaffection of its chiefs to the reigning family, came across the desert with an army, and beleaguered a fort near Dereguz. The Koords assembled from all quarters to protect the general interest, and a force rendezvoused at Dereguz, to oppose the enemy; but the khan, who had suffered on his passage through the desert, and who, disappointed in the hope he had formed of being joined by the chiefs of Koordistan, was somewhat anxious regarding his retreat, sent some of his chiefs to treat, and represented, that as both parties equally detested the Kadjers, it would be wiser for them both to join against the common foe, than to weaken each other that they might fall his prey. His representation had so far at least effect with the combined chiefs, that they desisted from their meditated attack; while Mahomed Raheem Khan, on his part, raised the siege; and Saadut Khan, of Baum, was dispatched with two hundred men, capitally armed and mounted, to attend the khan, and convince him of the friendly intentions of the Koordish lords.

The khan received their envoy with high honours, presenting him with a khelut, but expressed his hope that the chiefs themselves would visit him: this they were unwilling to do; but they urged him to push on to Mushed, which they would assist him in capturing; and sent Beder Khan of Sooltaun Meydān with one hundred horsemen, to relieve Saadut Koolee Khan, and to

* It is probable that this prince has attempted the invasion of Khorasān more than once. Mr. Moravief mentions one in 1813. This of Koordistan was certainly different from that both in time and place: it probably took place about 1815.

act as guides. There was, however, a mutual distrust, which in all probability saved Mushed; for the Koordish chiefs not making their appearance, Mahomed Raheem Khan suspected their intentions, and instead of advancing, seized Beder Khan on the second day of his stay, and imprisoned him and his companions, taking possession, at the same time, of their horses and equipments; made a fruitless attempt upon the fort of Dereguz, and immediately after commenced his retreat to Khyvah, carrying along with him his prisoners.

In this retreat the khan suffered severely, a great number of men, and even of camels, dying of thirst and of fatigue; and his conduct to his prisoners was far from generous; to Beder Khan, however, he showed some favour, because he was an excellent chess-player, and the khan constantly sent for him to play with him; but he says, that he was perpetually in fear of his life, from the uncertain and capricious temper of the chief.

Some two or three years after this event, when the king of Persia threatened the chiefs of Koordistan with destruction, these, alarmed at the prospect, sent an envoy to Mahomed Raheem Khan, to solicit assistance, offering to do him homage, and to deliver into his hands the sovereignty of the country. That prince continually desirous of extending his dominions, still looked with longing eyes towards Khorasān, and wishing for nothing better than any feasible means of success, in an attack upon that province, received the envoy with distinction, invested him with a dress of honour, and assured him of every sort of assistance in his power to bestow.

The king of Persia, however, having received notice of the intended coalition, and besides being extremely unwilling to draw such an enemy upon the country, having other strong inducements to wish for peace, entered into negociations with the Koords, and soon after evacuated the country. The chiefs having thus gained their object, and recovered from their alarm, were equally averse from bringing a power of such questionable character into Khorasān, and accordingly sent instructions to their envoy, to explain to Mahomed Raheem Khan what had occurred, and on their part to declare their unwillingness uselessly to expose that prince to the expence and hazard of so uncertain an adventure, intreating him, therefore, to lay aside thoughts of at present invading Khorasān. Neither the message nor the explanation pleased the khan, who forthwith confined the envoy, and threatened the Koords themselves with vengeance. The chiefs, to appease him, and to procure the release of their envoy, thought to temporize, and assured the khan that they, wearied of the tyranny of the reigning family, desired nothing more earnestly than to transfer their allegiance to him; but urged the uncertain issue of such an attempt during the life-time of Futeh Allee Shah: that, however, the health of that monarch was bad, and there was little doubt he would, in no long time, be gathered to his fathers, when, in the troubles that would doubtless succeed, *he* might invade Khorasān, and assisted

by them, might with ease, take possession of such portions as he should desire for himself, while they would do him homage as their sovereign. It is probable that this reasoning, enforced by a remembrance of former failures, had its effect upon the khan, for he complimented their envoy with a dress of honour, and dismissed him with presents.

Since that time, Mahomed Raheem Khan has not attempted to invade Khorasān; but some years ago*, irritated against the tribe of Tuckeh Toorkomans, he assembled an army, and crossing the desert, attacked and pursued them to the hills, where they received countenance and support from Reza Koolee Khan, and, I believe, from Nujjuff Allee Khan, of Boojnoord. In this expedition, the khan loaded a prodigious number of camels with water for the troops; but this precaution was insufficient to prevent great misery, and his loss in horses and camels was immense.

The character of Mahomed Raheem Khan is variously represented: by some, he is stated to be a cruel, rapacious, and moody madman, without consistency or principle to regulate his conduct or restrain his intemperate passions; that he is detested by his subjects, who would gladly exchange his tyrannical sway for the milder rule of any neighbouring sovereign. By others, he is called an excellent prince, possessed of a fine temper and good dispositions, strict, but just in his dealings, regulating his dominions in the best and most judicious manner, and beloved by all his subjects. It is not difficult to read in these different accounts the extremes of prejudice, resulting from sufferings inflicted in the one case, and favours conferred in the other; truth, as usual, probably lies between. Beder Khan affirmed, that the khan is a perfect madman, whose capricious temper is beyond all calculation; one day loading a person with favours, and the next day putting him to death without any adequate cause: so that man's life is unsafe and even valueless in his presence. He allowed him to possess personal bravery, but affirmed that he was totally deficient in conduct, or military skill, except in that of being personally a good sword and spears-man, and a good horseman; but that he now is so overgrown with fat, that he cannot get a horse fit to carry him. He says, that had the khan possessed common prudence, he might this day have been sovereign of Khorasān, and much of the surrounding country. Justice, to a certain degree, he also allows him, and in proof of this, he says, that the khan promised to every individual engaged in the expeditions against Khorasān and the tribe of Tuckeh, the price of such camels or horses as they should actually lose on service; and that, accordingly, the whole value, in money or in kind, was paid to each man, who produced the tails of such animals as had perished on the road. Beder Khan spoke with supreme contempt of his military force; "The troops," he ob-

* This expedition is dated by Mr. Moravief as soon after 1813. From various corresponding accounts I am induced to place it at a later period by several years.

served, are brave enough, but there is a total want of all arrangement, and the fortifications of the towns are contemptible. The royal equipage he described as extremely poor and mean. Beder Khan having gained favor in the sight of Mahomed Raheem Khan was left at liberty while resident in Khyvah, and thus had many opportunities for observation, of which, from his conversation, he appeared to have well availed himself; nevertheless, there can be little doubt that he was prejudiced against the khan by the violence and loss which he at first sustained, and that he judged and described his character harshly.

Moollah Murād Allee, envoy from the Koordish lords, remained for nearly two years at Khyvah; part of that time he was confined, but during the greatest part he enjoyed freedom and consideration; so that he had not only good opportunities for acquiring information, but being a man of superior endowments was likely to use them well; he was less severe in his description of the khan, but in general confirmed Beder Khan's account of his inconsistency and violence of temper; he did not, he said, believe him to be so blood thirsty as was commonly reported; yet that no one could feel himself secure with him; for he appeared to be ignorant or careless of the most commonly received international laws; that the characters of stranger and of guest had with him lost their sanctity, and, as the situation of his country was such as made him easy as to consequences, the slightest suspicion was sufficient cause for imprisonment, captivity, or death, without either trial, examination, or appeal.* I found that the merchants in general entertained more favorable opinions of this prince than others with whom I conversed; but even among them great diversity of sentiment prevailed. Hussun Jah Jermee gave the most favorable account both of the khan and of the place; but (as may be inferred from the mention made of this person in the course of the narrative), there was reason to believe that he was as much too partial as the others were too severe.

Mahomed Raheem Khan has still two brothers in life, one, Coothlee Murād, who is elder than himself, and whose residence is at Hazārasp; the other, Mahomed Nuzzer Khan, is younger. He has three sons, Alaverdi Tooreh, Mahomed Yar Tooreh, and another whose name I did not learn.

The officers of state are chosen from among the Oozbeck tribes, who are called attalugs mehters, and khooshbeggees: the former seem to be

* It is interesting to remark how strongly this account of the khan's character is confirmed by Mr. Moravief, who indeed suffered so much during his captivity there, that it is any thing but wonderful he should be ranked among those who give it the darkest hues. The lawless description of the community, and the narrow theatre in which the khan's character was formed, the necessity of strong measures to coerce such men, as his subjects for the most part are, and to support a usurped authority, with the ignorance arising from inexperience to compass these ends by other means than those of rigour and even cruelty, may, in some degree, account for this capricious, inconsistent, and blood-thirsty conduct in Mahomed Raheem Khan, without necessarily presupposing any thing unusually malignant in his disposition.

counsellors of state, of whom Shah Niaz is chief, the second is equivalent to minister or wuzeer, of whom the chief is named Yussuff; and the chief khooshbeggee, equivalent, I believe, to the military rank of general, is Mahomed Reza.

It is always difficult to obtain any intelligible account of the revenue of states so ill organized and irregular in their government; I could get no very distinct information regarding that of Khyvah. Moollah Murād Allee told me, that he had been informed by the wuzeer, that the population of the whole country including Eels*, amounted to about three hundred thousand families, from each of which the khan receives about two tomauns of Irāk, a piece, making his revenue about six hundred thousand tomauns of Irāk; the impost being at the rate of about one in ten, both on cultivation and on flocks, and two and a half of customs; the account by Beder Khan and another was nearly the same.

The military force of this prince has been differently stated; the standing army being estimated at from twelve to thirty thousand cavalry; in all probability he may have from twelve to fifteen thousand continually at command, if not on duty, but can raise at short notice, among the tribes over which he exercises influence, double the number, or forty thousand in case of need; though these would be by no means efficient for external warfare: a great many of those kept on duty are mounted on horses belonging to the khan; and it is a rule that all horses killed in battle, and lost in expeditions, are replaced by him.

There are, in the present state of Khyvah, five principal towns; Khyvah, now the capital and residence of the king or khan, Ourgunge, Hazārasp, Zercaun, and Pitnuck; others there may be of lesser consideration, and many large villages.

The town of Khyvah is represented to be about the size of Nishapore, well peopled, containing from four to five thousand families: it is surrounded

* The Eels or wandering tribes, tributary to Khyvah, enumerated to me by Hussun Jah Jermee and another, were as follows: —

Yamoot,	15,000	families.
Gocklan,	20,000	
Chowdēr,	20,000	Said to have been brought from the further borders of the Oxus, by Mahomed Raheem Khan.
Kalpāk,	30,000	
Kuzzāk,	40,000	
Eekdēr,	15,000	
Sarōkh,	15,000	
Oozbeck,	40,000	
	195,000	families.

It is probable that several of these tribes are overrated; and there seems to be an error in stating any of the Gocklans to belong to Khyvah. I give the statement, however, as I received it, without attaching any particular value to its authenticity or correctness.

by a wall, which, however, is very ruinous; the houses are in general mean, having rather the appearance of tents than permanent habitations; they are chiefly constructed of wood, or reeds plastered with clay, and roofed with the same description of numuds used by the Toorkomans to cover their tents. Even the khan resides in such a tent, and his dewan khaneh, or hall of audience, is but another of larger dimensions, with a mat laid upon the earthen floor, upon which are spread a few plain white numuds, without any carpet or other ornament.

Ourgunge, once a populous and prosperous town, has fallen much to decay; but is said still to enjoy some commerce, which its vicinity to the river Amoo particularly promotes.

Hazārasp, often mentioned in the history and struggles of this part of Asia, is a large, though not a very populous town; once well fortified, but now both walls and houses have gone to decay; there is still, however, a strong citadel, which serves as a residence to Coothlee Murād Eynāk, the khan's elder brother, with whom he is said to be on the best terms, and with whom he consults upon all great state occasions. Hazārasp is situated upon the banks of the Amoo, the waters of which surround it, and somewhat more than a day's journey distant from Khyvah, and the same from Ourgunge, so that these three towns form with each other nearly an equilateral triangle. I have no certain information regarding the two remaining towns, Zercaun and Pitnuck.

It was not easy to obtain clear information regarding the extent of the inhabited country dependent on Khyvah: the largest accounts confine it to a stripe upon the banks of the Oxus, of which the length, including the tracts that are only inhabited by Eels, does not exceed between two and three hundred miles, and the breadth in no place is more than fifty; the cultivated portions of this are confined to the vicinity of the towns, and chiefly to that of Khyvah, around which the country for several fursungs is described as being thickly studded with villages and gardens as well as corn fields. This fertility is entirely artificial, depending upon irrigation from canals which are cut from the Oxus, and which intersect the country in various directions far beyond Khyvah, that town itself being surrounded by the waters they bring from the river. Mahomed Raheem Khan has himself done a great deal in this species of improvement, and the use of these canals is given for service of horse and man, as well as let out upon payment of the stipulated duties. The desert commences at no great distance on the south and west of Khyvah, so that the cultivation to the north and south of this small circuit must be confined to the immediate banks of the river.

Silk and cotton are cultivated in considerable quantities around Khyvah, as well as a great deal of corn; both the former articles are manufactured into stuffs, which, as well as the raw materials, are taken by the Russians in exchange for goods from Astracan: fruits of various descriptions, said to be excellent

of their kinds, particularly grapes and melons, are produced in the gardens around.

The people of Khyvah are described by my Persian informants as a very uncivilized race; their domestic habits gross, and their food and manner of eating coarse and disgusting: they are all inclined to, and encourage corpulency, not only the khan, but all his ministers, and the greater part of his nobles, being unwieldy men, with pot bellies; they looked with amazement at the moderation with which the Persians indulged their appetites. They observe but little ceremony or distinction between the ranks of society; the chief and the groom, when not absolutely master and servant, standing or sitting down together almost promiscuously. They generally wear boots, and the few who wear shoes seldom think of taking them off when they enter a room; carpets are not in use, they spread only plain white numuds on the floor. In the presence of the khan, no one sits down, but the dewan khaneh or hall of audience is open to all, and great and small stand together indiscriminately, giving in their petitions, or demanding justice, as may be required.

The dress of the Oozbecks at Khyvah consists of a shirt and drawers of white cotton cloth, with two or three gowns over them of striped silk stuff, blue, red, and grey, all open at the breast, so that when the girdle (as is often the case) is loose, the breast and belly become (as my Persian friend observed) very indecorously exposed; a broad topped sheep-skin cap is worn upon the head. The khan is hardly to be distinguished by his dress from his subjects; but upon grand days he wears a small jewel in his turban, with a gold embroidered Oozbeck gown, over his white shirt and drawers; a tuft of gold and jewels upon his horse's head is the only other ensign of royalty he assumes.

The women are fair and beautiful; they dress a good deal like those of the Toorkomans of the desert, wearing a lofty cap upon the head, with numerous ornaments not easily described, and a handkerchief over it; the shirt and trowsers, with the gown or *jubba*, are not unlike those of the men.

The Russians have long entertained commercial relations with Khyvah, which they have sought to strengthen in various ways, and with various objects. The possession of the port of Astracan, and latterly of those of Bakō Salian, Derbund, and Lankeran, have given them an entire command of the navigation, and, consequently, of the commerce of the Caspian sea, and their ambitious government is extremely desirous to possess the whole of its shores. A settlement upon the eastern side they have long meditated, and have attempted to build forts at several points; as far as I could learn, the principal of these have been Okh Kallah or Okh Trappeh, not far from Astrabad, and some miles to the north of the Attruck, in the territory of the Yamoot Toorkomans; a port or point, in or connected with the bay of Balkan, called by the Russians Krasnovodsk; and an island in the bay of Mangushluck, still further to the north.

Several other places were mentioned by the Persians, but they may have originated in mistakes of those names already mentioned.

More than one expedition has been sent by the Russian government to examine that coast and country, though none have been attended with any signal success: the last escorted Mr. Moravief on his mission to Khyvah, frequently referred to above. From the tenor of his work (lately published and translated into French), the objects of the Russian government are clear enough: they have endeavoured to conciliate the Toorkoman tribes to the north of Astrabad; so that the commercial relations they encourage with them may not be disturbed, nor the tribes themselves take alarm when they establish posts upon the coast; and they have made the same attempt with the ruler of Khyvah, gaining at the same time a certain degree of information respecting the local and political situation of that state, to enable them, should conciliatory means fail, to take the earliest opportunity of obtaining possession by force; first of a footing on the coast, and then of Khyvah itself. The author in his work not only points out the importance to Russia of such an entrepôt, through which much of the commerce of the East would (he thinks) flow into that empire, but he discovers the weak points of the country, and the ease with which the conquest might be made; and certainly there is little doubt that, with the sea behind them, and Astracan, as a port of supply within two days' sail of a fair wind, a force night be set down on the eastern shore of the Caspian sea, either at Balkan, or at Mangushluck, that with common management might not only capture, but retain possession of Khyvah, and project and prepare for ulterior greater enterprizes.

The great obstacle to the march of an army in these arid steppes is the want of water. It appears by Mr. Moravief's account, that about sixteen days were occupied in his journey from Krasnovodsk to Khyvah, a distance, according to his calculation, of about seven hundred versts, or about five hundred miles, in which there were several days' journey continuously without drinkable water. Those Persians who have travelled from Astrabad to Khyvah with caravans, and with whom I have spoken, did not estimate the distance at more than eighteen or twenty days' journey, of which the portion to Balkan occupied eight. It is difficult to say what credit is to be attached to this statement; yet I had it from three respectable persons unconnected with each other, at different times, and each had made the journey more than once. It is possible that, jealous of the Russian envoy's intentions, his Toorkoman guides may have been induced to carry Mr. Moravief by a long and difficult route.

There is a still greater discrepancy in the distance between Khyvah and Mangushluck, as estimated by Mr. Moravief and my Persian informants. That officer merely alludes to the journey in one or two places, as being one of thirty days' duration through deserts, chiefly void of sweet water, but he gives no route or particular account of it. Five different persons well ac-

quainted with the country and trade, agreed in estimating it to me at about ten days' journey of six fursungs each, or about two hundred and fifty miles; and although there is doubtless a scarcity of water upon the road, a great proportion of the soil being salt, or sandy desert, still the country is inhabited by tribes of wandering Toorkomans, who pasture their flocks upon the steppes, and caravans continually pass and repass between Khyvah and the bay of Mangushluck. The plain of that name, according to these accounts, extends to Balkan south, and is (as Mr. Moravief also states), inhabited by Toorkomans of the Attah tribe, who are purely pastoral, living entirely on the produce of their flocks and herds; they rear great numbers of horses, camels, sheep, &c., and make a quantity of butter from their milk, with which, and their other superfluous produce, they go twice a year to purchase grain at Khyvah. The bay of Mangushluck is described as resembling a lake, communicating with the sea only by a narrow in-let, and in this bay or lake there is an island, upon which the Russians were desirous to build a factory or fort.

It is impossible to determine the degree of credit due to these accounts, but I think this much may be gathered from them, that the conquest of Khyvah by the Russians would, if they were to resolve on it, be an affair of no serious difficulty, and that, according to their present line of policy, the attempt will probably be made at no very remote period.

The object of that nation is, indeed, of no trifling magnitude in a commercial point of view, although the expectation they appear to entertain of diverting through this channel to themselves any very considerable portion of the trade of India, may appear chimerical; indeed, the nature of the commerce between Europe and India has, within the last few years, undergone so great a change, that it would be impracticable to transport the bulky articles in which the trade now consists in any other way than by sea; still, however, a large amount of valuable produce would be attracted to any entrepôt in that quarter, where security from pillage, and from exorbitant duties, could be relied upon; and it would be greatly increased, were the surrounding countries in a state so settled as to admit of a less perilous transit through the respective territories. How far the long-sighted and ambitious government in question may entertain the hope of exercising an influence in these rude and desert countries, sufficient to effect an end so desirable, it is not our present intention to enquire, but that some such ulterior object is within its view, can hardly be a matter of doubt, from the nature of the policy it has for a long time past pursued.

Russia, at present, supplies not only Khyvah, but Bockhara, and most part of Tartary, with the greater portion of European articles they require: caravans proceed from Astracan, by Orenburgh, to both these places, but the route is long and dangerous, being about forty days' journey, and in many places exposed to the attacks of the Kirgeesh, and *Kuzāks* (or Cossacks) who

inhabit the steppes north and north-west of Khyvah: the chief traffic is, therefore, by sea to Mangushluck, where the Russian traders bring their goods, and are met by those from Khyvah. The principal articles which Russia sends to Khyvah are, iron and lead, cochineal, printed and plain cottons of various qualities, woollen cloths, a little embroidery, and gold and silver lace, sugar, cutlery, and fire-arms, glass-ware, gold in ducats, and furs. They receive in return, silk, raw and manufactured, raw hides, cotton, black lamb-skins, old coins, antiques, &c. from Bockhara, lapis lazuli and rubies from Buduck-khan, toorquoises from Mushed, shawls from Cashmere, and various other articles of produce from the surrounding countries.

The duties upon Russian, and, indeed, upon all merchandize are, two and a half per cent. The merchants of Khyvah complain that the Russian duties on their goods are much heavier: perhaps this may be a misrepresentation.

One very considerable branch of the external commerce of Khyvah arises from the traffic in slaves captured from the surrounding countries, in plundering expeditions. Khyvah and Bockhara are the chief marts for the sale of these unfortunate people. The Tuckeh Toorkomans, and the Yamoots, although the latter are nominally at peace with Persia, and even the tribes around Khyvah itself, although the distance be so great, make inroads upon the territories of that country, carry off the inhabitants of the villages, or the travellers with whom they fall in, and sell them at Khyvah, in the market-place, like beasts of burthen. Many are frequently slain in these rencounters, more sink under the fatigues of the road, in passing through the desert, and die where they chance to fall, tortured with thirst, without a hope of relief, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather; the rest languish out a life of miserable captivity *, or, if known to belong to opulent families, are held at heavy ransoms, to be relieved by the precarious efforts of their friends.

On the other side, the Kirgeesh and Kuzāks make prisoners of the Russians upon their own frontiers, or while journeying in caravans to Orenburgh, Bockhara, or even to Khyvah itself, and carry them for sale to that city. Various are the accounts related of the numbers thus detained in captivity: many respectable persons told me, that the number of Persian slaves in Khyvah and its dependencies, exceed that of its grown up male population, and was generally estimated at from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand souls. Of Russian captives †, they assured me, that there were from twelve to fifteen thousand. No house, they said, was without

* It has, however, been proved, that the situation of these slaves becomes less intolerable than might at first have appeared probable.

† A person who had resided for upwards of forty years at Astracan informed me, that he perfectly remembers, that just before the close of the Empress Catharine's reign, that princess sent to Bockhara and Khyvah, to ascertain what number of Russian prisoners were detained in captivity in these places; the result was, that 60,000 men were found to be at Bockhara; the number of those at Khyvah, although large, he could not remember. The empress sent to require

many slaves; from twelve to fifteen was a common number. They form the bulk of the labouring class, cultivating the greatest part of the ground, and in the town they swarm. The severe punishments inflicted on such as are restive, the awe in which they are kept by the armed men that surround them, they themselves being unarmed, and the recollection of the immense and desert steppes, traversed by hostile tribes which intervene between them and their home, and, finally, the want of a chief to effect a co-operation among them; these considerations alone suffice to prevent them from attempting to regain their freedom, and returning to their native land.

Some of these slaves, however, by industry, and the favour of their owners, become first enabled to purchase their own liberty, and then rise to be merchants of high fortune: such was my friend Hussun Jah Jermee; and it must be owned, that they are often treated with a degree of leniency hardly to be expected from the character of their masters, and the nature of the right these have acquired over their captives; but whatever may be the exceptions, their case is generally deplorable, and in the midst of that laudable sympathy which has been excited in this country, for the condition of slaves in general, it can not be doubted that the wretched captives who languish in the steppes of Tartary will have their share, although their situation be unhappily beyond the hope of relief; and, however important it may be to check the dangerous ambition of a too aspiring nation, humanity will be inclined to wish success to the Russian cause, were it but to put a period to a system so replete with barbarity as the trade in captives at Khyvah.

It may be amusing to learn the opinion entertained among the natives, regarding the Russian mission and its objects. A respectable Persian, a native of Astrabad, who was at Khyvah during the stay of Mr. Moravief at that place, and who accompanied his caravan part of the way on his return, informed me, that the objects there commonly attributed to the mission were, to obtain permission for building a Russian fort at Mangushluck, for the protection of the trade, to permit their merchants to go and come in safety through all parts of the dominions of Khyvah, to oblige the khan to restrain the wandering tribes under his control from taking prisoners or selling Russian subjects, at the same time prohibiting the sale of such as might be brought to Khyvah by strangers; and, finally, to intimate that the khan was expected to acknowledge the supremacy of the Russian government, to place himself under its protection, and to swear allegiance to it.

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that the whole of her subjects should be released; and added a threat in case of refusal. The answer of the Oozbeck princes was, "Come and take them;" on which her majesty collected an army at Astracan to support her claim, and they had already advanced some distance on their march, when a courier brought, at the same time, the news of their mistress's death, and the orders of her successor for them to return to their quarters, as he had no intention to enter into foreign wars; the unfortunate captives accordingly remained in slavery.

The ambassador, he states, was indifferently enough received; he was detained prisoner in a garden, at some distance from Khyvah, for twenty days or a month, and there admitted to a single audience with the khan, during which he received his answer and his leave; the former was to this purpose: that with regard to trade, ships might come and go, as had heretofore been the custom; with regard to the traffic in Russian prisoners, they were (he observed) all unbelievers, and the practice consequently lawful; he should not therefore interfere to prevent it. As to their proposition that he should acknowledge the supremacy of Russia, they might, if they chose, try to win the country by the sword; and that when that had been effected, he would then, and not till then, acknowledge them as his superiors. The envoy then received a khelut, consisting of a gold brocade dress, and a horse, and was dismissed without further communication.

APPENDIX B. — PART III.

MAWUR-A-UL-NEHR; ITS DIFFERENT DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS. — THE KINGDOM OF BOCKHARA. — ITS BOUNDARIES. — SHAH HYDER, THE KING. — HISTORY OF HIS DESCENT. — HIS CHARACTER AND DISPOSITION. — USUAL MODE OF DRESS. — DISPOSAL OF HIS TIME, CEREMONIES OF INTRODUCTION. — KING'S WIVES AND CHILDREN. — NATURE OF THE GOVERNMENT. — PRECEDENCE OF RANK. — COURT ARRANGEMENTS AND DRESS. — COLLECTION OF THE REVENUE. — VILLAGE GOVERNMENT. — NATURE AND SOURCES OF THE REVENUE. — MILITIA. — BEYS OR BEGS. — EXPENDITURE OF THE REVENUE. — MILITARY STRENGTH. — POPULATION. — OOZBECKS OF THE CITY, AND OF THE COUNTRY OR DESERT. — HOUSES. — DRESS. — WOMEN. — AGE AND CEREMONIES OF MARRIAGE. — TAUJUKS. — TOORKOMANS, AND OTHER DESERT TRIBES. — THE CITY. — ITS ANTIQUITY. — PRESENT EXTENT. — PUBLIC BUILDINGS. — WATER. — INSALUBRIOUS. — PHYSICIANS, DRUGGISTS. — TRADE OF BOCKHARA. — HORSE-MARKETS, AND VARIOUS BREEDS. — CAMELS. — CURRENCY. — GOLD CHEAP AND PLENTY. — NO BILLS OF EXCHANGE. — CLIMATE AND SEASONS. — HARVESTS. — PRODUCTS. — COUNTRY AROUND THE CITY. — SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF MAWUR-A-UL-NEHR. — ALTOON TAUGH. — RIVER WITH GOLDEN SANDS. — ANTIQUITIES. — COINS. — GEMS. — SAMARCAND. — ANCIENT FAME. — PRESENT STATE. — TOMB OF TIMOOR. — KARCHEE. — SHEHER-E-SUBZ, OR KHEISH. — OURATUPPEH. — HISSĀR.

THE extensive tract of country recognized under the appellation of Transoxiana, or Mawur-a-ul-nehr, and which comprehends the greater part of Oozbeck Tartary, is divided into several states, some of which are under the dominion of powerful and independent sovereigns, while others are possessed by chiefs, who are sometimes tributary to these sovereigns, and at others assert their own independence, according to their powers of resistance for the time being.

In a country so fluctuating in its condition, it is no easy matter to ascertain even its nominal divisions, and still less so to describe the real situation of each; but as far as I have been able to ascertain, they lately amounted to seven, which are as follow: —

The kingdom of Bockhara, the ruler of which is Hyder Shah.

The kingdom of Kokaun, or Ferghaunah, the chief of which is Omer Khan.

The district of Ooratuppeh, which is under Mahmood Khan.

The state or district of Sheher-e-Subz, under Niaz Beg.

The district of Hissār, under Seyed Beg.

The district or town of Kobadiaun, under Murad Allee Beg; and
The district of Courghaun Tuppeh, under Yar Beg.

Of these divisions, Bockhara is by far the most important, both in power and extent. The habitable part of this kingdom is small, in proportion to the desert, with which it is chiefly surrounded, and which may be considered in great measure as its boundary. It is divided in this manner from Khyvah or Khaurezm, on the west and north-west; vast tracts of desert, thinly sprinkled with the tents of the Toorkoman and Karacalpāk tribes, stretch to the north and north-east, only interrupted by the Iaxartes or Sihoon; upon the east it is bounded by Kokaun, or Ferghaunah, and Hissār; and the Oxus or Amoo, with the mountains from which it flows, may be said to form its southern limit.* Like all Asiatic states, however, its territories vary in extent with its power, and where natural lines are not very strongly marked, precise limits can hardly be fixed.

As the sovereign forms the most prominent object in every eastern state, it may be convenient to commence what is to be said regarding Bockhara, with an account of its ruler, Shah Hyder, his character, and the nature of his government, and then to lay before the reader such particulars as have been ascertained regarding the capital, and the other chief cities or divisions of the kingdom, with whatever else promises to be of interest regarding the country in general. The following account of the king's predecessors on the throne, with the circumstances of his own immediate ancestor's accession to it, I received from prince Nasser-u-deen, a brother of the monarch, who resided at Mushed: it was given chiefly with a view to prove the descent of their family from Chengiz Khan, and is therefore little more than a dry genealogical detail, without the relief of interesting incidents; and I regret that the few facts of such a nature which came to my knowledge are too meagre and disjointed to be interwoven with it; but the chief part of the prince's narrative†, particularly that which relates to more recent events, was confirmed by the collateral evidence of many persons, perfectly acquainted with the family and its history.

Sheibahnee Khan was descended from and succeeded Tocktamish Khan, of the race of Chengiz Khan, who reigned over the Dust-e-Kipchāk, and the countries north and west of the Caspian, now subject to Russia; but being driven from these countries, to the eastward of the Caspian, he retreated to Bockhara, which he took possession of, and made his capital; and from thence he gradually extended his dominion over Balkh, Buduckshan, Herāt, Merve, and Khaurezm. He reigned twenty-two years, and, dying‡,

* Sheher-e-Subz, however, intervenes between Bockhara and the Oxus.

† This narrative was chiefly given, and taken down verbatim, from a sort of hereditary historian of the house (who lived with the prince in Mushed), and in the prince's presence.

‡ Sheibahnee Khan was slain in a great battle with Ismael Shah, of Persia, who conquered Herāt and Khorasān from him.

was succeeded by his nephew Obeidoollah, who retained all that his uncle had won, and, in addition, took possession of part of Khorasān, including Mushed, where he committed great havoc, slaughtering multitudes of its inhabitants. This prince reigned somewhat more than twenty years; and having no heirs, was succeeded by Iskunder Khan, a cousin of Sheibahnee Khan, who not only kept entire the territories which his predecessors had won, but sent his son Abdoolla Khan to pursue their successes in Khorasān, which he ravaged as far as Semnoon. Iskunder Khan reigned only twelve years, during which time, however, he is said to have built twelve hundred mosques, caravanserais, and water cisterns, for the convenience of travellers; and he was succeeded by Abdoolla Khan, who enjoyed the throne for thirty years. His son Abdool-momen, had only reigned six months, when the Omrahs of his court finding him disposed to tyranny, conspired against, him and put him to death.* He was succeeded by his cousin, Wullee Mahomed Khan, who married a daughter of Meerza Abootaleb, the mootwullee of the holy shrine at Mushed, by whom he had a son, Seyed Nadir Mahomed Khan. Having reigned eighteen years, without increasing or diminishing his possessions†, he died, and was succeeded by Imaum Koolee Khan, his son by a former marriage, who was, it is said, of so austere and reserved a disposition, and so little fond of pomp, that he only kept one horse for himself, and another for his servant: after reigning sixteen years he became blind, and sending for Seyed Nadir, his half brother, who resided at Balkh, he resigned to him the kingdom, and went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he died. Seyed Nadir reigned twenty-four years, and amassed great treasures; he had twelve sons, the eldest of whom, Seyed Abdool Azeez Khan, being turbulent and restless, leagued with the chiefs of the Oozbecks in Bockhara; and upon a certain occasion, when his father, who had made a journey to Herāt, returned to the city, he shut the gates against him, and prevented his entrance; the king retired to Balkh, and sent to intreat the aid of Shah Jehān, emperor of Hindostan, in recovering his kingdom. That monarch sent troops indeed, headed by one of his own sons, but they only came to take possession of Balkh for the Indian crown. Seyd Nadir then fled to Persia, where Shah Abbas, the second who filled the throne, received him with distinction, and offered him troops to recover his kingdom‡; the exiled monarch, however, appears to have dreaded the issue of this effort, and preferred remaining as a guest at Ispahān.

* About { A. D. 1587, / A. Heg. 996. } Malcolm's History, vol. i. page 525.

† In his reign, about A. H. 1006, the Oozbeck army invading Khorasān was defeated by Shah Abbas, with great slaughter, near Herāt. Malcolm's History, vol. i. page 528.

‡ Sir John Malcolm, in his history of Persia, vol. i. page 581, alludes to this event, although there are some small differences in the circumstances. He mentions the death of Seyed Nadir

The usurper, Seyed Abdool Azeez, then led an army towards Balkh, to recover it from the Indian invaders; but the young Indian prince, following the directions of his father, sent for Seyed Nadir, from Ispahān, delivered the city into his hands, and retired to Hindostan. Seyed Abdool Azeez, had by that time reached Balkh; and his father, seeking to entrap his rebel son, proposed a conference within the walls, at which he promised to give up the place to him in person, designing, in reality, to seize and put him to death. The son, however, was not so to be duped; he sent a threatening reply to his father, upbraiding him with his treacherous intentions, and demanding immediate possession of the place: the father, aware of his own weakness, fled in the night by an opposite gate, and retiring to Mecca, he built a residence, where he lived during the remainder of his days, and was buried by his brother.

Abdool Azeez then made Balkh the seat of his government, and reigned there thirty years, having previously reigned sixteen at Bockhara. By this time being old, he sent for his brother, Soobhān Koolee Khan from Bockhara, and resigning to him the reins of government, he followed his father's steps to Mecca, where he died. Soobhān Koolee Khan continued to reign for twenty-four years, and after his demise, was succeeded at Bockhara by his younger son, Obeidoolla Khan, while his eldest ruled at Balkh; these two went to war, and fought during twelve years, when both died natural deaths, and were succeeded by their younger brother, Abool Feize Khan. This prince, being of a weak and indolent nature, deficient in energy and talents for command, soon lost the greater part of his dominions*, retaining little more than Bockhara, with part of Mawur-a-ul-nehr.

It was in the reign of this prince that Nadir Shah, after taking possession of Balkh, marched against Bockhara; he crossed the Oxus on the 18th August, 1740; and having advanced within three days' journey† of the capital, he sent to know whether its king had any intention of opposing his further progress; but Abool Feize, fully aware of his own weakness, assured the conqueror that he submitted himself entirely to his clemency. Nadir then enquired respecting his family, and the king accompanied his reply with one of his daughters, whom he offered to that monarch as a wife. The next requisition on the part of the conqueror was a certain subsidy, which was fixed at two mauns of wheat and one of barley for every house in

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as having happened in Persia, and that he requested to be interred at Mushed: it is unlikely that an Oozbeck, and, therefore, a Soonnie prince, should have made such a request. It appears more probable that the historian of his house is correct, and that he made the haj to Mecca, where he ended his days.

* His army was defeated near Karchee, by Reza Koolee Meerza, the son of Nadir Shah, with great slaughter, in the year 1736, A. D. — A. Heg. 1149. Sir W. Jones's translation of Meerza Mehdee's history, vol. v. page 266.

† Meerza Mehdee says, four fursungs, about sixteen miles, ib. page 327.

Bockhara; the Bockhara maun weighs sixty of the Persian or Tabreez mauns; and Abool Feize, either mistaken in the meaning of the demand, or desirous to gratify and conciliate the invader, sent the quantity of grain measured by the former measure, replying to the surprized enquiries of Nadr, that he had complied honestly with the terms of their agreement according to their meaning in his country. This conciliatory tone of conduct operated on the stern mind of the Persian monarch so favourably, that he departed from the territories of Bockhara, confirming their monarch in possession of his throne, and without even entering the capital.

There was at this time, among the officers of state in Bockhara, one Raheem Khan, of the Mungut tribe, who had become so popular in the place, as to be an object of alarm and jealousy to its monarch; and he prevailed upon Nadir to carry him in his suite to Daghestān, whither he soon after repaired; but that person appears to have had so much craft and management, that he insinuated himself into the good graces of the Persian king, and even obtained from him a commission, whereby he was empowered to act as governor of Bockhara, in control of its natural prince Abool Feize Khan. There can be no doubt that the reigning prince was considered as unfit any longer to sway the sceptre; and that Raheem Khan, who had been the active instrument of his government for many years, had gained the confidence of men so completely, that when he now returned thus, to dethrone his master, he was assisted by all; and after a feeble resistance on the part of Abool Feize Khan, the latter was seized and put to death.

Raheem Khan reigned twelve years, during which time his more vigorous administration not only restored to order such parts of his dominions as had in the late weak reign been turbulent or disaffected, but regained some portions of what his predecessor had lost; he died without male heirs, leaving only a daughter. Dauniar Beg, an uncle of Raheem Khan, a noble of great respectability and consequence, a descendant also from Sheibahnee Khan, and thus related to the royal family extinct in Abool Feize Khan, was now, by common consent, raised to the throne of Bockhara; and the daughter of Raheem Khan was given in marriage to his son, Ameer Māāsoom, afterwards well known as the celebrated Shah Murād, or Beggy Jan.* Dauniar Beg disappointed the expectations entertained of him, proving a weak prince, in whose reign, of twenty-four years, the kingdom fell into disorder, and was greatly deteriorated. He was succeeded by his son, Shah Murād, who being a spirited and active prince, regained all that his father had lost, and extended the bounds of his territories, on the one side to the Seer or Sihoon river,

* The prince's name was Ameer Māāsoom, but upon his succeeding to the throne, in consequence of the fortunate circumstances which attended that event, he assumed the title of Shah Murād, or "the desired king." Beggy Jan was the familiar appellation given him by his father; Beggee being the diminutive of Beg. *Lord*, and Jan, an affectionate adjunct, equivalent to the English expression of, "my life."

and on the other, beyond the Amoo, retaking Balkh from the Affghauns, and Merve from Bahram Alee Khan, its governor on the part of Persia; the latter he destroyed, and it has ever since remained desolate.*

Shah Murād reigned sixteen years, and was succeeded on the throne by his son, Hyder Tureh, now Shah Hyder. Shah Murād had seven brothers, Rustum Beg, Fazil Beg, Mahomed Beg, Omer Khooshbeggee, Mahomed Hoosain Beg, and Mahomed Allee Beg, who was an idiot. At the time of the king's death, Rustum Beg and the idiot were in the ark or palace, the others were in the city; they made an attempt to seize the palace and treasure, but being opposed by the inhabitants, who favoured the legitimate heir, they took to flight, Rustum Beg and the idiot alone remaining; and Hyder Tureh, the eldest son of the late king, who was at Karchee when he learnt the death of his father, repaired without delay to the capital; and, assisted by the nobles and the people, took possession of the throne. Secure of the crown, he lost no time in pursuing his rebel uncles, the most of whom he took prisoners and put to death†; but Rustum Beg and the idiot, who remained at Bockhara, have been suffered to reside there unharmed.

Shah Murād had three sons, Hyder Tureh, Seyed Mahomed Hoossain Tureh, and Nasser-u-deen Tureh; the second, at the time of his father's death, was governor of Samarcand; but alarmed for his life, and perhaps with cause, he fled to the protection of Omer Khan of Khogende, where he still

* In the second volume of Sir J. Malcolm's valuable history of Persia, may be found a variety of interesting particulars respecting this singular prince; and, from the authorities quoted, as well as from the result of my own enquiries on the subject, I have no doubt of their being generally correct. The leading points in his character, his great real or affected religious austerity, the simplicity of his life, the nature of his government, of his military, or rather plundering expeditions, and general policy, were confirmed in the conversations I had with his son at Mushed, as well as with other persons perfectly well informed on the subject; but I had not sufficient opportunity or means to collect authentic materials for a more detailed account of his reign; I therefore, have, in the text, merely inserted what was written down from the prince's dictation, and I would refer such readers as may feel interested in the subject, to the work I have mentioned, where it is treated in much greater and more amusing detail.

† One of these brothers was pardoned, as I was informed, under circumstances of a very guilty nature. At the time when Beggy Jan surprized and destroyed Merve, the governor, Bahram Allee Khan was killed, and his wife and family carried prisoners to Bockhara; Mahomed Hoosain Khan, one of his sons, grew up in high favour with the monarch, and afterwards with his son, the present king; but it appears that he constantly cherished the hope of revenge for the destruction of his family. To throw the king off his guard, he wrote a letter to Meerza Hedayut Oollah, of Mushed, declaring that, upon conviction, he had abjured the Sheah faith and adopted the Soonnie creed, and this letter he took care should be intercepted, and brought to his majesty's hand. Having thus secured the monarch's confidence, he conspired with one of his brothers (of whose name I am uncertain) to murder him upon his return from a feast, but the design was discovered the very day it was to be put in execution, and both took to flight. What became of Mahomed Hoossain Khan I know not, but the prince was taken at Sheher-e-Subz, where he lived, was pardoned, and presented with a village near that town, as a maintenance, where he died only a few years ago. These circumstances I learnt from prince Nasser-u-Deen Meerza, at Mushed.

remains. Nasser-u-deen Tureh had, during his father's life, received the government of Merve as a provision, and he remained about sixteen years in that situation; at the end of which time, through the ill offices of mutual enemies, who filled the king's ears with tales of rebellion, and those of his brother with rumours of practices against his life, he was induced to intrigue with the prince of Mushed for assistance in case of his opposing his brother; but being disappointed, he feared to remain longer at Merve, and fled to Mushed, where he had, at this time, remained fourteen years a guest, in circumstances rather obscure and needy for his rank.*

Shah Hyder is of a mild, pacific, and unambitious disposition; charitable, just, and religious even to bigotry: the latter quality indeed forms so strong a feature in his character that his subjects as well as strangers speak of him as being more of a derwesh, or devotee, than a king; and although he does not practise the extreme austerities of his father, still his dress, his table, and equipage are of the simplest kind; the former being in general of plain white or buff colour, the latter consisting for the most part of vegetable fare, and bread, with very little animal food; besides which, he fasts every day, and is very wakeful at night. It is said he carries this simplicity to such an extreme, that he limits his private expenditure to such money as he raises by the conversion of Jews to the Mussoolmaun faith, in the persuasion that such money carries a peculiar blessing; consequently, he spares no pains in making such proselytes. He remains for many hours, and even days, without appearing in public, absorbed in meditation or study; he is a very great encourager of literature, and the name which Bockhara has ever possessed for learning and learned men, is by no means diminished under the reign of Shah Hyder: indeed it is a common remark, that in his court it is far better to be a derwesh, or a moollah, than a soldier, or a noble. He holds open assemblies like his father for the purpose of hearing and deciding causes, a system practised, I believe, by all the Oozbeck princes; but he is particularly fond of acting the priest, haranguing the populace from the pulpit, on subjects connected with their religion.

The king is about forty-five years of age, tall, handsome, of a fair and florid complexion, somewhat tinged with yellow, and having a full round beard: he wears an Oozbeck cap upon his head, with an Oozbeck turban wrapt around it, like an Arab imaum; a short jacket on his body, and above it a jameh or robe; a knife at his waist, and Oozbeck boots on his feet. An account of the manner in which he disposes of his time, as given by a very intelligent and trustworthy native traveller, will serve better than any thing else to convey a just idea of this monarch's character, and the nature and spirit of his government.

Rising at midnight, the king employs himself for some time in repeating

* The circumstances of his flight are detailed more at large in another place.

supernumerary prayers. After he has repeated the morning prayers, he reads and lectures to forty or fifty scholars, on the Tufseer, and traditions; after which he sits down on his two knees, upon a green velvet musnud, and all the khans come separately before his majesty; and while passing the door, make their obeisance, and call out with a loud voice, "Salaam Aleikoom:" they then take place, sitting upon their legs, while the king's naib returns the "Aleikoom Salaam."* In the royal presence, the seyeds and oolemah† occupy the right, and the khans the left, sitting on their legs. The hakim bey, who is opposite to the king in the assembly, does not sit. The king's peishkhidmuts (servants) stand on the left, close to his person. All the seyeds, oolemah, and khans, who attend in the presence, have a dress uniform in fashion and colour; and every person introduced to his majesty for the first time must put on the Oozbeck dress.

All strangers who come to wait on the king, can only be introduced after leave granted by his majesty; and the ceremonies of introduction, are as follows: a chobedar‡, takes him by the arm at the door of the presence chamber, and places him before the king, at a distance, from whence he gives the salute of "Salaam Aleikoom:" he then advances a few paces; two servants then taking him one by each arm, place him near the king; if his majesty makes the signal for him to kiss his hand, he goes forward and performs the ceremony; if he signs him to be seated, the servants conduct him to his proper place, where, being seated, he lifts up his hands with the "*al khyr*" (a blessing); he then states his business or makes his petition. If he be an ambassador, a fixed allowance is granted to him from that day until he takes his leave. If he be a *Peerzadeh* (a holy person, or the descendant of a saint), he receives a present of nearly two hundred tengehs §, on taking leave. In this way, he adapts his munificence to circumstances, dismissing every one pleased with their reception, and with presents either in money or in rarities of the country.

After the ceremonies of introductions are over, such as have complaints to prefer, and who repair every morning to the king's gate, are called upon by the chobedar to come forward, and place themselves on the ground at no great distance in front of his majesty, who makes the proper enquiries, and decides according to the Korān; some law books also lie upon the musnud, beside the king. At noon, five or six eminent expositors come before his majesty, and engage in literary controversy; the king joins with

* It is incumbent upon all Mahometans to return the Aleikoom Salaam to the "Salaam Aleikoom!" or, ("peace be with you!") of a true believer, whatever be his rank; and as the king is supposed to be too much occupied with business to attend to all that passes, he takes leave to do this by his naib or deputy.

† The oolemah are the heads of the law and religion.

‡ A mace-bearer or officer, bearing a staff of office: the term is chiefly used in India.

§ A coin about the value of a sixpence.

them in this exercise, and afterwards, as peish imaum, recites the noonday prayers, after which, those who come to be introduced, or complain, are admitted to the presence in the same manner as in the morning, until within an hour of sunset, when, after due enquiry, he decides the affairs of state, and of justice; he then acts as peish imaum, for the afternoon prayers, and recites what belongs to penitence and fasts, until evening. After this, he breaks his fast by taking some sweetmeats and light food; he then recites the evening prayers, but it is not until a little after this, that he takes his chief meal, which is also very temperate. When about two hours of the night is gone, he acts once more as peish imaum, in reciting the prayers of bed-time; and then the Seh-rekaat prayers being said, between the period of bed-time and midnight he takes rest for the period of half a watch in his palace.

The king generally dispatches a number of causes before night; if any one draws out to great length, he sends it to the cauzee, who dare not act contrary to law, both from dread of the king's anger, and because all the people are so well acquainted with the laws, that they would certainly bring any illegal judgment before his majesty, who would discharge and punish the cauzee for injustice.

On Wednesday eve, the king stays in his mother's house; and on Wednesday morning, goes on foot to visit the tomb of Huzrut Khajah Behā-u-deen Nagshbaud, about five miles east from the city; after repeating the fateheh *, he distributes some alms, and then mounting on horseback, returns to the city.

There is a person, whose duty it is to inform the king whenever any person dies in the city, and his majesty, immediately mounting a horse, goes to the house, and after acting as imaum, in saying the funeral prayers, he returns home.

The king always reads the khootbeh himself, acting as peish imaum at the grand mosque, under the walls. After the first prayers, all the royal servants leave the mosque, ranking themselves in two lines opposite to the town gate; the king then leaves the mosque with some khans and servants, preceded by chobedars; and he thus passes in royal pomp between the two lines, into the city, until he reaches the throne, when all the head men of the city and the suburbs repair to pay him their duty, and repeat "Salaam Aleikoom," after which they retire respectively to their homes; the number of khans belonging to the army, who thus present themselves every Friday, in genèral approaches, and sometimes exceeds a thousand.

The king, besides four wives, has some concubines; he has one son, of six-

* Form of prayer.

† The khootbeh is a species of sermon or discourse pronounced from the pulpit, in which prayers are said for the reigning sovereign, and thanksgivings put up for the benefits conferred on mankind by the true faith, &c. &c.

teen, called Tureh Khan; he has two brothers, one born of a Calmuck mother, lives in Mushed, and is called Nasser-u-deen Khan, ameerzadeh; the other, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, whose mother was of the family of Khwajeh Ekhrar, is now in Sheher-e-Subz, with Niaz Allee, the hakim of that place, but who is in reality independent of Shah Hyder.

The nature of the government may, in some degree, be gathered from what has preceded: the king is perfectly absolute, the fountain of all authority and power: the oolemah, and heads of religion alone, have influence enough to make it necessary for the king to pay them attention, lest by offending them he might weaken his authority; and even these have been brought under such perfect control by Shah Hyder, that some of the most highly regarded of their body have been lately put to death by that monarch, without the least disturbance: they rank, however, above all classes, civil or military.

The khaujahs of Jooeebaur are the greatest of these holy personages; they belong to a family, who are understood to be descended from the khaliph Abubekr, and derive so much weight from their large possessions, even more than from their sanctity and descent, that they may be, in some measure, considered independent of the king. They are not, however, the first in rank in the king's presence; this distinction appears to be enjoyed by the nukeeb, or head of the seyeds, who sits upon his majesty's right hand upon a musnud or elevated seat; after him the chief cauzees and mooftees, with the rest of the oolemah; all of whom, throughout the kingdom, hold their appointments directly from the king.

The omrahs, or nobles belonging to the army, only occupy the second rank before the king, sitting on his left hand; the first of them is the commander-in-chief of the troops, followed by his officers in their respective grades; and then come the gholaums and confidential slaves, according to their offices. The hakim beg, whose office approaches nearest to that of wuzeer, stands in front of the king. This officer has the highest rank at court of any, in what may be termed a civil station; he enjoys the king's confidence, he has the collection of the taxes in his charge, and when the king quits the capital, he leaves the management of the city and fort under his care.

The court, in its arrangements, is said closely to resemble that of Caubul, but to be far more splendid, the ameers wearing rich gold brocade, and embroidered broad cloth dresses, but no jewels. The oolemah and seyeds wear clothes with hanging sleeves, made chiefly of a cloth brought from Benares, called nohree-khab and sāl-e-abreshim; one kind is blue, the other very white like silver, whence its name. The chief men wear a turban and slippers; the common people often wear boots. Some, instead of a turban, wear a Kermān or Herāt shawl wrapt round the head.

When the sovereign of the country is strict and laborious in the discharge of his various duties, and an impartial dispenser of justice, the inferior de-

partments of his government will take a similar tone, and be easily regulated. In the city of Bockhara itself, and the seven toomauns, which comprehend the greatest part of the cultivated country around it, the king himself gives so much superintendance, that delegates of high rank and much confidence are little required. An officer, called a mihtur, has charge of the department of customs in the capital, assisted by amluckdars or subordinate collectors; and in all matters of justice the king is assisted by cauzees of various rank. To each toomaun a hakim or governor is appointed, who has a superintending charge, and is assisted by a wuzeer, who, like the hakim, holds his office directly from the crown.

These toomauns are districts that contain many villages, and each village has its separate system of government. The chief authority is the āk sukaul* or elder, who is appointed by the inhabitants from among themselves, in consideration of his respectability, wisdom, and learning; his office is permanent, and, indeed, commonly hereditary, nor is he ever changed except for misconduct. His business is to settle all disputes, to collect the revenue, and to levy the militia; and his judgment in these matters is assisted by persons chosen by the subdivisions, on the same principle as he himself was selected. The āk sukaul receives from every man who marries in the village a present or khelut, and a portion of grain from each inhabitant at the time of harvest; but this portion is not fixed, and appears to depend upon the respectability of the contributors.

The revenue collected by the āk sukaul consists of the deh-yek, or tithe of the produce of the land: the zikhaut†, or fortieth of flocks and money; and the customs, which are, in truth, but a branch of the zikhaut, being a fortieth on all merchandize.

The deh-yek is collected upon all private freeholds, by measuring the grain, and taking the tenth in kind. Of the land called *khasigee*, which is the royal property, one-third of the produce is taken. There is yet, another description of land, which is assigned to charitable and religious purposes, and which pays nothing to the revenue.

The zikhaut is collected from flocks, by tale; and the āk sukauls take care there shall be no concealment of numbers in taking the account; that which is collected on money or personal property cannot be assessed, and the collectors are forced to take whatever is offered by the proprietors; but as this zikhaut is enjoined by the Korān, it is considered a religious duty to pay it.

The customs are collected in the usual manner, on the entry or exit of goods.

The levies of militia, or *kara mairghan*, is thus effected: the āk sukaul

* Ak-sukaul is, literally, "*white beard*," — the "reish suffeed" of Persia.

† The zikhaut is a sort of legal alms authorized to be levied, or rather enjoined to be paid by the Mahometan law.

makes every man in the village pay a sum of money or a quantity of grain, proportioned to the number of his family; and with this collection he provides the requisite number of men, from among a set of military people, who are hangers-on of his own.

Besides the āk sukaul, there is an officer called the naib attached, according to circumstances, to each village, or to two or three together; he is the deputy of the hakim, appointed by the king, always a moollah, either a native of the village or a stranger, and he acts upon the king's part in all affairs, as the āk sukaul does upon that of the village. They co-operate when the interests of both are concerned, as in settling disputes, &c. These naibs do the duty of cauzees, by which name they are most frequently called, and they are changed once a-year. There are besides amluckdars, or officers attached to the naibs for the purpose of assisting in the collection of the king's revenue.

There are also, in most villages, men of importance called begs*, who are, in fact, the nobility and gentry of the Oozbecks, and who often enjoy a higher degree of influence where they reside, than even the āk sukaul himself; but they derive this influence entirely from their wealth, for they have no real or delegated authority, and can exercise it no longer than while the family continues rich and powerful; the title, however, is so far hereditary, that it sometimes survives the loss of influence and wealth.

Of the amount collected from the various sources of revenue, or its proportion to the expenditure, I could get no account, not even from the prince at Mushed. One merchant spoke vaguely of the customs collected at Bockhara, as producing a maun of gold (near 500lbs.) a day; another gave some computation equally wild and fanciful, but no source to which I have had access has afforded any authentic information on the subject. It is said that the greater part, if not the whole of his receipts, are expended by the king upon his army, and the oolemah, including all benefactions to religious, charitable, and learned institutions, and other contingencies of government; his own expences being furnished from the capitation tax, levied upon all fixed inhabitants not of the Mahometan faith, being from one to four tengehs† a head, according to circumstances.

Regarding the military establishment of Bockhara, the accounts vary greatly: some persons have stated it at a hundred thousand men and upwards; others as low as thirty thousand. The great discrepancy of these accounts (besides what is to be allowed for the natural incorrectness of Asiatics on such subjects), may arise in great measure from a confusion

* The word is differently pronounced, Bey, Bai, Boy, Beg, but it is the same word in all cases, and signifies "*a great man*," or a *Lord*. In some countries it seems to be equivalent to the word *khan*, in others it is a rank somewhat inferior. When applied in the feminine, "*begum*," to a female, it often signifies *queen*.

† From sixpence to two shillings.

between the military force kept constantly in readiness, and that which may be called forth in cases of emergency: it is probable, that of the first there may be a body of from thirty to forty thousand horse, kept in constant pay; and that from the militia and the tribes a levy exceeding the largest stated amount might be collected. The standing army is divided into troops under officers of various ranks, and is regularly paid twice a year; the amount of their pay has been likewise differently stated; by some it is said to be twenty tillas *, and twenty mauns of grain a year, by others only six tillas and six mauns of grain; the pay no doubt varies according to the character of the soldier, and probably according to the description of the corps, or service in which he may be inlisted.

The troops, which it appears are all cavalry, are armed with a very long lance, a sword, and a shield; a certain number, perhaps a third, have matchlocks, and those have no other arms; they all wear long knives or daggers, and some even two, at the waist. The soldiers are dressed in the Yarkund fashion, in keenkhab, and adres† jackets, and have shawls about their waists. They are said to be brave and patient of hunger, thirst, and fatigue; but my Persian informers evinced great contempt for them, declaring that they were no soldiers, and adding, with characteristic vanity, that a few thousand Persian horsemen would plunder Bockhara with ease, and defeat its army.

The population of this kingdom, like that of the rest of Mawur-a-ul-nehr, consists of Oozbecks, Taujicks, and Toorkomans of various tribes; of these, the Oozbecks are by far most numerous, and they are to be found inhabiting the towns and villages, as well as tents in the desert. The character which was given of this people, by every one with whom I conversed on the subject, was very favorable: they are said to be honest, just, sincere, good-tempered, generally well disposed, and by no means either cruel or treacherous; quarrels among themselves are rare, and still seldomer stained with blood; nor are they by any means so strongly given to private and murderous revenge as most of their neighbours; their moral character is unstained with many of the fouler crimes‡ which darken those of the surrounding countries; they are hospitable and kind, and, from what I have

* The tilla is a gold coin, which appears to be worth about ten shillings and sixpence.

† Adres is a species of silk manufacture made at Bockhara. This description of their dress should, I apprehend, be meant only to apply either to some particular corps or to the uniform on grand occasions.

‡ I must, in fairness, observe, that this has been denied; and, when in Mushed, several persons who should have been sufficiently informed, told me, that some of these disgusting vices existed in Bockhara more commonly, and even more openly than in Persia: this, perhaps, may have had reference to the Taujicks. I cannot say how far the accusation is true, but it is the duty of a traveller to state both sides of the case, and leave the truth to the decision of future investigation.

heard, strangers after having passed through the dangers of their frontiers, would probably be well treated and secure.*

This character may appear inconsistent with the practice of slave-selling, which is so universal throughout Bockhara; but this traffic is chiefly confined to the sale of Sheahs, with whom the Oozbecks, who are zealous Soonnies, consider themselves at constant war, and to sell whom as slaves, is, in their opinion, not only lawful, but praiseworthy. But they seem to have been taught this custom by the rude and savage tribes with whom they are surrounded, who appear to have sold the prisoners they took in war, and even to have made plundering excursions for the sake of taking captives, long before the Oozbecks were in possession of the country.

The Oozbecks who inhabit the uncultivated parts of the country live in parties of from two hundred to more than a thousand families; these parties are called *aouls*, and several of them belong to one *oorugh* or tribe. These tribes have no particular chief, any more than the Toorkomans; but each aoul is regulated by its own bey or beg, who appears to be chosen by the common consent, in general from his wealth, character, or abilities, and consequent influence; but the office is not hereditary. In large aouls the king has a voice in the election of a bey, but in smaller ones this is little attended to. These begs listen to all complaints, and adjust all disputes, which are not in their nature very grave; in more serious cases, several begs of the same oorugh meet to consult; and if they cannot decide the matter, the parties are sent to the cauzee. This officer, who is always appointed by the king, is held in considerable awe; and great part

* A native of Kabooshan, with whom I met at that place, related to me his own story, which, if quite true, would serve to prove that this general rule is not without exceptions. He went upon a commercial adventure to Bockhara with a caravan, and arrived safely at the house of a relative, but some report of his arrival having reached the king's ears, he was sent for, and questioned as to his country and business. He admits, that he regulated his replies rather according to certain advice he had received than to the round unvarnished truth; and the result proved how ill advised he had been, for the king, upbraiding him with being an impostor, ordered him to be confined. This was immediately done, and he remained in prison for two days and nights, during which time no food was given to him, although he called out to all the passengers, first, in terms of entreaty, and then of abuse (wishing, as he said, to hasten the crisis of his fate, whatever that might be), but all without effect. At last, a Persian captive from his own part of the country, being moved with compassion for his situation, brought him some bread and water by stealth, upon the third day of his confinement; and a little afterwards he was taken out of prison, and sold in the common bazar for fifty-two Persian tomauns, his horse and goods being also seized. He retained his clothes, however, and it so happened, that he had a sum of money sewed in his girdle, with which he some time after purchased his freedom. He remained, however, nine months in Bockhara and its neighbourhood, which enabled him to observe, and give to me many particulars relative to that city. He describes the slave-market as taking place twice a-week, when all who have captives for sale bring and expose them: there are brokers who make it their business to transact all bargains. He asserted, that the number of Persian captives in Bockhara exceeded that of the Oozbecks themselves, and that it was common to find individuals possessing from six to sixteen slaves of that nation.

of the influence which the begs possess, arises from the power he has of referring all disputants, and sending all delinquents to the cauzee.

The beg collects the revenue. The king sends an aumil, or collector, with a confidential person of legal authority, and ten soldiers, to the beg; who collects the sheep, camels, oxen, or other animals that are due (being one in forty) from the flocks and herds as they are found in the desert; he then fixes a price for them, which the proprietor must pay in money, as the zikhaut is not taken in kind.

It appears that all these tribes are perfectly in awe of the king, and he takes care to keep up this control in various ways; he discourages any great number of powerful tribes from living together in contiguous aouls, and he even directly prevents it, which he can easily do by a simple order to that effect: thus in the desert it is common to see, in the contiguous aouls, a variety of tribes.

The oorughs are perfectly recognized in the offices of government, as social subdivisions amenable to law, and each is made collectively answerable for the misdemeanours of its members. Thus, if a murder be committed by an individual of any particular oorugh, the whole tribe, if it should consist of twenty thousand families, is forced to pay the price of blood, unless the murderer be discovered and given up. All villages and their inhabitants, within hearing of the spot, where a murder has been committed, are considered answerable for the crime, and the price of blood; but it is said, that murders are very rare, except by robbers and in desert places.

The tents, or rather houses, of the Oozbecks resemble those of the Toorkomans, of which a description has already been given, a frame work of thin laths covered with thick black felts, and they are called karaooees (black houses) or kirghahs. The floors of the rich are spread with carpets and numuds, those of the poor with a blanket or mat of camels' hair; the only chimney they have is a hole in the roof, of open lattice work, over which they can draw a piece of black felt when it rains.

Their dress consists of a shirt and drawers, of cotton in summer, or of woollen in winter, over which they wear a silk or woollen wrapping gown, tied round the waist with a girdle; in cold weather they wrap themselves in a poosteen of sheeps' skin, or a coat of thick felt. The head dress for summer is a painted cap of silk, which they call a calpāk, in winter they wear a small cap of broad cloth lined with fur; a checked, or white turban is often worn round this, and forms, in fact, the true national head dress. Bandages of cloth are rolled round the legs instead of stockings, and although shoes are not unfrequently worn in summer, boots are in most general use, being of a brown colour, and reaching up to the knee in winter. The richer classes, however, make use of a sort of stocking made of black shagreen leather, which is worn at all times, and over which, when

they go out of doors, they slip a kind of shoe, of the same substance but thicker.

The women wear a pair of trowsers, and shift, reaching below the knee, of silk or cotton according to the circumstances of the wearer; and over this a robe like that of the men, which reaches to their ancles; indeed, the dress of both sexes is very similar. A silk or cotton handkerchief is tied about the head, and they plait their hair with silk, and gold or silver ornaments like the Toorkoman women, letting it hang down behind from the back of the head after the fashion of the Chinese. They are very fond of ornaments, wearing necklaces often of golden beads, like barleycorns strung together, nose rings at the nostrils, and ear-rings. They wear boots and silk gloves, and throw over the person a silk chudder or sheet called a boorkah; which conceals it from head to foot; a small netted orifice being left near the eyes to see through, in the same manner as among the Persians. This concealment, however, only applies to the inhabitants of towns, where the old women alone go with their faces bare. Among the Oorughs there is no such concealment, the women all appear openly, and carry on their usual domestic occupations, of working, making clothes, cooking, carrying water, &c., without veils, as in Europe.

The age of marriage among the males, is from sixteen to twenty years of age; among women, from ten to fifteen: if a girl remains unmarried until twenty, her parents are considered to be guilty of criminal neglect. The forms of marriage are as follows. A friend of the boy's father proposes the match to the girl's father; and settles the price, which is generally ten tillas.* The boy then sends some sheep, and some clothes as a present to the girl; after which the boy's father gives a dinner to his own and the girl's relations: they then send for the cauzee, who marries them. The father of the girl sets her up in dresses, ornaments, and household furniture; but the chief expence falls upon the bridegroom, and his relations. The new married couple set up a separate house upon their marriage.

The food of the Oozbecks is nearly the same as that of the Toorkomans, and most pastoral people; it is said they are fond of horse flesh, which they prefer to beef: I have heard this denied; but I do not know which statement is the true one. There is no doubt of their fondness for the national and intoxicating drink, called kimmiz, prepared from mares' milk, by shaking it violently in a skin for several hours. The Oozbeck, naturally rather soberly inclined, is often seduced into excess and drunkenness during the season of this favourite liquor. They are also very fond of tea; but I have already given a description of their modes of preparing this beverage.

Of the Taujuks, I know but little; the appellation itself is very indefinite, being used in common parlance, in opposition to *Toorks;* and understood to imply a sect or class, whose occupations were peaceful, as the latter did one

* About five guineas.

whose habits were predatory or military; and sometimes, I believe, the inhabitants of towns, in opposition to the wandering population of a country: certain it is, that the Taujuks do live entirely in towns and villages, and pursue peaceful occupations, being either merchants, tradesmen, or mechanics; they are described as being very dissolute and corrupt, and in almost every respect the very reverse of the Oozbecks: they bear but a small proportion to the numbers of that nation.

I can say very little of the Toorkomans: but I believe their habits do not materially differ from those of the tribes which I have endeavoured to describe; and I have no data on which to found, even a conjecture of the number either of tribes or families that are considered to be tributary to Bockhara. Among the names of tribes which are noticed as wandering over one or another part of its deserts, are the Kuzāks, Noghaes, Calmucks, Kirgeesh, Sullur Ghazee, Nymauns, Kara Kalpāks; but how many others there may be, or, whether all these can, strictly speaking, be termed Toorkomans, I am not able to say. They form a very sparse population; inhabiting chiefly the banks of the Oxus, and the habitable spots scattered through the desert; but they are to be found in greater or smaller numbers, according to the quantity of cultivated land, all over the more fertile and well-watered country, to the south and south-east of Bockhara.

With such a deficiency of materials, any attempt at estimating the population of the kingdom of Bockhara*, would be vain: the bulk of it is indeed contained in its most populous towns, and their dependant villages; but even these we have no means of rating; we must, therefore, hope, that the efforts of some future and successful traveller†, may, at no distant period, put us in possession of facts to supply this blank, and enlarge our acquaintance with these interesting countries.

Bockhara itself has, from a very remote period, held a distinguished place among the cities of Asia; and few have witnessed more numerous or more bloody revolutions. It is mentioned by the earliest writers on Persian history: the investiture of Yacoob-bin-Leis, with the government of that province, and of Balkh, by the Caliph Moatimud-ul-illah, is taken notice of A. Heg. 256: a little more than twenty years after, it fell into the hands of

* I find that Mr. Irvine, one of the gentlemen who accompanied Mr. Elphinstone on his embassy to Caubul, and who turned his attention to this subject, estimates the whole population of Bockhara at 3,600,000. I am ignorant of the data on which he founds this estimate, and cannot, of course, judge how far it may approach the truth.

† It may be hoped that this consummation is not very remote, as Mr. Morecroft, already known to the literary world as the author of a "Journey to the Lake Mansroar," &c., inserted in the Asiatic researches, is at present exploring some of these distant and interesting countries, and it was his intention to proceed from Leh or Ludhah (which he was already known to have reached in safety), by Kashgar and Yarkund to Bockhara. If the life of this enterprising traveller be spared, the public may reasonably entertain great hopes, from his industry and talents for observation, that much light will be thrown upon these hitherto comparatively unknown regions.

Ismael, the first Sovereign of the Samaneean dynasty, whose successors held it until the great Malik Shah* in A. Heg. 470, passed the Oxus, in his sweeping career, and reduced all Mawur-a-ul-nehr under his sway. About the year A. Heg. 594, Bockhara again passed to strangers, being taken by the celebrated Mahomed Shah Khaurezmee, who enjoyed its possession but a short while, ere it was wrested from his grasp, along with the rest of his kingdom, by the irresistible power of Chengiz Khan, A. Heg. 617. This mighty, but most savage conqueror, after giving to its inhabitants assurances of pardon and immunity, upon conditions which, for the most part, were very strictly fulfilled, enraged at discovering that some officers belonging to the army of his enemy Mahomed Shah, had been protected by certain of the townsmen, their relations, gave orders for setting this large and opulent city on fire; and, as the greater part of its habitations were constructed of wood, its destruction was complete; the sun, which rose upon its rich and crowded bazars, and thickly inhabited edifices, went down at night upon a waste of smoking ashes, among which, there was not one house standing, except some mosques and public buildings, that being built of brick, remained unburned.

Octai Khan, the son of the conqueror, who appears to have been as benevolent and humane as his father was blood-thirsty and cruel, rebuilt Bockhara, and restored it in some degree to its former prosperity; and it remained with the posterity of Chengiz, until Asia was again overwhelmed by a storm from the East, and the arms of the great Timoor bore down every thing before them. The descendants of Timoor retained possession of the city and dominions annexed to it, until about the A. Heg. 900, when, along with the whole of Mawur-a-ul-nehr, Khaurezm, Balkh, and other provinces of Tartary, it fell into the hands of the Oozbecks, in whose possession it has ever since continued.

This city is now of very great extent; it has been represented as covering less ground within the walls than Ispahan, but containing nothing but well conditioned and fully inhabited houses, without any intermixture of ruins. It is surrounded by a lofty wall of earth, faced and topped with unburnt bricks, and having brick towers at distances; but it is by no means in good condition, for the earth is of a mouldering nature, and my informant said that neither the wall nor towers would stand the battering of a single gun.

In this wall there are twelve gates, from each of which a continuous line of bazars, with rows of houses and gardens, extends for three or four fursungs (ten or twelve miles) into the country; so that the space that is thickly inhabited without the walls, greatly exceeds that within. The best accounts, including that which I obtained from the ameerzadeh, regarding the population of Bockhara, stated that *within* the walls to amount to about

* Malik Shah, third of the Seljook dynasty of Persia.

120,000 houses; and that of the suburbs and immediate dependencies to as much more. This may be a great exaggeration; but there is, I think, no doubt that this city contains a population far exceeding that of any other in Asia which we know of, except Pekin and some others in China and Calcutta, with one or two others in India.

The citadel stands upon an eminence on the north-eastern side of the town; it has sixteen guns and mortars, great and small, without carriages, lying on the ground; near it there is a large well-built mosque, where the king himself, on Fridays, reads the khutbeh*, and acts as peish imaum. A market is held every day at noon, in a place before this mosque and citadel, called the Registān Bazar, in which place there is a gallows set up like a figure of clay, under which, murderers, highway robbers, and such as have robbed three times, are put to death by the king's orders, in conformity with the sentence of the cauzee, and there hung upon the gallows.

In the centre of the city there is a charsoo, having a dome built of stone and lime, inside of which are four streets, one of which is closed up at the end, and in it are the booksellers: a market is held in this charsoo every morning. There are several other bazars, which are chiefly roofed in from the weather, and a number of caravanserais for travellers.

Mosques and medressas (or colleges) abound in Bockhara beyond all other buildings; among the former that deserves to be noticed from which Chengiz Khan harangued the people when he first got possession of the city, and which is still extant. Of the latter there are about eighty, chiefly built of stone and lime, and containing from forty to two and even three hundred chambers. The college of Gokultash, near the Karshee gate, and that of the Zeārut of Behā-u-deen Nagshbaud, are mentioned in particular, as having each of them three hundred chambers. In each medressa there is a lecturer, and each chamber is calculated to contain two students. Each college has some land and some shops in the bazar appropriated to it, the rents of which run from one hundred to five thousand rupees a-year, and support the lecturer and students. Many well disposed and pious men build and endow colleges with a hundred bigahs of arable land and a few shops; and the king assists all such institutions liberally out of the zikhaut or taxes, allowing, in many cases, from five to fifteen tillas a month. There are, besides these, a number of durgahs or mausolea of men of piety, which are visited from religious motives, and some of which are richly endowed and highly decorated.

The houses in Bockhara are in general two and even three stories high, built of raw brick, and often strengthened by wooden frame work; those of inferior description are constructed of the same frames of timber, filled up with mud and fragments of brick. All are plastered over with a coat of

* The service performed in the mosques, in which prayers were put up for the prosperity of the king.

lime cement, and many of them are handsomely decorated with painting, both inside and out.

The town is supplied with water from the river Kohik, which passing about twenty miles to the north-east of it, after leaving the hills near Samarcand, feeds several canals, that water not only the inside of the town but all the gardens around it. Once in fifteen days the water is caused to flow into the reservoirs of the town; and it is this which is used for all purposes by the inhabitants, both of the town and citadel, for there are no wells in the vicinity of the town. It does not appear, however, to be a wholesome beverage, for after using it during the spring and summer months, sickness generally prevails; and the Guinea worm, in particular, is so common among the people, that few escape it: the inhabitants have, in consequence, become very skilful in the treatment of this disease. After having felt its position, they make a little slit in the skin, and getting the head of the worm out, they continue to draw it with a gentle force, and enlarge the cut for three or four fingers' breadth, until the whole is extracted.

Fevers and complaints of the bowels are also common; but, although there appears to be sufficient need of physicians, the science of medicine, if we may believe report, is at a very low ebb in Bockhara, the practitioners being chiefly ignorant pretenders from Caubul, Peshawur, and other places, attracted by the estimation in which physicians are held, and the great profits they make. It is a common thing for the doctor to treat with his patient for the price of his attendance, and the cure he proposes to perform: nay, he often claims it beforehand; in which case, should the patient die, complaints are frequently brought by the heirs against the professor of medicine, and the price of blood has even been demanded; but this is never allowed except in cases where flagrant ignorance can be proved. However scarce good physicians may be, apothecaries are more numerous in Bockhara, for one traveller mentions that there are at least fifty druggists' shops in its bazars.

The trade of a city situated as Bockhara is, and enjoying, as it does, the peace and security of a comparatively mild and equitable government, cannot fail of being extensive, in spite of the disordered state of the countries around it; and many persons acquainted with the place, declared to me, that vast quantities of goods were actually brought to it and carried away from it every day. A regular intercourse is kept up with Russia by the way of Orenburgh; with Persia, through Mushed; with Herāt, Caubul, Peshawur, Shikarpore, Buduckshān, Cashmere, China (Kithai), and all the countries dependant thereupon.

There are not above two caravans in the year which pass between Bockhara and Russia; but each caravan consists of from four to five thousand camels; the journey being completed in about three months. The articles brought from Russia, are iron, steel, copper, brass, quicksilver, vermilion, coral, hardware, certain kinds of plated goods, gold and silver em-

broidery, copper wire plated or gilt; furs, broad cloths, cotton manufactured goods, white and coloured; cochineal, refined sugar, white and blue paper; and a variety of such goods. The exports to Russia are, black lambs' skins, certain manufactures of cotton and silk, lapis lazuli, rubies, toorquoises, antique gems, and coins.

From Persia, they import shawls and woollen goods from Kerman, silk stuffs from Yezd and Ispahan, gold and silver embroidery from Ispahan, the same with copper ware and other articles from Cashān; loaf, candy, and raw sugar, sal-ammoniack, Hamadān leather, toorquoises. They send to Persia black sheep and lambs' skins, camblet, or cloth made of camels' hair, coarse-coloured silk handkerchiefs, a little lapis lazuli, indigo from India, cochineal, tobacco, chintzes, and cotton manufactures.

From Caubul, Peshawur, Shikarpore, and these quarters, they receive wool, turbans, white cotton cloth, chintz, sugar in all shapes, yellow stick for dye, spices, black pepper, law books. In return, they send horses, copper, adres vests and cloth, no-kreh-khab, and various other manufactures; plated and gilt copper wire, toorquoises, coral, silk, and silk stuffs, tea, China ware.

From Buduckshan they receive lapis lazuli, rubies, and some other crystals, or stones.

From Kashgar, Yarkund, and the side of China, are brought large quantities of tea, China ware, and all the productions of China generally; while they send in return toorquoises, coral, sheep, lamb and fox skins, &c. &c.

A considerable trade in horses is carried on at Bockhara; and there is a market held in the Registan Bazar every Saturday, Monday, and Thursday; and on Wednesday, outside the town, near the tomb of Khaugeh Beha-u-deen Nagshbund: it does not, however appear that many fine or valuable animals are to be found there. A species called the Karabheer, is one of the most valued breeds for strength in draft and its powers of endurance on journies; it is bred in Miankhal, and about Sheber-e-subz, and brought from thence to Bockhara. The Toorkee horse, bred by the Toorkomans on both sides of the Oxus, is valued for its activity and beauty; but is not considered so good or valuable as the Kharabheer: they are now scarce. The Kuzāk horse abounds towards Yarcund and Kashgar; they are fat, small-sized, and have often an ambling pace: they are impatient of heat, and although Bockhara be cold enough in winter, the heat in summer renders it difficult to keep Kuzāk horses. These horses, however, are now scarce: for, some years ago, a scarcity of grass having caused a great proportion of the sheep to die in the Kuzāk country, and a dearth of grain rendering it difficult to feed their horses, the people were reduced to kill and eat most of those that were left.

The price of common small horses in the market is from ten to fifteen tillas; the better sorts may rise to a hundred, and even a hundred and fifty

tillas, but these are few in number, and are not brought to market, but kept in the stables of proprietors, and shown to purchasers by brokers. Those which will fetch from fifty to sixty tillas are most numerous. Mares are only sold when a tempting price is offered, as the proprietor generally wishes to keep them for breeding. Upon the whole, I am led to believe, that although there are plenty of small and coarse horses to be had at Bockhara, there are very few of a description that could compare with the Persian and better Toorkoman breeds, or that Persian gentlemen would condescend to ride, far less would admire; but they are strong, and sufficiently suited to the country. They have a very large and powerful breed of asses, which are greatly valued for the road, and which sell at from five to twenty tillas a-piece. Mules are not in use. Of camels, they appear to have pretty much the same breeds that are used in Khorasān. The Kuzāk camel has two humps, and is very shaggy. Like the horse, it cannot endure heat. It goes well enough in clay or among the hills, but is by no means equal to the camel with only one hump.

It would appear that the balance of trade is in favour of Bockhara, for the precious metals are so plentiful, that it is not found advantageous to bring gold or silver there. Most strangers lose so greatly by bringing foreign coin here, that they prefer to carry their money in the shape of goods. The coin which loses least is said to be the gold tillas from Caubul. Bills of exchange are neither common nor much understood, but when any merchant gives an order upon his agent at a distant place, for instance, on Shikarpore, or takes a bill to accommodate another, he exacts a very high rate of exchange, often from twenty to twenty-five per cent.

The currency of Bockhara consists of tillas and tengehs, which are struck in the city with the name and titles of the king; the former is a gold coin, weighing one miscal, of the latter, which is a silver coin, weighing a dirrem, there are twenty-one in a tilla: the value of the tengeh is about sixpence, consequently a tilla is about ten shillings and sixpence. I have no accurate information regarding their weights and measures, and, therefore, cannot speak with precision respecting the price of provisions; but from what I could gather on the subject they appeared to be very cheap.

The cold is very severe in Bockhara; in winter the rivers are frozen over, and remain so for nearly three months; the Oxus itself is rendered passable for caravans; the wind during this period is dry, and piercingly cold; but though snow lies sometimes for three months, it is never more than knee deep. During the three months of spring, light rains come every three or four days from the western quarter. The first two months of summer are very hot; the wind generally blows from the north-west, and is frequently scorching, but the air is occasionally cooled by light showers. During the last month of summer the weather begins to get cooler, and autumn is very pleasant: in autumn there are heavy rains from the west.

There are two harvests in this country, that of spring, the seed for which is sown at the beginning of the rains, and which is reaped in six months, and that of autumn, which is sown in autumn and reaped the next summer.

The spring crop consists of one species of wheat and barley, jowarree, maust, nakood, coonjid, arzun, gall, cotton, madder, with sweet and water melons, cucumbers, &c. This cultivation is commenced without irrigation but what it derives from the rains; after they are over, the fields, when they require it, are watered from wells by means of what are called Persian wheels.

The autumn crop consists of another species of wheat and barley (of which grains it is the chief season), and a little jowarree. The ground for this crop is first watered for a whole night and allowed to soak for three days, it is then ploughed up, and watered again. It is then sowed and harrowed (with an instrument similar to ours); when the corn begins to spring, or about forty days after it has been sown, they water it again, and once more when it is a span high; it is then left to be protected by the snow, until spring bring mild weather and rain to nourish it. It is cut about the beginning of June.

They follow a crop of wheat with one of melons, after which they manure the lands with horse-dung, &c. and allow it to lie fallow until the succeeding spring. They weed the autumn jowarree, and manure it while growing; they also thin the bunches of the grain.

Irrigation is effected during the autumn harvest by watercourses which are supplied by partially embanking the streams of rivers; wells are only used for watering gardens, and for the occasional and slighter irrigation of the spring crop.

Doshaūb is prepared from grapes; it appears to be used as a substitute for sugar, a species of which necessary is procured from Samarcand, Sheher-e-Subz, and Hissār, besides what is imported from others and more distant quarters; it is scarce, and dear, however, at Bockhara, and therefore every substitute is encouraged; there is another saccharine substance procured from Zerunjabeen, a species of manna, which is found on the ground. *

The animals in use among the Oozbecks for agricultural and pastoral purposes, are very much like those which have been mentioned as common in Khorasān, but carts drawn by bullocks are in use for carrying wood, manure, and such purposes; a covered waggon is also used for travelling in some parts of the country, but I do not know if horses are employed in drawing these.

The fruits of Bockhara are said to be excellent; apples, pears, quinces,

* This is different from the *gezungabeen* which is found in Persia upon small bushes. See a paper on this subject by Captain Frederick, in the Bombay Literary Transactions.

plums, peaches, apricots, cherries, figs, pomegranates, mulberries, grapes, melons, &c. &c. abound in their seasons; the musk-melons are mentioned as remarkable for size and flavour, often weighing twenty pounds, and keeping fresh and good for seven or eight months of the year.

The country beyond the city and its suburbs, is described as fertile and well cultivated, and thickly studded with well inhabited villages, for at least forty miles around; and this is particularly the case in the direction of Samarcand, which is five days' journey distant, and only one of these leads through an uninhabited country; beyond this circle, the desert commences, almost entirely surrounding the Oasis, in which Bockhara and its environs are situated.

The upper, or south-eastern part of Mawur-a-ul-nehr, which approaches the sources of the two great rivers between which it lies, is irregular and mountainous; comprehending many of the ranges which arise from, or are connected with, those lofty masses, called by Mr. Elphinstone the Pooshtee-khur, the Beloot-taugh, the Mooz-taugh, and others. It is difficult, and often impossible, to identify mountains or rivers by name; and my inform-ants could much easier give a description of countries which they had seen, than apply names to particular ranges of mountains, or streams they had passed; and I found, that to propose leading questions, was too often but a mean of eliciting from them an untruth, as the best mode of escaping the trouble of answering multiplied enquires; indeed, I could learn but little regarding this remote district, but what was too vague and unsatisfactory to be of any use in a geographical point of view, or even of a nature to increase our general knowledge of the country; I therefore will not attempt any geographical description, but content myself with taking notice of such places or facts, as were brought under observation.

In that part of this south-eastern district which belongs to Bockhara, I was informed, that there is a mountain called Altoun Taugh*, abounding in gold; which metal, being washed down along with the sands by the streams that issue from it during the rainy season, is collected by the classical method of placing sheep skins to entangle it along with the sand; it is then mixed with quicksilver, to extricate the metal by amalgamation; and it appears that they have learnt the art of driving off the mercury by heat, leaving the gold behind in a pure state. Silver is also found, but I do not know that either of these metals is procured otherwise than in the manner I have mentioned.

I was also informed, that there are sculptured and inscribed rocks† to be found in the Altoun Taugh, but I could get no intelligible description of

* Meaning in Toorki, "the golden hill." The Zur Afshaun (or gold shedding) river flows from it, which is also called the Kohik or Sogd, and flows past Samarcand.

† Meer Izzut Oolah, to whose information I have frequently been indebted, mentions an inscribed rock, which he saw about half way between Ooratuppeh and Samarcand, on his way from Kokhaun to the latter city, at a place called Hanutee. The inscription bears witness, that

what the sculpture represented. This part of the country would probably, however, afford a rich field to the antiquarian, for there are several sites of ancient cities scattered over it, among the ruins of which, gems, coins, medals, and various antique utensils and arms are to be found. One person who was himself a dealer in such articles, mentioned to me a city called Khojahwoobān, which he described as having been overwhelmed by sand, under which extensive ruins lie buried; in this place after rain, people go to dig for such articles, and find a great many; particularly plate, and utensils of gold and silver, for all of which they find a ready market with the Russian merchants, who, he assured me, would give five times their weight for such articles of metal, and a very high price for all carved gems. I should indeed have doubted greatly the rates he quoted for such things, and would have believed that it was a trick to induce me to make purchases, had it not been for the prices actually demanded by others in Mushed, and those which he himself offered for individual articles, which convinced me that the merchants of Bockhara had found ready, and probably ignorant purchasers for things of which they could hardly be judges. In the collection of one individual at Mushed, I saw upwards of a hundred small and large carved gems, both cameos and intaglios, all certainly of Grecian or Roman workmanship, and some of extraordinary beauty. I was very desirous to become a purchaser of some, but the value placed upon them was so high, and my means were then so limited, that I could not afford them: as an instance, four or five guineas a piece were asked for as many oval stones, cornelian, garnet, and sardonyx, none of which exceeded five-eighths of an inch long; on one of them was cut a lion at full speed, on the others well executed heads. Selim Beg, the person whose information I have quoted, offered not less than seven or eight hundred pounds sterling for a sardonyx cameo, about an inch and a half long by an inch broad, bearing the head and shoulders of a queen, exquisitely cut; the crown, ornaments and hair being formed of the reddish brown stratum of the stone. The owner, wonderful to say for a Persian, refused to part with this jewel on any consideration.

Five days' journey, or about a hundred and fifty miles, almost due east of Bockhara, is situated the celebrated city of Samarcand. The first two days leads the traveller, for about sixty miles, through a succession of villages, and gardens, and cultivation, to Karmina, a large and populous village: the

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in that place, and in the year of the Hegira, 977, Sooltaun Addoolla Khan Sahib Kerāun, met and engaged the khans of Tashkund, Toorkestan, and the Dusht-e-Kipchāk, who had an army of 400,000 men, defeated them and killed so many of their troops, that hills were formed of the slain, and the stream which passes by flowed for a whole month with blood instead of water. This place Hanutee is likewise remarkable for abundance of serpents, of which, however, as it was during the cold weather, the Meer saw none.

third to Zea-o-deen, a village; the fourth to Khet-e-courgaun, a considerable town: the fifth, to Samarcand.

This venerable city, often the seat of empire, once the favourite capital of the great Timoor, is now little better than a mass of ruins: indeed we are told, by a very respectable native traveller*, whose testimony is corroborated by all that I have heard on the subject, that, until the time of Shah Muraud, the place was not only ruinous but desert, "the haunt of the wolf and the lion:" but that sovereign used great exertion to get it repeopled, and its population, though still small, is daily increasing. It formerly covered more ground than Bockhara; and although the original walls, which tradition declares were twelve fursungs (near forty-eight miles) in circuit, have no doubt mouldered into dust, the city is still protected by a mud wall, and has a citadel of the same materials; but the principal buildings and most of the houses are built of stone.

In this place may yet be seen the Mausoleum of the Ameer Timoor; it is a large building with a very lofty dome, which once was covered with gold; but that was taken off by Shah Muraud. Within this building is the tomb, covered by a large flag of green stone†, adorned with jewels, and sculptured over with the genealogical tree of the great Timoor. The servants of the tomb are very poor; until the time of Mahomed Shah, they used to receive from the court of Dehlee assistance in money; but since then that source has been stopt; and they expressed to the native traveller above alluded to, an earnest wish, that if any descendants of the house of Timoor yet existed in India, they should be made acquainted with the melancholy situation of their ancestor's mausoleum, and its servants, at Samarcand.

Here, too, was the observatory of Oolugh Beg; but it was destroyed by Sheibahnee Khan, when he overran these countries; and it is now but a heap of dust. The mausolea of Khwajah Abdoolla Ekrār, Abool Mausur Matendi, and of Sheikh Burhan-u-deen Allee‡, the author of the Hedaya, with those of many other celebrated men, were here; but all have been deserted, and are going to decay. There are many noble colleges in the town, the finest of which was the Khānums, which is now all in ruins, and its extensive buildings waste: some, however, are still inhabited, among others the medressa of Shirnah, and the medressa Tilakari (or gilded college), both built by Bileng Tash Behaudur. The cauzee of Samarcand, Cauzee Kilan, Meer Aboo Seyed, who bore a very high character, was chief mas-

* Meer Izzul Oollah.

† Nadir Shah having heard that this stone was a bezoar, desired his nephew (who was sent to Samarcand to raise recruits for the army) to send the stone to Mushed, along with the brazen gates of the mausoleum in which he reposed, but the stone was broken in four parts in raising it, and some time after Nadir ordered both the stone and the gates to be restored to Samarcand.

‡ He was a native of Marghinan or Marghilan, in Ferghauna.

ter in the former. There is in the town also a very large dome, having six sides*, each side forming a bazar; there are regular horse markets held here on Sundays and Wednesdays; and horses are cheaper here than at Bockhara. It has the reputation of being a pleasant place, having water running through the town, a fine country around it, and a fine climate to add to its blessings.

Four days' journey south-east of Bockhara is situated the district and town of Karchee. The town is of no great magnitude, but the king has a hunting seat here, and enjoyed the government of the district, until his father's death. It is rather deficient in water, and the country around it produces little else than wheat and barley.

Sheher-e-Subz, also called Kheish, lies about a hundred miles east south-east of Bockhara, from the open country of which, it is divided by a chain of low hills. This district is said to be very delightful; blessed with a fine climate, and an abundant supply of water, it is verdant and richly wooded, abounding in delicious vallies, that are fertile in fruits and grain, and studded with fine villages. The town and environs of Sheher-e-Subz itself are particularly mentioned, as being beautiful, from the combination of wood, water, and mountain: it contains between twenty and thirty thousand inhabitants, and is surrounded by fine gardens; but I did not understand that it was fortified.

The greater part of this district is but nominally dependent upon Bockhara: the kings of that country, from the time of Dauniar Beg, have eagerly attempted to reduce the whole of it under their control; but they were uniformly baffled by the difficulty of the country, which, surrounded by mountains and deserts opposed insurmountable obstacles to the invading army.

Shah Hyder at length succeeded in taking and retaining possession of certain parts, and agreed to a peace with Niaz Beg, its chief, upon his consent to furnish a contingent of troops in case of need; but he acknowledges his dependence on Shah-Hyder in no other way, either in the coin of the country, or by the khutbeh.

The district of Ooratuppeh, which is eleven days' journey, E. N. E. of Bockhara, was formerly dependent upon the kingdom of Ferghauna, or Kokāun, and, like it, is inhabited by Oozbecks of the tribe of Euz; but Shah Murāud, and his successor, Shah Hyder, continued for many years to lead expeditions against it; till, at last, the latter succeeded in taking possession of the capital: and appointed a governor upon his own part. These sovereigns would bring an army of fifty thousand men into the country, always at harvest time, and would remain there three months ravaging and destroying it; after which they would retire. The chief of Ooratuppeh not having more than twenty thousand troops to oppose them, was forced to take refuge in his capi-

* Probably a large dome surrounded by six smaller ones, each forming a bazar.

tal, and strong holds, from whence he made sallies, until at last it was taken, and all the country was subdued.

Shah Hyder at first dispersed the Euzes into different parts of the country; but he has since re-assembled them, and appointed Mahomed Khan, related both to the late chief, and to the royal family of Bockhara, as governor. It appears that Mahomed Khan had performed some essential service, in repelling an attack of the ruler of Kokāun, and thus had induced Shah Hyder to bestow upon him the government; but it now seems doubtful how far he can be considered at all dependent upon Bockhara; or whether the king could make his authority be recognized without a severe struggle. The word Ooratuppeh, "between two mounds," is descriptive of the situation of the town, which is populous, and defended by a mud wall.

The district of Hissāur, which lies eleven days' journey* E.S.E. of Bockhara, is described as fertile and well watered; its chief town, Deh Nō, is large and populous. It was formerly independent of Bockhara, but at a time when its capital was besieged by Alla Verdee Tauz, of Koorghaun Tuppeh, the present king, then prince and governor of Karchee, went and attacked that chief, routed his army, killed him, and took possession of both Hissāur and Koorghaun Tuppeh. It appears, however, that Seyed Beg, the former chief, still retains his rank, if not his power, at Hissāur; probably upon a friendly understanding with the king of Bockhara, who has his daughter to wife. Koorghaun Tuppeh is now attached to Hissāur, but I have no information regarding it.

* I am not very certain of this distance, but believe it to be not far from the truth.

APPENDIX B.—PART IV.

THE KINGDOM OF KOKAUN, OR FERGHAUNA. — ITS BOUNDARIES. — DIVISIONS. — EXTENT. — PRESENT SOVEREIGN. — OMER KHAN. — GOVERNMENT. — REVENUE AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. — INHABITANTS. — VILLAGE GOVERNMENT. — WINTER AMUSEMENTS. — SEASONS, PRODUCTS. — OOZBECKS. — DRESS. — CITY OF KOKAUN. — OF KOGEND. — WARS BETWEEN KOKAUN AND BOCKHARA. — BUDUCKSHAN. — SITUATION. — NATURE OF THE COUNTRY. — CHIEF TOWNS. — MINES OF LAPIS LAZULI, AND RUBIES. — BALKH. — TOWN OF THAT NAME. — ANCIENT ORIGIN. — PRESENT RUINOUS STATE. — AIR SUPPOSED UNWHOLESOME. — REASON OF THE REPORT. — OTHER TOWNS OF THE PROVINCE. — ITS CHIEF. — KAUFFERS OR SEAPOSHES. — COURSE OF THE OXUS. — SPECULATIONS REGARDING IT. — KASHGAR AND YARKUND. — TOWN OF KASHGAR. — SIZE. — INTERNAL REGULATIONS. — ROAD TO YARKUND. — TOWN OF YARKUND. — ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE. — INHABITANTS. — SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. — REVENUE. — TAXES. — CUSTOM-HOUSE REGULATIONS. — CHINESE CONQUEST OF THE MAHOMETAN STATES IN THIS QUARTER. — THESE STATES HAPPY UNDER THE CHINESE SWAY. — ACCOUNT OF THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY BY HUSSUN MEROEE. — STRICT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, AND EXCELLENT POLICE. — CONFIRMED BY SELIM BEG. — CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

THE kingdom of Ferghauna, now called Kokaun, is the only important division of Mawur-a-ul-nehr that remains to be described; but, as there is reason to hope, that a far more particular and abler description of this interesting country, than I can pretend to offer, will soon be given to the public, I shall content myself with a very summary notice regarding it.

It is bounded on the east from Bockhara by a steep and inaccessible chain of mountains, in which the bed of the Āksoo (white river) divides the two kingdoms; on the south it has the mountainous tract which divides it from Buduckshan and Chitrāl; Kurratageen confines it on the south-west; on the east and north-east are mountains inhabited by Kirgeesh and Kuzāks tributary to China; on the north-west lies the district of Tashkund, lately reduced under its authority, with mountains and deserts.

The divisions of this kingdom are Kokaun Proper, Khojend, Murghilān, Andejān, Oosh, Sekht, Wuddee, Ispurrān, Ghurrum-Serān, Choost, Koorrameh, Nummungaun, and Tashkund. All these districts have towns more or less considerable, from which they derive their name. The river Seer Sihoon or Iaxartes which takes its rise about four days' journey south-east of

Kokaun, divides the country into two parts; the first eight districts being on the left, and the others on its right bank.

The territory of Kokaun is reckoned somewhat more than two hundred miles in length, and in breadth about one hundred and fifty; the general description of the country is mountainous, divided by vallies and plains, of which, those near the river Sihoon or Seer, and its tributary streams, are more rich and fertile, while those more removed are more arid and sterile. A great deal of cultivation, and many villages, are to be found scattered over its surface, but in many places it affords rich pasture for the flocks and herds of the tribes who wander over it.

The present ruler of Kokaun is Omer Khan, who has held the reins of government for about fourteen years. He succeeded to it by the murder of his brother Aulum Khan, who was a tyrant, and against whom the people conspired, aiding Omer Khan to mount the throne. Both were sons of Narbuch Khan, ameer of Kokaun. The nature of Omer Khan's government resembles, in most respects, that of Bockhara, but it does not appear that the oolemah have so much weight, or that learning and religion have so exclusive a sway, neither does the king preach in public, or hold his courts of justice in so ostentatious a manner; but, if I may credit the accounts given me, there is no want of vigilance or of justice in his administration; on the contrary, he was described as a mild, good, and equitable sovereign, ruling over a happy and contented people, who are free from the predatory habits of the other Oozbeck states, who neither make slaves, nor trade in, nor possess them, and among whom the traveller is perfectly safe.

Of the revenue of Omer Khan I have no account, but the rate and description of the government dues, and the modes of collecting them, are nearly the same as those of Bockhara. The military system, I suspect, differs in this, that the standing portion of the army is less regularly paid, and probably serves for an assignment of land; the less regular portion, which is contributed by the tribes, may amount to thirty thousand men, but neither of these can keep the field longer than two months, it is said, as, when the stock they carry with them becomes exhausted, they are forced to disperse. Their arms consist, in general, of spears, swords, and shields; they have a few matchlocks, but they bear small proportion to the other offensive arms. Armour is scarce, and bows and arrows are not used.

The bulk of the inhabitants are Oozbecks, and a few Taujuks, who live in villages; the Oozbecks are represented as a stout, fat, fair, and high complexioned people, extremely quiet, good humoured, merry, and hospitable; very fond of riding, hunting, hawking, and getting drunk upon kimmiz. There are also wandering tribes, as Kirgeesh, Kara-Kalpāk, Kuzāk, Mungs, &c. scattered in abundance over the face of the country, and they are peaceable and honest.

The system of village government in this country appears to be founded on

the same principle as that of Bockhara; one magistrate being appointed on the part of the people, and another on that of the crown, to collect the revenue. Villages consist of from a hundred to a thousand houses; they are generally composed of two streets crossing each other, or of one long street, in the centre of which is the mosque. There is a mehman khaneh in most villages for the entertainment of guests; and there the poorer inhabitants meet in winter, club their pillaws into a mess, and drink tea together, sing, tell stories, pass the jest around, and listen to some one who reads, while the young people sometimes dance in a circle, clapping their hands in time the while. Winter seems to be the season for enjoyment, for then they ride about from village to village in troops, decked in their best array, in pursuit of amusement, but during the rest of the year their time is devoted to labour.

The changes of seasons do not greatly differ from those of Bockhara; the winter is severe, although there is but little snow; fires are constantly used for three months, and the day becomes very short in winter. In spring there are light rains, strong westerly winds, and cloudy weather. The summer is very hot and parching, nor is there much rain until towards the end of autumn. The rotation of crops is much the same as at Bockhara. A great deal of silk is also made in the country, and manufactured into various fabrics. Mulberry trees are planted round all the fields, and cotton is also much cultivated; willows, poplars, cypresses, with all kinds of fruits known in Europe are common here. Chinārs (sycamores) are rare; but the hills are covered with lofty pines, poplars, almond, walnut, and pistachio trees.

The food of the Oozbecks of Kokaun is the same as that of the people of Bockhara: they love tea much, and drink it at least three times a day. Their chief meal is in the evening, consisting in general of pillaw: the tribes in the desert drink less of tea, but eat more of boiled meat, soup, and bread.

Their dress does not appear to differ materially from the usual Oozbeck costume; the women however wear a dress more resembling the Persian kabba, or the Hindostanee ungurca, reaching to the feet, and made of quilted silk: on the head, they wear silken or shawl turbans, of a size smaller than the men, and differing in shape; with earrings, and nose rings, like the women of India. The women of the towns and villages are concealed like those in other Mahometan states; and wear boorkas, or veils, from head to foot.

The city of Kokaun is of very modern date: before the time of Narbuch Khan, it was but a petty village; but by becoming the seat of government, it has increased so much, that it now contains more than fifty thousand houses: it has no wall, and water is introduced into most of the streets, from the river Seer, or Iaxartes, on the bank of which it is situate.

Khojend, which is about sixty miles west by south of Kokaun, the ancient

capital of the country, is a city of great renown, built on the left bank of the Seer: it is surrounded by a wall of mud and stone, and, although fallen from its ancient prosperity, is said still to contain thirty thousand houses. Its air and water are deemed excellent; its fruits delicious, and its people polite and hospitable: they understand and speak Persian as well as Toorkee.*

Hyder Shah, the sovereign of Bockhara, endeavoured several years ago to reduce Kokaun under his dominion, and for this purpose he marched against it with all the forces he could collect, amounting to eighty thousand men; but he was foiled in an attempt to force the pass into that country, and obliged to desist from his purpose. No peace was formally concluded between the sovereigns; but the nature of the frontier between the two states is so strong, as to render any attempt on either side extremely hazardous to the invading party; and they have therefore remained unmolesting, and unmolested.

To the south-east, or rather to the east south-east of Bockhara, about twenty days' journey, and nearly south of Kokaun, is situated the district of Buduckshan; which, according to the best accounts I could obtain, comprehends the upper part of the river Amoo's Glen, with its tributary vallies, and the mountainous country connected with them; perhaps as far as the sources of that river; the level of this district most probably rises gradually, from that of the lower and northern part of the province of Balkh, which occupies the left bank further down. It is described as a mountainous and well-wooded country. The people uncivilized and savage, living in the villages surrounded with gardens, and situated in the little glens and recesses of the hills. The chief town is Fyzeabad, said to be not more than a hundred and fifty miles from Balkh; but there is another town also of considerable importance, and of the same name as the province. I could gain little authentic information concerning the people of this country, their habits, or the nature of their government.

In the remote mountains of this district are situated some of the richest mines of lapis lazuli, and of rubies, that are known; the former is found forming veins sometimes of considerable thickness in a grey matrix; and slices of this stone are occasionally procured, weighing several Tabreez mauns, and capable of being wrought into large slabs: the produce is brought to Bockhara for sale, whence it is carried partly to Persia, but in far greater quantities to Russia. The price at Bockhara is somewhat less than six tomauns for about five mauns' weight; which, when carried to Russia, will sell there for three times its cost. The rubies are found in a white earth, and bedded in large masses of crystal, which, when broken, often, produce fine stones.

* There is, at or near Khojend, a toorquoise mine, but the stones found there are of a greenish hue, and by far less esteemed than those of Nishapore, in Khorasān. There is another of very insignificant note somewhere in Kermān: these mines, I believe, are the only ones that yield the true toorquoise in the known world.

Some large and coarse crystals were shown to me in long pointed hexagons, or octagons, the crystallization of which ran in needle-like filaments. Emeralds are also found here, as I was informed; but whether they are only green coloured crystals, or genuine stones, I cannot say, for no specimens were brought to me.

Concerning the present condition of the large and very interesting province of Balkh, which lies south and east of Bockhara, their capitals being about fifteen days' journey asunder, I regret that my information is very limited, and I can add little or nothing to that which the industry of Mr. Elphinstone has collected upon the subject. The southern part of this province is broken and uneven, lying upon those chains of hills which branchfrom the great mass of Hindoo Coosh, and the other mighty mountain ranges of central Asia: the northern and western parts are more level. The country in general is rather hard and gravelly, than sandy, in its nature, interspersed with rich and fertile spots; and there is not, I believe, any salt desert in the whole province.

The chief city, Balkh, situated seventy or eighty miles from the river Amoo, is built on a large plain, and is an immense melancholy mass of ruins. It was regularly built, the streets intersecting each other at right angles; and it contained some splendid bazars, arcaded and vaulted in the manner of the Bazar-e-wukeel, at Sheerauz, with corresponding caravanserais, and many magnificent mosques and colleges; but nothing now remains except such buildings as, having been constructed of solid brick masonry, have withstood the hand of time and the destroyer; and the inhabitants of this "Mother of cities*," once the superb capital of the greatest empire upon earth, which, but a few centuries ago, amounted to many hundreds of thousands, are now dwindled to a few thousand souls, thinly scattered amid the wide desolation.

I had frequently heard it remarked, that the province of Balkh, and particularly the vicinity of the city was remarkable for its unwholesome air. The ameerzadeh, to whom I applied for information on the subject, treated the matter lightly, and said, that the report had originated in this: that when the great Timoor took the place, he carried the inhabitants, in vast numbers, without the walls, and there massacred them: their carcases putrifying had created a pestilence, which continued to rage more or less violently for several years, and that consequently the place had obtained

* Mr. Elphinstone takes notice of its pretensions in the consideration of Asiatics, to this title, which are well supported by its known antiquity; for, before the time of Alexander the Great, it enjoyed the distinction of being the capital of a great empire, under some of its most celebrated and best kings, particularly those of the Paish Dadian dynasty; and, though these must be considered as to a certain degree fabulous, still the great antiquity of Balkh is to be inferred from its being the place fixed upon as the capital of sovereigns so remote. It was also the capital of the Greek kings of Bactria.

a bad reputation for health, which continued to attach to it; and if common report can be depended upon, not without reason, for it declares the inhabitants still to be short lived. The population of the province is in general thin, the majority consisting of wandering tribes; but in the different routes that I obtained, mention is made of several considerable towns, as Meymoonah, Andkhooee, Khooln, Shahmeidān. The first, which was described rather as a large village, has constantly around it extensive encampments of Eels. Andkhooee, which was said to be about the size of Nishapore, was the residence of a chief called Yooldooz Khan, dependent on Bockhara. The province indeed now nominally appertains to that kingdom; but its chief, Killich Allee Khan, is, in truth, entirely independent of any external authority.

While employed in making enquiries regarding this part of the country, I did not omit any opportunity of seeking information about the singular race that inhabit certain parts of its more remote and mountainous districts, called by the Mahometans, kauffers, or unbelievers; *Sia poshes*, or "Black clothed;" but the opportunities were rare, and the information obtained was limited and vague; how indeed could it be otherwise, when it regarded a people, whom the Mahometans, by their persecutions, have made their deadly enemies? The little I did obtain was generally confirmative of the curious account given by Mr. Elphinstone, and I should not have inserted this notice at all, but to exculpate myself from the charge of neglect, and to enjoy the privilege of referring the curious to that account, as the only one I am acquainted with; and which gives the substance of all, and even more than all, that their nearest neighbours know about them; for it was obtained through the medium of a native traveller, who appears to have been both enterprising and intelligent, beyond what is commonly met with in the east. The general impression regarding these people in the Mahometan countries around, is, that they are extremely savage, and, in point of intellect, and mental or moral acquirements, little superior to the brutes; but finely formed, fair and beautiful, insomuch, that the possession of their women as wives and mistresses, and of the men as slaves, is greatly coveted. Indeed, incursions are constantly made into their country, for the purpose of taking prisoners, and they are brought in considerable numbers to Bockhara, where my informant assured me, that when taken young, and converted to Islamism, they become good and intelligent members of society; a circumstance, which, while intended by him to prove the wonderfully ameliorating power of the Mussoolmaun faith, sufficiently demonstrates, if that were necessary, that there is no natural deficiency of mental debility in these oppressed people: indeed, whoever reads Mr. Elphinstone's account, will easily discover that they possess the materials of noble creatures. Their country is mountainous and inaccessible, but fruitful, and blessed with a fine climate. The extreme remoteness of all the countries included in and connected with the vast

mountainous ridges of this part of Asia, with the almost insuperable dangers and difficulties they oppose to the progress of the traveller, almost forbid the hope of seeing them explored to any valuable purpose; whilst they stimulate curiosity the more, and seem to hold forth the prospect of a rich reward, to the enterprize of such as may dare to risk their lives and liberties upon the adventure.

I would not willingly quit this part of the country without adverting to the course and final termination of the great river Oxus, Jeyhoon, or Amoo; although I can only add to the mass of hear-say evidence, without giving any thing conclusive upon this subject which has hitherto baffled the industry of geographers. Its present course from its source until it reaches the territories of Khaurezm, is not now in question: the labours of Mr. Elphinstone have elucidated this matter, and compiled a very minute account of its rise and progress so far. The points in doubt are, first, what may have been its course in former times after passing Bockhara, and whether any part, or the whole, ever reached the Caspian sea; and secondly, what becomes of it now, after passing Ourgunge.

With regard to the first point in question it may be remarked, that if all which has been written upon the subject be attentively examined, we shall probably discover that there is nothing like evidence in favour of the belief that any part of the Oxus ever reached the Caspian sea, either at Balkhan, or else where; and that the only foundation for such an opinion was in vague tradition to be traced to geographical confusion and ignorance. On the other hand, it will be found, that the only authorities which speak directly to the point*, constantly say, that the Jeyhoon or Amoo falls into the lake of Khaurezm. The best and most rational explanation of the error supposed to exist, which will also go far to reconcile these inconsistent accounts, is that of Major Rennel, in his geography of Herodotus; where he conceives that those European geographers who have treated of the subject up to the present century, have considered the sea of Arrul "as "*included* in the Caspian; as they knew but of one expanse of water in that "quarter;" while the Arabian and Persian geographers, on the contrary, knew of both, and carefully discriminated between them. Certain it is, that *now*, no body of water whatever falls into the Caspian to the south of the bay of Mangushluck; for the caravans that pass and repass from Astrabad to Khyvah, and from thence to Mangushluck, do not cross a single stream, or meet with a drop of running fresh water, after crossing the river Attruck near Astrabad.†

* Eber Haukul, Abulfeda, &c.

† Mr. Moravief, in his "Voyage en Turcomanie," already alluded to, describes very minutely a *supposed* dry channel, of a branch of the Oxus, that had the appearance of having led to the Caspian. Some attention is, undoubtedly, due to this account, but it is quite insufficient of itself to lead to any conclusion on the subject, even supposing that Mr. Moravief may not have been

The second point is equally clear, so far as regards the Caspian sea, for the caravans which trade between Astracan or Orenburgh, and Khyvah, cross no stream that can have any connection with the Oxus, so that no branch of that river falls into the Caspian to the *north* of Mangushluck. Selim Beg, who gave me by far the most distinct account of these countries, told me, that he had travelled along the banks of the Oxus from near its source in Buduckshan, where he crossed it not more than knee deep, to where, *after being joined by the Seer or Sihoon*, the united streams were lost in the lake of Arrul, as it is called by European geographers, but which he did not know by that name, and called *Dunghez, Keeleea Boorsauk*. Both this man, and the ameerzadeh Nasserudeen Meerza, with several other persons of credit, agreed, that the river after passing Ourgunge, makes a turn to the east, and running four or five days in that direction, *is joined by the Seer or Sihoon**, and that both spread into a large lake which has no outlet, its waters being absorbed by the sand, of which the circumjacent country is composed. This account corresponds so well with that of the Arabian and Persian geographers, and appears altogether so consistent and probable, that there really seems to be no good reason for denying credit to it.

Selim Beg spoke of a gulf in which part of the waters of this gulf were said to be swallowed up with a great noise†, but he did not see the place himself, nor was his account of it very intelligible. He accompanied the Russian ambassador (Monsieur de Negri probably, who visited Bockhara two years before) to this lake, which he states to be on the confines of the Russian territories; the gentlemen of the embassy, he says, measured it across the ice, for it was frozen at the time, and the ambassador being desirous to ascertain whether it contained fish, they made a hole in the ice, which was of great thickness, and having kindled a fire, the fish came to the light, and they caught great numbers. He described the country around it as perfectly desert, its only occasional inhabitants being a few very savage wandering Kuzāks.

In answer to my enquiries regarding the size of the river Amoo, another traveller informed me, that when he saw it in the summer season near Balkh, it was as large as the Jumna at its fullest season, and perfectly navigable for

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prejudiced in favour of such a belief, by the same sources of information which formerly misled Prince Beckowitch, and the Russian authorities that sent him to the eastern shores of the Caspian.

* It is worthy of attention, that the Emperor Baber, who was a very curious enquirer, and whose native kingdom lay upon the Iaxartes or Sihoon, says, that it reaches no sea, but is swallowed up in the sand a little below Toorkestan.

† This may have some reference to a pass in a range of hills called Khalkan, through which some accounts make the river Oxus flow before it enters Arrul: but I have no certain information on the subject.

boats, which are in common use for crossing the stream, and for the conveyance both of goods and passengers from Balkh and from Bockhara to Ourgunge and Khyvah.

The ameerzadeh informed me, that the Amoo, at the nearest point to Bockhara, is a very large river, the stream being at no time less than a thousand yards broad, and in summer when the snows melt, it sometimes spreads to a breadth of four miles. He said, that the Seer or Sihoon is three times as large as the Tigris at Bagdad: that both it and the Amoo, are very deep, navigable, and navigated by boats.

The Mahometan states of Kashgār and Yarkund lie about six hundred miles nearly east of Kokaun, several towns of more or less consequence intervene upon the way, and of these the city of *Ush**, seems to be the most important. The appearance of the country in general is more pleasing than that to the westward, being better watered, more finely diversified, more verdant, and better wooded than it, and differing equally from the gravelly and rocky soil of Persia, Khorasān, Balkh, and these more elevated tracts, as from the salt or sandy deserts of Khaurezm and Bockhara.

Kashgār, which being the westernmost of the two, is first reached by this route, has been placed according to the account of Mr. Klaproth†, in latitude 39° 25′ north, and in longitude 76° 05′ 45″ east of Greenwich. It is a city of great celebrity in the east, and has always been a place of much commercial resort from the surrounding countries. It was completely destroyed, however, by Meerza Abubekr, the grandson of Timoor, but was rebuilt by his orders, and at last fell under the dominion of China along with several of its neighbouring states, about sixty years ago.

The city according to some accounts is said to be equal in size to Amritsir‡, others say that it embraces a circuit of three miles and a half, and contains ten thousand houses, being crowded with population, and thronged with strangers. It has a wall built of stone and mud, with four gates, a charsoo, or market place with four bazars meeting; a market is held on Fridays within the town, and a horse market outside the walls.§ I learnt no further particulars regarding it.

* This is the frontier town of Ferghauna or Kokaun, and is said to be very populous.

† Mr. Klaproth gives this position upon the authority of the great Chinese map, constructed at Pekin according to the orders of the Emperor Kien Long, by the Jesuits, Felix D'Arocha, Espinha, and Hallerstein, who determined the longitude of many points in those countries by astronomical observation.

‡ A city of the Punjāb, in India.

§ The horses brought here are mostly of the Kirgeeshee and Kuzākee breeds, chiefly geldings; the price is generally low. Mules of a very excellent description are used by the Chinese. It is said that they take a mule from a bull and a mare, from a horse and a cow, and also from an ass and a cow. The traveller who reports this says, that he never saw these animals, although he had it on what he considered the best authority. They are said to be excellent for the draught, and to be without horns. If the mother be a cow and its sire a horse, the mule, if a male, resembles a horse; if a female, it takes after the cow.

The internal regulations are placed under the charge of its own hereditary chief, a Mussoolmaun, but he is entirely under control of a Chinese governor, who resides in a separate fortification with five or six thousand troops. He has the chief superintendance of Yarkund, and several other cities.*

The road by which travellers are obliged to go from Kashgar to Yarkund, carries them a distance of a hundred and eighty miles; it is said, however, that there is a much shorter way, by which only one night is passed upon the road†, but the officers of government alone are suffered to travel it.

Yarkund is placed by Mr. Klaproth in latitude 38° 19′ north, and longitude 78° 27′ 45″ east of Greenwich. This city, like Kashgar, after enjoying a high degree of celebrity in that part of Asia, was destroyed by Meerza Abubekr, who, however, again restored it to prosperity and population, and finding its air salubrious, made it his residence, adorning it with splendid edifices, bringing water into the streets, and in other ways rendering it fit for a royal abode. Its walls are said to have been thirty cubits high; and twelve hundred gardens, the fairest in the world, were planted around it.

It is at present defended by a wall of stone cemented with mud, in which there are five gates. It is a good deal larger than Kashgar, but the houses, like those of that town, are built of stone and mud, and are filled with balconies. The bazar runs from east to west, and is described to consist of a range of seats upon a platform, behind which there are handsome shops, chiefly occupied by Chinese. There are more than ten large colleges, for the support of which lands are assigned, and plenty of caravanserais for the accommodation of travellers.

* Twelve cities, it is said, viz. Aksoo, Eelah, Toorfaun, Khoten, Karakash, Elchi, Karria, Yarkund, Guama, Kargalik, Yengee-Hissar, Kashgar.

† The difference of latitude and longitude between the places do not bear out this assertion. It is, however, said, that there is much of mystery kept up about these countries and their confines, by the Chinese authorities. There is a district in these parts which is cautiously guarded by Chinese sentinels, on account of a peculiar grass which is said to grow in it, and which yields a juice of a fine musky odour. These Chinese posts have been but lately established, and upon the following occasion. About thirty years ago, a shepherd, having led his sheep up a hill in this vicinity, which is said to be several miles in height, saw from it a wide and winding river, in a fair and well-peopled plain, and a large fortified place. Coming down, he communicated his observation and discoveries. The hakim on this sent him to Yarkund, where he was put to death, as were afterwards all to whom he had revealed the secret. The posts on the hills were placed to prevent a repetition of such accidents, and to guard the grass: they are changed once in three years. It is further said, that a short way to China lies over this hill, but that the hakims who are sent to China, are carried by a round about road, which occupies them six months. The Mahometan officers, who are kept as spies on the Chinese collectors, are likewise sent to Pekin once in six years, and are carried by night through waste and desert paths, by persons employed for the purpose, thus occupying six months on the journey. What all this mystery is for I never could learn, and doubtless some portion of it is fabulous; but the story itself must have had its origin in some curious political precautions of that jealous and suspicious government.

The town is watered by canals from the river, which are occasionally opened to fill certain reservoirs built of stone and mud, and the water thus collected is all that the inhabitants have to use in the winter months, when the river is low and the canals frozen up. The rest of the river-water is largely made use of in irrigating the surrounding cultivation and gardens.

The country that surrounds these cities is described as rich and fruitful, well watered, and very delightful; towns and villages abound, and cultivation is carried on upon a very extensive scale. The fruits of Yarkund are represented as being particularly well flavoured and delicious.

In the bed of the river which flows past Yarkund are found pieces of the yesham (jasper or agate) stone, which is so highly valued, that all private persons are prohibited from gathering it; but after the floods of summer have subsided, the Chinese governor appoints people to search for it, and all that is found is appropriated by him.

The inhabitants of these towns are chiefly mechanics, merchants, and moollahs; there are no servants.* Many of them are afflicted with the glandular swelling in the throat, called goitre. They make use of large gourds instead of earthen pots for holding water, for calleeoons, and such purposes. The women of the country, whether high or low, do not wear veils.

The system of government appears to be as follows: — To each city there are appointed one Mahometan hakim, and two Chinese collectors (called ambans), who are all under control of the chief who resides at Kashgar; to the former belongs the more important duties of the administration of justice, the punishment of serious crimes, and the management of all political affairs. He is assisted in the judicial department by an officer called an elm akhund, who occupies the rank of kauzee-ul-kazaut, and is next to the hakim himself; there is also a muftee and a kauzee's deputy; the hakim is never removed but in cases of misconduct. The ambans have charge of levying duties on merchandize, and collecting the revenue. The hakim appoints an āk sukaul (or elder) to every class of merchants, who settle all minor differences that occur among them. Every stranger or person, the native of another country, is called a *musafir*†, how ever long he may have resided in these cities, even if he should have a wife and family there, a distinction rather favourable to him, as by that he evades the capitation tax.

The revenue appears to be derived from two sources, the tax on merchandize, and a species of monthly capitation tax, called alban, which is levied upon all males exceeding the age of twelve, but which varies, from circum-

* This seems rather unintelligible, as the relation of master and servant must certainly obtain here as elsewhere: we are told that they import slaves from Buduckshan and Kaufferistan; perhaps they are the only servants made use of.

† Literally a *traveller*.

stances, from five pools to fifteen tengehs * ; moollahs, schoolmasters, fukeers, and travellers (as above) are exempted from this tax. †

The arrangements observed for the admission of travellers and merchants into the country, with the method of levying duties upon goods, are thus described by a traveller, to whom I am indebted for many particulars relating to the countries in question.

All travellers or caravans, whencesoever they come, are stopt at a custom-house post (called by them *urteng*) several days' journey from the city, and probably upon the frontiers of the territory attached to it, where all packages are examined for dutiable goods. At these posts there are from fifteen to twenty Chinese, with a head man, whom they term the killadar. Whenever a caravan arrives, the killadar opens, examines, registers, and seals up every package, taking an inventory of such as are dutiable. Next day, a Chinese upon horseback, and two Mussoolmauns of the country are attached to the caravan, and accompany it to the custom-house at Yarkund, that no fraud may be committed so as to elude the proper duties. There the goods are locked up till the following day, when the killadar comes, and after comparing them with the inventory made at the urteng, the duties are taken as follows. If the caravan be from Cashmere they take *one in forty;* and if there be forty packages they take it in kind, choosing the best package; if less than forty, they value the whole, and take it in money; if the article be weighable, they weigh it, and take a fortieth. From all other countries than Cashmere, they take one per cent. ‡ only, levied in the same way; and if any fraud be discovered, they take ten times the usual duty. No duty is levied upon goods which are the produce of the country, or on presents, curiosities, or articles for private use, if the quantity be not very great or valuable. The merchants take care not to let the number of their goods which differ in price exceed thirty or forty; and if any one should have a hundred packages (of shawls, for instance), he will enter them in the name of three or four different persons: this seems to be with the intention of eluding the payment of duties in kind, for the killadar, after receiving the duties, gives back the goods to the owner.

The following is the account given of the manner in which the Chinese acquired possession of these countries. In A. Heg. 1050, Yarkund, Kashgar, Yengeti Hissar, Aksoo, Kuchār, Toorfan, Eelah, and others, were under the

* A *tengeh* is equal to fifty *pools*, and 224 tengehs are equal to one *yaboovar* or yamboo, which is a piece of silver, cast, I believe, into a shape resembling a horse's shoe, worth about 160 Dehlee rupees (about £13, sterling).

† There is a want of information regarding the mode of distributing and collecting this tax, which renders the subject rather obscure.

‡ One of my informers stated, that the duties he had paid coming from Bockhara were, one in thirty, in kind.

dominion of the Moghuls, probably descendants of Timoor. They next fell into the hands of the Kalmucks, whose king (whom they style Tureh *) resided at Eelah, and appointed governors over the other cities. It appears, that previous to this revolution, the chief influence over the country lay in the hands of certain lords or great men, called kaujahs, who were of two classes, the Aktaglick and Karataglick; the latter were originally the most powerful, but they were controlled by a Kalmuck governor, while the former resided at Eelah under complete subjection to the prince.

After some time, a distemper or plague broke out among the Kalmucks, which destroyed the prince and his family, with the chief of his nobility and about a hundred thousand of his army: upon this, the Aktagklick kaujahs, seeing the weakness of their masters, rose up in arms, and (probably exterminating the Kalmucks in the first place) fell upon the Karataglicks, and drove them from the kingdom, retaining the sovereign sway. At this season the kaujahs put to death an ambassador, who chanced to arrive from *the Khan of Khatay* (the Emperor of China) and that monarch sent an army to avenge the insult: this force was joined by certain of the Karatagklick kaujahs, and after a severe conflict, in which many fluctuations of success were experienced, it drove the Aktaglicks out of the country, which ever since, now nearly sixty years, has remained under the Chinese dominion. The kaujahs retired to Buduckshan, where their chief, Kun Kaujah, was put to death by Sooltaun Shah, then wali of Buduckshan, who sent his head along with many others to the Chinese commander. The family of Kun Kaujah retired to Bockhara, where their descendants still remain.

The above particulars, which have been taken from the accounts of several native travellers, and principally from that of the intelligent Meer Izzet Oollah, were confirmed by many merchants who had been long in the habit of trading to these parts, and with whom I had frequent conversations while at Mushed. They present us with the very remarkable, but most interesting and gratifying spectacle of several Mahometan states†, subjected to a foreign sway, and that sway, Chinese; yet enjoying the full exercise of their civil and religious privileges, the immediate rule of their own chiefs, and content and happiness under the mild and judicious regulations of their conquerors; there is no disposition to rebel, no disorders, none of the atrocities, which disgrace the history of the surrounding nations: all is peace and tranquillity.

* Tureh signifies a prince. The name of the prince is said to have been Khalder Chern. His son was called Ai Khan Jan Tureh.

† Some said that they were but seven in number, but I believe there are twelve principal cities (as before enumerated), most of which have at one time or other formed separate states, and which are all now in the situation described in the text.

Hussun Mervee, a very intelligent merchant, who had travelled through these countries repeatedly, and who had even visited Pa-chung (Pekin), gave me a very interesting and delightful account of the peace and happiness they enjoy. He says, that the Chinese rule is so equitable, beneficial and easy, that the inhabitants, and even the Mahometan chiefs, so far from experiencing any wish to rid themselves of their chains, would defend the country for their rulers against all invaders, even of their own faith; these rulers keep up their authority (to use the relater's own expression) more by use of the pen than of the sword; and so excellent are their arrangements, that the army, which is numerous and well appointed, is never required for active operations. Their custom-house rules he adverted to with admiration at their efficiency, dispatch, and the lightness of the duties levied, which only amount to one in thirty*, taken in kind. When a traveller or a merchant enters their dominions, an exact description of his person, equipage, and goods is taken, and dispatched by an express upon the road by which he is to travel; by this, he is recognized, and receives permission to pass along: if he lose any thing upon the road†, he is sure to have it restored, or its value made good to him, for nothing escapes the vigilance of the guards and watchmen who are every where upon duty, yet who perform that duty so mildly, that it never gives distress to the innocent: no disorders, no robbery, can take place, without the culprit's being immediately seized and punished, so admirable is the administration of police.

As an instance of their persevering investigation of the truth for the ends of justice, Hussun Mervee, mentioned a circumstance which he assured me had occurred within his own observation. In the course of an accidental fray, in a bazār, a certain Chinese received a wound from some offensive weapon in the face; the offender escaped at the time, but the bazar was shut up until he should be discovered, and several of those who had been present were taken up and severely questioned: at last, the merchants and other sufferers, weary of the continued restraint, bribed a poor man to declare himself the culprit, by promises of rich rewards to himself for any punishment he might have to undergo, and ample provision for his family in case of his death (which was not indeed dreaded). The justiciary authorities, however, would not accept of his confession, but cross-examined him, to discover if his story and replies corresponded with the proofs already in their hands, and finding this not to be the case, they dismissed him without any

* This, as has been before observed, differs somewhat from other accounts.

† The expression of my informer was, that if a traveller dropt a purse of gold on the road, no one would touch it, but would give information where it was to be found, that it might be restored to its owner; so certain are they that every action must be discovered, and that punishment will follow crime.

punishment. Some time afterwards the real offender was found; but as it was satisfactorily proved, after full enquiry, that what he had done either proceeded from great provocation, or was without any malicious intent, he, too, was pardoned and dismissed. I have no reason to believe the story otherwise than true; at all events, it shows the high estimation in which the impartial justice of the Chinese government is held.

Selim Beg, another well-informed merchant, to whom I am indebted for many other details, confirmed this account; and every one who had possessed opportunities of judging on the subject, agreed in the same, and corroborated all the material facts. Both these men declared, that the moment the limits of Bockhara are passed, a most important change is to be perceived in the manners of the people, and particularly among the Eels; all is peace and tranquillity*; there is neither robbery nor pilfering; and although caravans are used for the transport of goods, yet the road from one place to another is perfectly safe even for the smallest parties, or for individuals. This security increases the nearer you approach the Chinese territories, and when once within there, all risk ceases, and a child with gold in its hand might travel without fear.

Such is the amount of all the information I could obtain during my stay in Persia, on the subject of these interesting countries; the addition it offers to the general stock of knowledge is trifling, if it be any thing; but where it is found to agree with the observations of former travellers, it may offer a satisfactory corroboration of their testimony; where it differs from such authorities, it may stimulate to enquiry for the purpose of exposing error. In either case I may hope that it will not be considered entirely useless, and I have endeavoured to render it at least innoxious, by rejecting every thing that appeared of suspicious authority, or that was inconsistent or extravagant in itself, of which sort of information the traveller will always have enough before him. I have, in several places, alluded to or explained the sources from whence my information has been derived; such as have not been named, consist of merchants who had traded in these countries, religious mendicants who had travelled through them in the exercise of their profession, and a few men of superior talents, but whose sphere of observation was limited, or whose jealousy was alarmed by my questions. All who have themselves travelled know well how little of an authentic nature can in general be procured from such sources, even with the greatest perseverance and address. The merchant during his journeys attends but to matters which influence his profits; the derwesh seeks for little beyond the increase of his fame and accumulation of his disciples; neither are, for the most part, actuated by that curiosity, which induces the European traveller to visit distant countries

* Their words in Persian were, "*Ameen ust*," "it is peace;"—a very expressive term in their phraseology.

for the advancement of general knowledge; they are astonished at the persevering minuteness of his enquiries, and not unfrequently reply to them at random, merely to get quit of his importunity. The humble traveller, indeed, has many discouraging circumstances to contend with, which those who are armed with official authority are not subjected to; and if the former be enabled by his lowly station to take a closer view of domestic manners and private character as he moves along, he cannot hope to lay before the public so extensive or valuable a collection of geographical and historical information as the latter, or to compete with him either in interest or utility.

ROUTE FROM MUSHED TO HERAT, BY HADJEE MEERZA ABDOOLLA.

Day.

1. 6 fursungs, To Sungbust village, the road continuing between hills in the same valley as Mushed. Uninhabited after two fursungs.
2. 6 fursungs, To Hedineh village. Two fursungs on, there is a caravanserai called Chukāve, entirely covered in from the weather, with water and a little pasture. The road lies through a level valley, till within a fursung of the village, where you go through a pass among hills.
3. 7 fursungs, To Khyrabad village. An ābumbārah or water cistern, built by Ibrahim Khan Hazārah, at three fursungs on. The road passes over a plain, having hills on the north-east. No inhabitants.
4. 6 fursungs, To Toorbut-e-jāmee. The whole road lies through an inhabited country. A well-peopled valley, thickly interspersed with gardens and villages. Jām is a small town.
5. 8 fursungs, To Kāureez, a village. At two fursungs on, an old water-cistern. At half way a ruined fort and caravanserai called Abbasabad. Hills all along on the north-east.
6. 7 fursungs, To Kohistān, a village with a fort. A ruinous caravanserai called Dugāroo, at two fursungs. At four fursungs the ruined fort of Kaffer Kallah, and a caravanserai in repair. The road is over a plain, but the mountains of Kohistān are on the left to the north-east.
7. 7 fursungs, To Ghorian, a town. The road for four fursungs passes through an uninhabited country, after which you come to a fort and caravanserai upon the banks of the river of Herāt; as you approach Ghorian the country becomes thickly interspersed with villages. The town and district of Ghorian yield 50,000 tomauns to the

Day.

47 Brought forward.

government of Herāt. The road lies all the way in a valley of which the northern hills are close, and those to the south further removed.

8. 4 fursungs, To Sekeewan, a village in the same valley. The whole country inhabited.

9. 6 fursungs, To Herat. Entirely through inhabited country.

57 fursungs at 4 miles, is about 228 miles.

SECOND ROUTE FROM MUSHED TO HERAT.

Day.

1. - - Sungbust,
2. - - Chekow (or Chukāve), a ruined caravanserai, without water.
3. - - Hedineh, a village.
4. - - Mahmoodabād.
5. - - Kāurez.
6. - - Toorbut-e-jāmee.
7. - - Kohistan.
8. - - Ghorian
9. - - Sekeewan. Here from dread of the Toorkomans, the caravan went by a roundabout way to
10. 4 fursungs, Doosmee.
11. 4 fursungs, Gibreel.
12. 3 fursungs, Jooee Nokra.
13. 5 fursungs, Sarwan Muhuleh, the rendezvous about a fursung from Herāt.

The above journeys were those of a camel, and may be rated at from 18 to 25 miles, or an average of 22 miles each, making 198 miles to Ghorian; and that town being 10 fursungs, or about 40 miles from Herāt, the whole distance according to this route becomes 238 miles.

THE SAME ROUTE CONTINUES TO CANDAHAR, AS FOLLOWS:—

4 short days Journey to Anar Durreh, an old city close to a dry river bed. Many fine gardens abounding in pomegranates. The whole country populous and well cultivated.

3 days To Subuzwar, a city now chiefly in ruins, and not larger than Boojnoord, but situated in a fine well watered and well cultivated country, with many gardens abounding in fruit. The relater, an Hindee, compared the country to Hindostan.

4 days To Furrah, which is a city as large as Nishapore, situated in a valley among hills with about twenty villages and many gardens; it is close to a river which runs towards Seistan, and which in early spring was fordable for horses and camels, but not for men.

14 days To Shuth-e-Helmind (or the river Helmind), where there is a village and very strong fort (*Geerēsh*) belonging to Futeh Khan, the wuzeer of Caubul, furnished with ten or fifteen pieces of cannon, and well inhabited. The road passes through a hilly country, with some trifling cothuls, but the road excellent—fit for guns.

3 days To Candahār.

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28 days, At 22 miles each, would give about 500 miles; but as several of these journeys are confessedly short, it would be too much to allow them, and there is reason to believe, that several of those which are put down in mass, are merely changes of position without much advance in the journey, so that, on the whole, a great deduction must made from the sum total above mentioned.

ROUTE FROM HERAT TO BOCKHARA, BY HUSSUN MERVEE, A MERCHANT, TRADING BETWEEN BOCKHARA AND MUSHED.

Day.

1. 3 fursungs, To Gundāb, an uninhabited place.
2. [6]fursungs, To Khooskabād, in a desert place, where are two caravanserais.
3. [6]fursungs, To Charbagh, where there is a caravanserai of stone also in the desert.

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15 Carry forward.

Day.		
	15	Brought forward.
4.	[6]fursungs,	To Kāra Tuppeh, a plain where there is some verdure, and some inhabitants occasionally.
5.	4 fursungs,	To Hauze-e-khan, a desert place, but affording water.
6.	7 fursungs,	To Kalbēra, an inhabited plain.
7.	7 fursungs,	To Robaut Khooskee, an uninhabited place, where there is a caravanserai.
8.	[6]fursungs,	To the banks of the Moorghaub river, which is always fordable, except in spring, when the snow is melting.
9.	7 fursungs,	To Cheh.
10.	8 fursungs,	To Isse Brelāk (or hot spring), from hence it is three days' journey,
11. 12. 13.	23 fursungs,	to Mymoonah, a village, and large encampment of Eels.
14. 15. 16. 17.	28 fursungs,	To Andkhooee, a town as large as Nishapore, dependent upon Bockhara, Yooldooz, being its present chief.
19. 20.	18 fursungs,	To the banks of the Amoo.
21. to 27.	35 fursungs,	To Bockhara, entirely among Eels.
	164 fursungs,	or about 656 miles between Herāt and Bockhara.

The above route is said to lie chiefly through an open country, with but few hills; the direction, as far as Andkhooee, chiefly easterly, from thence to Bockhara northerly. The relater must be wrong in this, as Andkhooee must certainly be considerably to the north of Herāt. The distances put in braces were not given by the relater, but are taken at the average of six fursungs each, for the convenience of calculation.

ROUTE FROM ANDKHOOEE TO BALKH, AND THENCE TO CAUBUL BY THE SAME.

Day.		
1.	10 fursungs,	To Aukchak.
2.	7 fursungs,	To Balkh.
	17	Carry forward.

Day.

17 Brought forward.

3. 3 fursungs, To Shah Meydan, a considerable town.

4. 8 fursungs, To Khooln, where the son of Killich Allee Beg is hakim.

5. 6 fursungs, To Koonnee,
6. 5 fursungs, To Koorrum,
7. 6 fursungs, To Saurbaugh,

} all well inhabited places, with a fine country around them, among wooded hills, and surrounded with gardens.

8. to 12. 22 fursungs, To Bamian, among hills with bad passes; the hills are lofty, and generally covered with snow; the road impassable in winter.

At Bamian there are two gigantic figures (three spears, or about forty-five feet in height), said to represent some god and his wife; they are naked, and standing erect, like some of the figures cut out of the rock at Gualior. There are (the relater says) no more sculptures at the place; but from these it has obtained the name of *Boot* Bamian. *Boot* is the word applied in India to an image or idol, and has, doubtless, originated in the name of Boodh, which was at one time the object of worship over a great part of these countries.

FROM BOOT BAMIAN.

13. 14. 15. 16. 22 fursungs to Caubul. — Thus, by this account, the distance between Caubul and Balkh (72 fursungs), may be estimated at 288 miles.

89 fursungs.

FROM KHOONDOOZ TO CAUBUL.

Day.

1. 10 cōs, To Bagaleen; a river from Ghoree runs here.
2. 5 cōs, To Ghoree; the river comes through a large valley.
3. 4 cōs, To Kailghā, on the banks of the same river. Two cōs further on, three rivers join, the Soorkhāb, Anderāb, and Khinjan; and there is a pass of considerable length, but the country is richly cultivated.

19 Carry forward

Day.

19 Brought forward.

4. 7 cōs, To Khinjan, through a narrow valley; the Hindoo-koosh is close to this town.

5. 10 cōs, To Dooshākh. Pass over the Hindoo-koosh; there is here a road to the right, and one to the left, both on hills. There is for six months of the year so much snow, that no one remains here; it is said, that firing a gun, or making a noise, endangers bringing the snow down upon the passengers.

6. 12 cōs, To Koshan. The right hand road leads over the hills on that side, and along their tops for the greater part of the way. Koshan is in a valley to the right.

7. 12 cōs, To Cherakār, along a narrow valley well cultivated. Cross the Caubul river two cōs from Cherakar.

8. 18 cōs, To Caubul. Small hills and passes. There are two cothuls, one called Mewa Khatoon, and the other called Nia Minār; the first three, and the other two cōs from Caubul; they are both easy.

78 cōs, which taken at a mile and a half, would only be 117 miles; but, as the *Pucka* cōs of India is full two miles, the distance between Caubul and Khoondooz may, by this calculation, be set down at 150 miles. Khoondooz may be about 100 miles distant from Balkh.

ANOTHER ROUTE FROM CAUBUL TO BALKH.

Day.

1. 16 cōs, To Chankār.
2. 20 cōs, To Ghorebund.
3. 8 cōs, To Boot Bamian.
4. } 40 cōs, To Kamerd.
5. }
6. }
7. } 50 cōs, To Khooln, three days' journey, estimated at 50 cōs.
8. }
9. 24 cōs, To Mezār.
10. 24 cōs, To Balkh.

182 cōs in all. There are no particulars of this route given; if the cōs be estimated at one mile and a half only, it brings it nearly to that given in the first route, on which I have most re-

liance. Such modes of estimating distances are vague, and unsatisfactory at best; it is only from multiplying them that any approximation can be made to the truth.

ROUTE FROM BOCKHARA TO KASHGAR, BY KOKAUN, EXTRACTED FROM THE ITINERARY OF MEER IZZEL OOLLAH. — THE JOURNEYS ARE MEASURED BY HOURS, WHICH MAY BE TAKEN AT THREE AND A HALF MILES EACH.

Stage.	Hours.		
1.	2	E.	To Mazār, where is the mausoleum and place of pilgrimage of Beha-u-deen: the mausoleum is a tomb without any dome: to the N. W. there is a mosque open like a verandah. The road is bordered by villages and gardens.
2.	5	E. by N.	Irancheh, which is a large village. There are villages upon the north side of the road, and the desert upon the south.
3.	8	E. by N.	Khan-Robaut, built by Abdoolla Khan; the road as before.
4.	3	E. by N.	Karmina, a large place in the midst of Miankal; villages and cultivation abound on the north; the desert is close upon the south.
5.	7	E. by N.	Robaut-e-Abdoolla Khan, near a village; villages succeed each other close upon the road side; the desert is not far distant on the south.
6.	8	E. by N.	Keneh Koorghān, a fortified town, having a Saturday market; this place is called eight fursungs distant from Samarcand.
7.	6	E. by N.	Kārasū, a fountain. A post of Oozbecks stationed here to protect the road: the road is desert.
8.	2	E. by N.	Ashigan, a large mausoleum, and a large river flows by.
9.	3	E. by N.	Naseerabad, a village, the road up and down hill.
10.	1	E. by N.	Dōdul, a village belonging to Samarcand.
11.	2	E. by N.	Robaut-e-Cherki, built by Abdoolla Khan.
12.	3	E. by N.	Samarcand, a famous city; has been described in the text.
	50		=175 miles.
	50		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	50		Brought forward.
13.	2	E. by N.	Kara Kalpāk, a horde of Eels; they are reckoned Oozbecks: the name of their village is the same as that of the tribe. The river of Kohik comes from the hills, towards Derwāz, and Sirkul, and after supplying water for the cultivation of Samarcand, goes on to Bockhara: the town and cultivation of which it supplies with water.
14.	2	E. by N.	Khisht Kupruk, pass a stream over a bridge of burnt bricks.
15.	2	E. by N.	Bulag Melachip, a fountain, without any inhabitants near it.
16.	4	E. by N.	Yengee Koorghān, a fort under Dizzikh, its inhabitants being Oozbecks; the road level, but distant hills all around.
17.	4	E. by N.	Kanuti; this place is said to abound with serpents, but at this time in consequence (he was assured) of the cold, he saw none; the hills approach here, and a stream from Dizzikh passes through a narrow valley; there is an inscription at this place commemorative of a great battle that happened A. Heg. 977, as mentioned in the text.
18.	2	E. by N.	Dizzikh; a large place like a city, having a wall and fort; it is a sort of port of entry from Kokaun to Bockhara, as all goods from the former going to the latter are examined and inventoried here, and according to that inventory custom is levied at Bockhara.
19.	6	E. by N.	Kudk, in Toorkee, it means a wall; there are here some walled villages, and Oozbeck aouls.
20.	8	E. by N.	Yam, a large village with a wall. Here commences the country of Ooratuppeh.
21.	2	E. by N.	Sibāt, a village surrounded by a square wall, belonging to Ooratuppeh.
22.	5	E. by N.	Ooratuppeh, a town between two high mounds of earth; its chief, Mahmood Khan, acknowledges but very slightly the supremacy of Shah Hyder of Bockhara, and is in fact an independent sovereign; it has been noticed in the text.
	83		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	83		Brought forward.
23.	8	E. by N.	Kurak, a village surrounded by a square wall of stone and mud, and the frontier town on this side of the Ooratuppeh territory.
24.	2	E. by N.	Ak-sū, a village, the frontier of the Kokaun territory.
25.	3	N. E.	Ak Tuppeh, a fortified village, within a short distance of Khojend, and where the river Khojend is crossed upon a bridge, this river is different from the Seer.
26.	2	E. by N.	Khojend, a famous town on the left bank of the Seer or Sihoon, distant from it two or three bow shots, spoken of in the text.
27.	7	E. by N.	Makhrām, the name of a place which has a fort, with a wall of stone and mud, on the west bank of the Seer, about a bowshot distant; the course of this river here is west.
28.	2	E. by N.	Kaubadām, a populous place like a town, so named because of a hill not far off, on the skirts of which in a place abounding with running water a great quantity of almonds were formerly raised.
29.		E. by N.	Shahberooi, a village.
30.	1	E. by N.	Bishāreek, a village dependant on Kokaun. There are many villages on the road.
31.	8	E. by N.	Kokaun. Has been described in the text.
32.	8	E. by S.	Kara Khitai, is a village. The Kara Khitai inhabitants are Mussoolmauns.
33.	4	E. by S.	Kishlak of Ak-Beg. There are two roads; the one passes through an inhabited and cultivated country, the other through desert.
34.	5	E. by S.	Marghinan, commonly called Margh*ilan*, is the chief city of the country of Ferghauna; there is here the tomb of the famous Secunder Padshah. It is a pleasant and good place, and the people polite. Shawl-wool is produced in this country; and they weave shawls, but inferior to those of Kashmeer: much silk is also made. The town has a wall of brick and mud, but it is ruinous, and there is a large minār of burnt bricks in the middle of it.
35.	6	E. by S.	Kishlak of Kopruk. Road level, and villages succeeding each other rapidly.
	142		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	142		Brought forward.
36.	5	E. by S.	Sulikhaneh Tugeona-bashee, a village. North of this one stage, is Andejān, once the capital of Ferghauna. There are both Kirgeesh and Kalmuck aouls near it; the latter here are Mahometans.
37.	3	E.	Mingtuppeh, a large village; around it are extensive pastures (called here Yeilāks) of the Toorki and Kipchāk tribes; these may amount to ten or twelve thousand householders, all living in comfort, good looking men, and good soldiers; contrary to the Kirgeesh, who are all poor, ill-looking, and have no knowledge of war.
38.	3	E.	Ardaneh, a large village, the inhabitants of which are of Buduckshan.
39.	8	E. by S.	Ush, a large town with a great population. The road to it is level, but hillocks are seen in the distances; villages and population. Aouls of the Kirgeesh, and many flocks of mares are also seen by the way. Ush is the frontier town of Ferghauna in this direction; a great portion of the surrounding inhabitants are Kirgeesh Eels; those from a place called Kurgasheen to Ush depend upon the ameer of Kokaun. These people were formerly inclined to thieve and infest the highways, but having been severely punished by Alim Khan, the ruler of Kokaun, they have become peaceable subjects, and are possessed of large flocks and herds of cattle and sheep. They say here, that Ush is the throne of Suleimaun (Solomon), and shew this fancied throne upon an hillock where they have erected a dome: in the spring season men of every profession from the town come to visit the Tucht-e-Suleimaun. They also shew the tomb of his *wuzeer*, Asef Barhia. Mosquitoes are very plentiful in spring; in every house they have four long sticks, on which are fly-flaps; in the summer they sleep on the top of them. The town of Nemingān is two stages north-west from Ush, and is famous for its fruits.
	161		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	161		Brought forward.
			Andejān, once the capital of Ferghauna, and the residence of Umur Sheikh Meerza (the father of the Indian emperor Baber), is three stages W. by N. from Ush, and one stage west of Nemingān. Andejān has now but few inhabitants.
40.	5	E.	Madee, a place where there is a tank with trees, and Kirgeesh encampments around it. There is much population and cultivation towards Ush.
41.	3	E. by S.	A station, only having wood, water, and grass. Kirgeesh tents all the way. The road level.
42.	5	E. by S.	Lengar, the name of a place where there is some wood, water, and grass. No inhabitants.
43.	4	E.	Zeertuppeh, a station below a hillock. Kirgeesh Eels close around.
44.	9	E.	The skirt of *Duan* (or pass of) Chugurchuk. Cross a lofty mountain of this name, three hours high. Much snow. Several horses died. Kirgeesh Eels about.
45.	4	½ E. by N. ½ N.	Gulsken, a village on a plain with many fruit trees.
46.	5	E.	Mazār Goombuz, a large dome and Kirgeesh tombs. Spring water, wood, and grass; the road hilly and uneven. Flint stones abound.
47. 48. 49.	17	chiefly E.	Yeman Kiz. The first half of the road level, with plenty of pasture, wood, and water; the latter half ascending a valley to Yeman Kiz; a camp or settlement of Kirgeesh among hills, where there is cultivation.
50.	9	½ E. ½ S. by E.	Azchelik. Ascending through a mountain valley. No wood. It is a place in a fine valley.
51.	10	S. by E.	Dameen-e-Duan-e-Tizik. Ascend for eight hours, and descend the Duan-e-Tizik for two hours. Much snow. A hundred Kirgeesh were hired here to press down the snow, before the caravan could pass upon it. In the summer (July) the road by this defile is impassable, and caravans go by other routes on the right and left of it.
52.	3	S. by E.	The gate of the Duan (or pass of) Tizik; the road in a valley. No wood or grass. Running water.
	235		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	235		Brought forward.
53.	3	E. by N.	Koksū. A severe mountainous road, the first part in a narrow valley bounded by lofty hills, after which you descend a steep pass to a river which runs from hence, joined by several other streams, and enters the Seer or Sihoon near Khojend. The river of Kashgar takes its rise at Koksū.
54. 55.	12	chiefly E.	Mouth of the Duan of Akizek. Two Duans of this name are passed in this place. Akiz means *twin* in Toorkee, so that these have received the appellation of "*the twin passes.*" The road rough mountainous, with little wood or grass.
56.	8	½ N. ½ E. by N.	A station. Missed the road on this route. Much snow.
57.	5	E. by S.	Nufai Bashi, which lies to the left of the road in a valley. Much of the common alder-wood here. Little grass. Much snow to this place.
58.	7	S. E.	Yungshin. Kirgeesh Eels, and plenty of wood and grass.
59.	9	E.	Sater Kamush. Abundance of water and grass. The road through a valley under a hill. A place called Nokareh-Chaldi, on the banks of the Kashgar river, situated on a hill, is said to have been the Nokareh Khaneh of Afraziāb: there are still to be seen traces of houses. The river of Kashgar is forded in this march.
60.	4	E.	Yesu Kichek. A ford on the river. The water reaches the stirrup. Road uneven and hilly.
61.	4	E.	Shur-bulag, Yesu Kichek. Grass, and plenty of wood.
62.	5	E. by S.	Duan Mazār, also called Duan Uk-Satur (from *ug*, an arrow, and *satur*, thrower), the pass of the archer. The ascent of this pass is trifling.
63.	7	E. by S.	Uk-Satur. The road hilly. Above the pass are tombs of the Kirgeesh.
64.	7	E. by S.	Shur-bulag-Mullachip. The road hilly. Plenty of wood, water, and grass.
65.	4	E.	Shur-Bulag Kurghashem (or the spring of lead.) Lead comes from hence, and is carried and sold by
	310		Carry forward.

Stage.	Hours.		
	310		Brought forward.
			the Kirgeesh, and of which there are plenty of camps about. Wood, grass, and water abound.
66.	3	E. by S.	Kizzil Ubi. One house, near which are the camps of Kirgeesh Eels. Plenty of wood, water, and grass.
67.	8	E.	Kahkgleek. A ruined place, on the side of a hill. The first part of the road level.
			Urteng (or Custom-house Post). The road level. Hills on either side, very distant. At the Urteng there are some houses of the common people. On leaving the Kashgar territories, the pass carried by travellers is here examined by the chiefs or beys; who, having taken security that they are foreigners (and not persons of the country), enters the same in the Amban's book, and delivers in return a pass in the Khilai character, which enables him to travel unmolested. The inhabitants of the country are not permitted to leave it.
68.	3	E. by S.	Kuhneh Karawul. A former Chinese post. Road level.
69.	6	E. by S.	Kichek Andejan. A ford and station on the river Kashgar. There is no other inhabited place.
70.	5	E. by S.	Kashgar. Villages along the road, which is level.
	335		hours, or about 1172 miles.

GENERAL LIST OF LATITUDES OF PLACES,

WITH THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE OBSERVATIONS UPON WHICH THEY ARE FOUNDED.

Names of Places.	No. of Observations.			Latitude by Mean of these.	
	Sun.	Star.	Total.		
Bushire. Factory.	0	6	6	28° 59′ 30″	
Brauzjoon.	0	1	1	29 13 0	
Dalakee.	0	1	1	29 26 0	
Konar Tucht.	0	1	1	29 32 0	
Kumauridge.	0	1	1	29 36 26	
Kauzeroon.	1	1	2	29 37 24	Camp close by the west end of the town.
Sheerauz.	4	4	8	29 37 50	Gardens of the Jehannumah 1¼ miles N.E. of the centre of the town.
Persepolis.	1	0	1	29 56 30	
Kinara.	2	0	2	29 54 38	
Zergoon.	1	0	1	29 47 5	
Futehabad.	1	0	1	29 56 42	
Mayeen.	1	0	1	30 11 53	
Caravanserai at Oojān	1	0	1	30 27 42	
Khooshkeezurd.	1	0	1	30 48 44	
Dehghirdoo.	1	0	1	31 10 0	
Yezid Khaust.	0	1	1	31 31 4	
Muxoodbeggee.	0	1	1	31 49 20	
Komaishah.	0	1	1	32 1 0	
Mayār.	2	1	3	32 16 20	
Ispahan, in the palace.	3	4	7	32 39 34	
Moorchacoor.	0	2	2	33 5 25	
Soo Vill.	0	2	2	33 26 28	
Cohrood Vill.	0	1	1	33 40 12	
Cashan.	0	2	2	33 49 51	
Shurab.	0	1	1	34 23 4	
Tehrān.	3	1	4	35 40 11	
KebootGoombuz.	0	1	1	35 28 0	
Eywana Key.	0	2	1	35 20 20	
Kishlac.	0	1	1	35 12 40	
Lasgird.	0	2	2	35 22 0	
Semnoon.	1	1	2	35 33 30	
Dowlutabad	0	1	1	36 3 54	
Damghān.	1	1	2	36 10 0	
Deh Moollah.	0	1	1	36 15 30	
Shahrood.	3	3	6	36 25 20	
Budusht.	0	0	0	36 25 15	
Abbassabad.	1	0	1	36 25 50	
Subzawār.	0	2	2	36 12 45	
Robaut Zafferounee.	1	0	1	36 10 14	

LIST OF LATITUDES OF PLACES — *continued.*

Names of Places.	No. of Observations.			Latitude by Mean of these.	
	Sun.	Star.	Total.		
Nishapore.	3	0	3	36° 12′ 20″	
Mushed.	3	2	5	36 17 40	Gardens of the Char Baugh.
Kabooshan.	4	1	5	37 9 5	
Boojnoord.	2	0	2	37 29 25	
Pisseruc Vill.	0	2	2	37 13 25	
Finderisk.	0	1	1	37 0 30	
Peechuck Muhuleh	1	0	1	36 55 51	
Astrabad.	0	2	2	36 51 0	Near the centre of the town.
Ashruff.	0	2	2	36 41 30	
Saree.	0	2	2	36 34 13	
Balfroosh.	0	2	2	36 33 15	
Amol.					
Izzut Deh.	0	2	2	36 36 10	
Alleeabad.	0	2	2	36 35 42	
Nodeh.					
Roode-sir.	0	1	1	37 8 35	
Lahajan.	0	1	1	37 12 20	
Resht.	0	6	6	37 17 30	

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE WEATHER, AND STATE OF THE THERMOMETER DURING THE JOURNEY.

Places.	Date.	Rate of Thermo. at Sunrise	Rate of Thermo. at Noon.	Rate of Thermo. at 9 P.M.	Leslie's Hygrom.	
	1821.					
Bushire town.	Aug. 7	89°	96°	94		
	8	91	96	94		
	9	87	96	94		
	10	86½	97	93		
	11	85	96	92		
	12	91	97	-	-	A hot wind from the N.W. all night.
The heat for about ten days more continued nearly as above; if any thing a degree or two higher; the average might be taken at		84 to 87	96 to 100	90 to 96		after which the weather became cooler.
Bushire camp, a few miles from the town.	24	-	106			
	25	81	104			
	26	77½	105			
	27	74½	100	86	-	In the tent with tatties, or wetted mats.
	28	80	101	86	-	Very heavy dew this night.
	29	71½	103	86	-	Less oppressive than many preceding hotter days.
	30	70	105	-	-	In the morning a cold east wind.
	31	78	105	86		
	Sept. 1	76	109	86	-	This day hotter and more disagreeable than usual on account of a strong southerly wind.
	2	73	105	-	200	These three days windy and disagreeable. Leslie's hygrometer sunk below the scale.
	3	75	106	-		
	4	-	106	-		
	5	cool	103			
	6	70	102	89	-	A strong N. wind with much dust.
	7	86	95	80	-	A great fall in the real temperature, and still greater to the sensations, than in reality.
	8	74	103	78	-	Night cool in consequence of the wind.
	9	67	95	78	-	Night cool.
	10	69	98	-	-	Ditto.
	11	69	98	-	-	Ditto, a heavy fog in the morning with much dew. During the whole time of our stay at Bushire, a heavy dew fell in the night time, so that the mornings were comparatively fresh and cool. The season was on the whole considered cool for Bushire.
Charcota.	12	cool	105	-	-	March first from Bushire.
Brauzjoon.	13	do.	109	-	180	Very hot all day.
Dalakee.	14	hot	106	-	-	Very hot and uncomfortable.

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE WEATHER — *continued.*

Places.	Date.	Rate of Thermo. at sunrise.	Rate of Thermo. at noon.	Rate of Thermo. at 9 P. M.	Leslie's Hygrom.	
	1821					
Konārtucht.	Sept. 15	hot.	99°	-	-	Ascended the hills, and experienced a decrease of heat.
Kumauridge.	16	cool	97	-	108	
Kauzeroon.	17	61°	106	-	170	Cold in the morning, but very hot and disagreeable all day.
	18	62	105	-	-	Cold night: the day hot.
	20	-	100	-	187	Wind dry and hot.
	21	57	100			
Sheerauz.	Oct. 15	50 to 57	74 to 80	64 to 70	130 to 150	These were the average rates with very little variation for twenty days, at Sheerauz, at this period: the air for the most part very dry; no rain, and only one or two cloudy days; the winds variable, blowing hot from the west in the middle of the day, but changing for cold northerly blasts in the evening.
Plain of Oojāus.	28	28				
Khooskeezurd.	29	20	57			
Dehghirdoo.	31	30				
Yezed Khaust.	31	-	54			
Muxoodbeggee.	Nov. 1	38	64			
Komaishah.	2	45	55			
Ispahan.	5 to 20	28 to 38	50 to 56			
Soo.	24	35				
Cohrood.	25	29				
Cashan.	26	35				
Shurab.	27	37				
Koom.	-	-	50			
Semnoon.	Dec. 25 to 27	26 to 42				
Gurdunee Sirdara.	28	11				
Dowlutabad.	29	16				
Damghan.	30	24				
	1822					
Shahrood.	Jan. 1 to 5	25 to 26	60 to 64	38	30	
Zaffarousee.	17	20				
Nishapore.	23 to 31	16 to 20	40	30 to 36		
Mushed.	Feb. 3 to 7	16 to 28	40 to 50			
Kabooshan.	Mar. 15 to 25	-	40 to 54	-	-	Generally.

TABLE OF THE BOILING POINT OF WATER AT DIFFERENT PLACES ON THE ROUTE,

TO SHOW THEIR COMPARATIVE HEIGHTS ABOVE THE LEVEL OF THE SEA.

Places.	Boiling Point.	Places.	Boiling Point.
Brauzjoon.	211½	Semnoon.	205⅛
Dalakee.	211½	Carav. Gurdunee Sirdara.	202½
Konar Tucht.	209	Dowlutabad.	206½
Kumaridge.	207	Damghān.	206⅛
Kauzeroon.	207	Deh Moollah.	206 6/10
Dushte-Arjun.	198½	Shahrood.	205⅓
Sheerauz.	204⅛	Muzeenoon.	207
Zergoon.	203	Mehr.	207
Khooskeezurd.	199	Nishapore.	206½
Dehghirdoo.	199 a shade less.	Village of the Toorquoise Mines.	203½
Yezid Khaust.	200¾	Mushed.	206⅓
Muxoodbeggee.	202	Kabooshan.	204¾
Komaishah.	203	Sheerwan.	206⅓
Ispahan.	204	Boojnoord.	206⅓
Cohrood.	200	Pisseruc.	212
Cashān.	207		
Koom.	208		
Tehrān.	204⅔		

TABLE OF LATITUDES AND LONGITUDES, in which the positions of the most important places, as they have been fixed from the author's observations, are contrasted with those they have hitherto occupied in the best English maps, and in the great Russian map published at their Depot in 1816.

Names of Places.	Longitude by Chronometers.		Long. by Jupiter's Sats.		Long. by Lunar Obs.		Longitude adopted in the Map.	Latitude adopted in the Map.	Position in the Maps hitherto.		Position by the Russian Map of central Asia, published at the Depot, 1816.	
	From whence deduced.	Long.	No. of Obs.	Long.	Sets of Obs.	Long.			Lat.	Long.	Lat.	Long.
Bushire *	——	—	6	50° 53′ 49″	—	—	50° 50′ 0″	28° 59′ 30″				
Brauzjoon	——	—	1	51 3 0	—	—	51 5 2	29 13 0				
Kauzeroon	——	—	1	51 37 45	—	—	51 40 4	29 37 24				
Sheerauz, Jehannumah gardens	——	—	4	52 38 15	1	52° 9′ 30″	52 40 22	29 37 50	29° 35′ 0″	52° 42′ 15″		
Kinara, one mile S. of Persepolis	Sheerauz	52° 57′ 51″	—	—	—	—	52 57 0	29 54 38	29 55 45	52 57 0		
Dehghirdoo	Ditto	52 11 7	1	52 15 0	—	—	52 17 56	31 10 0				
Yezid Khaust	Dehghirdoo	52 17 24	—	—	—	—	52 17 24	31 31 4	31 29 30	52 13 0		
Mayār	Ditto	51 51 58	—	—	1	51 41 45	51 54 30	32 16 20				
Ispahn, Palace	——	—	4	51 42 30	—	—	51 44 37	32 39 34	32 24 34	51 50 0		
Moorchacoor	——	—	2	51 30 15	—	—	51 32 30	33 5 25				
Shurāb	——	—	1	51 12 15	—	—	51 14 25	34 23 4	34 28 0	51 2 0		
Tehrān	——	—	3	51 22 30	1	51 36 0	51 22 50	35 40 0	35 38 15	50 52 30		
Keboot Goombuz	Tehrān	51 44 0	—	—	—	—	51 44 0	35 28 0				
Eywan-e-key	Ditto	52 7 39	—	—	—	—	52 7 39	35 20 20				
Kishlac	Ditto	52 26 51	—	—	—	—	52 26 51	35 12 40				
Lasgird	Ditto	53 15 17	—	—	—	—	53 15 17	35 22 0				
Semnoon	Ditto	53 28 18	—	—	—	—	53 28 18	35 33 30	35 27 0	52 48 0		
Dowlutabad	Ditto	54 23 20	1	54 12 15	—	—	54 15 5	36 3 54				
Damghān	Ditto	54 33 50	1	54 48 45	1	54 2 0	54 35 52	36 10 0	36 5 0	53 37 0	35° 25′ 0″	54° 31′ 30″
Deh Moollah	Shahrood	54 57 24	—	—	1	55 0 0	54 57 24	36 15 30				
Shahrood	Tehrān	55 7 20	1	55 0 0	—	—	55 2 23	36 25 20	36 2 0	54 27 0	35 51 0	54 55 30
Budusht	Shahrood	55 6 8	1	55 8 20	—	—	55 9 0	36 25 15				
Abbassabad	Budusht	56 30 34	—	—	—	—	56 30 34	36 25 50				
Subzawār	Ditto	57 40 37	—	—	—	—	57 40 37	36 12 45				
Robaut-e-Zafferounee	Ditto	58 5 29	—	—	—	—	58 5 29	36 10 14				
Nishapore	Shahrood	58 46 38	3	58 48 15	2	58 56 30	58 49 27	36 12 20	36 23 30	57 4 0	36 10 0	57 48 0
Mushed, Char Baugh gardens	Nishapore	59 35 27	—	—	1	59 44 45	59 35 27	36 17 40	37 16 0	56 54 0	37 5 30	57 36 0
Kabooshan	Mushed	58 16 17	—	—	—	—	58 16 17	37 9 5				
Boojnoord	Kabooshan	57 12 17	—	—	1	57 16 30	57 14 23	37 29 25				
Pisseruc village	Boojnoord	55 18 56	—	—	—	—	55 18 56	37 13 25				
Finderisk village	Ditto	54 57 59	—	—	—	—	54 57 59	37 0 30				
Peechuch Muhuleh	Ditto	54 51 27	—	—	—	—	54 51 27	36 55 51				
Astrabad	Ditto	54 25 33	—	—	1	54 27 0	54 25 33	36 51 0	36 48 30	54 6 0	36 24 0	54 22 30
Ashruff	Astrabad	53 27 1	—	—	—	—	53 34 0	36 41 30				
Saree	Ashruff	52 58 33	—	—	1	53 22 30	53 6 26	36 34 10	36 35 0	53 48 0	36 28 30	53 17 0
Balfroosh	Saree	52 44 56	—	—	1	52 11 30	52 44 56	36 33 15	36 50 0	52 24 0		
Amol	Balfroosh	52 23 55	—	—	—	—	52 23 55	—	36 37 0	51 54 30		
Izzut Deh	Ditto	52 11 10	—	—	—	—	52 11 10	36 36 10				
Alleeabad	Ditto	51 49 4	—	—	—	—	51 49 4	36 35 42				
Nodeh	Ditto	51 21 56	—	—	—	—	51 21 56					
Resht	Shahrood	49 43 23	—	—	2	49 18 30 two workings.	49 42 53	37 17 30	37 20 0	49 48 0	37 12 30	49 0 0
	Saree	49 44 50										

* Bushire is laid down according to the position it occupies in the best charts. An observation of Jupiter's 1st sat. also observed at Greenwich, gives 50° 34′ east long.; a mean of six observations *including* this one gives long. E. 50° 40′; and a mean of the same, using the corresponding times indicated by the Nautical Almanack, gives long. E. 50° 53′ 59″.

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