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Margaret Thompson

THE
HISTORY OF PERSIA,

FROM THE
MOST EARLY PERIOD
TO
THE PRESENT TIME:

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE
RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, USAGES, AND CHARACTER
OF THE
INHABITANTS OF THAT KINGDOM.

BY
MAJOR-GENERAL
SIR JOHN MALCOLM, G.C.B., K.L.S.,
GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED, IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

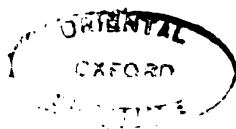
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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER XV.

A.D.	A.H.		Page
1688	1100	History of Nâdir Shah and his immediate successors :—	
		His obscure birth—Period of that event	3
		Early achievements	4
1726	1139	Becomes a chief of great reputation	ib.
1727	1140	Enters the service of Shah Tâ mâsp	5
		Takes Kelât, and puts his uncle to death	ib.
1730	1143	Receives a grant of four provinces	6
		Marches against the Turks, and takes Hamadan, and the province of Aderbejan	7
1732	1145	Tâ mâsp marches against the Turks—Meets with se- vere checks, and concludes a degrading peace	8
		Nâdir inveighs against the peace	ib.
		Marches to Isfahan, and dethrones Tâ mâsp (16th Aug.)	10
1733	1146	Encounters Topal Osman (11th July)	11
1735	1148	Occupies Armenia and Georgia—Defeats the Turks	14
1736	1149	Death of the infant sovereign of Persia	15
		Nadir accepts the crown of Persia on condition of the Sheah sect being abolished	16
		Resolves on invading India	23
1738	1151	His rapid and successful progress	25
1739	1152	Description, by himself, of his battle with the Indian army	26
		Report spread of his death—Its consequences—Massacre at Delhi	32
1740	1153	Rejoicings at the prospect of his return	36
		Enters Herât, and displays his wealth	37
1741	1154	Meshed made the capital of his empire	40
		Is wounded by an assassin	41
1743	1156	Suspects his son Rizâ Kooli, whom he deprives of sight	43

A.D.	A.H.		Page
1745	1158	Marches against the Turks, and routs them	44
...	...	His barbarous conduct during the last five years of his reign	45
1747	1160	He is murdered	46
...	...	Review of the principal actions of his life	ib.
...	...	Ahmed Khan Abdállee founds a new kingdom	53
...	...	Ali, or Adil Shah, obtains the throne of Persia	ib.
1748	1162	He is dethroned by his brother Ibrahim Khan, who deprives him of sight, and proclaims himself king	54
...	...	Is himself put to death, with his brother	55
...	...	Reign of Shah Rokh—Disturbed by Meerza Syud Mahomed	ib.
...	...	Shah Rokh is deprived of sight	56
1750	1164	Syud Mahomed, or Sulimán, proclaims himself king—Is taken and put to death	ib.
...	...	Ultimate fate of Shah Rokh	ib.

CHAPTER XVI.

1750	1164	Life of Kerreem Khan, Zend	59
...	...	He is invited to join the standard of Ali Murdán Khan	ib.
1751	1165	He protects the inhabitants of Julfá—whom Ali Murdán oppresses	60
1753	1167	Ali Murdán is assassinated	ib.
...	...	Character of the population of Persia at this period	61
...	...	Kerreem Khan finds a new rival in Azád Khan Affghan—His first action with him	64
...	...	Second battle with Azád Khan, who is totally defeated, and throws himself on his mercy	65
...	...	A new enemy arises in the person of Mahomed Hoossein Khan Kajir	66
1756	1170	Kerreem Khan subjects Fars, and takes the city of Isfahan	69
1757	1171	Mahomed Hoossein Khan lays siege to Shiraz	ib.
...	...	He is afterwards slain	72
1760	1174	Pretensions of Fatteh Ali Khan—His defeat	73
1763	1178	Conduct of Zuckee Khan—Horrible atrocities committed by him	76
1775	1189	Sáduk Khan sent with an army against the Turks	79
1776	1190	He commences the siege of Bussorah, which surrenders	80
...	...	Removal of the English factory from Gombroon	81
...	...	Conduct and successes of the Dutch	ib.
1779	1193	Death of Kerreem Khan (13th Suffer)	84
...	...	His character and government	ib.

CHAPTER XVII.

A.D.	A.H.		Page
		Successors of Kerreem Khan :—Zuckee Khan wishes to assume the sovereignty, but is prevented, and	
1779	1193	Abool Fatteh Khan is proclaimed king	89
...	...	Zuckee Khan imprisons Abool Fatteh Khan, and proclaims Mahomed Ali Khan sole monarch	91
...	...	Murder of Zuckee Khan	94
1780	1194	Abool Fatteh Khan again proclaimed king—Is again confined, and his eyes put out, by Sâduk Khan, who appoints his own son to the government	95
1781	1196	Sâduk Khan is put to death	98
...	...	Ali Moorad Khan becomes sovereign of Persia	99
1782	1197	Appoints his son Shaikh Vais against Aga Mahomed Khan, whom he defeats	100
1784	1199	Shaikh Vais is himself defeated by Aga Mahomed Khan	ib.
1785	1200	Death of Ali Moorad—His character	101
...	...	Banker Khan usurps the name of king—Is taken and imprisoned by	
...	...	Jaffier Khan, who usurps the government	102
1788	1203	He is obliged to vacate the seat of royalty	104
1789	1204	Lootf Ali Khan succeeds to the throne	108
...	...	Defeated by Aga Mahomed Khan	109
1791	1206	Marches to Isfahan	112
...	...	Hajee Ibrahim, his minister, conspires against him	ib.
...	...	Successes of Lootf Ali	115
...	...	Aga Mahomed Khan advances with a large army—His advanced guard is defeated	118
...	...	Lootf Ali Khan, deceived as to the completeness of his victory, is compelled to make his escape	119
1793	1207	Receives aid from the chief of Tabbus	121
1794	1208	Lays siege to Darabjird—Raises the siege—Retreats—Is defeated	ib.
...	...	Attacks the city of Kerman, which he takes—Assumes the style of a sovereign	122
1795	1210	Aga Mahommed Khan lays siege to Kerman—Flight of Lootf Ali—Massacre of the inhabitants . . .	123
...	...	Lootf Ali taken prisoner, and slain—His character	125

CHAPTER XVIII.

...	...	View of Persia and adjoining countries, before the elevation of the reigning family to the throne—Condition of the principal chiefs of Persia at the period Aga Mahomed Khan attained power	129
...	...	Brief account of the province of Kûrdistan	131

A.D.	A.H.		Page
1795	1210	State of the north-eastern provinces of Armenia	135
...	...	Condition of the province of Georgia	ib.
...	...	Actual state of the province of Khorassan—Its rulers	137
...	...	Condition of the Pacha of Bagdad	152
...	...	Short notice of the successors of Ahmed Khan Abdâllee, sovereign of Cabool, and his successors	153
...	...	State of Scind, Seestan, and Balochistan	155
...	...	Account of the Tartar tribes inhabiting the countries between the Oxus and Jaxartes	156
...	...	Government of Bokhara	158
...	...	Elevation of Beggee Jân to the throne of Bokhara—His life and character	159

CHAPTER XIX.

1747	1160	Life of Aga Mahomed Khan :—Made prisoner, and emasculated	176
...	...	Effects his escape, and joins his father	ib.
...	...	Falls into the hands of Kerreem Khan	ib.
1779	1193	His escape from Shiraz	178
1781	1196	He is again made captive, but is liberated	179
1786	...	Collects troops, and enters Irak	ib.
1788	...	Becomes master of Isfahan—Makes Teheran his capital—Joined by several powerful chiefs	ib.
1794	1208	His contests with Jaffier Khan and Lootf Ali—The massacre at Kerman	181
...	...	His treatment of his brothers	184
...	...	His conduct towards the Turkûman tribes near Asterabad	186
1795	1209	Invades Georgia	190
...	...	Defeats Heraclius, and enters Teflis—Orders a massacre	191
1796	1210	Is solicited to accept the crown—His speech on that occasion	193
...	...	His avarice—Cruelties inflicted by him on Shah Rokh	195
...	...	His territories invaded by the Russians—Their successes	197
1796	1211	Recalled in consequence of the death of the Empress Catherine (9th November)	199
...	...	Aga Mahomed Khan is murdered by his own attendants—His character and government	203
...	...	Fatteh Ali Khan proclaimed King—Sâduk Khan opposes him, but is defeated	214
...	...	Establishes his power in Khorassan	ib.
...	...	Georgia becomes a province of Russia	215
...	...	His court visited by ambassadors from Europe	ib.
1808	1223	Enters into alliance with the English	216

CHAPTER XX.

A.D.	A.H.		Page
1808	1223	Religion of the inhabitants of Persia	217
...	...	Doctrines of Mahomed	219
...	...	Account of the Soonee sect	236
...	...	The sect of Sheahs	238
...	...	Some account of the Soofees	266
...	...	Their tenets	269
1191	...	Remarkable teachers:—Meer Maassoom Ali Shah—	
to		Fyaz Ali—Noor Ali Shah	295
1215	...	Progress of this class of devotees in Persia	298

CHAPTER XXI.

Government of Persia	302
Power of the monarch	303
Duties of his ministers	308
Laws of Persia	311
Administration of justice	ib.
Mode of collecting the revenue	335
Army of Persia	355

CHAPTER XXII.

Climate, &c. of Persia	367
Vegetable, mineral, and animal productions	369
Population	372
Principal cities and towns	374
Commerce	379
Agriculture	ib.
Manufactures	380
Arts and Sciences	ib.
Literature	387

CHAPTER XXIII.

Manners and Usage of the Persians	391
Education and habits of the Royal Family	392
Forms of the court	399
Banners and arms of Persia	406
Ceremonies observed by viceroys, governors, &c. at the reception of a foreign ambassador	409
Condition and treatment of the women of Persia	424
Ceremonies and usages of marriage	426
Marriage by contract—Forms of divorce	428
Dress of the Persians	430

	Page
Condition and treatment of slaves	430
Manners and usages of the Eelyâts, or wandering tribes . . .	431
Condition of the Arabian tribes in Persia	448

CHAPTER XXIV.

Observations on the condition and character of the sovereigns of Persia	453
Of the Princes of the blood royal	456
Of the ministers and chief officers of the court	ib.
Of the governors of provinces and cities	457
Of the religious orders	ib.
Of the inhabitants of cities and towns	ib.
Of the military tribes	461
Concluding remarks on the character of the nation	463

INDEX	465
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THE HISTORY OF PERSIA.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HISTORY OF NADIR SHAH, AND HIS IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS.

THE rise of Nâdir Shah from the lowest rank of life to be the absolute monarch of his country, is an event which would attract attention, even if the guilty fame he acquired as a conqueror and destroyer had not perpetuated his memory. The first enthusiasm of the religion of Mahomed had swept away the Sassanian dynasty ; but a bold and able leader ^a, by the destruction of the power of the caliphs, had rescued his country from the ignominy of being a province of another empire, and restored it to its dignity as a kingdom. From that period it had been in possession of Tartar chiefs, who had generally migrated with their tribes into the milder climate of Persia, and whose power was continued for a time by the support of those warlike followers by whom it had been established. A revolution of a very singular nature had transferred the crown of Persia from these Tartar chiefs to the son of an ascetic ^b. Several among the early Seffavean princes were worthy of their destiny ; but the last century of their rule presents us with a picture which can excite only disgust and indignation ; and such was the debased and worthless character of some of these monarchs, that the mind is almost reconciled to the dreadful scenes amid which they perished.

^a Yacoob-ben-Leis. Vide vol. i. p. 147.

^b Shah Ismael.

In countries where the government is despotic, the opinion of the people is seldom heard ; but it appears often in action. It is always in extremes, and generally determined by contrast. We can well conceive, that, when weakness, cruelty, and debauchery, seemed the chief qualities of a sovereign, and when the nobles were only remarkable for their effeminate vices and their cowardice, a fallen and suffering nation like Persia should have turned its eyes with admiration and hope on the character of Nâdir Shah. The lowness of his birth, the coarseness of his manners, and the daring though guilty actions of his early life, were all calculated to favour these impressions, as they placed him in complete opposition to those rulers and nobles to whom they attributed all their misfortunes.

Several events in the life of Nâdir Shah have been already related ; but it will be necessary to preface the account of his reign^c with a cursory view of the occurrences which preceded his elevation to the throne.

The father of Nâdir Shah belonged to the tribe of Affshâr, one of the seven Turkish tribes which attached themselves to the Seffavean kings. His name was Imâm Kooli ; and we must conclude from every account that he was a person of no note or rank. Nâdir Kooli^d himself never

^c The life of Nâdir Shah, like that of Timoor, has been given by a flatterer. Meerza Mehdee, his confidential secretary, who attended him in all his expeditions, has written an account of his actions ; and his work has been translated by Sir William Jones. The credit to which this volume is entitled, is not destroyed by its being written in a strain of eulogy. The author survived his sovereign ; and the free manner in which he has detailed the actions which disgraced his latter years, may be received as a proof of the authenticity of the rest. But we have in the works of Jonas Hanway a very elaborate life of this tyrant ; and the personal knowledge this author had of many of the facts which he records, gives it particular value. We have also a Memoir of Nâdir written by Mr. Fraser, from Persian manuscripts obtained in India. In addition to all these authentic materials, I obtained in Persia, a copy of his correspondence, and several other valuable manuscripts relating events connected with his life.

^d Kooli means " slave ;" Nâdir, " wonderful ;" and the latter term is used as an epithet to describe the Almighty. His name, therefore, signified

boasted of a proud genealogy: even his flattering historian^g, though he informs us that the father of his hero was a man of some consequence in his tribe, reveals the truth by a metaphorical apology for low birth, saying, that the diamond has its value from its own lustre, not from that of the rock where it grew. We learn from other sources^f, that he earned his livelihood by making coats and caps of sheepskins^e. Nâdir often spoke of his low birth; and when the pride of the royal house of Delhi required that his son^h, who was to marry a princess of that family, should give an account of his male ancestors for seven generations, the conqueror exclaimed: "Tell them that he is son of Nâdir Shah, the son of the sword, the grandson of the sword, and so on, till they have a descent of seventy instead of seven generationsⁱ!"

Nâdir Shah was born in Khorassan^k. Persian historians pass over the early occurrences of his life: the first event that they notice, is the birth of his eldest son, Rizâ Kooli, when he was thirty-one years of age^l. He had before that experienced great vicissitudes of fortune, and had given proofs both of valour and talents. When only seventeen, he was taken prisoner by the Oosbeks, who made annual

"the slave of the wonderful, or of God." When he was promoted by the favour of Shah Tââmâsp to the dignity of a khan, he took the name of that monarch, and was called Tââmâsp Kooli Khan; but, on reaching the throne, he styled himself Nâdir Shah, resuming his original name of Nâdir, which is the one I shall use throughout his history. Meerza Mehdee, in his *Life of Nâdir Shah*, never mentions him under the name of Tââmâsp Kooli Khan, which leads Sir William Jones to doubt the fact of his having assumed that appellation.

^g Meerza Mehdee.

^f Hanway, vol. ii. p. 267.

^e Persian MSS.

^h This prince's name was Naser Ali.

ⁱ Persian MSS.

^k Sir William Jones, following Meerza Mehdee, fixes his birth on Sunday, the 11th of November, 1688. Hanway, who cannot be expected to be so correct as the Persian historian in his dates, places his birth in 1687.

^l Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 28.

incursions into Khorassan; but he effected his escape after a captivity of four years^m. His occupation from that time, till he entered into the service of Shah Tāmâsp, only merit notice, as it shows that his character was always the same. He was at one time in the service of a petty chiefⁿ of his native province, whom he murdered, and whose daughter^o he carried off and married. After this, he obtained a precarious subsistence by heading a band of robbers^p, from which occupation he passed, by a transition easy in such troubled times, into the employment of the Governor of Khorassan, by whom he was at first raised to rank and command, as a reward for his valour in actions with the Oosbegs; and afterwards degraded and punished with the bastinado, on account of his insolent and turbulent conduct.

Irritated at this disgrace, Nâdir left Meshed, and went to the fort of Kelât in the same province, which was in the possession of his uncle, who appears at this period to have been at the head of a small branch of the Affshârs. He resided there but a short time, before his relation, alarmed at his violence and ambition, compelled him to retire. He appears next to have resumed his occupation of robber; but his depredations were now on a more extended scale. The Affghans had become masters of Isfahan; and the rule of the Seffavean kings over the distant provinces was subverted, without that of their conquerors being established. At such a moment a plunderer of known valour and experience could not want followers; and in a short time we find Nâdir a chief of reputation, at the head of three thousand men, levying large contributions on the inhabitants of Khorassan^q. His uncle, alarmed at his increasing power, sought his friendship. He addressed a kind letter to him,

^m His mother was taken at the same time, and died in Tartary.—HANWAY, vol. ii. p. 257.

ⁿ The name of this chief was Babool-beg.

^o This lady was the mother of the Prince Rizâ Kooli.

^p Hanway, vol. ii. p. 259.

^q Hanway, vol. ii. p. 261.

and proposed that he should enter into the service of Shah Tāmāsp, and aid him in expelling the Affghans from Persia. Nādir pretended to listen to this overture, and earnestly desired that the king would grant him a pardon for his past offences. This was easily obtained; and he went to Kelāt to receive it. He appears to have always deemed the governor of that place as the chief obstacle to his rise; and at this moment he laid a plan to destroy him, and to seize his fortress. He succeeded in both; and, after having slain his uncle^{*} with his own hand, proceeded to employ the force acquired by this crime against the Affghan ruler of Khorassan. This popular attack on the enemies of his country enabled him to obtain a second pardon from Shah Tāmāsp, into whose service he entered, and to whose cause he brought a great accession of strength and reputation.

Shah Tāmāsp early entertained great jealousy of Nādir; and on his disobeying a mandate to return from an expedition on which he was engaged, the weak monarch ventured to proclaim him a rebel and a traitor. The indignant chief, the moment he heard of these proceedings, marched against the court, and soon compelled it to submit on the terms he chose to dictate[†]. From this open rupture, which took place soon after the conquest of Meshed, we may date the annihilation of the little power Tāmāsp had ever enjoyed. Nādir continued to treat him with respect, till he deemed the time mature for usurping the throne; but we discover that, as early as his first expedition into Khorassan, he began to prepare the minds of his countrymen for his future elevation. Like Ardisheer, the founder of the Sassanian race, he had his visions of future grandeur. He saw, we are told, a water-fowl and a white fish with four horns: he dreamt that he shot the bird; and, after all his

^{*} Some oriental writers, who find nothing but virtue in the early life of Nādir, inform us, that his uncle was an usurper of his right, and that his nephew, by slaying him, at once did an act of justice, and possessed himself of the means to save his country.—FRASER'S *History of Nādir Shah*.

[†] Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 64.

attendants had failed to seize the extraordinary fish, he stretched out his hand and caught it with ease¹. His dreaming of a bird and a fish, he was informed by flattering astrologers, was a certain presage of his attaining imperial power; and his historian² has had a less difficult task in discovering from subsequent events, that the four horns were the kingdoms of Persia, Khaurizm, India, and Tartary, all destined to be conquered by this hero. Such trifles are not unworthy of notice; they show the art or superstition of him who uses or believes in them, and portray, better than the most elaborate descriptions, the character of the minds on which they act.

The expulsion of the Affghans seemed to have been effected solely by the genius of Nâdir; no reward, therefore, appeared too great for the man who had liberated his country. The grant made to him by Tââmâsp, of the four finest provinces³ in the empire, was considered only a just recompense for his great services. We are told, that in the same letter by which Tââmâsp conveyed this grant, or, in other words, alienated half his kingdom, his victorious general was requested to assume the title of sultan, and a diadem richly set with jewels was sent by a nobleman of the court. Nâdir accepted all the honors⁴ except the title of sultan⁵; that high name, he thought, would excite envy without conferring benefit; he, however, took advantage of this proffered dignity to exercise one of the most important royal privileges. He directed that his army should be paid in coin brought from Khorassan, and that it should be struck in his own name, which virtually amounted to assuming the independent sovereignty of that country.

The conquests made by the Turks have been mentioned.

¹ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 65.

² Meerza Mehdee.

³ Khorassan, Mazenderan, Seestan, and Kerman.

⁴ A marriage was, at this period, agreed upon between Rizâ Kooli, the eldest son of Nâdir, and a daughter of the late sultan, Shah Hoessein.

⁵ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 111.

Their armies continued to occupy some of the finest parts of Irak, and all Aderbejan. Nâdir marched against them as soon as his troops were refreshed from the fatigues they had endured in pursuing the Affghans. He encountered the united forces of two Turkish pâchâs on the plains of Hamadan, overthrew them, and made himself master, not only of that city, but of all the country in its vicinity^a. He hastened to Aderbejan, where the same success attended him. Tebreez, Ardebil, and all the principal cities surrendered; and the conqueror was preparing to besiege Erivân, the capital of Armenia, when he received from his brother, whom he had left in the government of Khorassan, an account of an alarming rebellion of the Affghans in that province. He hastened to its relief; and his success against the rebels was completed by the reduction of the fortresses of Furrâh and Herat. An event occurred, during the siege of the latter, which marked the barbarous character of this war. Nâdir had obtained a victory over a large division of the Affghans, and resolved to celebrate it with a splendid feast. Among other guests were several prisoners of high rank. During the festivities, the heads of three hundred Affghans, who had been slain in the action, were held up on the tops of spears. "At this sight," says the flattering historian of Nâdir, "the chiefs of our enemies fixed their eyes on the ground, and never dared to raise them again, notwithstanding the extraordinary kindness with which they were treated by their great and generous conqueror^b!"

While Nâdir was at the siege of Herat, the Persian nobles at Isfahan persuaded Tâmâsp to place himself at the head of an army and march against the Turks, who were again assembling on the frontier. The reverses which their arms had sustained in Persia had caused a revolution at Constantinople, where the janizaries first murdered the

^a Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 112.

^b Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 144.

vizier, and afterwards dethroned Ahmed^c, and placed his nephew, Mahmood^d, upon the throne. To this prince Nâdir had sent an envoy^e, demanding that the Turks should evacuate Aderbejan; and Shah Tââmâsp had sent another with what a Persian historian indignantly terms “a sweet-scented letter of congratulation,” on his elevation to the throne. Before the result of Nâdir’s mission could be known, Tââmâsp had marched to besiege Erivân; had retreated from before it; had been defeated by a Turkish army; and had lost in one month all that his general had gained during the preceding season. To complete the effects of his weakness, the alarmed monarch had agreed to a peace, by which he abandoned the whole country beyond the Araxes to the Turks, and ceded five districts of Kermanshah to Ahmed, the reigning Pâchâ of Bagdad, by whom this treaty was negotiated. The disgrace of this engagement was aggravated, by its containing no stipulation for the release of the Persians who had been made prisoners during the war.

The moment Nâdir received accounts of this peace, it seems to have occurred to him, that it afforded an excellent pretext for consummating the projects he had so long cherished: but, though bold and impatient, he was compelled to proceed with caution in the extinction of a race of kings to whom obedience had become a habit, and who were, at that moment, represented by a prince weak indeed and despicable, but endeared to many of his subjects by his misfortunes. His first step was to issue a proclamation, inveighing with bitterness against a treaty which bounded the empire of Persia by the river Araxes, and left many of its inhabitants prisoners in the hands of cruel enemies. “Such a treaty,” he said, “is contrary to the will of Heaven; and the angels, who guard the tomb of the holy ‘Ali, call aloud for the

^c Ahmed the Third.

^d Mahmood the Fifth.

^e Rizâ Kooli Khan.

deliverance of his followers from the bondage in which they are now held by vile heretics'."

There is no country, however abject its inhabitants, where the most daring and ambitious can venture to usurp the supreme power, without first obtaining a hold on public opinion; and we cannot have a stronger proof of this, than the conduct of Nâdir on this memorable occasion. Though he had revived the military spirit of his country, and roused a nation sunk in sloth and luxury to great and successful exertion, yet neither this success, nor the imbecility of Shah Tââmâsp, nor even a reliance on his own fame and strength, could induce him to take the last step, until by his arts he had excited in his countrymen that contempt for the reigning sovereign and that pride in his own glory which was likely to make his elevation appear more the work of their wishes than of his ambition.

At the same time that Nâdir published the proclamation which has been mentioned, he addressed letters to all the military chiefs of the country. In that to the governor of Fars, which has been preserved[†], he informs him of the great success he has had against the Affghans, and of the conquest of Herat. He then proceeds to state the astonishment and indignation with which he has learnt the particulars of the treaty concluded with Turkey. "You will, no doubt," he observes, "be rejoiced to hear, that, as was to be hoped from the goodness of God, this peace with the Turks is not likely to endure; and you may rest in expectation of my approach; for, by the blessing of the Most High, I will advance immediately, with an army elated with success, skilled in sieges, numerous as emmets, valiant as lions, and combining with the vigour of youth the prudence of age. Let the cup-bearer (he exclaims, quoting Hafiz) tell our enemy, the worshipper of fire, to cover his head with dust; for the water that had departed, is returned into

[†] Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 154.

[‡] MS. Collection of Nâdir Shah's Letters.

its channel." He concludes this letter by threatening, with excommunication and destruction, all Sheahs, or, in other words, all Persians adverse to the renewal of hostilities. "Those Sheahs who are backward on this great occasion, and are reconciled to this shameful peace, shall be expelled from the faithful sect, and for ever counted among its enemies. To slay them will be meritorious; to permit their existence, impious."

The actions of Nâdir corresponded with these declarations. He sent an officer to Constantinople, with this short message to the Emperor Mahmood: "Restore the Persian provinces^b, or prepare for war." A messenger was despatched to Ahmed, the Pâchâ of Bagdad, to apprise him, "that the deliverer of Persia" was approaching. A peace had been concluded with the Russians, by which it was stipulated that they should abandon all their conquests on the Caspian; and Nâdir sent two officers to see that there was no delay in its execution.

After adopting these measures, Nâdir marched to Isfahan. He first upbraided Shah Tââmâsp with his conduct in making peace with the Turks, and then pretended to be reconciled to him: but the scene of his mock submission drew to a close. Tââmâsp was invited to the tents of his general to share in the pleasures of a feast, which terminated in his being seized, and dethronedⁱ. He was sent to Khorassan. The Mahomedan author^k who records these events, is careful to inform us, that Nâdir generously desired that Tââmâsp, though a prisoner, should be accompanied by all his ladies, and enjoy every other comfort which could be deemed necessary to pleasurable existence.

The time did not yet appear to Nâdir ripe for his seizing the crown of Persia. The officers of his army, and some venal nobles of the court, earnestly requested that he, who

^b Georgia was the principal province alienated by the treaty, and that part of Aderbejan which lies to the north of the Araxea.

ⁱ The 26th of August.

^k Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 162.

was alone worthy to wear the diadem, would place it upon his head: but he rejected their entreaties, from pretended respect for the blood of the Seffavean kings. The son of Tâmasp, an infant¹ only eight months old, was seated upon the throne, and Nâdir accepted the name and power of regent of the empire^m.

When the ceremonies of this coronation were over, Nâdir marched with a large army to attack Bagdad. The governor of that city, Ahmed Pâchâ, was no less distinguished for his talents as a soldier than as a statesman; and the Persian leader had made his preparations in the expectation of an obstinate defence: but neither the valour nor skill of Ahmed would have saved his city, had not the Turkish general, Topâl Osman, advanced, at the head of an immense armyⁿ, to his relief. Nâdir instantly resolved to hazard a battle. He left a small part^o of his army in his lines, and led the remainder to attack Topâl Osman, who was encamped on the banks of the Tigris, near the village of Sâmârâh, about sixty miles from Bagdad. The action was one of the bloodiest ever fought between the Turks and Persians. At first it was favorable to the latter, whose cavalry put the enemy to flight: but the Turkish infantry advanced and restored the battle. A corps of Arabs, from whom Nâdir expected support, fell upon one of his flanks. His men, who had been exposed all day to the intense rays of a summer sun, were faint with heat and thirst. He himself twice fell to the ground, in the midst of his enemies, his horses being shot; and his standard-bearer, conceiving him slain, fled from the field. All these causes combined to give the victory to Topâl Osman; and, after a contest of more

¹ This child is called Abbas the Third. He is included, by some historians, in the list of Persian kings.

^m Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 162.

ⁿ Meerza Mehdee asserts, that this army amounted to one hundred thousand men.

^o According to Meerza Mehdee, he left a body of twelve thousand men in the trenches before Bagdad.—Sir WILLIAM JONES's Works, vol. v. p. 174.

than eight hours, the army of Nâdir was completely defeated. The moment the news reached Bagdad, its inhabitants fell on the troops left to guard the trenches, who were also routed. The loss of the Persians in this battle was estimated by their enemies at sixty thousand men; and it probably amounted to more than a third of that number. The Turks suffered almost as severely: but their triumph was complete; for Nâdir did not reassemble his broken and dispersed army till he reached the plains of Hamadan, more than two hundred miles from the field of action.

There is no period in the life of Nâdir at which he appears to more advantage than after this great misfortune. Instead of reproaching his soldiers with their defeat, he loaded them with praises and favours. Their losses in money and horses were more than repaid, and they were encouraged by his exhortations as well as his actions, to desire nothing so much as an opportunity of revenging themselves on their enemies. This conduct increased his reputation and popularity to such a degree, that recruits from every part of Persia hastened to join his standard; and in less than three months, Nâdir descended again into the plains of Bagdad, with an army more numerous than before.

His brave antagonist, Topâl Osman, had jealous rivals at the court of Constantinople, who, alarmed at the fame he had acquired, not only by their intrigues prevented his being reinforced with men, but, by withholding the supplies of money necessary to pay his troops, compelled him to separate his forces. He, nevertheless, made the greatest efforts to oppose this second invasion. He sent a corps of cavalry to arrest the progress of the Persians: but the latter, eager for revenge, made such a sudden and furious attack on it, that they completely routed it. On hearing this, the Turkish general advanced with all the troops he had been able to draw together; but his own army partook in the panic of their flying comrades. Topâl Osman endeavoured in vain to rally them. He was so infirm, that

he was always carried in a litter. His attendants, in the hope that he might escape, lifted him (when the flight became general) upon a horse; but his rich dress attracted a Persian soldier, who pierced him with his lance, and then severing his head from his body, bore it to his commander. We are pleased to find that Nâdir respected the remains of his former conqueror^p. His head and corpse were sent by an officer of rank to the Turkish army, that they might receive those honorable rites of sepulture, which in all nations are considered due to a great and valiant soldier.

After the death of Topâl Osman, and the defeat of his army, Nâdir proceeded to invest Bagdad^q; but being alarmed at the account of a serious revolt in Fars^r, he readily listened to the terms which the governor proposed, that Turkey and Persia should repossess such countries as belonged to them in the reign of Sultan Hoossein, before the Affghan invasion. The rebellion which compelled him to retire from the Turkish territories, had hardly been suppressed, before he learnt that the Emperor of Constantinople had refused to ratify the engagements made by the

^p There is a very interesting account of this celebrated Turkish general in Hanway. Topâl Osman had been taken in his early life by a Spanish privateer: he was ransomed and restored to his country by the generosity of a French officer, of the name of Vincent Arnaud, at Malta. The gratitude and kindness which he showed to his deliverer give us the best impression of his private virtues. He was raised to the high but dangerous dignity of prime vizier in 1731, and his first act was to desire the French ambassador to write for his benefactor. "Bid him make haste," said Topâl Osman, "for we viziers seldom last long." Before he was promoted to this high station, he had repaid Arnaud tenfold for his ransom; but he now loaded him with caresses and favours, and made a glory of presenting to the whole court the virtuous and generous man to whom he owed his life and liberty. When Topâl Osman was removed from the office of vizier, he publicly returned thanks to Heaven for having been released with honour from such a burden. He was afterwards raised to the command of the Turkish armies on the Persian frontier, and terminated his life as has been described.

^q Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 190.

^r This rebellion was headed by Mahomed Khan, who was the chief of a tribe of Baloches: after he was taken prisoner he hanged himself.

Pâchâ of Bagdad, and had sent a general named Abdûlla*, at the head of a large force, with orders, either to conclude peace, or to continue the war, as circumstances should render expedient. Nâdir hastened to occupy Armenia and Georgia, the principal of the disputed provinces. He threw a bridge over the Araxes; and at once invested the cities of Teflis, Gunjah, and Erivân, in the hope that this would lead the Turkish general to hazard an action. Nor was he deceived. Abdûlla, encouraged by his superior numbers, left his entrenchments†, and attacked the Persians on the plains of Bâghâvund, near Erivân. Nâdir, when he saw him advancing, addressed his troops in the most animated language. "Your enemies," he said, "outnumber you eight to one"; but that is only an incitement to glorious exertion. I dreamt last night that a furious animal rushed into my tent, and, after a long struggle, I slew it‡. With such an omen, success is certain to those who fight under the protection of His great arm, who raiseth the weak to glory, and casteth down the proud oppressors." If his troops were encouraged by this speech, they were still more by his example. After making the ablest disposition of his army, he rushed on the enemy at the head of his bravest men; wherever he led, the Persians were irresistible. In one of these charges Abdûlla Pâchâ was slain by a soldier§, who brought his head to Nâdir; as the battle still raged, he directed it to be fixed upon a spear, and displayed where it would be best seen by the enemy. The effect was what he anticipated. The Turks, perceiving

* Hanway styles this officer Abdûlla Kouprouli, Pâchâ of Cairo.—HANWAY, vol. ii. p. 336.

† He had fortified a camp near the city of Kars, (the Charsa of Ptolemy,) which is at present subject to Turkey, and has a population of about thirty thousand souls.—KINNIER'S *Memoir of Persia*, p. 323.

‡ Meerza Mehdee gives an exaggerated account of the number of the Turks. They had, he asserts, sixty thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry.

§ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 216.

¶ The name of this man was Roostem.—Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir WILLIAM JONES'S *Works*, vol. v. p. 217.

their general was slain, fled in every direction, and left the plain covered with their dead. This victory was followed by the submission of the cities of Gunjah and Teflis: and those of Kars and Erivân, with all the former possessions of the Persians in that quarter*, were soon afterwards ceded to him by the Ottoman Court; who, taught by misfortune, were glad to conclude a peace on the basis before settled by the Pâchâ of Bagdad.

The period was now arrived when Nâdir thought he might lay aside the veil he had hitherto worn. The infant* sovereign of Persia had died at Isfahan, and consequently the throne was vacant. It has always been the usage of the kings of Persia to observe the Nou Rôze, or vernal equinox, as a great festival, on which all the chief officers, civil and military, of the government appear at court. Nâdir issued an order, that not only these, but every person of rank and consideration in the kingdom, should meet him, on the day of that festival, on the plains of Chowal Mogâm^b, where he ordered a number of temporary buildings to be erected, and made every preparation to receive them with splendour and magnificence. We are informed, that upwards of a hundred thousand persons attended this celebrated meeting: if this includes the troops, the amount is probably not exaggerated.

* During the three months between the victory of Bâghâvund and the conclusion of peace, Nâdir was employed in the reduction of the Leaghees, a savage tribe who dwell on the mountains that separate Georgia from the Caspian, and continually harass that province with their irruptions.

* Many authors state that the child died a natural death; but this is of little consequence. It cannot be supposed that Nâdir could ever have hesitated a moment in removing so frail an obstacle, (if that had been necessary,) to clear the path of his ambition.

^b "The celebrated Chowal Mogâm, or Plain of Mogâm, extends from the neighbourhood of Ardebil to the mouths of the Cyrus. It is reported to be sixty fursungs in length, and twenty in breadth; and its rich soil, and luxuriant pastures, seem to have rendered it the favorite encamping ground of most eastern conquerors. The victorious career of Pompey the Great was arrested by the venomous serpents with which it is thought to be infested. Heraclius passed some time at Mogâm."—KINNIER'S *Memoir of Persia*, p. 162.

Nâdir (his historian informs us) assembled the principal nobles and officers on the morning of the festival, and addressed them in the following terms :—"Shah Tāmâsp and Shah Abbas were your kings, and the princes of their blood are the heirs to the throne. Choose one of them for your sovereign, or some other person whom you know to be great and virtuous. It is enough for me that I have restored the throne to its glory, and delivered my country from the Affghans, the Turks, and the Russians." He retired, that their deliberations might seem more free, but was soon recalled to hear their unanimous request, that he, who had saved his country, and was alone able to protect it, should accept the crown. He refused this offer, protesting solemnly that the idea of ascending the throne of Persia had never once entered his imagination !^d The same scene was acted every day for a month, till Nâdir, appearing to be subdued by their earnest solicitations, agreed to comply with their wishes; but said, when he made this apparent concession, "I must insist that, as I sacrifice so much for Persia, the inhabitants of it, in consideration for one who has no object but their tranquillity, shall abandon the belief introduced by Shah Ismael, the founder of the Seffavean dynasty, and once more acknowledge the legitimate authority of the four first caliphs^e. Since the schism of Sheah has prevailed, this country has been in continual distraction: let us all become Soonees, and that will cease. But as every national religion should have a head, let the holy Imâm Jaffier, who is of the family of the prophet, and whom we all venerate, be the head of ours." After the assembly^f had con-

^c Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 235.

^d Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 236.

^e Aboobeker, Osman, Omar, and Ali.

^f I follow the historian of Nâdir, Meerza Mehdee. Hanway and others inform us, that the chief priest rose, and advised Nâdir to confine himself to temporal affairs, and not to interfere with matters of religion. The sudden death of this rash counsellor warned others into a speedy assent to all Nâdir's propositions.—HANWAY, vol. ii. p. 341. FRASER's *History of Nâdir Shah*, p. 118.

sented to this change, and a royal mandate^c had been issued to proclaim it, Nâdir informed them, that he would communicate what had been done to the Emperor of Constantinople, and require him to give full effect to this advance toward general concord among Mahomedans; and he would also insist that, as there were now four orthodox sects^b

^a The following translation of the edict issued on this occasion, is given by an English writer :—

“To all in high stations, the chief pontiff, the governors, ministers of the law, and learned men of the royal residence of Isfahan, being exalted through the king's favor, know ye, that while the abode of our ensigns (on whom victory attends) was at Chowal Mogâm, it was agreed at several meetings, that from henceforth, according to ancient custom, (being fixed and established in the religion of Haneefa and Jaffier, as transmitted to us by our predecessors,) we do acknowledge the directing caliphs (in all whom the high God is pleased) as the successors of the chief of messengers; and whenever they present themselves, mention the names of each of the four with great respect. Moreover, in some places of these kingdoms, at the time of calling to prayers, and standing up at prayer, then mention these words, ‘Ali, the friend of God,’ according to the usual method of the Sheahs, and contrary to those who are orthodox. This is repugnant to religion, and contrary to the agreement and covenant entered into. Besides, it is evident to the world, that as the prince of the faithful, the lion of God, the victorious, is elect, praised, and acceptable to the Lord of glory, his rank and interest at the court of unity will not be increased by vulgar testimony, nor the full moon of his power be diminished by omitting these words. The ill consequence of this form is, that both sects, who equally acknowledge the chief and prophet of both worlds, will, by this difference, be provoked to animosities, which are disagreeable both to the prophet and to the prince of the faithful. Wherefore, as soon as the purport of this high edict is known, let it be signified to all Musselmen, high and low, great and small, the callers to prayer in the city, its dependencies, and the adjacent countries, that from this day henceforth, these words, as differing from the orthodox custom, be not mentioned. It is also usual with the governors in their assemblies, after Fattaha and Tokbir, to say, ‘May the king, from whom all our fortune flows, live for ever.’ As a Tokbir for perpetuating a mortal man is vain, and of no effect, I expressly order, that every khan who is a master of a tabal and ensign, say it in this manner: ‘Thanks to the true king for all benefits.’ From henceforward all persons must observe these settled regulations, and written orders: for whosoever deviates therefrom, will incur the displeasure of the king of kings. Written in the month of Suffer, 1149.”—FRASIER'S *History of Nâdir Shah*, p. 123.

^b The sects of Haneefa, Shaffei, Malik, and Hanbal; each of which have an oratory at the temple of Mecca.

among Soonees, the Persians, under the name of the sect of Jaffier, should be admitted as the fifth, and that another column should be added to the four¹ which already decorated the temple at Mecca, in honour of this new branch of the true religion.

Various conjectures have been made respecting the motives which induced Nâdir to propose to the Persians the abandonment of their belief as Sheahs. He had professed himself a warm admirer of the doctrines of this sect, and had used every effort in his power to kindle the very belief which he now desired to suppress. But the conqueror was always consistent: he worshipped at no shrine but that of ambition. While he pretended to be the slave of a Seffavean king, and desired only to expel the Affghans and Turks, he tried to obtain strength by exciting in his countrymen all the rancorous feeling of an opposite sect. But when success extended his views; when he resolved on the extinction of the descendants of Shah Ismael; and began, in his waking visions, to contemplate, as parts of his future empire, the mountains of Candahar, the plains of India, and the fine provinces of Asia Minor, he naturally sought the abolition of a sect, which, by its very institution, revived the memory of a family he had destroyed, and which appeared, from the hatred with which its followers were regarded by the nations he proposed to subdue, likely to interpose a considerable obstacle to the progress of his power.

The historian of Nâdir is careful in informing us, that the crown of Persia was placed upon the head of the conqueror exactly at twenty minutes past eight on the morning of the 26th of February². The moment, no doubt, had been fixed by the most skilful astrologers. The ceremony was performed in a splendid hall erected for the occasion; and Nâdir was seated on a throne covered with precious

¹ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 238.

² Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 239.

jewels. Various coins were immediately struck in his name, on which was the following inscription¹: "The impression stamped upon this gold proclaims to the world the sovereignty of Nâdir, native of the land of Persia, and the monarch who subdues the earth." On the reverse was a short Arabic sentence, which signified, "That which has happened is the best." But even the flatterer^m who records these particulars confesses, that there were malicious wits who made free with the latter sentence, and, by altering the position of a letter, made it signify, "That which has happened is not the best."

Nâdir Shah, soon after his elevation to the throne, marched to Isfahan; but the short time he spent there was solely devoted to military preparations: he had resolved on the extinction of the Affghans as a separate power; and that could not be effected without reducing the city and province of Candahar, then in possession of a prince called Hoossein Khan, the brother of the celebrated Mahmood. Before he proceeded on this expedition, he adopted every measure that could secure the internal tranquillity of Persiaⁿ during his absence. The peace of the country round Isfahan had been much disturbed by the depredations of a numerous and barbarous tribe, called Bukhteearees, inhabiting the mountains which stretch from near this capital to the vicinity of Shuster. The subjugation of these plunderers had ever been deemed impossible. Their lofty and rugged mountains abound with rocks and caverns, which, in times of danger, serve them as fastnesses and dens. But Nâdir

¹ Some of these coins are in the Bodleian Library. The Persian stanza is,
Siccâ bur zer kurd, nâm e Sultanet der Jehân,
Nâder e Irân zumeen ou Khoosrooe Geetee Sitân.

The Arabic sentence on the reverse was *Al Kheir fimâ wâkâ*: when changed by the wits, it was *Lâ Kheir fimâ wâkâ*. The letters of the Arabic sentence on Nâdir's seal form, as numerals, 1149, the date of the Hijrah on which he ascended the throne.

^m Meerza Mehdee.

ⁿ The Island of Bahrein was taken this year from the Arabs, by Mahmood Tuckee Khan, the Governor of Fars.

showed that this fancied security, which had protected them for ages, was a mere delusion. He led his veteran soldiers to the tops of their highest mountains; parties of light troops hunted them from the cliffs and glens in which they were concealed; and in the space of one month, the tribe was completely subdued. Their chief^o was taken prisoner, and put to death: but Nâdir treated such of his followers as escaped the first fury of his troops with lenity and favor: he assigned to them better, but more accessible lands: he also took a number of them into his army; and this corps, by its extraordinary bravery at the siege of Candahar, confirmed the wisdom of his generous conduct.

Nâdir now marched with eighty thousand men through Khorassan and Seestan to Candahar. He met with no resistance of any consequence before he reached that city; but he found its defences too formidable to give him hopes of its early surrender. His first resolution was to subdue it by blockade; and he not only made permanent cantonments for his army in its vicinity, but ordered the lines of a new city to be traced out, which he called Nâdirâbâd, or “the abode of Nâdir.” He also built towers all round Candahar, and so connected them with small batteries, that it became impossible for the besieged to maintain any intercourse with the surrounding country^q. Observing, however, that the Affghans were not intimidated by these indications of his resolution to conquer them, and that they had still abundance of provisions, he was compelled after a year had been wasted in the blockade, to commence more active operations. The city of Candahar stood on the face of a hill, and was defended by a wall, and by a number of small towers. The Persians made themselves masters of some of the most commanding eminences, to which, with incredible labour, they

^o The name of this chief was Ali Moorâd.

^p After Candahar was taken, almost all the inhabitants removed to this new city, which, after the death of its founder, received the name of Candahar. The modern Candahar is close to the site of the old city.

^q Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 258.

conveyed both cannon and mortars. Aided by the fire of these, they successively assailed the different towers. From some they were repulsed with great loss; against others they succeeded: the bravery of the Bukhteeârees, who have been before mentioned, carried a principal tower, which enabled them to enter the citadel, and placed the whole town at their mercy. The governor, however, with the main part of the garrison, still held out in a detached fort: but, seeing that resistance was vain, he offered to capitulate; and Nâdir readily gave him a promise of forgiveness and protection. It appears at this period to have been the policy of the conqueror to conciliate the Affghans. He had, in a great degree disarmed their prejudices, by his proclamation against the Sheahs; and he now sought, not merely to soften their resentment, but to attach them to his person and government by favors. He completely succeeded: some of the tribes of that nation continued, during his life, to rank among the bravest soldiers of his army, and formed a powerful check upon the discontent and turbulence of his own countrymen.

While Nâdir was besieging Candahar, his generals had reduced the strong holds in its vicinity; and his eldest son, Rizâ Kooli, had, during this short period, obtained a fame which seemed to promise that his name would equal his father's. The Affghan prince of Candahar had expected aid from the chief of Bulk, against whom Nâdir detached his son, with a chosen body of twelve thousand horse. The prince not only defeated his foe, and took his capital, but passed the Oxus, and gave battle to the monarch of the Oosbegs, who had advanced from Bokhara with an army far out-numbering the Persians^r. The rash valour of Rizâ Kooli was crowned with a signal victory; and the career of the young hero was only arrested by a mandate from his father, desiring him to recross the Oxus. Nâdir at the same time addressed letters to the King of the Oosbegs,

^r Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 266.

and to the other chiefs of that part of Tartary, informing them, that he had sent orders to his son to retreat within the limits of the Persian empire, and not to disturb countries which were the inheritance of the race of Chenghiz Khan, and of high Turkuman families.

This conduct, evidently the result of that policy which affects moderation that it may better accomplish its ambitious purposes, has been ascribed by some to a jealousy which they conceive Nâdir, even at this early period, to have entertained of the rising reputation of his son: but those who impute it to this cause, forget that Rizâ Kooli, when he returned, was not only received with extraordinary favor and affection, but soon afterwards was intrusted with all the power of a sovereign, and left to govern Persia, while his father proceeded in his vast designs of subjugating the distant regions of India.

When Nâdir Shah marched against the Affghans, he had sent an ambassador to Delhi, requesting that the monarch of India would give orders to the governors of his northern provinces not to permit the enemies of Persia to find refuge from an avenging sword, in the territories of an ally¹. No satisfactory answer had been received; and, while the Affghans were allowed to take shelter within the Indian empire, obstacles were thrown in the way of the return of the Persian envoy. Nâdir, incensed at these proceedings, pursued the fugitives to Cabool, and not only made himself master of that city, but of all the country in its vicinity². After this conquest, he addressed another letter to the Emperor of India, reproaching him, in the bitterest terms, for his past conduct; but still professing a desire to maintain the relations of friendship. The bearer of this letter was slain by an Affghan chief³; and Nâdir,

¹ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 278.

² Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 282.

³ The name of the chief by whom the Persian envoy was slain, was Wâled Abbas; he was Governor of Jellalabad.—Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 284.

perhaps, did not regret an event which added to the pretexts that before existed for undertaking the most splendid of his enterprises,—the invasion of India.

Before the events of this memorable expedition are narrated, it may be useful to make some observations on the condition of that great empire, which was threatened with destruction. India had been frequently overrun by the hardy warriors of the north. Since the invasion of Mahmood of Ghizni, Hindoo princes had ceased to reign ; and it had continued subject to different dynasties of Mahomedan monarchs, who, in their turns, were overthrown by powerful conquerors. The destructive sword of Timour had desolated those fields which, after a series of extraordinary revolutions, were destined to flourish under his descendants ; and the scenes of his bloodiest and most inhuman massacres, by a strange vicissitude of fortune, became those in which his name, as the renowned ancestor of a long race of emperors, was most venerated.

His descendant, Baber, had been driven from his inheritance^{*} on the banks of the Jaxartes by the superior numbers of the Oosbegs ; but, supported by the attachment of his followers, and his own great qualities, he first established himself in the country of Cabool, and then made himself master of the throne of Delhi, which attained its greatest splendour under his grandson, the celebrated Ackbar. We may date the commencement of its decline from the death of that truly great sovereign ; but the appearance, if not the reality, of its former glory was revived by the art, the wisdom, and the valour of Aurungzebe[†], the last prince of the race of Timoor who enjoyed real power : for, besides that common cause of dissolution in such empires, the turbulence and rebellion of those high nobles who, from the constitution of the government, were intrusted with great military power and the charge of distant provinces, a race

^{*} The province of Ferghanah.

[†] The great grandson of Ackbar.

of Hindus had arisen in the southern parts of India, who threatened by their bold and incessant depredations, to retaliate on their Mahomedan conquerors all the evils which these had inflicted on their ancestors.

The Marhattas among whom are found the four classes of Hindus, derive their name from the ancient appellation of that region^a of India of which they are natives. They are, to speak in the language of modern geography, inhabitants of the Deccan. They first became formidable in the reign of Shah Jehan; during thirty years which Aurungzebe passed in the southern provinces of his empire, his chief occupation was to subdue the Marhattas; but he found this impossible, for they never awaited his attack. The country was laid waste, and his troops continually harassed by men, who, from the lightness of their frames, were no burden to their horses; and who, from habits of hardihood and abstemiousness, required little either for shelter or support. It seemed in vain to war with a foe who was intangible, and whose glory lay in the rapidity of his retreat; for the Marhatta soldier, though brave, boasts more of his power to elude, than to attack his enemy.

When the empire of India fell to pieces at the death of Aurungzebe, and the Mahomedan princes and nobles were all ranged against each other, the Marhattas, by continuing united, made a rapid and surprising progress. Besides the great possessions which they actually occupied, they compelled not only the paramount sovereign of India, but almost every ruler of a province, to pay them a considerable part of their annual collections^a, that their habitations and fields might be safe. At the period when Nâdir threatened invasion, the city of Dehli itself was subject to this disgraceful tribute^b.

Mahomed Shah, the ruling emperor, was a weak and dis-

^a Maharashtra.

^b This was levied under various names of Choute, Desmooke, &c.

^c Sier Mutákhereen.

solute prince. Cotemporary authors have told us, "that he was never without a mistress in his arms, and a glass in his hand:" hating occupation, he intrusted others with the management of his empire. His principal vizier was Khan Douran Khan; who, though fond of power, was also devoted to pleasure. The chief rival of this minister was Nizam-ool-moolk, the Subadar, or Viceroy of the Deckan, who had been called to court with no friendly view, and to whose experience and wisdom his monarch did not resort till the danger became imminent and alarming. This nobleman has been accused of having invited Nâdir to invade India. There is, however, no proof of this fact; nor can we assign any reasonable motive for such traitorous conduct in one of the first and most powerful omrahs of the empire; but imputed treachery is ever the shield with which incompetence and cowardice seek to defend themselves. The real truth was, that the distracted and despicable court of Delhi, sensible of their own weakness, tried to persuade themselves that Nâdir would not advance. They had formed an exaggerated opinion of the strength of Candahar, and the valour of its defenders; and when they learnt its fall, they expected the Persian monarch would return to his own dominions. Even when they heard he was at Cabool, they still thought some event might compel him to retire; and this stupid infatuation was hardly dispelled by hearing that he had crossed the Indus. Roused, however, at last to a sense of the great danger with which the empire was threatened, Mahomed Shah, attended by his court, and all the troops he could collect, marched to the plain of Karnal, a village situated on the right bank of the Jumna, about a degree to the north of Delhi, where he surrounded his camp with entrenchments, on which were mounted a useless train of heavy artillery.

The progress of Nâdir from Cabool to India was rapid and successful: almost all the governors of the provinces through which he passed, anticipated the fate of the empire by their

* Nâdir Nâmeih.

submission; but the conqueror, in a letter to his son, Riza Kooli, has given us the most authentic account of events from the day on which he left Lahore, till that on which he resolved to restore the vanquished Mahomed Shah to the throne of his ancestors. After relating an advantage which his troops had gained over an advanced party of his enemies, and describing an ineffectual attempt he had made to prevent the junction of an army under Saadut Khan with Mahomed Shah, he states, that the Indian monarch considered himself so strong from this reinforcement, that he left his entrenchments, and drew up his troops in order of battle. The result will be best told in Nâdir's own words.

“ We, whose wishes were for such a day, after appointing guards for our camp, and invoking the support of an all-powerful Creator, mounted, and advanced to the charge. For two complete hours the action raged with violence, and a heavy fire from cannon and musquetry was kept up. After that, by the aid of the Almighty, our lion-hunting heroes broke the enemy's line, and chased them from the field of battle, dispersing them in every direction^d. The battle lasted two hours; and for two hours and a half more were our conquering soldiers engaged in pursuit. When one hour of the day remained, the field was entirely cleared of the enemy; and as the entrenchments of their camp were strong, and the fortifications formidable, we would not permit our army to assault it.

“ An immense treasure, a number of elephants, part of the artillery of the emperor, and rich spoils of every description, were the reward of our victory. Upwards of twenty thousand of the enemy were slain on the field, and a much greater number were made prisoners. Immediately after the action, we surrounded the emperor's army, and took measures to prevent all communication with the adjacent

^d He here enumerates the principal chiefs of the Indian army who were killed, severely wounded, or taken prisoners: among the former was Khan Douran, the prime minister; among the latter, Saadut Khan, the general.

country ; preparing at the same time our cannon and mortars to level with the ground the fortifications which had been erected.

“ As the utmost confusion reigned in the imperial camp, and all discipline was abandoned, the emperor, compelled by irresistible necessity, after the lapse of one day, sent Nizamool-moolk, on Thursday, the 17th of Zilkâdeh^e, to our royal camp ; and the day following, Mahomed Shah himself, attended by his nobles, came to our heaven-like presence, in an afflicted state.

“ When the emperor was approaching, as we are ourselves of a Turkuman family, and Mahomed Shah is a Turkuman, and the lineal descendant of the noble house of Gurgan^f, we sent our dear son, Nasser Ali Khan, beyond the bounds of our camp to meet him. The emperor entered our tents, and we delivered over to him the signet of our empire^g. He remained that day a guest in our royal tent. Considering our affinity as Turkumans, and also reflecting on the honours that befitted the majesty of a king of kings, we bestowed such upon the emperor, and ordered his royal pavilions, his family, and his nobles, to be preserved ; and we have established him in a manner equal to his great dignity.

“ At this time, the emperor, with his family, and all the lords of Hindustan, who marched from camp, are arrived at Delhi ; and on Thursday, the 29th of Zilkâdeh^h, we moved our glorious standard toward that capital.

“ It is our royal intention, from the consideration of the high birth of Mahomed Shah, of his descent from the house of Gurgan, and of his affinity to us as a Turkuman, to fix him on the throne of the empire, and to place the crown of royalty upon his head. Praise be to God, glory

^e Corresponding with the 18th of February.

^f This is the common appellation of the house of Timoor.

^g This mode of reception was as distinguished as if the Emperor of Delhi had visited Nâdir in peace. It was, in fact, treating him as a superior.

^h Corresponding with the 3rd of March.

to the Most High, who has granted us the power to perform such an action! For this great grace which we have received from the Almighty, we must ever remain grateful.

“God has made the seven great seas like unto the vapour of the desert, beneath our glorious and conquering footsteps, and those of our faithful and victorious heroes. He has made, in our royal mind, the thrones of kings, and the deep ocean of earthly glory, more despicable than the light bubble that floats on the wave; and no doubt his extraordinary mercy, which he has now shown, will be evident to all mankind¹.”

The facts in this letter are not contradicted either by Persian or Indian historians; though the latter find reasons for the defeat of their countrymen at Karnal, in the rashness of some of their leaders, and the caution of others; and they state, that even after the victory, the conqueror would have returned to Persia on receiving two millions sterling, if the disappointed ambition of an Indian omrah^k had not urged him to advance to Delhi. But it is not necessary to seek after causes for the overthrow of an army, so panic-struck that they fled at the first charge, and nearly twenty thousand of whom were slain with hardly any loss to their enemies^l; and our knowledge of Nâdir Shah forbids our believing a tale, which would make it appear, that the ultimate advantages from this great enterprise, and its unparalleled success, depended less upon his genius, than on the petty jealousies and intrigues of the captive ministers of the vanquished Mahomed Shah.

¹ A full translation of this remarkable letter will be found in the tenth volume of the Asiatic Researches.

^k Saadut Khan, who had been taken prisoner, negotiated this agreement. He expected, as a reward, to be made prime minister; and when he heard that office was given to Nizam-ool-Moolk, he advised Nâdir Shah to advance, and obtain better terms.—SCOTT'S *Translation of the History of the Deckan*, vol. ii. p. 204.

^l Nâdir is said to have lost only five hundred men: this probably is below the number. Fraser, in his *Life*, states the loss of the Persians at two thousand five hundred killed; but this, from all other accounts, appears exaggerated.

The causes which led Nâdir to invade India have been already related; nor were they groundless. The court of Delhi had certainly not observed the established ties of friendship. It had given shelter to the Affghans who fled from the sword of the conqueror; and this protection was likely to enable them to make another effort for regaining their lost possessions, and thus to involve Persia in war. The ambassadors of Nâdir, who had been sent to make remonstrances on this subject, had not only been refused an answer, but were prevented from returning, in defiance of his reiterated and impatient applications. This proceeding, we are told, originated more in indecision, than from a spirit of hostility; but it undoubtedly furnished a fair pretext for Nâdir's advance. As to other motives which induced him to undertake this enterprise, we can conjecture none but an insatiable desire of plunder, a wish to exercise the military spirit he had kindled in the Persians, or the desire of annexing India to Persia. But if he ever cherished this project, he must have been led by a nearer view of India, to reject it as impracticable. We are, however, compelled to respect the greatness of that mind, which could resolve, at the very moment of its completion, on the entire abandonment of so great a conquest: he did not even try to establish a personal interest at the Court of Delhi, except through the operation of those sentiments which his generous conduct in replacing him upon his throne might make on the mind of Mahomed Shah^m.

^m Nâdir, it is true, did not wholly abstain from adding to his possessions; but the provinces he reclaimed had before belonged to Persia. Mahomed Shah ceded the countries beyond the Indus, which was made the boundary between the two empires. The following translation of the treaty by which this cession was made, has been preserved by a cotemporary writer. It is an extraordinary paper, and was no doubt dictated by the conqueror:—

“Formerly the ministers of his high majesty (who is exalted like Saturn, fierce as Mars, impetuous as the god of war, king of the kings of the earth, prince of the princes of the age, the shadow of God and refuge of Islam, in pomp like Alexander, the heavens his court, the sultan who is merciful, and the emperor who is august, Nâdir Shah, may God perpetuate his reign,)

Nâdir claimed as his prize the wealth of the emperor, and a great portion of that of his richest nobles and subjects.

had sent ambassadors to this court, to treat of certain affairs, which I intended to comply with: afterwards Mahomed Khan Turkuman arrived from Candahar, to remind me thereof; but my ministers and agents having delayed the ambassadors, and postponed an answer to his majesty's letter, raised such a misunderstanding between us, that his successful army, having come to the confines of Hindustan, both parties encountered in the fields of Karnal; where, after a royal battle was fought, as Providence would have it, victory, to appearance, rose from the east of his undeclining fortune. As his high majesty, who is mighty as Jemsheed, and the greatest of the Turkumans, is the source of goodness and prowess, relying on his honour, and trusting to his support, I had the satisfaction of an interview, and enjoyed the pleasure of being entertained in his paradise-like company. After which, we came together to Shahjehanabad, where I brought forth to his view, and with the proper ceremony presented to him, all the treasure, jewels, and precious effects of the Hindustan emperor. His majesty, in compliance with my request, accepted of some; and out of the greatness of his soul, and abundant humanity, in regard to the illustrious family of Gurgan, and the honour of the original tree of Turkan, was graciously pleased to restore to me the crown and gem of Hindustan.

"In consideration of this favor, which no father shows to a son, nor no brother to a brother, I make over to him all the countries to the west of the River Attock, the water of Scind, and Nala Sunkra, which is a branch of the water of Scind: that is to say, Paishavur with its territories, the principality of Cabool, Ghuznavi, the mountainous residences of the Affghana, the Hazarijat and the passes, with the castles of Buckar, Sunkar, and Khudâdâd: the rest of the territories, passes, and abodes of the Chokias, Baloches, &c., with the province of Tatta, the castle of Ram, and the village of Terbin, the towns of Chum, Sumawaly, and Ketra, &c., places dependent on Tatta: all their fields, villages, castles, towns, and ports, from the first rise of the River Attock, with all the passes and habitations which the abovesaid water and its several branches comprehend and surround, as far as Nala Sunkra, where it empties itself into the sea. In short, all places westward of the River Attock, and those parts, and westward of the River Scind, and Nala Sunkra, I have annexed to the dominions of that powerful sovereign; and, from henceforth, his agents and servants may enter upon and set about the management and the securing of the abovesaid territories, taking the government and command of those several places, tribes, and inhabitants into their own hands; my officers, servants, &c., evacuating the abovesaid places, as being severed from my dominions, and renouncing all right they have or might formerly have had to command, control, or collect any revenues there: the castle and town of Lohry Bunder, with all the countries to the east of the River Attock, water of Scind, and Nala Sunkra,

All the jewels collected by a long race of sovereigns, and the whole contents of the imperial treasury, were made over to the conqueror. The principal nobles, imitating their monarch, gave up all their money and valuables. After these voluntary gifts (as they were termed,) had been received, arrears of revenue were demanded from distant provincesⁿ, and heavy impositions were laid on the richest inhabitants of Delhi. The great misery caused by these impositions was augmented by the Indian agents employed farming the right of extortion in the different quarters of the city, to wretches who made immense fortunes by the inhuman speculation^o; and who collected, for every ten thousand rupees they paid to Nâdir, forty and fifty thousand from the unhappy inhabitants: numbers perished under blows inflicted to make them reveal their wealth; while others, among whom were several Hindus of high rank, became their own executioners, rather than bear the insults they were exposed to, or survive the loss of that property which they valued more than their existence^p.

The approach of Nâdir Shah to Delhi had filled the inhabitants with dread; but the strict discipline which his troops observed on their first arrival, restored confidence to all. This, however, was of short duration. The monarch himself occupied a palace in the city, and had sent some troops

shall, as formerly, belong to the empire of Hindustan. Dated at Shahje-
hanabad, the fourth of Mohurram, 1152."—FRASER'S *History of Nâdir
Shah*, p. 223.

ⁿ We are informed by a respectable author, that "a very short time after Serferaz Khan had taken possession of the government (of Bengal), and before he was confirmed in it, a messenger, sent by the vizier, Kummer-addeen Khan, announced the arrival of Nâdir Shah at Delhi, and demanded the revenues of the three last years. Serferaz Khan, by the advice of Hajee Ahmed, and the other two counsellors, not only paid the money, but actually ordered coin to be struck, and the Khoorbeh to be read from the pulpits, in the name of Nâdir Shah.—STEWART'S *History of Bengal*, p. 434.

^o Scott's Translation of the History of Deekan, vol. ii. p. 211.

^p Among the higher classes of Hindus, suicide to prevent disgrace is very common. From their frugal habits, they have little apparent use for money, and they are yet devotedly fond of it.

to different quarters of it to maintain tranquillity, and to protect the inhabitants from insult or injury^q. He entered the capital on the 8th of March, and on that and the two succeeding days all was quiet; but on the night of the 10th it was reported that Nâdir was dead. This report, first circulated by some designing persons, instantly spread, and a thoughtless mob made a furious assault on the Persians, who were scattered about the town as safeguards. Being divided in small parties, and quite unsuspecting of attack, they were almost all murdered; and we must cease to pity the nobles of Delhi, when assured by concurring authorities, that most of those, at whose palaces troops were stationed for their protection, gave them up without effort to the fury of the populace, and even in some instances assisted in their destruction^r.

Nâdir, when he first heard of this tumult, sent several persons to explain to the populace their delusion and their danger; but his messengers were slain. He remained with all the Persians he could assemble in his palace till the day dawned, when he mounted his horse, and rode forth to endeavour, by his presence, to quell the tumult^s. But his moderation only inflamed those whom (even Indian historians inform us) it was his desire to spare^t; and he at last gave his troops, who had arrived from their camp near the city, orders for a general massacre. He was too well obeyed: the populace, when the Persians began to act, lost all their courage; and, from sun-rise till noon, Delhi presented a scene of shocking carnage, the horrors being increased by

^q Orders were issued by Nâdir, that if any of his troops should insult an Indian, the nose and ears of the offender should instantly be cut off.—FRASER'S *Life of Nâdir Shah*, p. 179.

^r Scott's Translation of the History of the Deekan, vol. ii. p. 207.

^s Scott's Translation of the History of the Deekan, vol. ii. p. 207.

^t All authors agree in this fact. Fraser, who was a cotemporary, and writes from a journal kept on the scene, says, that a shot was fired at Nâdir himself, which missed him, but killed one of his principal officers, and that het hen gave loose to his indignation.

the flames which now spread to almost every quarter of the city.

Nâdir, after issuing the fatal orders, went into the small mosque of Roshun-ood-douleh, near the centre of the city, and remained there in a deep and silent gloom which none dared to disturb. At last the unhappy Mahomed Shah, attended by two of his ministers, rushed into his presence, exclaiming, "Spare my people!" Nâdir replied, "The Emperor of India must never ask in vain:" and he commanded that the massacre should cease". The prompt obedience given to this command is remarked by all his historians, as the strongest proof of the strict discipline he had introduced.

The number of persons slain on this occasion has been differently estimated, and from the nature of the scene, it could not be correctly ascertained. An author^x, who has been often referred to, conjectures that about a hundred and twenty thousand perished; while another European writer^y nearly doubles this amount. But a respectable Indian historian^z reduces the number to eight thousand: and there is reason to conclude that his statement is nearest the truth. Two nobles, who were supposed to have caused the riot, fled, with conscious guilt, to a small fortress near Delhi. They were pursued, taken, and put to death, with those who were deemed their accomplices, amounting to about four hundred persons.

A very few days after these events, a marriage was celebrated between the second son of Nâdir and a princess of the imperial house of Timoor; and the festivities that attended the nuptials gave a colouring of joy to scenes which abounded with misery: but the majority of the inhabitants of Delhi appear to have been of a light and dissolute cha-

^x Fraser's History of Nâdir Shah, p. 184.

^z Fraser's History of Nâdir Shah, p. 185.

^y Otther.

^z Scott's Translation of the History of the Deckan, vol. ii. p. 207.

VOL. II.

D

racter. We are, indeed, told by an Indian author^a that numbers regretted the departure of the Persians. But the drolls and players of the capital began, immediately after, to amuse their countrymen with a ludicrous representation of their own disgrace; and the fierce looks and savage pride of their conquerors, which had so lately been their dread, became in these imitations one of their chief sources of entertainment.

Nâdir remained at Delhi fifty-eight days. Before he quitted it, he had a long and secret conference with Mahomed Shah, in which it is supposed he gave him such counsel as he deemed best for preserving that power to which he was restored. To all the nobles of the court he spoke publicly, and warned them to maintain their allegiance to their emperor, as they valued his favour, or dreaded his resentment. To those who were absent he wrote in similar terms: he informed them, that he was so united in friendship with Mahomed Shah, that they might be esteemed to have one soul in two bodies; and, after desiring them to walk in the path of duty to the house of Timoor, he concluded these circular letters in the following words: "May God forbid! but if accounts of your rebelling against your emperor should reach our ears, we will blot you out of the book of creation."

The conqueror had behaved with considerable moderation and kindness towards the chief omrahs of the court of Delhi; but he must have despised their luxurious effeminacy. We learn his sentiments from a remarkable anecdote. When speaking one day to Kummer-addeen, who was then vizier, he asked how many ladies he had^b? "Eight hundred and fifty," was the reply.—"Let a hundred and fifty of our female captives," said Nâdir, "be sent to the vizier, who will

^a Scott's Translation of the History of the Deckan, vol. ii. p. 214.

^b A chief of the tribe of Affshâr informed me, that his father (who was one of Nâdir's generals) used often to praise his great continence, saying, he never had more than two wives with him when in the field, and was displeased with any leader who had more than one.

then be entitled to the high military rank of a *Mim-bâshee*, or 'commander of a thousand'.^c”

The march of *Nâdir* from India was literally encumbered with spoil. The amount of the plunder he carried from that country has been estimated variously. The highest calculation makes it upwards of seventy millions sterling; the lowest is considerably more than thirty. A great part was in precious stones, of which he was immoderately fond. When on his march from India, he was informed that several of the most valuable crown jewels had been secreted by some of his followers. He made this a pretext for searching the baggage of every man in his army, and appropriating all the jewels that were found. The soldiers murmured^d, but submitted; and their not resisting is an extraordinary proof of the subordination he had established. He was, however, in general kind and liberal to his troops: he had given to each man a gratuity of three months' pay at the fall of *Candahar*^e; he gave them as much more after the victory of *Karnal*; and they received a still greater bounty before he marched from *Delhi*.

The troops of *Nâdir*, we are told, suffered much in their return from the intense heat. Their passage over the rivers of the *Punjaub* and the *Indus* was delayed by accidents to the temporary bridges which he had constructed, and in one instance by the threatened attack of the mountaineers of *Cabool*, whose forbearance the proud conqueror did not disdain to purchase^f; and when we consider the nature of the country he had to pass through, his immense train of bag-

^c Persian MS.

^d *Hanway*, who records the particulars of this occurrence, says, some of the soldiers were so enraged, that they threw their jewels into the *Indus*, on the banks of which they were encamped, rather than deliver them to the officers appointed to search.—*HANWAY*, vol. iii. p. 392.

I have heard many Persian noblemen, when speaking on this subject, refer the conduct of *Nâdir* more to policy than avarice. He feared, they affirmed, his soldiers would be spoiled by wealth.

^e *Meerza Mehdee's History*. *Sir William Jones's Works*, vol. v.

^f *Hanway*, vol. ii. p. 392.

gage, and the danger that might have arisen from the slightest confusion, we cannot blame the prudence with which he acted.

The greatest expectation was excited in Persia at the prospect of their victorious monarch's return. The Persians had already felt the benefit of his triumphs. He had commanded that all taxes should be remitted for three years; and they began to anticipate scenes of unheard-of joy and abundance. The most exaggerated reports were circulated of the vast riches which their sovereign and his soldiers had acquired; and all conceived that Nâdir was disposed to enjoy himself, from the number of artificers and musicians whom he brought from India. Curiosity too was eager to behold the train of elephants which attended his march. That noble animal had become a stranger to the plains of Persia; and the natives of that country were only familiar with its shape, from seeing its figure in the sculptures of ancient times. Sanguine minds were led, by a natural association, to believe that their present ruler was the destined restorer of their country to its former glory; and the conqueror was hailed, at his return, as a hero, whose fame had eclipsed that of a Sapor, or a Noosheerwan.

The soldiers, we are informed, after the expedition to India, were anxious for repose; but Nâdir knew too well the consequences of this indulgence to permit them to enjoy it. After he passed the Indus, he had led them through the deserts of Scind to attack a feudatory chief, who had established himself in the government of that province⁵. This

⁵ I find the following account of this transaction in a Memoir, transmitted by Mr. N. H. Smith, late envoy from the supreme government of India to the ruler of Scind.

“ In the reign of Mahomed Shah, when the alarm excited by the threatened invasion of India by Nâdir Shah had become general, Meer Noor Mahomed Ubassce Caloree, whose hereditary possessions consisted of the province of Sewee, also called Seree, and other districts, and who not only exercised the functions of executive power in those provinces, but possessed a spiritual authority over several military chiefs, who considered themselves bound to pay him obedience on the ground of the sanctity of his family,

prince had courted Nâdir Shah when he first threatened the invasion of India, deeming such a measure favorable to his views of independence; but when his possessions were made over to Persia, he changed his policy; and, lodging all his treasure and property in the fortress of Amerkote^b, made a feeble attempt at opposition; but his capital was taken and plundered, and he was compelled to surrender himself to the conqueror; who, however, satisfied with his submission, and the possession of his wealth, restored him to his government, on his agreeing henceforward to hold it as a tributary to the crown of Persia.

After this expedition, Nâdir marched to Herat¹, where he made a proud display of his jewels and spoils; among which, the most remarkable was the celebrated throne of the Emperor of Delhi^k, made in the shape of a peacock, and ornamented with precious stones of every description. This

availed himself of the apprehensions of Sadiq Ulee Khan, the Soobadar of Scind, on the part of Mahomed Shah, respecting the attempts of Nâdir Shah to persuade that officer, in the 1150th year of the Hijrah, to transfer the government of Scind to him for the sum of three lacks of rupees, part of which sum has remained unpaid to the present day. Nâdir Shah, having in the year 1152 of the Hijrah defeated the Caloree army, compelled the chiefs of the family to take refuge in Amerkote, a fort situated in the desert. An arrangement, however, was ultimately made, by which the Calorees were permitted by the conqueror to retain the government of Scind, on condition of paying a yearly tribute to the sovereigns of Persia; and this appears to have been regularly paid by the first of these princes. After the death of Meer Noor Mahomed Caloree, which took place in the year 1185 of the Hijrah, eight princes of the Caloree family, in regular succession, reigned in Scind, until the year 1197 of the Hijrah, when Meer Futteh Ulee Talpooree effected the expulsion of Ubdool Nubee, the last of the Caloree princes, and established the present dynasty of that country."—Mr. SMITH'S *MS.*

^b This town, which is in the province of Scind, is situated in 26° 23' north latitude, and in 116° 25' east longitude. It at present acknowledges the authority of the Hindu Rajah of Joudpore. This city derives its fame from being the birth-place of Ackbar. His father, Hoomâyoon, when he fled from India, first took refuge with the Rajah of Amerkote; and his celebrated son was born there in the year 1541.

¹ He entered that city on the 26th of May, 1740.

^k We are told, that Nâdir was so fond of this throne, that he had an exact duplicate of it made of other jewels.

gorgeous exhibition took place on the 4th of June ; and on that day, and several others, the court, army, and populace, were amused with pageants, shows, and entertainments of every kind : but Nâdir, though satisfied that this public triumph was calculated to raise his fame with his subjects, and to gratify the vanity of his soldiers, appears always to have dreaded inaction. He moved his army from Herat ; and after meeting his son, Rizâ Kooli, and bestowing valuable presents on him and on the other princes of his family, he moved towards Bulkh, where he had ordered preparations to be made for crossing the Oxus, to punish the sovereign of Bokhara, who, unmindful of his alliance, had taken advantage of Nâdir's absence in India to make inroads into Khorassan.

The motives which induced Nâdir to proceed on this expedition were soon apparent. He had no desire to extend his empire in a direction where he knew it could not be maintained ; but he wished to avenge on the inhabitants of this part of Tartary the calamities which they were in the annual habit of inflicting on the frontier provinces of Persia. Aboul Fyze Khan, the ruler of the Oosbegs at this period, boasted a lineal descent from Chenghiz : but he inherited not the spirit of his great ancestor. He was terrified into submission at the approach of Nâdir, and sent his vizier to deprecate his wrath. The minister was well received ; but told, that his master must surrender immediately, if he desired to save himself from destruction, and his country from ruin¹. During these negotiations, the Persian army advanced, by rapid marches, to Bokhara^m ; and on the 23d of August, five days after they had crossed the Oxus, encamped within twelve miles of that capital, where this short expedition was brought to a close by the personal submission of Aboul Fyze Khan : attended by all his court, he

¹ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 328.

^m This city is not more than fifty miles from the Oxus : but Nâdir had crossed above the place where it approaches nearest to Bokhara.

proceeded to the tents of Nâdir Shah, and laid his crown and other ensigns of royalty at the feet of the conqueror, who assigned to him an honorable place in the assembly; and a few days afterwards restored him to his throne, on condition that the Oxus should remain, as in former periods, the boundary of the two empires. This treaty was cemented by an alliance between the daughter of the ruler of Bokhara and the nephew of his conqueror; and, after its conclusion, a great number of Tartars, with the concurrence of their own monarch, were enrolled in the Persian army, whose commander probably esteemed the services of these hardy warriors as of more consequence to the peace of his own dominions, and to the fulfilment of his future views of ambition, than all the wealth he had brought from India.

The arms of Nâdir were next directed against the kingdom of Khaurizm, situated to the westward of Bokhara, and stretching along both banks of the Oxus, to the shores of the Caspian. The prince of this country (whose name was Ilburz) neither merited nor received such humane treatment as Abool Fyze Khan. He had committed frequent depredations on the Persian territories; and, conceiving that the strength of his fortresses would secure him, he resolved on resistance. The King of Bokhara had sent a mission advising him to submit: he not only treated this friendly counsel with disdain, but in violation of laws which the most savage nations respect, slew those by whom it was conveyed. This conduct greatly irritated Nâdir, who, after he had defeated his army and made him prisoner, doomed him, and twenty of his chief officers, to death^a. The possessions of Ilburz were bestowed on Taher Khan, a cousin of the sovereign of Bokhara, and consequently a direct descendant of the celebrated Chenghiz^c.

When the winter of this year was far advanced, Nâdir

^a Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 335.

^c Meerza Mehdee, in his History of Nâdir, calls this chief Taher Khan Nevadi Genghizi.—Sir WILLIAM JONES's Works, vol. v. p. 335.

marched to Kelât^p, to which place he continued from his earliest years to be much attached. He had directed that its fortifications should be improved; that a palace should be built; and that aqueducts should be constructed to improve the fertility of its fields. He had also ordered, that all his treasures should be carried thither: and a peaceful retirement to this cherished spot, after the toils and dangers of war were at an end, was the most innocent of those dreams which amused the fancy of this most indefatigable conqueror.

After a short residence at Kelât, Nâdir proceeded to Meshed, which he had made the capital of his empire; and, during three months that he remained there, his time was passed in constant festivities. Five^q monarchs had been subdued in five years. The empire of Persia had not only been rescued from a foreign yoke, but its limits had been extended as far as the Oxus to the north, and the Indus to the east; and the hero, by whom all this had been accomplished, promised his exulting subjects that the Turks should soon be driven from the banks of the Tigris and Eu-

^p “Kelât is about a degree north of Meshed, on the road to Merv-i-Shah Jehan, and is situated in a very mountainous country, named Ashdar Koh, or ‘the Mountains of the Dragon.’ It is a very high hill, accessible only by two narrow paths. After an ascent of about seven miles, you reach a fine plain, nearly twelve miles in circuit, watered by a multitude of little streams, and producing corn and rice in the greatest abundance. The inhabitants of the mountains live in tents; and the only buildings in this delightful valley are two towers, and a small marble edifice erected by Nâdir. The towers were intended for the defence of the paths, and the house for the use of his majesty. On quitting the valley, you continue to ascend; and, after travelling about fifteen miles, gain the summit of the mountain, on which is another plain, not so large, but equal in fertility to the former. Here are also two small towers, which command the approaches, and are the only fortifications on the Castle of Kelât; the strength of which, like the Kela Sufeed, consists in the steepness of the rock, and in the difficulty of access to it. A single stone, hurled from the top, is sufficient to stop the advance, if not to effect the destruction, of an enemy.”—KINNIER’s *Memoir of Persia*, p. 176.

^q The two Affghn princes, Ashráff and Hoossein; Mahomed Shah, Emperor of India; Aboul Fyze, King of Bokharah; and Ilburz, ruler of Khaurizm.

phrates: but honour required that, before any other expedition was undertaken, Nâdir should revenge the blood of his brother, Ibrahim Khan^r, who had been slain in an attack of the Lesghees.

When the army was on its march to Dâghestan, an event occurred which cast a dark cloud over all the fair prospects then dawning upon Persia, and exhibited, in the strongest view, the miserable condition of those empires whose fate hangs upon the disposition and talents of a despotic sovereign. An advanced corps, chiefly composed of Affghans, by their extraordinary valour had gained great advantages over the Lesghees; and Nâdir was hastening by way of Mazenderan to their support, when, on his march through one of the forests in that country, a ball from an assassin, who had concealed himself behind a tree, wounded him in the hand, and killed his horse. The prince, Rizâ Kooli, who was near him, galloped towards the spot from which the shot had been fired; but neither his efforts, nor those of the guards that aided him, could seize the fugitive, who, favored by the thickness of the wood, effected his escape. He was afterwards taken; and the historian^s of Nâdir asserts, that he was employed by the chief^t of a barbarous tribe, who cherished a secret resentment against the conqueror.

This accident, though it made an indelible impression on the mind of Nâdir, did not prevent his proceeding to attack the Lesghees: but he never engaged in an enterprise of more hazard. These mountaineers defended themselves with desperate bravery: and the rugged nature of the country of Dâghestan, which they inhabit, made it almost impossible to subdue them. The bravest troops in the Persian

^r Ibrahim Khan was an active and brave man. He enjoyed the full confidence of his brother; and his sons, after his death, were considered as princes of the empire.

^s Meerza Mehdee.

^t Meerza Mehdee, the historian of Nâdir, states, that the name of this person was Aga Meerza, the son of Delavur, the chief of the tribe of Taimni. The assassin's name was Neek-kuddum, who, he asserts, confessed his crime, and therefore only lost his eyes.

army were worn out with the fatigue of this harassing war : and the preparations which the Russians began to make at Astracan, though dictated by the fear that Nâdir meant to invade their country after subduing the Lesghees", gave the latter every encouragement to persevere in their resistance ; and the Persian monarch was compelled to retire with very partial success, and very great loss.

Nâdir, from the very day on which his life was attempted, had entertained suspicions of his eldest son, Rizâ Kooli.

■ We meet with the following observations of Hanway on this subject : —

" The Lesghees had intimated their desire of putting themselves under the protection of Russia, from the time of Nâdir's first invading their country : and it certainly was the interest of that empire to support the independency of those brave mountaineers, who form so safe a barrier against the Persians. The arrival of the Russian troops, indeed, contributed to defeat Nâdir's designs ; and he found himself obliged to abandon an enterprise to which his skill and fortune were not equal.

" As soon as the Russian general arrived in the neighbourhood of Dâghestan, the Lesghees made application to him ; and from an apprehension of the danger they might be exposed to, in case Nâdir was determined to prosecute his design of reducing them, they wrote to this commander as follows :—

" Most honored and most accomplished general and commander in chief.

" Our most humble petition consists in this : all the inhabitants of Dâghestan having been informed that you are arrived near the frontiers of Kialar with an imperial army, and that your intention is to defend and protect the subjects of her imperial majesty in Andrewska, Koskoff, and Baxan, as also all the chiefs and rulers of the states bordering on the dominions of her imperial majesty, after longing expectations of your arrival, we have sent our deputies in the name of the whole nation to desire your intercession, that her imperial majesty may receive us under her puissant protection, and permit us to be her slaves. We are determined to hold the golden border of her imperial robes, and, in spite of all the evils that may threaten us, we will not be dragged from them, nor seek any other protection, nor acknowledge any other sovereign than God and her imperial majesty.

" We hereby take a solemn oath of allegiance to her imperial majesty, whom we most humbly implore to protect us against our enemies, and in her exalted clemency to give a favorable answer to our petition. And that her puissant majesty may know in what numbers our troops consist, we send you a list as follows."—HANWAY, vol. ii. p. 401.

They transmitted, with this letter, a summary of the forces that the different chiefs could raise, which amounted to sixty-six thousand : but this account of their strength must have been exaggerated.

He summoned him to his presence. The prince obeyed : on his arrival he was made prisoner, and deprived of sight. A respectable European writer², who went to Persia two years after this event, appears satisfied that the assassin who fired at Nadir in the woods of Mazenderan was employed by Rizâ Kooli ; who, he informs us, though brave and able, was violent and oppressive. According to this author, on hearing that Nâdir was dead, during his expedition to India, his son declared himself king ; and at the same time, put to death the unfortunate Shah Tâmasp³, who was confined at Subzâwar, in Khorassan. The same writer assures us, that Nâdir, though convinced of his son's guilt, addressed him in the mildest and most humane terms, and offered him complete pardon if he would only confess his crime and promise repentance ; but that the fierce youth rejected this offer, said he gloried in the attempt he had made to rid the world of a tyrant, and provoked his fate by the coarsest abuse of his father and sovereign. It is probable that this author received the account he has given of this transaction from some person desirous of palliating the guilt of a reigning tyrant : we are compelled to disbelieve it. The flattering historian of Nâdir expressly informs us, that he was deluded by the gross misrepresentations of infamous men into the commission of this great crime⁴. The European physician⁵, who attended him during the latter years of his life, asserts the innocence of Rizâ Kooli. He adds, that Nâdir was so penetrated with remorse the moment after the deed of horror was done, that he vented his fury on all around him : fifty noblemen, who had witnessed the dreadful act, were put to death, on the pretext that they should have offered their lives as sacrifices, to save the eyes of a

² Hanway, vol. ii. p. 339.

³ Shah Tâmasp was put to death by Rizâ Kooli, as Hanway mentions ; but it has been conjectured that it was by the command of Nâdir.

⁴ Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 398.

⁵ The monk Baxin joined Nâdir Shah at Derbund, in 1741, and remained with him as physician till 1747, the year in which he was murdered.

prince who was the glory of his country^b. It is also to be remarked, that the traditional impressions about a fact comparatively recent, are all against Nâdir, who is believed to have had no evidence of his son's guilt but his own suspicions. From the day when his life had been attempted in Mazenderan, he had become gloomy and irritable. His bad success against the Lesghees had increased the natural violence of his temper, and, listening to the enemies of Rizâ Kooli^c, in a moment of rage he ordered him to be blinded. "Your crimes have forced me to this dreadful measure," was, we are told, the speech that Nâdir made to his son. "It is not my eyes that you have put out," replied Rizâ Kooli, "but those of Persia^d." The prophetic truth of this answer sunk deep into his father's soul, and we may believe his historian, who affirms, that he never afterwards knew happiness, nor desired that others should enjoy it. All his future actions were deeds of horror, except the contest which he carried on against the Turks for three years; and even in that he displayed none of the energy and heroic spirit which marked his former wars.

The Persian army had made unsuccessful efforts to reduce the cities of Bussorah, of Bagdad, and of Moossul. Nâdir marched, early in the succeeding year, to meet a large Turkish force which had advanced near Erivân: and we are told, that he desired to encounter his enemies in battle on the same plain where, ten years before, he had acquired such renown: but their general, subdued by his own fears, fled, and was massacred by his soldiers; who, thrown into confusion by this event, were easily routed by the Persians. This was the last victory of Nâdir^e, and it was gained merely by the terror of his name. Sensible of his own con-

^b *Lettres Edifiantes*, vol. iv. p. 294.

^c I have conversed with the descendants of several of Nâdir's chief omrahs, who all concurred in the truth of Meerza Mehdee's statement.

^d Persian MSS.

^e His son, Naser-ollâ, defeated, about the same period, an army of Turks near Diarbekir.

dition, he hastened to make peace. His claim to the establishment of a fifth sect among orthodox Mahomedans; and the erection of a fifth pillar in the mosque at Mecca, were abandoned. It was agreed, that prisoners on both sides should be released; that Persian pilgrims going to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina should be protected; and that the whole provinces of Irak and Aderbejan should remain with Persia, except an inconsiderable territory, which had belonged to the Turkish government in the time of Shah Ismael, the first Seffavean king.

The conduct of Nâdir to his own subjects during the last five years of his reign has been described (even by a partial historian) as exceeding in barbarity all that has been recorded of the most bloody tyrants^f. The acquisition of the wealth of India had at first filled his mind with generous and patriotic feelings. He had proclaimed that no taxes should be collected for three years. But the possession of riches had soon its usual effect of creating a desire for more: and while his vast treasures were hoarded in the fort of Kelât, which, with all the fears of a despot, he continually laboured to render inaccessible, he not only paid his armies, but added to his golden heaps from the arrears of remitted revenue, extorted with inflexible rigour.

Nâdir knew that his attack on the religion of his country had made him unpopular, and that the priests, whom he peculiarly oppressed, endeavoured to spread disaffection. This led him to suspect those who still adhered to the tenets of the Sheahs; in other words, almost all the natives of Persia. The troops on whom he placed most reliance, were the Affghans and Tartars, who were of the Soonee persuasion. Their leaders were his principal favorites; and every pretext was taken to put to death such Persian chiefs as possessed either influence or power. These proceedings had the natural effect of producing rebellion in every quarter^g; and the spirit of insurrection which now displayed

^f Meerza Mehdee's History. Sir William Jones's Works, vol. v. p. 399

^g Fars, Shirwan, and Mazenderan, were all, at one period, in rebellion.

itself among his subjects, changed the violence of Nâdir into outrageous fury. His murders were no longer confined to individuals: the inhabitants of whole cities were massacred; and men, to use the words of his historian^b, left their abodes, and took up their habitations in caverns and deserts, in the hope of escaping from his savage ferocity. We are told^c, and the events which preceded render the tale not improbable, that, when on his march to subdue one of his nephews^k who had rebelled in Seestan, he proposed to put to death every Persian in his army. There can be little doubt that his mind was at this time in a state of phrensy which amounted to insanity. Some of the principal officers of his court, who learnt that their names were in the list of proscribed victims^l, resolved to save themselves by the assassination of Nâdir. The execution of the plot was committed to four persons, among whom was Mahomed Kooli Khan, a chief of his own tribe of Affshâr, and Sâlah Beg, the captain of his guards. These chiefs took advantage of their stations, and, under the pretext of urgent business, rushed past the guards into the inner tent, where the tyrant was asleep. The noise awoke him; and he had slain two of the meaner assassins, when a blow from Sâlah Beg deprived him of life.

The character of this extraordinary man will be best understood from a short review of his principal actions. Born in a low rank, he appears to have owed the distinction which he early obtained among his rude associates, to his uncommon bodily strength, his determined courage, and a strong natural sense, which, though afterwards improved by experience, was never cultivated by education. The wretched condition of his native country was calculated to excite in his

^b Meerza Mehdee.

^c Hanway, vol. ii. p. 433.

^k Ali Kooli Khan.

^l The physician Bazin states, that Nâdir had informed the chief of the Affghans that he entirely reposed on the fidelity of his corps, and that he meant they should next day seize and imprison all the officers of his guards.
—*Lettres Edifiantes*, vol. iv. p. 313.

ardent mind the noblest ambition: and when we reflect on the success which attended his first efforts against the Affghans, we are almost reconciled to his usurping the name of that sovereignty, the substance of which he had long enjoyed, and which he could not have resigned without extreme danger, both to himself and to a nation that had been saved by his valour and his genius.

After expelling the barbarous invaders from the central provinces of Persia, and after obtaining the most signal victories over the Turks, his next labour was to restore the throne to its former glory: and when he had conquered Candahar and Cabool, he sought (and with success) to add to the strength of his empire, by converting the most dangerous of her enemies into the bravest of her defenders. The causes of his expedition to India have been explained; and, though it brought misery to thousands, perhaps there never was a conquest of such magnitude made by an Asiatic prince, with less crime in the conqueror. The riches and renown which he obtained by this enterprise, gave him great means of restoring Persia to her ancient splendour; and his invasion of Bokhara, while it was the best, and indeed the only way to secure the continued tranquillity of his own possessions, added, perhaps, still more to his fame and power. His generous treatment of the humbled monarch of that country, and his conduct to the Emperor of India, showed that Nâdir desired to trust more to the impression of his arms, than to the extent of his dominions, for the future security of his power.

Hitherto this monarch, whether we consider the noble and patriotic object which first stimulated his ambition, the valour and ability he displayed, the comparative moderation with which he used success, or the glorious deeds he performed, is entitled to great, if not unqualified, admiration. The dreadful change which took place in his disposition and character has been narrated. From the time when his mind was subdued by avarice and suspicion, he became one of the most cruel of tyrants: and Persia, by a

strange destiny, seemed doomed to receive her death from that hand, to which, a few years before, she had owed her existence.

When the mind of Nâdir was in its most disturbed and phrensied state, he continued to brood over those plans which he had cherished in his happier days. He anxiously desired to encourage trade; and thought that his country would not only become wealthier, but more powerful, if he could form a navy. The aid of an enterprising, but indiscreet Englishman^m, enabled him to commence the execution of this project on the Caspian; but the effort produced no benefit to Persia; and, by exciting the jealousy of Russia, proved destructive to an infant commerce, which British merchants had established in that quarter. Nâdir had also ordered ships to be built on the shores of the Persian Gulf; and, with the true spirit of an unreflecting despot, commanded that timber for that purpose should be conveyed from the forests of Mazenderan, a distance of more than six hundred miles, and through a country which had neither canals, roads, nor wheel carriages. The inhabitants of the intervening provinces were compelled to contribute their labour to this object, which was never accomplished. The rude ribs of an ill-constructed vessel were to be seen some years ago on the beach at Abusheher, and seemed spared to be the memorial of the folly of this attemptⁿ.

We have a remarkable instance of the anxiety with which Nâdir desired to encourage commerce, in his conduct towards our countryman, Hanway, who visited his camp three years before his death, at a time when Persia was devas-

^m The name of this person was Elton: for an account of his proceedings and their consequences, see the Works of Jonas Hanway.

ⁿ He also directed an immense quantity of marble to be carried from Aderbejan, to ornament his palaces at Kelât and Meshed, the transport of which caused almost as much misery as conveying the timber. In 1810 I visited the quarry where this marble was found, and saw a great number of half-finished blocks, which had lain untouched since his death. This quarry is on the banks of the Lake of Oormeah, and about eighteen miles from the town of Mârâgâ.

tated by his oppression and cruelty. The monarch commanded that all the losses which this eminent merchant had sustained by the rebellion at Asterabad, should be made good, either by the restoration of his merchandise^o, or from the sale of the property of his plunderers.

It has been already stated, that Nâdir desired to change the religion of his country. His first idea, probably, was to destroy, with the tenets of the Sheah sect, the veneration and attachment of those who held them for the Seffavean dynasty, by whom this faith had first been established as the national religion. He also desired, as has been noticed, to do away religious distinctions, which seemed likely to interfere with his schemes of ambition. We have the strongest evidence to conclude, that his conduct on this point was wholly uninfluenced by other motives than those of policy. He appears, indeed, to have had no fixed religious sentiments.

Soon after his return from India, he directed that the four Evangelists should be translated into Persian; and when this work was finished in a very incorrect manner by some Romish and Armenian priests, who wrote under the

* A Persian MS. in my possession relates an anecdote of Nâdir at this period, which shows how he understood the feelings of the most ignorant and the wickedest of his subjects. A native merchant, travelling from Cabool, had been robbed in a plain near Nishapore, and carried his complaint to the sovereign. "Was there no one near but the robbers?" said Nâdir. "None," was the reply. "Were there no trees, or stones, or bushes?" "Yes," said the man, "there was one large solitary tree, under whose shade I was reposing when I was attacked." Nâdir, on hearing this, affected great fury, and ordered two executioners to proceed, and flog the tree every morning, till it either restored the lost property or revealed the names of the thieves. The mandate of a king of Persia is always law; that of Nâdir was as irrevocable as fate. The executioners went; and the tree had not suffered flagellation above a week, when all the stolen goods were found one morning at its root. The alarmed robbers, who soon heard of the extravagant severity which inflicted such blows on an inanimate substance, trembled at the thought of the horrible punishment that awaited them, if they were ever discovered. When the result was reported to Nâdir, he smiled, and said, "I knew what flogging that tree would produce."

superintendence of his secretary^p, he summoned some Christian priests, Jewish rabbies, and Mahomedan moolahs, to his presence^q. Extracts from the imperfect translation of the New Testament were read to him, and he amused himself, and some of his hearers, with ludicrous remarks on the mysterious parts of the Christian faith. The tenets of the Jews, and the traditions of the Mahomedans, were treated with the same freedom; and the tyrant broke up the assembly with a declaration, that, if God spared him, he would make a religion much better than any which mankind yet possessed.

The Seffavean kings had established a powerful hierarchy in their dominions, at the head of which was a Sudder-ool-Suddoor, or chief pontiff. This body, who always possessed much wealth, had enjoyed not only a great share in the government, but of the revenues, under the weak and bigoted Shah Sultan Hoossein. The fate of that prince had brought popular indignation on every measure with which his memory was associated; and Nâdir, therefore, proceeded, without alarm, to plunder the ecclesiastics. Immediately after he was crowned, he assembled a number of the principal priests, and demanded of them in what manner the immense revenues^r were appropriated. They replied, "in supporting priests, colleges, and mosques. In the latter, we continually offer up prayers to God for the success of our sovereigns."—"Your prayers," said Nâdir, "are evidently not acceptable to the Almighty, for the empire suffered its greatest decline when your order was most encouraged. It has been rescued from destruction by my brave soldiers, who are, therefore, to be deemed God's chosen instruments, and your wealth must henceforward be applied to their support."

^p Meerza Mehdee, who was also the author of his history. Hanway tells us, that this translation, which was completed in six months, was dressed up with glosses and fables to make it agree with the koran.

^q May 1741. Hanway, vol. ii. p. 404.

^r Hanway, vol. ii. p. 343. Hanway calculates this amount at nearly one fifth of the revenue of the country, or about a million sterling.

At the same time that Nâdir seized almost the whole of the church revenue, he abolished the duties of the chief pontiff, but left the name, and gave the person who bore it a small pension. His conduct to the priesthood, though it excited no commotion at the moment, was, perhaps, one of the most impolitic acts that he ever committed. This order became the active disseminators of sedition; and, as the envy which their wealth had excited was soon changed into pity for their fallen condition, their efforts were very successful. Nâdir was well aware of their sentiments. On sending one of his nobles to take charge of a distant government, he concluded his instructions by saying, "Remember you are not to communicate with the moollah; but I know you will meet him at night, and talk of me. He will call me one of the greatest monarchs in the universe; but will add, that I am a villain, and that I have neither mercy nor justice in my composition *."

The contempt of Nâdir for the arts by which the dervishes, and other religious mendicants, imposed on the credulity of his countrymen, was shown on every occasion. Many believed that the holy Imâm Rezâ, who is interred at Meshed, continued to work miracles; and this belief gave rise to a number of impositions. Persons, pretending to be blind, went to his tomb; and, after a long period of prayer, opened their eyes, and declared that their sight had been restored by the holy Imâm. One of these was seated at the gate of the sacred mausoleum when Nâdir passed †. "How long have you been blind?" said the monarch. "Two years," answered the man. "A proof," replied Nâdir, "that you have no faith. If you had been a true believer you would have been cured long ago. Recollect, my friend, if I come back and find you as you now are, I will strike your head off." When Nâdir returned, the frightened fellow pretended to pray violently, and all at once found his sight. "A miracle! a

* Hanway, vol. ii. p. 446.

† Persian MSS.

miracle!" the populace exclaimed, and tore off his coat in small pieces, as relics. The monarch smiled, and observed, "that faith was every thing."

Nâdir, we are informed, was a predestinarian; and the Persians believe, that even in his phrensed moments, when he was destroying his fellow-creatures, he thought himself an instrument of Heaven. As a proof, they relate the following occurrence". An arrow was shot into his quarters with a paper affixed to it, on which was written, "If thou art a king, cherish and protect thy people; if a prophet, show us the path of salvation; if a god, be merciful to thy creatures." The tyrant, while he made every search for the author, commanded that copies should be distributed through the camp, with the following answer. "I am neither a king, to protect my subjects; a prophet, to teach the way of salvation; nor a god, to exercise the attribute of mercy; but I am he, whom the Almighty has sent in his wrath, to chastise a world of sinners^x."

The character of this wonderful man is, perhaps, exhibited in its truest colours in those impressions which the memory of his actions has left on the minds of his countrymen. They speak of him as a deliverer and a destroyer; but while they dwell with pride on his deeds of glory, they express more pity than horror for the cruel enormities which disgraced the latter years of his reign; and neither his crimes, nor his attempt to abolish their religion, have subdued their gratitude and veneration for the hero, who revived in the breasts of his degraded countrymen a sense of their former fame, and who restored Persia to independence.

The morning after the murder of Nâdir presented a scene of the greatest confusion. Ahmed Khan^y, a chief of the Abdallee tribe of Affghans, supported by a corps of Oosbegs, made an attack on the Persian troops, but was repulsed.

^x Persian MSS.

^y Hanway also relates this occurrence. Vol. ii. p. 442.

^z According to some authors, Ahmed Khan was attacked by the Persians.

He left the army; and proceeding by rapid marches to Candahar, not only obtained possession of that city, but took a large convoy of treasure coming from Cabool and Scind to the Persian camp. With these means he laid the foundation of a kingdom, which soon became formidable to surrounding nations. The chiefs who had murdered Nâdir agreed to place his nephew Ali, then at the head of a force in Seestan, upon the vacant throne. This prince hastened to join them; and was hailed as sovereign of Persia the moment he arrived. His first act was to circulate a proclamation², declaring, that those who had slain his uncle had acted by his order. This extraordinary document, which was meant to give security to the conspirators, deserves attention, as it shows what impressions had been made on all ranks by the horrid cruelties of Nâdir. His favorite nephew, who owed every thing to his bounty, appeals to the Persians to support him on the throne, on the ground of his merit in having destroyed a despot; who, to use the words of the proclamation, "delighted in blood, and with unheard-of barbarity made pyramids of the heads of his own subjects." "We commanded," this prince observes, "that Mahomed Kooli Khan should prevail on the Affshâr guards to seize and remove the tyrant; thus performing a service highly beneficial to the public welfare, and restoring rest and tranquillity to the nation³."

The same proclamation informed his subjects that Ali had marched to Meshed, where he had listened to the unanimous voice of the principal officers in the army, and of the inhabitants of the city, who entreated him to ascend the throne, "that he might relieve the miseries, and repair the desolations of his country." He concluded by stating, that in consideration of the dreadful extortions and cruelties of his predecessor, and desiring to appease the wrath of

² All Persians agree in their account of the causes which led to the death of Nâdir; and there is no doubt this declaration of Ali's was only meant to screen the murderers from future imputation and danger.

³ Hanway, vol. ii. p. 451.

Heaven, he remitted the revenues of the current year, and all extraordinary taxes for the two following.

While Ali, who took the name of Adil Shah, or "the just king," was, by his professions, endeavouring to obtain popularity, his actions showed that he was at once weak and cruel. A party of his troops had succeeded in taking by surprise the fortress of Kelât, which contained all the treasures of Nâdir. The princes, Naser-ollâh, Imâm Kooli, and Shah Rokh, were at Kelât when the troops entered. They fled, but were pursued and taken. The two former were put to death, as were also the unfortunate Riza Kooli, and thirteen of Nâdir's sons and grandsons. The only descendant of the conqueror who was spared, was his grandson, Shah Rokh, then fourteen years of age. We are informed, that the life of this lad was only meant to be preserved till Adil Shah was established in the power he had usurped. It is also asserted that the tyrant was withheld from destroying him by a fear that the people might demand as their ruler a prince of the blood of Nâdir; and in this extremity, he proposed elevating Shah Rokh to the throne, and continuing to rule Persia in his name.

Adil Shah endeavoured to efface the impression made by his cruelty and his usurpation, by dispensing with a prodigal hand the vast wealth accumulated by his uncle: but even this attached none to his interests, and his reign was short and inglorious^b. He was defeated, taken, and deprived of sight, by his brother, Ibrahim Khan, whom he had intrusted with the government of Irak. That chief did not at first declare his intention of mounting the throne. Aware that Shah Rokh was supported by several powerful nobles, he endeavoured to obtain possession of his person, and of the royal treasures before he disclosed his views. He failed, however, in this plan: and when he found he

^b Mahomed Kooli Khan, the chief actor in the conspiracy against Nâdir, incurred the displeasure of Adil Shah. He was seized, and given up bound to Nâdir's ladies, who fell on him and cut him to pieces.

had no resource except a bold and open attempt, he proclaimed himself king: but his reign was still shorter than that of his brother, whom he had dethroned^c. He was made prisoner by his own troops, and fell, unregretted, by the hand of the officer appointed to guard him to Meshed. Adil Shah was also sent prisoner thither, and put to death.

Shah Rokh was the son of Rizâ Kooli, with whose misfortunes those of Persia were associated. His mother was the daughter of Shah Sultan Hoosein; and he had, therefore, every claim, from his descent, to the throne he now filled. He was also popular on account of his youth, his personal beauty, his amiable manners, and humane character. But all these fair hopes were blasted by the art and ambition of an enemy, who, encouraged by the confusion of the times, sought to obtain the crown by the destruction of the prince in whose favour all voices appeared united. The name of this person was Meerza Syud Mahomed. He had been employed in stations of some distinction under Nâdir Shah, and boasted of being descended through a female branch from one of the Suffavean monarchs^d. He commenced his machinations by circulating a report, that Shah Rokh inherited all the rancour of Nâdir against the religion of his country: and he brought forward the kindness and generosity with which the young monarch had treated persons of other religions, particularly Christian merchants, as a proof of this charge. He was the son of a chief priest^e of Meshed; and the high reputation of his father gave him so great an influence with the whole order, that they combined to favour his views. Encouraged by their support,

^c His victory over his brother was gained by the defection of Ali's army. He conquered Ameer Arslan, however, an ambitious governor, who had made himself independent in Aderbejan.

^d His mother was the daughter of Sulimân the Second, the father of Shah Sultan Hoosein.

^e Meerza Dâoud; a man of such celebrated piety, that Shah Sultan Hoosein had not disdained to give him his sister in marriage.

he collected a body of followers, and attacked Shah Rokh before he could assemble his troops. The young prince was made prisoner, and deprived of sight; while his cruel enemy was proclaimed King of Persia, under the name of Sulimân: but his power was short. Yûsûph Ali, the principal general of Shah Rokh's army, hastened to avenge his monarch. Sulimân was defeated, taken, and put to death—a just punishment for his barbarity.

Yûsûph Ali, after this victory, restored Shah Rokh to the throne, and assumed the name of regent. But these measures were opposed by two chiefs¹, one the head of a Kûrdish, the other of an Arabian tribe, by whose combined forces he was overcome and slain. Shah Rokh, who seemed born to be the sport of fortune, was again sent from his throne to a prison. His enemies, however, a few days after quarrelled with each other, marched out of separate gates of the city, and came to action. Meer Aulum, the Arab, triumphed, but only to fall in his turn before Ahmed Khan Abdâllee. This leader has been already mentioned. Immediately after the death of Nâdir he proclaimed himself King of the Affghans, and had just added to his other conquests that of Herat. He now advanced against Meer Aulum, who was defeated and slain; and Meshed, after some resistance, submitted to him.

Ahmed Khan was now in a condition to attempt the reduction of all Persia: but the prospect was not inviting. Every province was exhausted. The Affghans were still deemed the original authors of the misery which the nation endured; and the unsuccessful attempt to alter their religion had revived the hatred which the Persians entertained for that race as Soonees. In addition to these obstacles, the example of usurpation which Nâdir Shah had given, had inspired every governor of a province and every chief of a tribe with the desire of rule, and Persia abounded with

¹ One of these was Jaffier, who commanded a large body of Kûrds; and the other Meer Aulum, the chief of a tribe of Arabs.—*Persian MSS.*

pretenders to regal power. Under such circumstances, we must admire that wisdom which led the Affghan prince to withdraw from this scene of turbulence, that he might exclusively direct his future exertions to the nobler and more legitimate object of establishing a power in his native country, which, while it gave a crown to his descendants, raised his nation to a rank and consideration far beyond what they had ever enjoyed.

Before Ahmed Khan left Khorassan, he assembled the principal chiefs, and proposed that the province which gave birth to Nâdir should be separated from Persia, and converted into a principality for his unfortunate grandson⁵. They all agreed, and promised continued allegiance; expecting, no doubt, that an arrangement which placed a blind and inefficient prince at their head, was the most favorable for their views of aggrandisement. Ahmed became the guarantee of the independence of Khorassan, which he justly concluded would hereafter form a strong barrier to guard his dominions from the ambition of whatever ruler might obtain the crown of Persia.

The blind Shah Rokh continued, as was designed, to enjoy the name of a prince; and his petty court was supported by the revenues of the city of Meshed and its immediate environs. He also received annual offerings from some chiefs, who acknowledged him as their nominal superior. The few and unimportant events relating to this prince and his family will find their place in the history of those rulers who rose to power amid the violence and distraction in which the empire was involved immediately after the death of Nâdir.

⁵ Persian MSS.

CHAPTER XVI.

REIGN OF KERREEM KHAN, ZEND.

THE History of Persia, from the death of Nâdir Shah till the elevation of Aga Mahomed Khan, the founder of the reigning family, though it occupies nearly half a century, presents no one striking feature, except the life of Kerreem Khan, Zend^a. The happy reign of this excellent prince, as contrasted with those who preceded and followed him, affords to the historian of Persia that kind of mixed pleasure and repose, which a traveller enjoys, on arriving in a beautiful and fertile valley, during an arduous journey over barren and rugged wastes. It is pleasing to recount the actions of a chief, who, though born in an inferior rank, obtained power without crime, and who exercised it with a moderation that, for the times in which he lived, was as singular as his humanity and justice.

When Ahmed Khan was employed in settling the fate of Khorassan, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, chief of the tribe of Kajirs, (and grandfather to the present King of Persia,) established himself at Asterabad; a town on the eastern shores of the Caspian, which had long been the residence of his family; and the whole of Mazenderan had submitted to his authority. His fatherⁱ had been murdered by Nâdir Shah; and the Kajirs cherished, in consequence, a blood feud against the descendants of that monarch. Ahmed Khan, fearing that the future enterprises of Mahomed Hoossein Khan might disturb his arrangements, sent a corps of Affghans to attack Mazenderan; but they were repulsed

^a Zend was the name of his tribe, or clan.

ⁱ Fattch Ali Khân, whose death and its cause have been noticed in the Life of Nâdir Shah.

with considerable loss: and the fame and strength of the chief of the Kajirs were greatly increased by this victory.

The province of Aderbejan was at this period under the rule of an Affghan leader^{*}. Ghilan had declared itself independent under one of its own chiefs¹: and Georgia, governed by a Christian prince of the name of Heraclius, who had learned the art of war under Nâdir, had assumed an attitude which induced many to believe it would emancipate itself from the subjection in which it had been so long held by the Mahomedan princes of Asia.

Such was the state of all the northern parts of the empire, when a chief of the tribe of Bukhteeâree, Ali Murdân Khan, took possession of Isfahan^m, and determined to raise a pageant of the house of Soofee to the throne, in order that he might reconcile the inhabitants of that capital to his usurpation of regal power. Well satisfied that he could not effect this great object without aid, he invited several omrahs to join his standard; the principal of whom was Kerreem Khan, of the tribe of Zend. This chief was not of high birthⁿ, and had obtained no command in the army of Nâdir; but he was distinguished for his good sense and courage. We are told by the historian of his reign, that Kerreem Khan from the first enjoyed an equal rank with Ali Murdân: and that when it was agreed to raise a young prince^o of the race of Soofee to the throne, it was settled that one of the chiefs should be appointed his minister, and

^{*} Azâd Khan, who was one of the generals of Nâdir Shah.

¹ Hidâyet Khan.

^m He attacked and defeated Abool Fatteh Khan, who was governor of the city on the part of Shah Rokh: but he appears to have afterwards contracted some engagements with this chief, as we find him continued for a time in his station of governor.—*Tuvarikh Zendeah*, by MEERZA SADUC.

ⁿ In a genealogical account of his family, written by one of his immediate descendants, Kerreem Khan is stated to have been the son of a celebrated freebooter of the name of Eymâck; but there is no attempt to trace his descent further.

^o This pageant was the son of the sister of Shah Sultan Hoossein: he was between eight and nine years old, and was crowned under the name of Shah Ismael.

that the other should command the army. But it appears from other authorities, that Kerreem did not consider himself on a level with Ali Murdân Khan. It is probable, that his ambition at the commencement of the connexion was limited to the prospect of succeeding that leader, who was very old and had no children.

When the forces of these chiefs occupied Isfahan, it was distracted by a number of parties. Every pretender to the throne had his adherents in the capital: but the inhabitants were soon reconciled to the new government. The troops of Ali Murdân Khan at first committed some excesses, but no blood was shed; and that omrah, though stern and severe in his manner, was neither cruel nor unjust^p. His fame, however, was soon eclipsed by that of Kerreem, who, when they took possession of Isfahan, defended the inhabitants of Julfâ, the quarter where he commanded, from the slightest injury either to their persons or property. His conduct was more remarkable, as they were almost all Christians: but Kerreem thought more of their condition than of their religion, and displayed all that moderation and humanity which distinguished his character. He was rewarded with the warmest gratitude of those whom he saved from pillage. Even his soldiers respected the principles of their leader; and the eyes of all were directed with admiration and astonishment to a chief of a barbarous tribe who refrained from plunder, and showed, amid scenes of violence and confusion, so marked a love of order and justice.

The conduct of Kerreem obtained him a popularity which excited the jealousy of Ali Murdân Khan; and a short period brought them to an open rupture. Ali Murdân Khan had taken advantage of Kerreem's absence to oppress the inhabitants of Julfâ, and afterwards publicly reproved him for the vehemence with which he expressed his sentiments on this occasion. He had also put to death the governor of Isfahan^q; and it was obvious that Kerreem

^p Persian MSS.

^q Abool Fattah Khan.

would be the next victim of his suspicion and resentment. Aware of his danger, and preferring open hostility to such friendship, Kerreem took the field with his followers, and declared himself the enemy of Ali Murdân, who, after a short contest with various fortune, was assassinated by a noble of the name of Mahomed Khan^r, and by his death left to his rival the undisputed possession of the southern provinces of Persia. But Kerreem, before he could expect to preserve those territories in peace, had still to contend with many and powerful enemies. Before we proceed to narrate the wars in which he engaged, it will be useful to take a view of the means and impressions to which he trusted for success, and to which he ultimately owed his complete triumph.

The Persians may be divided into four great classes. The first, and the most powerful if united, are the native tribes, who continue to live in tents^a, and change their residence with the season. Their habits are pastoral and military^b; and they are chiefly to be found along those ranges of hilly countries which, commencing near the entrance of the Persian Gulf, stretch, parallel to its shores, as far as Shuster, and thence, taking a north-western direction, extend up the left bank of the Tigris, to the borders of Armenia. The region described includes Kerman, almost all Fars, a part of Irak, and the whole of Kûrdistan. The inhabitants of these countries are divided into many different tribes; but there cannot be a stronger proof of their coming from one stock, than that their languages are all rude dialects of the Pehelvec. There is a considerable difference in these dialects, but not so much as to prevent the inhabitants

^r It is stated by some authors, that this chief was a relation of Kerreem Khan, and that he deserted his standard and joined Ali Murdân Khan for the express purpose of perpetrating this crime.—*Tuvarikh Zendeâh*, by MEERZA SADUK.

^a In the northern parts of Persia, where the climate is very severe, they inhabit hovels in winter.

^b Some of them are also settled in Mazenderan.

of one province understanding that of another. Since the introduction of the religion of Mahomed, no king of Persia had been of this race: That country had either been governed by Tartar or Arabian monarchs. The numerous tribes of native Persians had, consequently, always been regarded with apprehension; and a jealous policy had sought to weaken them by transplanting them to distant quarters, and fomenting internal divisions; but the great counterpoise to their power were the Tartar, Turkish, or Turkuman tribes^u, who, at different periods, accompanied conquerors from beyond the Oxus, from the banks of the Volga, and from the plains of Syria, into Persia. The usages of these tribes in all that related to their rude habitations, their mode of life, and of warfare, were like those of the natives; but they had continued distinct, from the difference of their language; and that circumstance alone (had other motives been wanting) would have kept alive a spirit of rivalry and hatred between these two great classes of the military population of Persia. The Turkish tribes, though not so numerous as the Persians, were more powerful, because more united and more wealthy. Through all the revolutions of that kingdom, they had been kept more concentrated, as they formed, from the conquest of Togrul Beg, till that of Abbas the Great, the force on which the different races of monarchs chiefly depended.

The citizens and cultivators of Persia were not warlike, though the former, on many occasions, by their gallant defence of their lives and property, had acquired a high reputation for valour. Almost all the towns and villages were walled; and in a country where the science of attack was little known, the efforts of the inhabitants (part of whom were always a militia) in repelling attack were often success-

^u There can hardly be said to be any distinction in these names, which are indiscriminately used by Persian historians to describe the tribes in Persia deriving their origin from Tartary or Türkistan, and speaking the Turkish language.

ful; consequently, though this part of the population seldom furnished many recruits to an army, their attachment, during civil warfare, was of great consequence to the chief whose cause they espoused.

The fourth class of the inhabitants of Persia consisted of a number of Arabian tribes, who entirely occupied the level country between the mountains and the Persian Gulf. This tract, which, as has been before stated^x, resembles the peninsula of Arabia more than any of the interior provinces of Persia, had been long abandoned to this race, who from the earliest ages possessed a superiority over the Persians at sea. The latter indeed seem, at all periods of their history, to have at once dreaded and abhorred that element. The Arabs had consequently not only possessed themselves of the islands in the Gulf, but of almost all the harbours along the coast. Their children maintained these possessions, yielding at times a real, and at others a nominal, obedience to the government of Persia; but their poverty, the heat of the climate, and the barrenness of the soil, combined with the facilities of embarking in their boats, have at all periods aided the efforts of this race to maintain themselves in a state of rude independence.

Such was the character of that nation over which Kerreem Khan desired to establish his government. He was chief of a small tribe, who, though described as a branch of that of the Lac, claimed a high rank among the native Persians^y. He summoned to his standard the whole of this class, and urged them to union and exertion, that they might no more be deemed a conquered people, but resume that pre-eminence to which they had a right from their numbers, their valour, and their glorious descent from the ancient heroes of Persia. The inhabitants of the principal cities in the empire showed from the first their partiality to Kerreem,

^x Vide vol. i. p. 2.

^y Some authors assert, that this tribe received the name of Zend from being charged by Zoroaster with the care of the Zend-a-vesta, or scripture of that prophet.

which was grounded on their confidence in his humanity and justice. The Arabians, who had preserved the habits of their nation, admired the simplicity and manliness of his character; and even those enemies, against whom he had chiefly to contend, the Affghan^a and Turkish tribes, who fought under the banners of his rivals, considered Kerreem Khan with respect, and placed an implicit reliance not only in his pledged faith, but in the generosity of his disposition and the probity of his mind.

Kerreem Khan, after the death of Ali Merdân Khan, had two formidable rivals^a to subdue, before his power could be firmly established. It will prevent confusion to give a distinct account of his contest with each. In his first action with Azâd Khan Affghan, the ruler of Aderbejan, fought near Cazveen, he was so completely defeated, that he was compelled not only to abandon Isfahan, but Shiraz. Continuing his retreat, he entered those great ranges of mountains which divide the elevated and fertile valleys of Fars from the arid country between their base and the shores of the Persian Gulf, and which is emphatically termed the Province of Gurmâseer, or the region of heat^b. We are told, that Kerreem, discouraged by his reverses and the desertion of a number of his followers, had at this period some thoughts of seeking that repose, which, with all his ambition, he loved, by flying to India; but if ever he indulged in so unworthy a scheme, he was diverted from it by the remonstrances of Roostem Sultan, the chief of Khisht, a village situated in a small valley near the top of one of those mountains which immediately overlook the Gurmâseer. That gallant soldier represented how easy it would be to defeat the army of Azâd Khan when entangled in a difficult pass, which they must march through before they reached Khisht. Roostem Sultan did more than give

^a The Affghans were mere temporary invaders, and cannot, therefore, be deemed a class of the population of Persia.

^a Azâd Khan Affghan, and Mahomed Hoossein Khan Kajir.

^b TuariKh Zendeah.

advice; he offered to attack the enemy with his mountaineers, and was successful in persuading Kerreem Khan to await the result of an action.

The pass of Kumâridge is in extent about two miles. The road, or rather path, which winds along the edge of the mountain, is very narrow, (in some places not more than two feet wide,) and consequently, only admits of troops marching in single files. The surface over which this difficult road has been made is hard rock; but there are a number of small hills in its vicinity, on which there are neither rocks nor vegetation. These appear to be formed of different layers of pebbles and loose earth. They are very steep, and rise in clusters of low and high peaks, some of which approach the road within less than a hundred yards. It was in the peaks of these hills, and in the most inaccessible parts of the mountain, that Roostem Sultan posted his men, while Kerreem Khan waited for the enemy in the valley below^c. The troops of Azâd Khan were permitted to enter the pass before the attack commenced. When it did, the confusion was instant and irremediable. They were entirely exposed to the mountaineers, who took aim at them with all the coolness inspired by security. Those who rushed forward were met and destroyed, before they could form in any numbers, by the body near Khisht under Kerreem Khan. All who remained for any time in the pass were killed; but retreat was impossible, as those in the rear, when the action commenced, rushed forward to support their comrades. A few brave men, rendered desperate by their situation, made an attempt to reach their enemies; but they only hastened their own destruction. The victory was complete; and Kerreem Khan, attended by the chief of Khisht,

^c I have been twice over the ground where this action was fought. When I visited it in 1800, I was accompanied by the grandson of Roostem Sultan, and there were several old men with him who had fought in the battle, and who pointed out every spot they had occupied. I became afterwards acquainted with Zâl Khan, the son of Roostem Sultan, who with feelings of just pride recited to me the particulars of this action.

and reinforced by several tribes of Arabians, pursued the fugitives, and once more occupied the city of Shiraz, where he employed himself in recruiting his army. He had no further contest with 'Azâd Khan^d, who was soon afterwards compelled, by the result of a war into which he entered with Mahomed Hoossein Khan, to fly to Bagdad; but the ruler of that city, though he granted him protection, refused to aid him in any effort to recover his possessions. He next endeavoured to engage the Georgian prince, Heraclius, in his cause, but with no better success. Wearied of a wandering life, he at last threw himself upon the clemency of Kerreem Khan^e, who received him with kindness, promoted him to the first rank among his nobles, and treated him with so generous a confidence, that he soon converted this dangerous rival into an attached friend.

The most powerful enemy of Kerreem Khan was Mahomed Hoossein Khan, the chief of the Kajirs. The Turkish tribe of Kajir had been long settled in Syria. They were brought thence to Persia by Timoor, and were among the seven tribes who raised Shah Ismael, the first king of the Seffavean race, to the throne^f. We must conclude that this tribe was both numerous and brave, from the division of them by Abbas the Great into three branches; one of which he stationed at Gunjah, in Georgia, that they might check the incursions of the Lesghees^g; another was planted at Merv, the ancient capital of Margiana, which, from its situ-

^d The army of this chief, though only in part composed of his countrymen, was still called the Affghan army; and the great hatred which the inhabitants of southern Persia entertained against a ruler of that nation, no doubt operated in favour of Kerreem Khan.

^e It is stated, that Kerreem demanded from Heraclius to deliver up Azâd Khan, but that was an act of which the Georgian prince was incapable. However, when he refused the Affghan chief his support, he is supposed to have recommended his throwing himself upon the clemency of Kerreem.

^f Persian MSS.

^g The Lesghees inhabit the mountains between Georgia and the Caspian, and are alike remarkable for their valour and turbulence. They are now subject to Russia.

ation on the frontier of Khorassan, had been always deemed the principal defence of that province against the incursions of the Oosbeks; and the third was settled at Asterabad^b, a small province, bordering on the country of those Turkuman tribes who dwell along the eastern shores of the Caspian, and who, defended from subjugation by their deserts and their courage, subsist by making constant predatory inroads into Persia. The first of these branches, which was settled at Gunjah, attached themselves to the fortunes of Nâdir Shah; and in compliment to him took the name of Kajir Affshâr¹. They declined after his death. The second^k continued, surrounded by enemies, to hold possession of Merv; while the chiefs of the third now openly aspired to the throne of Persia, which they would even now have attained, had they not been distracted and weakened by domestic feuds. This branch of the Kajirs is divided into two great families, or clans¹; the higher, and the lower. The chiefs of the former had been the acknowledged superiors, until the elevation of Fatteh Ali Khan, who belonged to the latter, to be the general of Shah Tââmâsp, gave him an influence and authority, which led to his being recognised as the head of the whole tribe. When he was murdered by Nâdir Shah, that monarch, who desired to foment divisions in this formidable tribe, gave the government of Asterabad to a noble of the

^b "The small province of Asterabad is sometimes included in Mazenderan, which it resembles in appearance, climate, and productions. This is the ancient Hyrcania, and the paternal estate of the present King of Persia, as chief of the Kajir tribe, who have entire possession of the province. It is bounded on the west by the Caspian Sea; to the south it is separated by a lofty ridge of mountains from the districts of Dâmghân and Bistân; it extends to the east as far as the longitude of 58°, and is divided from Dâghestan by the river Ashor. The city of Asterabad, the capital of this province, is situated near the mouth of the river Ester, on a bay of the Caspian Sea."—KINNIER'S *Memoir of Persia*, p. 168.

¹ Nâdir, as has been before stated, was of the tribe of Affshâr.

^k The name of this tribe of Kajirs is Azdânloo.

The Turkish names of these families are *Youkhârees-Bâsh* and *Ashâkâ-bâsh*, which may be translated *the higher and lower*.

higher family^m; and Mahomed Hoossein Khan, the son of Fattah Ali, was compelled to save his life by taking refuge with the Turkuman tribes, who feed their flocks in the neighbourhood of that town. Aided by these robbers and a few other adherents, he, during the life of Nâdir Shah, made an attack on his native district, which at first was successful; but, being unable to maintain himself, this expedition terminated in the death or ruin of almost all who were rash enough to attach themselves to his fortunes. He escaped again to the Turkumans, with whom he had established such a connexion as seems always to have afforded him a safe retreat.

We find in Jonas Hanway a very particular and curious account of the capture of Asterabad by Mahomed Hoossein Khan, and of the subsequent dispersion and punishment of the followers of the Kajir chief. Hanway was in Asterabad when it was taken; and when the valuable investment, of which he had the charge, was presented by Mahomed Hoossein to the Turkumans, he with horror heard these barbarians demand, that "the merchant, as well as all his goods, should be given to them. He would," they said, "be useful in looking after their sheep." The Persian chief was too generous to comply. He told them to be content with the plunder; and the man, thus saved from looking after flocks on the shores of the Caspian, not only obtained from the justice of Nâdir Shah the restitution of almost all the property he had lost, but lived to become a most distinguished citizen in one of the first capitals in the world.

From this event, until the death of Nâdir Shah, during nearly four years, Mahomed Hoossein Khan remained with the Turkumansⁿ. The moment he heard that the conqueror was slain, he appears to have left his retreat; and

^m The name of this chief was Zumân-beg. His father, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, was a great favorite of Nâdir Shah. It was this chief who, by the order of Rizâ Kooli Meerza, put an end to the life of Shah Tâmasp.

ⁿ Tuarikh Kajir.

we find him a few months after in such force, that he defeated (as has been before stated) a large body of Affghans belonging to the army of Ahmed Shah, who attempted to penetrate into Mazenderan.

Kerreem Khan, after he had made himself master of Shiraz, took advantage of the contest in which his enemies, Azâd Khan and Mahomed Hoossein Khan, were engaged with each other, not only to subject the whole of Fars to his authority, but to possess himself of Isfahan, and a great part of Irak°. He was soon, however, compelled to abandon the greatest part of these territories; for Mahomed Hoossein Khan, after defeating Azâd Khan, and adding Aderbejan to his possessions, directed his march toward Isfahan, with an army far superior to any that had been assembled under one chief since the death of Nâdir Shah. Kerreem Khan made an attempt to arrest his progress, but in vain: he was compelled to retreat to Shiraz, where he shut himself up, determined to abide a siege.

We are informed by an intelligent traveller^p, that success completely changed the character of Mahomed Hoossein Khan. He had been remarkable for his mildness and moderation; but the near prospect of the crown made him haughty and rapacious. He particularly evinced this change in his conduct to the inhabitants of Isfahan, no longer treating them with that temper and justice which he had shown when he thought their attachment of consequence to his interests. He now levied large contributions on the city, and allowed his troops to commit, unpunished, the most wanton excesses. These proceedings were equally calculated to diminish his reputation, and to add to that of his rival, Kerreem, whose behaviour towards the citizens of the capital had never changed with circumstances.

Mahomed Hoossein Khan, having completed his preparations, left eight thousand men in Isfahan, and advanced,

° Tuarikh Zendeâh.

^p Olivier, vol. vi. p. 70.

with a force, amounting to nearly thirty thousand, to lay siege to Shiraz¹. The defences of that city consisted only of a high mud-wall, flanked by round towers, and surrounded by a deep dry ditch: but in Persia the science of attack is not more advanced than that of defence; and the slightest fortification seemed formidable to those whose force was chiefly cavalry, and whose unskilful gunners could only fire their unwieldy cannon a few rounds in the course of a day. Nevertheless, every thing concurred to give confidence to the besiegers. The attack commenced at a season when the country round Shiraz is beautiful. The fields were covered with grain; and the most abundant harvest seemed growing for the support of the invaders. But the hopes which the first success of their operations and the appearance of plenty inspired, soon vanished. Their batteries were hardly opened before they were attacked by repeated sallies from the garrison: while their attention was occupied in repelling these, a considerable body of horse, commanded by Shaikh Ali Khan, a brave and able leader of the tribe of Zend, commenced a predatory warfare on their supplies; and he was aided by the inhabitants of the surrounding country, who burnt their own fields, and retired with their families and all the property they could carry, into the neighbouring mountains². The effect of these measures was a scarcity of provisions in the camp of Mahomed Hoossein Khan, and discontent among his soldiers. The delays and hardships of a protracted siege, which often weary the patience of well-appointed and disciplined bodies of men, are altogether insupportable to those loose, irregular, and unconnected masses which constitute the force of an Asiatic prince. In the present case, the evil became more dangerous from the composition of the besieging army, a great proportion of which was new levies; and some, before the flight

¹ Persian MSS.

² Tuarikh Zendeah.

of Azâd Khan, had been fighting for years against the chief under whose banners they now served.

While the light troops of Kerreem were harassing the besiegers, that chief not only bravely defended the city, but employed every art to spread defection among his enemies. His efforts were completely successful: the daily desertion of numerous bodies of his troops warned Mahomed Hoossein Khan of the necessity of an early retreat*. He suddenly raised the siege, and marched to Isfahan: but the corps he had left there dispersed the moment they heard of his failure. Thus he was compelled to retire to Mazenderan, which he reached with a dispirited army, reduced by desertion to twelve thousand men.

Kerreem Khan, after recruiting his forces, and restoring tranquillity to Fars, advanced to Isfahan, where he was received with the most sincere joy. The inhabitants welcomed him as the ruler they loved; and their example was followed by all the principal cities in Irak. Kerreem took care to preserve a feeling to which he was already so deeply indebted. His military career, since he had become a competitor for the sovereign power, had not been fortunate. He had gained few victories, and had often been defeated. His condition had more than once seemed desperate; but still the preference which the citizens of Persia gave to him over his rivals, always enabled him to support reverses, and to take full advantage of every casual success. He could not but be proud of an attachment to which he had no claims but such as originated in his personal good qualities: and the strength it gave him must have been a motive for persevering in that course of moderation and justice by which it had been obtained.

While Kerreem was settling the numerous provinces which now cheerfully submitted to his authority, he detached Shaikh Ali Khan into Mazenderan, and placed under his command the choice troops of his army, in order

* Tuarikh Zendeâh.

that he might completely subdue Mahomed Hoossein Khan : but that object would hardly have been effected if the Kajirs had remained united. The division between the two principal families has been before noticed. The chief^t of the house opposite to that which had for some years exercised a general rule over the whole, either tempted by the offers of Kerreem Khan, or actuated by a desire of revenging former injuries, deserted at this critical moment the cause of his prince, and joined the army of Shaikh Ali Khan^u. Several of his relations and adherents were, in consequence of this treachery, put to death. This rash act of resentment revived, with increased violence, the feud that had so long distracted this tribe. Although these events must have left Mahomed Hoossein Khan with little hope of success, he determined to meet his enemies ; and even they confess, that he fought with a valour which deserved victory. His efforts, however, were in vain. Some new levies, who had just joined his standard, fled soon after the action commenced : their example was followed by all his troops. He would have escaped if his horse had not fallen^x, which gave his pursuers time to come up ; among them was his irritated and implacable enemy, the chief of the Kajirs, who had deserted at the opening of the campaign. He could expect no mercy from his adversary, and only hastened his fate by an attempt at resistance. His head, displayed upon a pike, proclaimed to all the triumph of Kerreem Khan over the greatest and most powerful of the rivals^y who had disputed with him the rule of Persia.

^t This chief, who was the head of the family of Youkhâree-bâsh, was also named Mahomed Hoossein Khan.

^u Tuarikh Zendeâh.

^x Tuarikh Zendeâh.

^y The principal chiefs of the family of Mahomed Hoossein Khan, including all his sons, fled to the country of the Turkumans, and remained there about four years before they gave themselves up to Kerreem Khan, by whom they were treated with consideration and kindness. Aga Mahomed Khan was the eldest of those princes. Olivier, in his account of this transaction, states, that they were taken by Shaikh Ali Khan as hostages to Shiraz : but this

The conquest of Mazenderan was followed by the submission of Ghilan and the greatest part of Aderbejan; but the latter province was soon disturbed by the pretensions of Fattéh Ali Khan, a chief of the tribe of Affshâr, who had given his support, at different periods, to the competitors opposed to Kerreem Khan, and now ventured to proclaim himself his open enemy. He was defeated in an action fought on a plain^a a short distance to the south of Tebreez. He fled into the city of Oormeah^a; but, after sustaining a siege of some months, seeing no prospect of success, he threw himself upon the generosity of Kerreem, who did not hesitate to pardon him^b.

Before Fattéh Ali Khan surrendered, he had endeavoured, and apparently with success, to engage some of the principal nobles of Kerreem Khan to enter into a conspiracy against his life. The plot was discovered, and those concerned in it punished. Some persons of high rank were put to death. The Persian historian^c of Kerreem informs us, it was for a participation in this conspiracy that the gallant Shaikh Ali Khan was condemned to lose his sight^d. If this chief, who was related to Kerreem, and

is evidently an error. I follow the Tuarikh Zendeâh of Meerza Saduk, who expressly asserts that they gave themselves up some time afterwards, and were treated with great humanity and attention.

^a The name of this plain is Kârâ Chemun, or "the Dark Meadow."

^a "The very ancient city of Urumeah, the Thebarma of Strabo, and supposed birth-place of Zoroaster, is situated in a noble plain, fertilized by the River Shar, and on the south-west of the lake to which it gives its name. This town is thirty-two fursungs from Tebreez, and contains a population of twelve thousand souls. It is defended by a strong wall and deep ditch, that can be filled with water from the river; and the neighbourhood produces corn and fruit in abundance. Urumeah cannot now boast of a single ruin of any consequence; and the natives are not even aware of the tradition concerning the birth of Zoroaster."—KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia*, p. 154.

^b He some time afterwards forfeited by misconduct his title to clemency, and was put to death.

^c Tuarikh Zendeâh.

^d Olivier, on what authority I know not, places this act several years after the date mentioned by the author of the Tuarikh Zendeâh, and states,

whose valour had been so instrumental to his elevation, was tempted by ambition to conspire against his life, he merited the dreadful sentence passed upon him: and it is not consistent with the justice due to the character of a ruler, who had the courage not only to forgive, but to employ some of his most inveterate enemies, to suppose that he was led, by a cowardly jealousy of the increasing reputation of a favourite general, to commit an act which combined, if it proceeded from such a motive, the deepest guilt with the basest ingratitude.

Kerreem Khan, throughout the whole of his struggle for power, had been partially supported by the Arab tribes, who inhabit the Persian shore of the Gulf. A large body of these had marched with him as far as Isfahan; and though their discontent had compelled him to precipitate an action with Mahomed Hoossein Khan, in which he had been defeated, principally from their bad conduct, he continued to value their attachment, and was never severe with them except when forced by their excesses, or by their refusal to pay tribute. The vigour with which he acted, when compelled to punish them, increased their respect. The most refractory and troublesome of all these petty rulers was Meer Mohunnâ, of Bunder Reeg, a small seaport, half a degree to the north-west of Abusheher. This chief was at once remarkable for his valour and his atrocious wickedness. He had offended the Persian government almost beyond the hope of pardon; having interrupted, by his depredations, the communication between Shiraz and Abusheher, now the principal port^e of the kingdom. When attacked by a numerous army, he defended his possessions on the continent for several months; when forced to abandon them, he took refuge in the small Island of Corgo, near the top of the Gulf, nearly a degree from Bunder Reeg.

that it was imputed to a jealousy of the reputation Shaikh Ali Khan had acquired with the army.

^e Gombroon was, about this period, almost deserted.

On this spot, which does not contain more than two square miles, and has hardly any cultivation, the desperate Arab not only supported a number of followers, and defeated all the efforts of the Shaikh of Abusheher to subdue him, but added to his means by plundering a number of vessels, and succeeded in surprising the Dutch garrison in the neighbouring Island of Kharruck. These successes, from giving more scope to his dreadful cruelties, only accelerated his ruin. All around him were enemies : but he might have braved external danger for some time, if he could have preserved the fidelity of his own tribe. A rebellion of his followers obliged him to fly to Bussorah, where he was seized and slain. The governor not only refused his claims to protection^f, but, to mark the detestation in which he held his character, directed that his corpse should be cast out into a field to be devoured by dogs. The death of Meer Mohunnâ spread joy from the Court of Shiraz to the shores of India. This monster, at the head of the list of whose crimes was the murder of a father, possessed an energy and courage which had rendered his name an object of universal dread ; and the inhabitants of the shores of the Gulf still pronounce it with mixed horror and apprehension.

The territories of the Arabian tribe of Chaâb extend along the sea-shore from the River Taâb, which falls into the sea about a degree to the north-west of Abusheher, to the mouth of the Karoon, which bounds the kingdom of Persia and the province of Bussorah. Their chief, Shaikh Sulimân, had made himself so strong during the troubles after the death of Nâdir, that he ventured to oppose Kerreem Khan, who was obliged to march with a considerable force to reduce him. Sulimân, alarmed at his superior numbers, embarked in his boats, and sought refuge in the

^f The Arabs, though they held Meer Mohunnâ in abhorrence, blamed the Governor of Bussorah for having violated, even in his person, the sacred rights of hospitality: they believe he did so to flatter the Court of Shiraz.

neighbouring small islands : but he was glad to save from destruction his fields of grain, and the large plantations of dates, on which the population in this part of Persia chiefly depend for subsistence, by the payment of a considerable sum, and a promise of regularity in the future remittance of his tribute^a.

The government of Kerreem Khan was frequently disturbed by the turbulence and ferocity of his brother, Zuckee Khan^b. That chief at one period openly rebelled ; having possessed himself of a number of the hostages which the principal officers of the kingdom had given as pledges of their fidelity, he fled to the tribe of Fylee, from whom he expected support. The attempt failed ; and he was compelled to throw himself upon the clemency of his offended brother. He was not only pardoned, but restored to confidence and employment. We find him immediately afterwards detached to Dámghán^c, where Hoosein Kooli Khan, Kajir^d, had excited some disturbances, which Zuckee Khan soon quelled. The Kajir chief fled to the Turkumans, by whom he was seized, and put to death^e. A more cruel fate awaited those of his followers who fell into the hands of his

^a Persian MSS.

^b Zuckee Khan is always called the brother of Kerreem ; but was only his cousin and half-brother. His father, Boodák, was the brother of Eymack, Kerreem's father, and had married Byághá, the widow of Eymack, and mother of Kerreem Khan. This lady had three children by her second husband, Iskunder Khan, Zuckee Khan, and a daughter. The latter obtained celebrity from being the mother of Ali Moorád Khan, who attained and held for some time the sovereignty of Persia.—*MS. Genealogical Table of the Zend Family*.

^c " Dámghán is supposed to be the ancient Hecatompylos, for some time the metropolis of the Parthian empire."—KINNIER's *Geography of Persia*, p. 173.

^d The Tuarikh Zendeáh states, that Hoosein Kooli Khan had been placed in the government of this place by Kerreem Khan.

^e This chief was the son of Mahomed Hoosein Khan, and the father of the reigning sovereign of Persia. In the Tuarikh Zendeáh it is stated, that he was murdered at the instigation of Hoosein Khan Youkháree-básh, the Kajir chief of a rival family, who has been before mentioned, and who was, at this period, governor of Asterabad.

ferocious conqueror. The Persian historian ^m who describes the expedition to Dâmghân, is careful to inform us, that it was on this occasion that the inventive barbarity of Zuckee Khan first made a garden of his enemies. He directed the earth to be opened at equal distances, as if for the reception of trees, to form an avenue. Large branches were then cut, and a prisoner tied to each, with his head towards the root, which being placed where the ground was opened, the soil, as it was thrown in, produced a gradual suffocation. It is horrible even to think on such scenes; but still the relation is important, were it only to make the mind sensible, by extreme contrast, to the blessings of civilization.

The terror which the cruelty of Zuckee Khan inspired, was no doubt useful in preserving the general tranquillity of the kingdom. The known lenity of the ruling prince had encouraged numbers to rebel, with an expectation that, even if unsuccessful, pardon would follow submission. All knew that these hopes were vain when his savage brother was employed. He had succeeded not only in repressing rebellion at Dâmghân, but in Mazenderanⁿ, and several other parts of the empire; and every where his track was marked by blood. The very rumour of his approach was at last sufficient to spread dismay; and those who most execrate his memory confess, that he greatly contributed to that general peace and security which Persia enjoyed during the latter years of Kerreem Khan.

The troops which civilized nations maintain for their defence, are raised indiscriminately from the mass of the population; and the power to support them increases with those resources which are greatest in periods of tranquillity. It is very different with barbarous states, where the armies are formed from a class of men quite distinct from the rest of the community. They receive no regular

^m Meerza Saduk.

ⁿ The Kajirs of the Youkhâree-bâsh, had rebelled, and several of their chiefs were taken, and put to death.

pay ; thus their means of subsistence are narrowed or extended with the sphere of their action. Such a body, if numerous, cannot be supported but in war, where they live upon the enemy ; yet it is hazardous to disband men who have no pursuits of industry, and who have hardly a resource, when at peace with foreign powers, but in internal troubles. If (which rarely happens) the wealth of a rude government enables it to pay an army, it cannot allow it to remain idle, without the certainty of its soon becoming useless ; for in bodies of men so constituted, efficiency must be the result of that individual energy and experience which actual employment alone can give ; and the place of which, in regular armies, is in a great degree supplied by the influence of order and discipline. It is on this general reasoning that we must account for those constant wars in which we find some of the best Asiatic monarchs engaged ; and it is probable, that these considerations influenced Kerreem Khan in the attack he made, a few years before his death, on the Turkish territories. He had continued to display as much moderation in the exercise of his power, when sovereign of Persia, as in its attainment. Although he deemed it prudent to confine the pageant^o to whom Ali Murdân Khan^p had given the name of king ; and to refrain from the mockery of false allegiance, he only styled himself Vakeel, or lieutenant of the kingdom, and seemed to act under no desire of personal aggrandisement. Attached to Shiraz, which he had made his capital, he had ceased to lead his armies in person ; he even committed the large force assembled for the siege of Bussorah to his brother, Sâduk Khan ; though he must have been sensible that the ties of blood only rendered the abuse of so great a trust more probable. Considering, therefore, his disposition, and the state of Persia at the time, we must conclude

^o He removed him from Isfahan to a fort called Aubâdâh, on the road between that city and Shiraz.

^p Vide p. 59.

that his principal motive for attacking the Turks was to preserve internal tranquillity, by employing those most likely to disturb it in foreign war: and having taken that resolution, he studied to render the measure popular with his subjects. To men of the Sheah sect, no greater encouragement could be offered, than the prospect of conquering that land which contained the tombs of the holy Ali, and of his sainted sons, Hoosein and Hussun; and the prominent ground^a on which Kerreem attempted to justify the war was allied to this feeling^r. He demanded from the court of Constantinople the head of Omar, the Pâchâ of Bagdad, for having levied a tax on the Persian pilgrims who visited those sacred tombs. The answer which he must have expected soon arrived: the Turkish emperor refused to abandon his servant for doing his duty, and Sâduk was directed to commence his march. He proceeded along the shore of the Gulf with an army of near fifty thousand men; and a fleet of about thirty vessels, almost all of a very small size, which had been fitted out at Abusheher and Bunder Reeg, accompanied his operations.

The city of Bussorah, against which this force was directed, is on the right bank of that noble stream called the Shât-ool-Arab, or River of Arabia, formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. From their confluence at Koornâh^s to Bussorah is nearly sixty miles, and it is about the same distance from thence to the sea. The whole

^a There were several other pretexts. He accused Omar of having prevented the Persians from subduing the province of Oman, by the aid he had granted to the Imam of Muscat. He was also said to have plundered some Persian merchants.—*Tuarikh Zendéah*.

^r Persian MSS.

^s "Koornâh, which is one of three *Apameas* built by Seleucus in honour of his first wife, Apama, is situated at the point of a triangle, formed by the confluence of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. *Apamea*, although now dwindled into a petty town, was formerly a place of consequence." (*Kinnier's Memoir of Persia*, p. 287). Koornâh is situated on a low flat, apparently with a rich soil, and along the river are low banks to prevent the country being flooded. Here some oriental traditions fix the garden of Eden.

of this extent is navigable for ships of large burthen. The Turkish government have generally some vessels of war at Bussorah, but they are seldom in a state of equipment. This fleet (for so it is termed) appears to have offered no efficient resistance to that of Sâduk Khan: after becoming master of the river, he soon constructed a bridge of boats, by which he passed his whole army to the right bank, and immediately commenced his preparations for a siege. The city was of great extent, containing a number of large gardens, as well as houses, within its walls. The inhabitants were reckoned at forty thousand, and the troops who formed the garrison were more than a fourth of that number. The governor, Sulimân Aga, was a brave soldier, whose character gave him every right to expect the attachment of those under his orders. The walls were high, but not strong; and the chief defence was a number of bastions, on which nearly a hundred pieces of cannon were mounted.

Though the siege proceeded slowly, the Persian army made progress; and the weak court of Constantinople, alarmed at the prospect of losing a possession of such importance, ordered the Pâchâs of Van, Moossul, Diarbekir, Aleppo, and Damascus, to march, with all the troops they could collect, to Bagdad. It was at first thought that they were meant to combine with the governor of that province for the relief of Bussorah; but it soon appeared that they were only instructed to put Omar to death, in the hope that his punishment might satisfy the King of Persia, and cause him to desist from his enterprise^t. An envoy was sent to Shiraz, to inform Kerreem Khan that his demand had been complied with, and that the cause of the rupture was removed. But Kerreem, while he amused the envoy with promises, was only encouraged by this proof of weakness, to prosecute his plan; and the brave governor of Bussorah, after a siege, or rather blockade of thirteen months, was compelled to surrender for want of provisions.

^t Olivier, vol. iv. p. 348.

Sâduk Khan used his victory with great moderation, and appeared anxious to reconcile the inhabitants to their change of masters; but Ali Mahomed Khan, the officer whom he left in command when he returned to Shiraz, imprudently engaged in a dispute between two Arab tribes, and sustained a defeat, in which the Persians suffered severely, and their commander was slain. Sâduk, on hearing this, hastened to Bussorah; by his conciliating manner and good conduct^u, he restored peace, and remained in undisturbed possession of his conquest till the death of Kerreem Khan, when a regard for his personal interests and safety led him to abandon it. The Turkish government, by this accident, regained, without having made any effort for its recovery, one of their most important possessions in that quarter of Asia.

From the invasion of the Affghans till the latter years of Kerreem Khan, European nations had maintained but little intercourse with Persia, as its distracted state was very unfavorable for commerce. The English had removed their factory from Gombroon in consequence of the oppressive conduct of a governor of Lâr^x; but they had afterwards fixed it at Abusheher, where it continued subject to all the vicissitudes of the changing and unsettled government within the dominions of which it was established.

The Dutch still carried on a trade with Persia and the eastern parts of Turkey; and an event occurred in the beginning of the reign of Kerreem Khan, which, if their power had not been on the decline, would have given them a permanent and superior influence to all their European rivals

^u He was particularly attentive to the English. He told the resident, that the factory he lived in was the only house fit for him to occupy, but that, so great was his respect for the English nation, he would not take it if the walls were of gold.

^x Nâser Khan, who, in 1761, forced them to give him a thousand to-mâns. The court of Directors, on hearing of this, ordered them to quit the factory. Nâser Khan, who had committed other outrages, was taken prisoner by Kerreem Khan in 1763, and carried to Shiraz.

on these shores. Baron Kniphausen, a man of considerable ability, had been appointed by the Dutch government of Batavia their agent at Bussorah. The Turkish governor of that place, on the pretext that the baron had transgressed the laws ^γ of the country, imprisoned him, and refused his release till he had paid a considerable sum of money ^α. The baron proceeded to Batavia, justified himself completely to his superiors, and then laid before them a plan which combined the resentment of the injury offered to his country in his person, with advancing the interests of the Dutch East India Company. His project was to seize on Kharruck ^β, an island containing about twelve square miles, near the top of the Gulf; which, while it in a great degree commands the entrance of the Bussorah river, has an easy communication of a few hours' sail with the shores both of Persia and Arabia. His plans were adopted. He sailed with two ships, and found no difficulty in taking possession of the island ^β, where he erected a small fortification. His first step was to make his two vessels blockade the Bussorah river; and the detention of some Turkish ships from India compelled the governor not only to make restitution of the money he had extorted, but to court the friendship of the baron, who received equal attention and respect from all the rulers in the vicinity. The Island of Kharruck rose rapidly into importance. It was a safe emporium; the merchants were near several markets, where it was advantageous to sell, but dangerous to trust their goods for any length of time, as every change in the government exposed them to the hazard of being plundered. Thus the local position of this island was peculiarly

^γ He accused him of having cohabited with a Mahomedan lady, and of withholding some customs that were the right of the government.

^α He took fifty thousand rupees from the baron, thirty thousand from his second, and twenty thousand from the broker.

^β This island is very healthy, has plenty of fine water, and in parts the soil is good.

^β The Shaikh, or Governor, of Bunder Reeg, who claimed the right or lordship of this island, had made the baron a grant of it.—*Ives's Voyage.*

favorable to commerce; and it possessed great advantages, in the abundance and excellence of its fresh water, and the salubrity of its climate. Under circumstances so propitious, it is not surprising that Kharruck should have soon become a flourishing settlement. Its population, which amounted to a hundred poor fishermen and pilots when Baron Kniphausen first established himself there, increased, in the eleven years that the Dutch held it, to upwards of twelve thousand souls. It was neglected and lost, as has been described, because it was not worth preserving to the nation^c by whom it had been acquired.

The internal commerce of Persia, as well as its agriculture, had greatly revived during the latter years of Kerreem Khan. He gave particular encouragement to all the industrious classes of his subjects, to none more than the Armenians settled in his kingdom. This body of Christians were the first who benefited from his justice; and to the last moment of his life he was anxious for their prosperity. The possessors and cultivators of the soil in Persia pay but a very moderate proportion of its produce to the government; but, as the monarch can impose arbitrary fines and requisitions, he may be said to possess the power of taxing at pleasure. This class therefore is almost as dependent for their happiness on his personal disposition, as any other in the community. They enjoyed under Kerreem as much consideration as he was able to give them; and he was on all occasions ready to redress the wrongs they suffered from the officers placed over them; but still, from the opposite view which travellers who visited Persia during his reign have taken of the condition of his subjects, we must conclude, that the state of the countries near the seat of rule and under his immediate observation, was very different from that of provinces, which, from their remoteness to the capital, or the turbulence of their inhabitants, were given over to the arbi-

^c This account of the Dutch establishment at Kharruck is taken from contemporary travellers, and from the public records.

trary rule of military chiefs. All the cities in Persia flourished under this prince; but none in a degree comparable with Shiraz. Kerreem was perhaps first induced to make this city his capital, by its central situation among the pasture-lands of those tribes on whose support he chiefly depended, and by the attachment which its inhabitants early showed to his interests. He was at great pains to strengthen its defences; and he improved and ornamented the city itself with a number of useful and magnificent buildings, and beautified its environs by the erection of some fine edifices, near which were planted luxuriant gardens; but he appeared still more desirous of promoting the comfort and prosperity of its inhabitants, than of increasing its magnitude or splendour. "The rays of this sun of Majesty," observes a Persian historian^d, speaking of Kerreem Khan, "were spread over the whole empire; but its genial heat was most felt at Shiraz. The inhabitants of that favored city enjoyed perfect tranquillity and happiness. In the society of moon-faced damsels they passed their leisure hours; the sparkling goblet circulated; and love and pleasure reigned in every breast." This is an oriental mode of informing us, that, by the protecting care of their sovereign, they were contented and happy.

Kerreem Khan died at an advanced age, being nearly eighty years old^e. He had enjoyed independent power for twenty-six years; and during the last twenty had been, without a competitor, the acknowledged sovereign of Persia. His character is not easily described. It has few of the common features of a despotic monarch. He had ambition,

^d Ali Rezá's History of the Zend Family.

^e Some authors state that he was seventy-five; others seventy-six; and several that he was near eighty. It is probable that Kerreem only knew his own age by a reference to events that occurred about the period of his birth. There is no register of births in a wandering tribe; and it is not probable that either this prince, or any of his family, possessed an exact record on such a subject. I one day asked a Persian of a wandering tribe his age. The answer was, *Moollah ná hustum ke hissáb aíl be dânum*: "I am not a learned man, that I should understand to calculate my years."

but free from the turbulence which almost always mixes with it. He preserved an undisturbed temper equally amid scenes of violence and repose; and was, through life, distinguished by a manly simplicity of mind, which kept him as remote from the pomp and vanities of his high rank, as from that affectation which endeavours to conceal its pride under the garb of humility. Although humane, he sometimes punished severely; and he employed others of a disposition very different from his own to spread terror among his enemies and rebellious subjects; but his clemency was hardly ever refused to a fallen or repentant foe. One of the most remarkable features in his character was goodness of heart. He often repeated an anecdote of his early life, which showed a feeling very uncommon among men of his condition. "When I was a poor soldier," said Kerreem, "in Nâdir Shah's camp, my necessity led me to steal from a saddler a gold embossed saddle, sent by an Affghan chief to be repaired. I soon afterwards learnt that the saddler was in prison, and sentenced to be hung. My conscience smote me, and I replaced the saddle exactly in the place whence I took it. I watched till it was discovered by the saddler's wife; on seeing it she gave a scream of joy, fell down on her knees, and prayed aloud that the person who had brought it back might live to have a hundred gold embossed saddles. I am quite certain," Kerreem used to add, smiling, "that the honest prayer of the old woman has aided my fortune in attaining that splendour which she desired I should enjoy^f."

Kerreem Khan possessed that noble courage which dares to pardon; and the generous confidence with which he treated those whom he forgave, appears to have almost always attached them to his person. His virtues had nothing of a romantic character; they were, like all his other qualities, plain and intrinsic. He was esteemed pious, and was exact in the performance of his religious duties; but his re-

^f Persian MS. Major Campbell's Journal.

ligion was not austere. His natural disposition indeed was gay and cheerful; and he continued to the last to enjoy the pleasures of this world, and anxiously desirous that others should do the same. This inclination has given rise to one of the few attacks^a that have been made on his reputation; but, if we are to believe the concurring testimony of historians and of living witnesses, we must pronounce that his example, even in the path of dissipation, could not have been very baneful; for his love of pleasure never degenerated into intemperance; nor was he ever unfitted by indulgence for the active performance of his duties as a sovereign.

Kerreem Khan had received no education. It is stated that he could not even write; and from his birth, and the occupations of his early years, it is probable he neither had, nor desired to have, any such accomplishment. The son of a petty chief in a barbarous tribe^b would be brought up to despise all attainments, except such as were suited to his condition of life. In these he excelled. Possessed of great bodily strength and an active frame, he was an admirable horseman, and expert in all military exercises; but, though unlearned himself, he valued and encouraged learning in others. His court was the resort of men of liberal knowledge. He built tombs over the remains of Sadi and Hafiz, which are deposited near Shiraz, and endowed these edifices with gardens and lands for the support of the dervishes, or holy men, appointed to watch over them. This pious act, while it marked his regard for genius, was one of the most popular in his reign with the inhabitants of a city, the chief boast of which is its being the birth-place of those poets.

It is the usage with the King of Persia to devote a number

^a The Russian traveller, Gmelin, who visited, during Kerreem Khan's reign, some of the provinces near the Caspian then recently subdued, and with difficulty kept in subjection, reports him, conformably to the impression he received, to have been a prince immersed in luxury, and heedless of the miseries of his subjects.

^b The Zend, and all other branches of the Lac, are certainly as barbarous as any among the wandering tribes of Persia.

of hours every day to hear the complaints of his subjects. An anecdote is related of Kerreem Khan, which, while it shows the confidence reposed in his temper and justice, admirably illustrates the consideration and feeling with which he performed this important duty. He was one day retiring from his judgment-seat, harassed and fatigued with a long attendance, when a man rushed forward in apparent distraction, calling out in a loud voice for justice. "Who are you?" said Kerreem.—"I am a merchant," replied the man, "and have been robbed and plundered by some thieves of all I possess."—"What were you about," said the prince, "when you were robbed?"—"I was asleep," answered the man.—"And why did you sleep?" exclaimed Kerreem in a peevish and impatient tone.—"Because," said the undaunted Persian, "I made a mistake, and thought you were awake." The irritation of the royal judge vanished: he was too much pleased with the manly boldness of the petitioner to be offended at the reproach. Turning to his vizier, he bade him pay the amount of the merchant's losses from the treasury. "We must," he added, "try to recover the property from the robbers¹."

The mode which Kerreem Khan took to attain and preserve his power, was different from that pursued by any former monarch of Persia. He made no effort to gain strength by the aid of religious or superstitious feelings. He neither tried to attach his army by gratifying their lust of plunder; nor courted the applause of a vain-glorious nation by the pursuit of ambitious projects, or the gorgeous display of royal splendour. He was modest, even to his attire; and though his rule was always firm, and at times harsh, his general manner to the meanest of his subjects was familiar and kind. There is no part of his character more pleasing and

¹ This anecdote of Kerreem Khan is taken from a small Persian MS., and I have heard it from several Persians. It is the custom in Persia, as in other countries, to apply such stories to remarkable personages; but, even in that view, the application proves the impression entertained of the character.

surprising, than his being able, amid such scenes as he lived in, to carry the best affections and feelings of human nature into almost every measure of his government; and his success affords a lesson to despotic monarchs. He lived happily; his death was that of a father amid a family whom he had cherished, and by whom he was beloved. The Persians to this day venerate his name; and those who have risen to greatness on the destruction of the dynasty which he founded, do not withhold their tribute of applause to his goodness. Indeed, when meaning to detract from his fame, they often give him the highest possible eulogium. "Kerreem Khan^k," they say, "was not a great king. His court was not splendid; and he made few conquests; but it must be confessed, that he was a wonderful magistrate"¹.

^k I have repeatedly heard this observation made by the first among those Kajir chiefs who have risen to great power upon the downfall of the family of Kerreem Khan.

¹ Kutkhodah.

CHAPTER XVII.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DESCENDANTS OF KERREEM KHAN, ZEND.

It would be painful, after the history of a prince like Kerreem Khan, to dwell at any length on that of his descendants, who soon forfeited by their crimes that power which he had obtained by his virtues. He had five sons, four^m survived him to become the victims to the ambition and cruelty of those chiefs of their family, who contended with each other for a crown, acknowledged by all to be their inheritance.

Zuckee Khan, the moment Kerreem died, assumed the government. Several principal chiefs of the Zend tribeⁿ knew that they were personally obnoxious to him; and fearing every thing from the atrocity of his character, seized upon the ark^o, or citadel, at Shiraz, and prepared for a siege. At the same time they proclaimed themselves the adherents of Abool Fattah Khan, the son of Kerreem; but Zuckee Khan deprived them of any popularity they might expect from this act, by declaring that young prince, and his brother, Mahomed Ali Khan^p, joint successors to the throne of

^m The eldest of Kerreem's sons, Salah Khan, was never raised even to nominal power: he was deprived of sight by his cousin, Ackbar Khan. The second, Abool Fattah Khan, after being a nominal king, had his eyes put out also during the reign of Sâduk Khan. The third, Mahomed Ali Khan, was blinded by Ackbar Khan. The fourth, Mahomed Rahim Khan, had the good fortune to die during the lifetime of his father; and the fifth, Ibrahim Khan, was deprived of his virility by Ackbar Khan.—*Genealogical Table of the Zend Family.*

ⁿ Among these were Naser'Ali Khan, and the sons of Shaikh Ali Khan, the celebrated general of Kerreem Khan.

^o This is an Arabic term. It is sometimes pronounced arek, but more generally ark. It literally signifies the citadel, and is never applied to any other fortification.

^p This prince had married Zuckee Khan's daughter.

their father. But though he elevated these youths to nominal sovereignty, he himself assumed the substance of power, on the pretext of being, from affinity of blood, their natural guardian, they, from their age, being incompetent to the management of public affairs. He was supported in all his pretensions by his nephew, Ali Moorâd Khan¹, a chief of reputation; and their mutual efforts were directed to the reduction of the citadel. This was not an easy task; so, to avert the dangers of a protracted siege, Zuckee Khan had recourse to treachery². He solemnly pledged his faith to the nobles who defended it, and not only promised to forgive all that had passed, but to admit them to a share of the highest offices in the state. They believed his professions, submitted, and were instantly seized, and put to death in the most inhuman manner³.

Sâduk Khan, on hearing of the death of Kerreem Khan, evacuated Bussorah, and advanced toward Shiraz. When he arrived near that city, he encamped his army, and sent his son, Jaffier Khan, to wait upon Zuckee Khan, and discover his sentiments about the future settling of the government. The youth probably went to this conference with a mind not free from prejudice⁴: when he returned, he told his father, that, though every word Zuckee Khan had uttered breathed friendship and cordiality, he felt convinced, from what he had observed in the expression of his countenance, and from

¹ The son of the daughter of Boodâk and Byâghâ, and consequently the nephew of Zuckee Khan.

² Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

³ Captain Franklin, who visited Shiraz seven years after, informs us, he was told by an eye-witness that these chiefs were butchered in presence of Zuckee Khan by the common Pehlwan, or public wrestlers of the city, who performed on this occasion the parts of executioners. He adds, that the same person assured him he saw a Turkuman soldier not only bathe his hands in their blood, but, taking some in his joined palms, drink a little, and with the remainder wash his beard, exclaiming, "Shooker Ullah!" or "Thanks be to God!" The savage meant to recommend himself to the monster whom he served, as one that delighted "to drink the blood of the enemies of his chief."

⁴ Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

the looks and manners of all around him, that if he went into the city, he would share the fate of the unfortunate nobles, who had been recently duped to their destruction by his treacherous arts^u. This made the impression intended on Sâduk; who, abandoning all thoughts of an union of interest with his dangerous relation, prepared to besiege Shiraz, and appeared confident of success, from the number and supposed attachment of his troops; but he had to encounter an able and resolute soldier, and one more versed than himself in those daring and decided measures which so often command success. Zuckee Khan, when he despaired of overcoming him by treachery, imprisoned Abool Fatteh Khan, the eldest son of Kerreem Khan, whom he suspected of being well-affected to his uncle's interests, and proclaimed Mahomed Ali Khan^x, who had before only shared with his brother the name of king, sole monarch of Persia. He at the same time made prisoners three sons^y of Sâduk Khan, who were in Shiraz; and, having shut the gates of the city, threatened with instant disgrace and death all the families of the officers and soldiers who should continue to adhere to his enemy. The effect was what he had anticipated. The terror entertained of his boldness and cruelty banished every hope that he would hesitate to execute his threats, and all the officers of Sâduk Khan's army, whose families were in the power of his enemy, deserted their chief, to save from ruin and death those who were dearer to them^z. The brother of the late monarch, and the conqueror of Bussorah, found that all his plans were defeated. Only three hundred men remained attached to his fortune; with these he fled to Kerman. A body of horse was sent to cut off his retreat.

^u Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

^z This prince, as has been before stated, was the son-in-law of Zuckee Khan.

^y Their names were Mahomed Tuckee Khan, Ali Nuckee Khan, and Hoossein Khan.

^x Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

They overtook him, and an irregular conflict ^a ensued, the leader ^b of the pursuers was slain, and his disheartened followers returned to Shiraz; while Sâduk Khan continued his march to Kerman, where he took shelter in a small fortress^c, commanded by a noble firm in his attachment.

The most important, if we consider its ultimate consequences, of the events which occurred at the death of Kerreem Khan, was the flight of Aga Mahomed Khan, Kajir, who had been for many years a prisoner at large in Shiraz. For some time after he surrendered himself, he had been strictly guarded, and never allowed to go beyond the walls of the town; but latterly he was permitted to take the amusement of the chase. This indulgence was owing to the kindness of Kerreem Khan's character, and to the settled state of his government; which no chief of a tribe, however powerful, could hope to disturb. The extraordinary wisdom of Aga Mahomed had attracted the notice of Kerreem, who was in the habit of asking his advice on questions of state policy^d. Aga Mahomed had thus full opportunity of appreciating the characters of the Persian princes and nobles; and we can believe that he had long looked to the death of Kerreem Khan as the crisis of his own fate. When the last illness of that prince assumed a dangerous appearance, he contrived to leave the city^e on the usual pretext of hunting. His sister, who was in the royal harem, sent him intelligence from hour to hour of the progress of Kerreem's disorder. At last the wished-for messenger announced, that the founder of the Zend dynasty was no more. Accompanied by a few attendants, Aga Mahomed Khan

^a This action was fought at the pass or defile of Ursinjân, about forty miles to the eastward of Shiraz.

^b The name of this officer was Mahomed Hoossein Khan, Zend Huzzârâ.

^c Ali Rezâ says, he remained in the fortress of Kussunjân; others, that he went to Bum-Nermânsheer. Both these fortresses are in Kerman.

^d MS. Memoir.

^e He went out of the city on the 12th day of Seffer, A. H. 1193, the day before that of Kerreem's death.—ALI REZÂ'S *History of the Zend Family*.

commenced his flight^f; and, favored by the confusion of the moment, he reached his native province of Mazenderan in safety. A considerable body of his tribe having gathered round him, he proclaimed himself a candidate for the crown of Persia, and began to collect whatever means he could to support his pretensions.

Zuckee Khan, confident that the chief of the Kajirs would not long remain satisfied with Mazenderan, detached his nephew, Ali Moorâd Khan, with his best troops^g, to oppose his further progress; but he only increased the danger which he desired to avoid. His nephew was brave and ambitious; and experience had taught him, that, in the condition of his country, a person of his rank could have no safety but in the possession of power. He had probably only waited for a favorable opportunity of revolting from a ruler in whom he could never repose confidence, and who was hated and dreaded by all his subjects. An appeal which Sâduk Khan, after his flight from Shiraz, made to Ali Moorâd, then at Teheran, gave him the pretext he desired. He assembled his officers, and demanded if it was not disgraceful to support a chief, who treated the son and brother of Kerreem Khan as Zuckee Khan had done. There was no difficulty in persuading his followers to entertain the same sentiments. Desirous of the elevation of their leader, they rejoiced in any measure likely to promote his advancement. Ali Moorâd immediately marched to Isfahan, whence the governor^h appointed by Zuckee Khan fled at his approach. All ranks appeared to rejoice at Ali Moorâd's success; and he obtained additional popularity by proclaiming, that he

^f He travelled with astonishing celerity, arriving at Isfahan the third day, a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles.

^g This force consisted of ten thousand horse and five thousand infantry.

^h The name of this governor was Bustâm Khan. He had been nominated to the government as a reward for his repressing a commotion excited in Isfahan on the death of Kerreem Khan, by Jehangheer Khan and Mahomed Rasheed Beg, sons of Fattah Ali Khan Affshâr, a chief whose pretensions and fate have been before noticed.—vol. ii. p. 133.

had no design beyond restoring the eldest son of the virtuous Kerreem Khan to the throne, his lawful inheritance.

Zuckee Khan¹ became quite furious when he heard of the revolt of his nephew. He immediately assembled all the force he could, and marched toward Isfahan; but the hour was near when he was to fill up the measure of his guilt, and to fall by the hands of the very men whom he had trained to crime. When he arrived at Yezdikhaust, he demanded from the inhabitants the payment of a sum² belonging to the public revenue, which he charged them with having secreted: on their denying all knowledge of this money, and pleading inability to raise it, he commanded that eighteen of the principal men of the town should be thrown from a precipice, immediately under the window at which he sat. Not satisfied with this act of barbarity, he sent for a Syud, or descendant of the prophet, who was remarkable for his piety, and charged him with having taken part of the money he wished to recover. The man protested his innocence, and, after being stabbed, was thrown down the same precipice. Enraged at what he deemed the obstinacy of his last victim, he directed that his wife and daughter should be given over to the brutal lust of some of his guards, who were of the tribe of Maaffee³; but these men, savage as they were, shuddered at the conduct of their chief, and particularly at this last act, which they deemed at once horrid and sacrilegious. While these feelings prevailed, a conspiracy was formed; and those who had long been the instruments of his guilt, established a claim on the gratitude of their country by the murder of their inhuman leader.

The town of Yezdikhaust, where this took place, is situated upon the high and rocky bank of a narrow deep vale, which in this quarter divides the provinces of Irak and Fars.

¹ Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

² Franklin states that this sum was only three hundred tomâns,—about three hundred pounds.

³ The Maaffee are, like the Zend, a branch of the Lœc; one of the most numerous among the native tribes of Persia.

Its remarkable site and rude fortifications give it a singular and romantic appearance; and it is now interesting from being considered as a scene hallowed by the sword of retributive justice. The memory of Zuckee Khan is held in execration; and the traveller, who is passing Yezdikhaust, is stopt to hear the catalogue of his crimes: he is shown the window from which he directed the principal inhabitants and the holy Syud to be thrown; and the feelings which this spectacle, and the relation of these deeds, excite in the mind, are relieved by the story of his death, and the praises bestowed on those who had the courage to free their country from such a monster.

The character of Abool Fattah Khan, who was proclaimed King of Persia the instant Zuckee Khan was put to death, would not lead us to suspect that he was at all concerned in this bold act^m of justice; it placed in his hands a power which he appears to have been unfit to exerciseⁿ. His elevation, however, was evidently the only measure which could save the Zend family from destruction; and for a moment all indulged in the delusive expectation of tranquillity. Zâduk Khan, when he heard of Zuckee Khan's death, hastened from Kerman to Shiraz^o. This chief was a plain soldier, of a good disposition, but subject to violent passion. The author who gives this account of his character adds,

^m Mr. Scott Waring in his History of this period affirms, on the authority of a Persian writer, that Abool Fattah Khan was not only concerned in this plot, but took an active part in its execution. I follow a manuscript written by a very respectable Persian, who had the fullest opportunity of knowing the real nature of this transaction.

ⁿ The only author who speaks favorably of the qualities and disposition of this prince is Olivier; but that well-informed and intelligent writer seldom refers to authorities. All contemporary Persian authors that I have read, represent him as weak and dissipated. I have conversed with many persons who knew him well, and they confirmed this account: they added, that he was of a gentle disposition, and unambitious.

^o The young prince entered Shiraz, as sovereign, on Friday, the 30th of Jumadee-ool-awul, A. H. 1193, and was received with great joy by the inhabitants.

that he was not satisfied to live under a weak and dissolute^p young prince, incapable of governing himself, yet too jealous to commit his power to those who had more experience and wisdom^q. In the relations in which they were placed, it is not surprising that the uncle and nephew could not agree; but, not content with usurping his authority, and confining his person^r, Sâduk Khan put out the eyes of the unfortunate Abool Fattéh Khan, and proclaimed himself sovereign of Persia. He could not expect that he should be permitted quietly to enjoy a power obtained by so cruel an action; but his only dangerous rival was his nephew and step-son^s, Ali Moorad Khan. Fully aware of the ambitious designs^t of that leader, he sent his son, Jaffier Khan, to assume the government of Isfahan, and to watch his movements.

Ali Moorad, who was at Teheran when these events occurred, instantly declared himself king, and marched, with all the force he could collect, toward Isfahan, whence the new governor fled at his approach.

Sâduk Khan, having assembled a considerable army^u, placed it under his son, Ali Nuckee, whose first operations were completely successful. He attacked and discomfited the advance of Ali Moorad; whose troops were so discour-

^p We are informed by the historian of the Zend family, that the only joys of Abool Fattéh Khan were the circling goblet and fair damsels; and that, immersed in luxury, he was altogether unfit for government.

^q Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

^r Sâduk Khan and his sons broke in upon him when in his haram, and seized him without meeting with opposition.

^s Sâduk Khan had married the mother of Ali Moorad; and his eldest son, Jaffier Khan, was a half brother of that chief.

^t As long as Abool Fattéh Khan was king, Ali Moorad had professed allegiance. During that period, he marched against Zûlfekâr Khan, of Khumsâ, who had rebelled and seized on the countries about Cazveen, Sultaneah, and Zunjân. Ali Moorad defeated and slew this chief, whose head, according to usage, he sent to Shiraz.

^u This force, of twenty thousand men, had been besieging Yezd. Ali Nuckee was joined, before he encountered Ali Moorad by his brother, Hoossein Khan.

raged by this reverse, that they dispersed in different directions. A few went over to Ali Nuckee; the remainder retired to their homes. Ali Moorad, accompanied by his own family and a few faithful adherents, retreated to Hamadan, and must either have been taken or compelled to fly his country, if he had been immediately pursued. Sâduk Khan^{*} wrote to his son to desire he would not lose a moment in improving the great advantage which fortune had given him; but the idle youth, intoxicated with his success, thought of nothing but enjoying his triumph. He entered Isfahan as a conqueror, and for more than a month[†] remained in that city, giving himself up to every kind of excess. The moments which he wasted were taken full advantage of by Ali Moorad. Taught by past misfortunes that his sole dependence was on his own efforts and the attachment of his army, he evinced an union of the most resolute spirit[‡] with the most conciliating temper; and his conduct had more effect on those whom he had desired to gain, from being contrasted with the vanity, insolence, and dissipation of Ali Nuckee Khan, who, roused at last from his dream of pleasure, marched from Isfahan to complete his conquest of Irak. But the hour of success was past: he was met near Hamadan by Ali Moorad, and was in his turn abandoned by almost all his followers. This unexpected defection filled him with dismay, and gave his enemy an easy victory. He was compelled to fly to Shiraz; and the victorious Ali Moorad Khan, encouraged by some further successes in the field[§], resolved on laying siege to that city.

^{*} Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend family.

[†] According to Ali Rezâ, he remained in Isfahan between thirty and forty days.

[‡] He was not only refused protection, but threatened with violence by powerful chief who had deserted from his army, if he went to Hamadan but, instead of avoiding that city as he had been advised, he advanced rapidly with a few followers, took its ungenerous governor by surprise, slew him, and used his wealth in paying his new levies.

[§] His troops gained several advantages over those of Sâduk Khan, parti-

VOL. II. H

Sâduk Khan, when he learnt that Ali Moorad was advancing to attack his capital, detached an army (chiefly infantry) to a position about twenty-five miles from Shiraz^b, with orders to oppose his progress : but the different corps of which it was composed quarrelled about the distribution of provisions ; and the whole retreated in disorder, pursued by the horse of Ali Moorad Khan, who hastened to take advantage of an occurrence promising important results, as it evinced a want of union and discipline among his adversaries.

Shiraz was blockaded, rather than besieged, for eight months. The assailants had made no progress in destroying the defences ; but both the inhabitants and the troops were reduced to such distress for want of supplies, that a spirit of revolt began to display itself : a part of the garrison seized one of the gates, and gave it up to Ali Moorad Khan, whose army immediately took possession of the town^c, but committed no outrage that could cause the inhabitants to regret the desire they had for some time entertained of submitting to his authority.

Sâduk Khan, with his family, retreated to the citadel ; but he was soon compelled to surrender, and was put to death^d with all his sons that had reached manhood, except Jaffier Khan, who had made his terms with the conqueror long before the city was taken. Sâduk had evinced, during the life of his brother, Kerreem, a moderation and judgment which had given a very favourable impression of his disposition ; and his conduct at the siege of Bussorah added to his former character, of a respectable man, the

cularly in an action at Abâdâh, where Tâher Khan, the son of Sâduk Khan, commanded the forces of his father.

^b The village they encamped at was Hâzârbizâ.—ALI REZÂ'S *History of the Zend Family*.

^c Shiraz was taken on the 18th of Rubbee-ool-awul, A.H. 1195, February A.D. 1781.

^d Ali Rezâ states, that he was put to death ; others say, his eyes were first put out, and then poison administered ; while a third account is, that, frantic at the loss of sight, he dashed his brains out.

reputation of a good soldier: but in his latter years we lose all respect for an inactive and indulgent parent, who shutting himself up in his capital, appeared insensible to the incompetence and vices of his sons, and continued to intrust them with the command of armies and the government of provinces, until a general disgust at their misconduct and oppression alienated all minds from his rule. Nor can we deplore the fate of a chief who attained power, by depriving of his crown, and of sight*, the son of a brother, to whose courage and virtues he and his family were indebted for all they possessed; and whose memory was so revered in Persia, that the inhuman Zuckee Khan had not dared to outrage public feeling by that crime with which Sâduk Khan commenced his unpropitious reign.

Ali Moorad Khan was now sovereign of Persia; and his character and success seemed to promise some years of rest to that disturbed kingdom. Among the chiefs of his army, none had distinguished himself more during the siege, for his courage and conduct, than Ackbar Khan, the son of Zuckee Khan; but we may conclude that he was as cruel and revengeful as he was brave and enterprising, since he not only urged Ali Moorad to put Sâduk Khan with his three younger sons and some of his principal nobles to death, but obtained permission to be their executioner. His eagerness for their fate precipitated his own: he was accused of plotting against the life of the ruler whom he served; and it was not difficult to persuade Ali Moorad of the dangers he had to apprehend from his ambitious cousin. He believed, or affected to believe him, guilty; and the prince

* Franklin, Olivier, and Waring agree, that the eyes of Abool Fatteh Khan were put out by Sâduk Khan; and it appears almost impossible that the former, who visited Shiraz in 1786, when Jaffier Khan, the son of that prince, was upon the throne, could be mistaken in such a fact. Yet Ali Rezá, in his *History of the Zend Family*, distinctly states, that the eyes of this prince and his brothers were put out by Ali Moorad Khan, when he took Shiraz. This is probably an attempt of a partial historian to remove the guilt from a prince whose memory he respected.



Jaffier Khan became the willing instrument of putting to death^f the man whose hands were yet stained with the blood of his father and brothers.

After remaining a few months at Shiraz, Ali Moorad Khan returned to Isfahan, which city became, during his reign, the capital of the kingdom. He confided so far in his half-brother, Jaffier Khan, as to employ him in the government of a province^g. The command of his army was given to his son, Shaikh Vais, who was detached to the north-western frontier to keep in check Aga Mahomed Khan. This young prince was at first very successful. He invaded Mazenderan, took Sâri, the capital, and defeated the chief of the Kajirs, who fled to Asterabad. A force was detached in pursuit of him; but the rash commander^h of this corps advanced without securing the difficult defiles through which he passed. They were occupied by the enemy, who not only cut off his communication with the army in Mazenderan, but prevented any supplies from reaching his camp. The distress consequent on these operations compelled him to attempt a retreat; but this was impracticable. He was attacked, defeated, and slain, by Aga Mahomed Khan; and almost all his followers either lost their lives, or were made prisoners. The few who escaped communicated a panic to the troops with Shaikh Vais, who instantly dispersed, and by their cowardice compelled their leader to abandon Sâri, and the other conquests he had made. He retreated to Teheran, and was joined there by Ali Moorad Khan, whose rage against the chiefs for deserting his son was so great, that he ordered several of

^f Franklin and Olivier state, that he conspired against the life of Ali Moorad Khan; Waring deems his death to have proceeded from envy of his superior talents. Ali Rezâ informs us that there was a mixture of both motives: that Ackbar Khan had, no doubt, ambitious views; and that Ali Moorad Khan dreaded him so much, as to be glad of a pretext for putting him to death: this is probably the fact.

^g He was first appointed to Shuster, and afterwards to the Khumsâ.

^h Mahomed Zâhir Khan.

them to be put to death in a cruel¹ and disgraceful manner.

Ali Moorad Khan, though suffering under a very severe illness, evinced the most active energy. He had formed another army, which he sent into Mazenderan; and was preparing to support it in person, when he learnt that Jaffier Khan^k, encouraged by the intelligence of the reverses his arms had sustained, and by a report of the dangerous state of his health, had revolted, and was marching toward the capital. Ali Moorad was so irritated, that he instantly resolved to proceed to Isfahan. His ministers and medical attendants entreated him to remain where he was till the violence of his disease had abated; and the latter gave it as their opinion, that travelling at that severe season (for it was the depth of winter) would be attended with extreme hazard to his life: but the impatient monarch refused to listen to their advice; he could think of no danger but that which threatened his power. Their predictions proved true, and he expired¹ on the road. The principal officers of his court concealed his death from the army until it reached the capital; and the royal property was by this wise precaution saved from pillage: for almost all the troops who had attended him, when they learnt he was no more, spread themselves over the country, and began to plunder in every direction.

The character of Ali Moorad Khan has been variously given. He appears to have possessed an energetic and firm mind. There can be no better claim to a character than the respect of an able enemy. Aga Mahomed Khan, who found it difficult, while this prince lived, to maintain Mazenderan, was wont to say to his adherents, who urged him

¹ Ali Rezá states, that he commanded their brains to be beaten out by wooden mallets.

^k This prince, we are told by Ali Rezá, was at Zunján in the Khumsá, and directed his march to Isfahan.

¹ He died on the 28th of Seffer, A.H. 1199, (11th of February, 1785,) at the village of Moortchákhour, about thirty miles from Isfahan.

to advance into Irak, "Let us wait till that respectable blind gentleman^m (so he always called Ali Moorad, who had lost one of his eyes) is out of the way; then, but not before, we may succeed in such an enterprise."

Five days elapsed from the death of Ali Moorad till the arrival of Jaffier Khan at Isfahan, during which period the name and ensigns of royalty were usurped by Bauker Khan, the governor of the city; a vain, imprudent man, who appears to have had no means of supporting his pretensions. He fled at Jaffier Khan's approach, but was pursued and taken; and his ambition only obtained him the distinction of sharing the imprisonment of the relations of his late sovereign. The person whose pretensions Jaffier Khan had most cause to apprehend, was Shaikh Vais, the son of the deceased monarch. He addressed a letter to that prince in the friendliest terms; but having deluded him within his power, the mask was thrown off, and the confiding youth was deprived of sight, to prevent his ever disturbing the reign of his treacherous uncle.

Aga Mahomed kept the promise he had often made to his followers, of leading them into the plains of Irak on the death of Ali Moorad. The moment intelligence of that desired event reached him, he issued from the mountains of Mazenderan, accompanied by only five or six hundred men; and as he found his numbers hourly increased by the junction of his own adherents, and of disaffected chiefs, he pushed boldly on toward Isfahan, satisfied that decided success alone could keep an army so composed together. It is affirmed by someⁿ that he had a secret correspondence with several of the principal nobles; but there had been little time for such intrigues, as he was at Asterabad when

^m I have been assured by many who had heard Aga Mahomed speak of Ali Moorad, that he always called him the *koor moolâshukus*, or "the respectable blind man."

ⁿ Olivier states, that he was invited by Bauker Khan, but gives no authority for this assertion. The fact is not confirmed in any history or memoir of this period that I have perused.

Ali Moorad died ; and in little more than two months from that date he entered Isfahan^o, whence Jaffier Khan fled at his approach in such confusion, that his baggage, treasure, and even the ensigns of royalty, were plundered by the rabble^p of the capital. While his formidable rival was establishing himself at Isfahan, Jaffier Khan was welcomed to Shiraz. The fidelity of Syud Moorad^q, the governor of that city, was very doubtful ; but the allegiance of its inhabitants had been preserved by the influence of their magistrates. The most active of these was Hajee Ibrahim, who was immediately promoted by his grateful sovereign to the high office of *kalanter*, or chief civil magistrate of Fars.

Aga Mahomed Khan did not remain long in possession of his conquest. An unsuccessful attack made on some tribes of mountaineers^r, led the fluctuating bands, who had been the instruments of his success, to desert what they deemed his falling fortunes. He was thus obliged to make a precipitate retreat to Teheran ; and while he was forming a more efficient force, Jaffier Khan repossessed himself of Isfahan^s : but the advance of Aga Mahomed obliged him again to abandon it ; and the remainder of his reign was a defensive war against that ruler, who, master of almost all Irak, annually threatened an attack on Shiraz.

Jaffier Khan had not been more successful in repressing

* He entered on the 6th of May. The distance from Asterabad is four hundred miles.

^p We are told, that the rabble, who plundered Jaffier Khan's baggage, were encouraged and led by some nobles escaped from prison ; among these was Bauker Khan, who has been before mentioned. This chief had not only been imprisoned, but severely beaten by Jaffier Khan, to make him discover his wealth.

^q Syud Moorad Khan was the nephew of Ali Moorad.

^r He attacked the Bukhteeârees, who inhabit the great ranges near the capital, and whose complete reduction had hardly been effected by the energy of Nâdir Shah : since Nâdir's death they had maintained their former rude independence.

^s Raheem Khan, the governor, defended the citadel for some time, and when taken, was put to death.—ALI REZA's *History of the Zend Family*.

the rebellion of his own subjects, than in opposing foreign enemies. His relation, Ismael Khan[†], whom he had intrusted with the government of Hamadan, revolted, and defeated the army^u which he led against him. He was also repulsed with considerable loss from the city of Yezd^x which he made an effort to reduce. But in the beginning of the last year of his reign, fortune seemed more favourable. His son, Lootf Ali Khan, had made a successful expedition into the mountains of Lâr; encouraged by Aga Mahomed Khan's absence, he marched with a considerable force to Isfahan, and defeated the troops left for its defence. But his triumph was short: a report of his formidable rival's approach obliged him to evacuate that city, which was never again possessed by a prince of the Zend family.

We are informed by an authority^v to which we cannot refuse credit, that Jaffier Khan was kind to his subjects, and gracious to strangers; that his temper was mild, and that he was inclined to justice. This favorable account of a luxurious prince, enjoying himself at a moment of comparative repose, whose affairs were at that period administered by a wise and popular minister^z, is not irreconcilable to the character we are disposed to form of him, from contemplating the events of his life; nor are the negative virtues ascribed to him at variance with those charges of cowardly weakness and meditated treachery, which have been affixed to his memory. There can be no doubt that

[†] Ismael Khan was a cousin of Jaffier Khan. His father, a brother of Kerreem Khan, died during the life of that ruler.

^u This action took place on the 2d of March, 1786. The victory is chiefly ascribed to Khoosroo Khan, the Waly of Ardelân, who brought a large corps of Kûrds to the aid of Ismael.

^x The governor of that city, Tuckee Khan, was aided by the independent chief of Tubbus, a neighbouring town in Khorassan.

^v Franklin, who resided for some time at Shiraz during his reign.

^z His name was Meerza Hoossein, a most respectable man. He was the father of Meerza Boozoorg, the prime minister of the Prince Abbas Meerza, the heir apparent of Persia.

the total disregard which he showed to the honour of one of his most faithful and distinguished leaders, and to his own pledged faith, led to his becoming the indirect instrument of his own destruction, and gave to the blow of his assassin the colour of justice.

Among the chiefs who served him, none was more distinguished than Hajee Ali Kooli, of Kazeroon. This nobleman had been sent to quell a serious revolt in the country to the east of Cashan. He had subdued the leader^a against whom he had been detached: among his prisoners was a corps of fifteen hundred Khorassan infantry; who, after defending themselves bravely, had capitulated on the express condition of being honourably treated. Jaffier Khan refused to ratify this agreement, and directed that the men should be deprived of their arms, and thrown into prison^b. In vain his general represented that this act would be alike impolitic and disgraceful. His remonstrances were disregarded; and his earnest request that his honour might be preserved from the stain which so flagrant a breach of promise would entail on him, was treated with slight, if not with contempt. The indignant chief resolved to quit the service of a monarch who had sacrificed his reputation. He left the army, accompanied by all his followers^c; and, notwithstanding the alternate threats and entreaties of his monarch, retired to Kazeroon^d. It is probable that Jaffier Khan had not power at the moment of preventing^e this act of open contumacy; but he soon sent an army to reduce Hajee Ali Kooli to obedience. This leader who, subsequently to his departure from camp, had refused to obey a

^a The name of this chief was Mahomed Hoossein Khan, Arab. He was aided by Meer Mahomed Khan of Tubbus.

^b Ali Rezā's History of the Zend Family.

^c These were almost all infantry.

^d Ali Rezā's History of the Zend Family.

^e It is possible that the chiefs of his army would have refused to act against Hajee Ali Kooli when the question was one of personal honour, and evidently unmixed with any desire of revolt.

summons to attend court, was at last persuaded to yield: he did not however consent to go to Shiraz, until the monarch had sworn upon the Koran that he would not offer him the slightest injury: but Jaffier Khan could not forgive a man whom he had so deeply wronged; he seized him, and unmindful of his faith, threw him into a prison, where he was doomed to linger out the remainder of his existence. Rendered desperate, the chief of Kazeroon entered into a conspiracy with some other prisoners to destroy the despot by whom he had been so cruelly treated. Among these, Syud Moorad Khan^f, from his high birth and former employment, had the most influence. When the plot was ripe for execution, a slave who had been bribed, managed to convey poison^g into the victuals of Jaffier Khan; and when he was writhing under its effects, the prisoners were released by their friends, and rushing into his chamber, put an end to his existence. The head of their sovereign, thrown from the citadel into the square before its gate, announced to the inhabitants of Shiraz that their ruler was no more.

Lootf Ali Khan, the son of Jaffier Khan, was in Kerman when his father was murdered; and Syud Moorad Khan, through the influence of the conspirators, was proclaimed king; but he only reigned a few months. Hajee Ibrahim, the principal magistrate of Shiraz, who was warmly attached to the cause of the absent prince, disposed a number of the inhabitants and chiefs of tribes to the same interest: and Lootf Ali Khan, who, on receiving the first intelligence

^f Syud Moorad, who had been Governor of Shiraz, was first trusted and employed, and afterwards confined, by Jaffier Khan; who ordered him to be beaten severely, to compel him to discover his riches.—FRANKLIN.

^g I here follow the History of Ali Rezâ, who is very particular, and, I have no doubt, correct, in his account of the death of Jaffier Khan. Waring states, that the poison was administered by a female slave, who had formerly belonged to Syud Moorad Khan. Olivier (vol. vi. p. 209) asserts, that this prince had taken medicines to lessen his corpulence, and that they had reduced him to a state of debility and suffering, which made it easy for the conspirators to attack and overcome him.

of what had occurred, had fled from the uncertain fidelity of his own troops to the Shaikh of Abusheher, was soon enabled to assert his claim to the crown of his father. The Arab chief, who had granted him protection and aid, died immediately after his arrival at Abusheher; but with his last breath he charged his son^h to devote himself to Lootf Ali Khan, whose small army, when he first took the field, was almost entirely formed of the followers of this petty ruler. The approach of a considerable corps under the brotherⁱ of Syud Moorad threatened destruction to this force; but the second in command^k being attached to Hajee Ibrahim, prevailed on the soldiers to seize their general, and declare in favour of the prince whom they were sent to oppose. Encouraged by this event, Lootf Ali Khan hastened to the capital, where the influence of his friends had been so effectually exerted, that he was welcomed by the unanimous voice of its inhabitants. Syud Moorad Khan, who had shut himself up in the citadel, was soon compelled to surrender, and suffered death: but Hajee Ali Kooli, whose defection from that cause, which resentment and despair had led him to adopt, was essential to the success of this revolution, had, with several others, received solemn assurances of pardon from Hajee Ibrahim; and Lootf Ali Khan, on his accession, not only confirmed these promises, but marked with favour and confidence those to whom they were made.

Before we proceed with the history of Lootf Ali Khan, it appears proper to say a few words on the origin and rise of a man, whose name became so conspicuous in the annals of his country. Hajee Ibrahim was the son of Hajee Hâshem^l,

^h Shaikh Nâsser, who was till very lately the chief of Abusheher, and is since dead.

ⁱ Shah Moorad.

^k His name was Ali Himmüt Khan.

^l The name of Hajee Hâshem is still held in great respect in his native city. When Nâdir Shah encamped there, this magistrate gave him an entertainment in the garden of *Dil Gooshâ*, near the tomb of Sadi. This

a respectable magistrate of Shiraz, who having lost his eyesight through age was, during his latter years, unfit for business, and left a large family in very low, if not distressed circumstances: but his son, Hajee Ibrahim, early became a magistratè in one of the wards of his native city; and his manly character, in which good temper and good sense were combined with extraordinary fortitude, raised him rapidly into high employment. He had been placed in the situation of his father by Kerreem Khan, and promoted to a higher charge^m by Ali Moorad: as it was chiefly owing to his exertions that Jaffier Khan obtained such easy possession of Shiraz when forced to fly from Isfahan, he (as has been before stated) raised Hajee Ibrahim to the high station of *kalanter*, or first magistrate of Fars; and the influence of that situation enabled him to repay his debt of gratitude to the father, by placing his son upon the throne.

No event could appear more propitious to the happiness of his country, or more likely to restore the fallen fortunes of his family than the elevation of Lootf Ali Khan. Although not yet twenty years of age, he had been matured by continual employment during his father's reign, and was already ranked, in the estimation of both friends and enemies, among the bravest and best soldiers of his country. His appearance was singularly calculated to win that admiration which his qualities commanded: his countenance was beautiful, and full of animated expression; his form tall and graceful; though slender, he was active and strong. In skill as a horseman, and in dexterity at all martial exercises, he was unrivalled; nor was he deemed wanting in the mental qualities which his situation required. He had displayed on several occasions as much conduct as courage. Before he

event, which flattered the vanity of the family, as it proved the consequence of Hajee Hâshem, is related in the History of Hajee Ibrahim; and his son, Meerza Mahomed Khan gave me an entertainment in 1800, on the same spot where, as he took care to inform me, his grandfather had feasted Nâdir Shah and his court about seventy years before.

^m He was made magistrate of all the Hyderee *mâhâls*, or wards termed Hyderee, which include more than half the city.

ascended the throne, his manners were kind and prepossessing, particularly to his inferiors; but soon after he obtained power, his disposition changed, and his mind appears to have lost some of its best qualities. He was no longer mild and conciliating, but proud and self-sufficient. The gratitude and esteem he expressed, and probably felt at the moment, for Hajee Ibrahim, whose attachment to his cause had enabled him to attain the throne, gave way to alarm and suspicion. Nor was it surprising that he should have viewed with more jealousy than regard the subject who had shown himself possessed of the dangerous power of placing the crown upon his head.

Lootf Ali Khan was hardly established in the government, before Aga Mahomed Khan advanced to attack him. The young prince ventured to meet his enemies in the field^a: but he was defeated by superior numbers, and forced to fly to Shiraz. The Kajir prince, encouraged by his success, invested that city; but, after a vain endeavour during more than a month to make some impression upon its defences, he raised the siege, and returned to Teheran, now become the capital of his kingdom.

The next year Lootf Ali Khan, expecting a repetition of this attack, made formidable preparations to resist it: but Aga Mahomed Khan was occupied in Aderbejan; and the young ruler of Fars, unwilling that the force he had collected should remain idle, resolved to march into Kerman, and compel the governor^o to submit to his authority. The season of operations was almost past; and the prudent counsellors of Lootf Ali Khan urged him to accept the terms offered by the chief of Kerman, which included the full acknowledgment of his authority, the regular payment of the revenue of the province, and every submission that could be required of him, except his personal attendance at court.

^a This battle was fought at a village called Házárbizá, within six *fersákhs*, or twenty-five miles, of Shiraz.

^o The name of this chief was Hoossein Khan Khákee.

But on this the impetuous prince insisted; and, with a view of enforcing it, laid siege during a very severe winter to the city of Kerman. He was discomfited, his historian^p informs us, not by the garrison, but by the elements. Almost all the horses, and many of the men in his army, perished through cold and hunger; for when the snow became deep, it was impossible to furnish his camp with regular supplies. Compelled by the defection of some of his troops, and the clamorous discontent of all, to raise the siege of Kerman, he returned to Shiraz, sullen and irascible from the reverse he had sustained.

Before he set out on this unfortunate expedition, he appointed one of his younger brothers, who was quite a child, to the nominal rule of Fars; but he had at the same time committed the civil government of Shiraz, and the countries in its vicinity, to Hajee Ibrahim. The command of the garrison, with separate powers, was given to a chief of his own tribe, called Burkhoodâr Khan; and the ark, or citadel, was placed in charge of another nobleman of the Zend family. This division of authority, meant to guard against treachery, only promoted it. Burkhoodâr Khan, a weak and arrogant man, vain of his rank and of his independent power over the military, insisted, but without effect, on Hajee Ibrahim paying him all those submissive attentions, which in Persia are considered due to a superior. Offended at what he deemed a personal insult, he laboured to impress his prince with the belief, that such marked disrespect for a lord of the Zend family, could only be shewn by one who cherished traitorous designs. If these representations were not altogether believed, they made a serious impression on the irritated mind of Lootf Ali; and every act, after his return from Kerman, proved that he had no longer the same respect or confidence in his minister.

An occurrence some time before this had greatly weakened that reliance which Hajee Ibrahim was at first disposed

^p Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

to place in his sovereign. Lootf Ali Khan, at his earnest solicitation, had pardoned a number of persons supposed to be concerned in the conspiracy against his father. Among these was Meerza Mehdee, who had been formerly employed by Jaffier Khan¹; but, on being discovered in some peculation, was disgraced, and condemned to lose his ears. When the head of Jaffier Khan was thrown from the citadel, it had been exposed to a thousand indignities; and, according to popular rumour, Meerza Mehdee had cut off the ears. He had always denied this accusation; and Hajee Ibrahim, who professed to be persuaded of his innocence, solicited his pardon of Lootf Ali Khan, who not only granted it, but said, even if the accusation were true, he freely forgave the meerza from the consideration he had for his mediator. Several months after, when the prince was distributing honorary dresses, one was given to Meerza Mehdee. This was reported to his mother, who sent for him, and asked, if it was not enough that he should be required to forgive the murderers of his father. "Is it necessary," she added, "that you should degrade yourself by bestowing marks of regard and favour on a wretch who mutilated his remains?" This upbraiding language had the effect intended on the violent temper of the prince. He returned to his court, summoned Meerza Mehdee, and, after reproaching him with his crime², directed him to be thrown into a fire. Hajee Ibrahim had been sent for, but arrived only in time to hear from the prince what he had done, and to see with horror the remains of the man whose pardon had been so fully granted to his intercession³.

¹ He was Lashkur-novees, the duties of which office are, to keep a register of the troops, and to transact all business relative to their pay.

² Persian MS.

³ Lootf Ali Khan demanded of Meerza Mehdee, what that man deserved who could behave ill to his sovereign and benefactor. "To be burnt alive," was the reply. "You are the man," said the prince; and directed him to be instantly thrown into a fire.—*Persian MS.*

⁴ Hajee Ibrahim related to me the particulars of this event, in almost the same words in which I find them written in his history. He assured me,

The mutual distrust which had arisen between the sovereign and the minister became apparent to all. Lootf Ali Khan could ill brook the restraint under which he acted; but he could not venture on an open attack of one whose influence he dreaded: for, besides the devoted attachment which the citizens of Shiraz were known to entertain for him, many governors of provinces and chiefs of tribes were warmly attached to his interest, and his brothers commanded the principal corps of infantry with the army. But though the prince refrained from violence, every action showed his feelings; and the minister, satisfied that his existence was at stake, determined to overthrow a prince, "from whom he had ceased," in his own words, "to expect any thing but death^u."

When affairs were in this situation, Lootf Ali Khan, who had resolved upon advancing to Isfahan, made the same arrangements for a division of authority at Shiraz, as when he proceeded to Kerman: and with a chief of his own family^x in charge of the garrison, and another in command of the citadel, he considered that he had nothing to fear from his minister; but still he could not avoid showing a distrust of his fidelity. After he had publicly nominated him to the civil government, when the army was on the eve of marching, he ordered his eldest son, Meerza Mahomed, to be sent to camp, where, as he was too young to be employed, he was evidently meant to be a hostage for his father's conduct. If Hajee Ibrahim had before entertained doubts regarding the light in which he was viewed, they were removed by this ill-timed act of suspicion; and he appears to have decided on the immediate execution of a plan, which he had

he did not believe the man guilty of what popular rumour accused him of; and added, "From the moment this act was committed, I lost all confidence in Lootf Ali Khan."

^u MS. History of Hajee Ibrahim.

^x Burkhoodâr was appointed, as before, to the command of the garrison and the charge of the police. Mahomed Ali Khan, Zend, had charge of the citadel.

for some time contemplated, of making over Shiraz to Aga Mahomed Khan, and thus rendering him the sole ruler of Persia.

Hajee Ibrahim perhaps persuaded himself^y, that by this treason he was only anticipating an event which must occur, and saving his country from a protracted war between two rival families; but there can be no doubt that his real motive was self-preservation. He had lost all confidence in Lootf Ali Khan. He knew that he had many enemies, incessant in their endeavours to destroy him; and he perceived, from the conduct of the prince, that their representations had made all the impression they could desire. Under these circumstances, he sought to preserve his life, and to place himself, by a signal service, under the protection of a powerful monarch. He was successful: but his memory is stained with the reproach of having destroyed a family to which he owed all his advancement.

When Lootf Ali Khan had advanced some marches on his way to Isfahan, Hajee Ibrahim, with a small corps of citizens which he had formed and placed under the command of his youngest brother, Mahomed Hussein Khan, seized the two noblemen^z left in charge of the garrison and citadel of Shiraz; and, so well were his measures taken, this was effected without bloodshed. An account of his success was despatched to one of his brothers^a with the army, which, when the messenger arrived, was encamped^b within twenty

^y In his conversations with me on the reasons which influenced his conduct at this period, Hajee Ibrahim always declared, that a desire to save his country from continual petty wars was one of his principal motives. "None," said he, "except some plundering soldiers cared whether a Zend or a Kajir was upon the throne; but all desired that Persia should be great and powerful, and enjoy internal tranquillity."

^z Burkhoodâr Khan and Mahomed Ali Khan. They were invited to a consultation on some affairs regarding the civil administration, and seized as they were seated at the hajee's house.

^a Abdool Raheem Khan.

^b Lootf Ali Khan was encamped at a village within five ferssekhs of Koomeshâ, to which the troops of Aga Mahomed Khan had advanced.

miles of the forces of Aga Mahomed Khan, commanded by his nephew, then known by the familiar appellation of Bâbâ Khan^c. The brother of Hajee Ibrahim communicated the intelligence to his friends, and to the chiefs concerned in the plot; and it was settled that, immediately after dark, some of the infantry should fire upon Lootf Ali Khan's quarters; and that this fire, accompanied by a great noise, should be the signal for the friends of Hajee Ibrahim to assemble. The moment the first shot was heard, loud shouts followed from every quarter of the camp, and bodies of men began to move. The prince, astonished and enraged, sent messenger after messenger to inquire the cause of the uproar. These at last returned and advised him to mount his horse and escape, as his own troops had become his enemies. None of his principal officers would attend his summons: one chief^d alone, and seventy men, continued with him. Accompanied by this small party, he proceeded towards his capital, of which he was satisfied that his friends still retained possession. On the second day after he left the camp, he received information of all that had passed; but being now joined by about three hundred horsemen, he moved boldly on to the gates of Shiraz, and sent a person to demand of Hajee Ibrahim the reason of his conduct. "Inform Lootf Ali Khan," said that minister calmly, "that I knew his intentions, and had no mode of saving my life but by depriving him of the power to take it away. Advise him to abandon all hope of repossessing Shiraz, and bid him think only of saving himself by flight^e." But the proud prince, who had already been joined by a number of his troops, scorned the advice. "The traitor," said he, "after

^c Bâbâ Khan was the name by which the present sovereign of Persia was known till the death of his uncle. His proper name was Fattah Ali Khan; but Aga Mahomed was in the habit of terming him *Bâbâ*, or "child;" and the name continued to be given to him after he attained manhood. He was at this period twenty-two years of age.

^d Tâmasp Khan Fylee.

^e MS. History of Hajee Ibrahim.

all, is but a citizen^f, and his force consists merely of a few shopkeepers, who can never withstand brave soldiers." Supported by these expectations, he encamped near the walls of the city; but that policy which had placed the families of the soldiers in the capital, now gave great advantage to Hajee Ibrahim: he called on the few troops still with their monarch to return immediately to their homes if they desired the safety of those whom they loved. The appeal had full effect: the deserted Lootf Ali Khan was compelled to fly, with four or five attendants, to Abusheher. He found, however, that the shaikh of that place was no longer his friend. That chief was devoted to Hajee Ibrahim. But he met with a kind reception, and all the aid his limited means could afford, from the governor of the neighbouring port of Bunder Reeg; and was enabled by this support to collect a few followers, with whom he resolved to attempt the recovery of Shiraz.

The want of numbers in the army of Lootf Ali Khan was remedied by his own heroism, and by the valour of those who adhered to his fortunes. His first success was over the troops of the Shaikh of Abusheher^g. His next action was with the governor of Kazeroon^h, whom he made prisoner and deprived of sight. This act of cruelty was very injurious to his interests; for while it made a powerful family his implacable enemies, it weakened that sympathy which his youth, his courage, and his misfortunes, were so calculated to excite.

^f Sháhreee, or citizen, is used in Persia as a term of contempt, to signify unwarlike, the soldiers being all men of wandering tribes.

^g This action, if such it can be termed, was fought at a village called Tangestán. The cavalry under Rizá Kooli Khan deserted him and joined Lootf Ali Khan; and the Bushire infantry fled before they were attacked. —ALI REZA'S *History*.

^h Hajee Ali Kooli Khan of Kazeroon, who had been pardoned by Lootf Ali Khan on his ascending the throne, had been subsequently compelled to fly to Aga Mahomed Khan. His brother, Rizá Kooli Khan, was governor, and had offended Lootf Ali Khan by plundering part of his baggage and some favorite horses when he fled from Shiraz.

Lootf Ali Khan, encouraged by these successes, once more appeared before Shiraz, and commenced a blockade, which he was unable to besiege, having neither infantry nor cannon. The unsubdued spirit he had evinced gained him many followers; and his friends began to indulge sanguine hopes of the re-establishment of his power. But the daring valour and unwearied efforts of the young prince were opposed by a man, whose wisdom removed danger by measures of anticipation, and whose firmness, tempered by moderation, gave no unnecessary irritation to his enemies, while it secured the constancy and attachment of his adherents. The extraordinary character of this wonderful man was perhaps more fully displayed by his conduct on this critical occasion, than by any other action of his eventful life.

After the revolt of his troops had forced Lootf Ali Khan to fly from that army with which he had hoped to conquer Isfahan in the preceding year, they had returned in disorder to Shiraz; and their arrival had increased the number of men belonging to the military tribes¹ of Fars within its walls, to about twelve thousand. The infantry, or city militia, composed of shopkeepers and artificers, did not amount to a fifth of this number: yet these were the only troops from whom Hajee Ibrahim could expect support; for it was impossible that tribes, whose fortunes were dependent on the continuance of the Zend dynasty, could ever consent to what he intended,—the transfer of the supreme power to the chief of the Kajirs. Convinced that they would oppose the execution of his plan, Hajee Ibrahim resolved on disarming and expelling from Shiraz this multitude of soldiers. He took his measures with a precaution and promptitude which eluded all suspicion. Having given orders to secure the streets which led by a back way from his house to the gate of the city, he sent notice to the mili-

¹ They are termed Eelyáts, or “tribes,” are all soldiers, and generally horsemen. The cities furnish to the army only infantry: they are defended by a militia, which sometimes takes the field.

tary tribes to be ready, at an appointed time, to receive a donation. They assembled as directed, and a hundred^{*} were admitted at a time into the interior court of his mansion. From the height of the walls round it, those who were without could know nothing of what was passing within. The first party admitted found themselves surrounded, but were told that no injury was intended to them if they resigned their arms: they did so; and while these were given to citizens to increase the corps on which Hajee Ibrahim could depend, the unarmed soldiers were conducted, by the back way before mentioned, beyond the gates of the town. The whole were disarmed, and party after party joined their astonished companions under the walls. However extraordinary it may appear, this measure was executed without confusion or bloodshed. When the whole body were expelled, they were directed to proceed to some villages in the vicinity. Unable to resist, they were forced to obey. Some joined Lootf Ali Khan; others remained at their places of destination, watching the progress of events.

Hajee Ibrahim wrote to Aga Mahomed Khan the moment he had seized Shiraz; and that chief sent a general¹ with a strong detachment to his support; but Lootf Ali Khan took the first opportunity of attacking this corps, and, after a severe contest, defeated it. Aga Mahomed, alarmed at this intelligence, ordered a force^m to Shiraz, which he conceived from its superior numbers must terminate the war. This body, after being joined by the troops in garrison, marched to attack Lootf Ali Khan, whose small army they outnumbered more than ten to oneⁿ. The brave prince did not decline the combat, but left his entrenchments, and drew his men up in some gardens, with the double view of occupying a strong position, and concealing his numbers from observation. The action, at its commencement, was

^{*} Some accounts say only fifty: the difference is of little consequence.

¹ Moostâphâ Khan.

^m He gave the command to Jân Mahomed Khan and Rizâ Kooli Khan.

ⁿ Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend family.

favorable to his enemies, who drove his men from their position, and pursued them to some distance: but Lootf Ali Khan, who possessed eminent talents as a commander, observed that they had commenced to plunder the camp he had abandoned; and, judging the opportunity favorable, he made a resolute and successful charge with a body of horse whom he had rallied. His repulsed troops, encouraged by the gallantry of their chief, returned to the charge, and the enemy gave way in every quarter. The victory was complete; and it was rendered more decisive from Rizâ Kooli Khan, one of the Kajir leaders, being among the prisoners.

Hajee Ibrahim, who perceived in these repeated successes a dangerous increase of reputation to Lootf Ali Khan, wrote to Aga Mahomed, urging him to advance in person. That monarch, sensible of the importance of the crisis, moved with a large force^o towards Shiraz. Although his numbers exceeded those opposed to him in a proportion of nearly a hundred to one, he proceeded with a caution which proved that he thought there was much to apprehend from the bold enterprise of his enemy: nor was he mistaken. When he arrived at a village^p near the ruins of Persepolis, his camp was suddenly attacked by Lootf Ali Khan: animated with a courage equal to that of any hero who had ever feasted in those halls, he had determined to make one great struggle for the crown of Persia. He surprised the advanced guard of Aga Mahomed Khan, and defeated it, and, following the fugitives to their camp with only a few hundred men, attacked upwards of thirty thousand. The darkness of the night, the fears communicated by those who fled, and the terror of his name, created a dismay and confusion which

^o Some authors state that he had forty thousand men; but this is an exaggeration.

^p The name of this village is Mâyen. It is about sixty miles from Shiraz, and thirty-one from Persepolis. Aga Mahomed reached this encampment on the fourteenth of Shâwâl, in the year of the Hijrah 1206.

promised complete success¹. Almost the whole of Aga Mahomed Khan's army dispersed; the assailants had arrived at the royal quarters, when a chief, who had joined Lootf Ali Khan, assured him that the Kajir monarch was among the fugitives, and entreated that he would not lose the wealth he had so nobly won, by permitting his followers to plunder the jewels and treasures of an empire². This chief³ was unfortunately believed. Lootf Ali Khan directed his men to halt, and not to enter the royal pavilion; they obeyed, but dispersed to plunder in other directions. When that morning dawned which was to have beheld him a conqueror, he heard with dismay the public crier in the enemy's camp call to prayers⁴; this announced to those who remained of Aga Mahomed Khan's army that their sovereign was at his post. He had never left it. When he found it impossible to remedy the confusion into which his troops were thrown, he had remained stationary at his quarters, surrounded by some of his guards, expecting, from the small numbers of the enemy, and their want of discipline, the very event which occurred. Lootf Ali Khan, awakened from his dream of victory, found himself compelled to fly with all the speed he could, to save himself from being made prisoner.

This daring attempt to recover his power ought not to be deemed an act of desperate temerity, in which success was impossible. He well knew from experience, that in an army such as that which he attacked, confusion, if once introduced, was likely to be irremediable. He also knew that many chiefs of tribes were fluctuating between him and Aga Mahomed Khan. These leaders always acted on the

¹ He killed the leader, Ibrahim Khan, and a great number of his party: they were posted in the pass between the villages of Mâyen and Alboorz.

² Ali Reza's History of the Zend family.

³ His name was Meerza Fattah Ollâ Ardillanee. Some historians declare that he was sincere; others assert that he was the emissary of Aga Mahomed Khan.

⁴ This is never done except when the king commands in person.

impulse of the moment; and as the part they took was blindly adopted by their followers, he had a right to expect that brilliant success would turn the tide in his favour, and that he should overcome his enemies with the very means they had collected for his destruction. The plan of attack was able: he proceeded with every caution, and completely surprised the advance corps. The advantage he took of his first success showed his skill and determined courage. Victory was snatched from him by one of those incidents which have so often decided the fate of battles and of empires.

If Lootf Ali Khan deserved success, Aga Mahomed Khan had also merited the crown which this day fixed upon his brow. He had evinced, amid consternation and confusion, all that calm resolution and self-possession which marked his extraordinary character. His mind loved to dwell on these events; and he used often to observe, that in the modern History of Persia three achievements alone were worthy of being transmitted to posterity^a. First, the policy and firmness of Hajee Ibrahim, who, with a few shop-keepers, took Shiraz, and maintained it for months against all the warlike tribes of that province. Secondly, the daring heroism of Lootf Ali Khan, who, with four or five hundred men, ventured to attack an army of thirty thousand; and, lastly, the fortitude he himself had displayed, in remaining at his quarters when all around him fled; and that calmness in danger which made him direct the common crier to announce morning prayers in the usual manner, that both his own army and his enemy might learn he was at his post, undisturbed by all that had passed.

The flight of Lootf Ali Khan was continued until he reached Kerman, where he began again to collect followers: but Aga Mahomed Khan, who had marched to Shiraz, sent an army^x to attack him; and the few men who had joined him

^a Persian MS.

^x The cavalry of this force was commanded by Wullee Mahomed Khan, Kajir, and the infantry by Abdool Raheem Khan, brother to Hajee Ibrahim.

dispersed, considering his fortunes as desperate. The deserted prince fled to Khorassan⁷, which, since the death of Nâdir Shah, had remained subject to a number of independent chiefs. One of these, Meer Hoossein Khan, who ruled over the city and district of Tubbus, offered his protection to the royal fugitive; who, on learning that the jealous policy of Aga Mahomed Khan had destroyed the fortifications of Shiraz, determined to make another effort to reconquer that city. The chief of Tubbus furnished him with two hundred men; with these, and a few faithful followers who had never forsaken him, he marched toward Yezd. The governor⁸ of that city sent a corps to oppose him, which Lootf Ali Khan attacked with his usual impetuosity, and defeated. Elated with this success, his small force advanced rapidly upon the village of Aberkoh, on the borders of Fars. It submitted to his authority; and from it he proclaimed to his friends that he was once more in the field. He had still numbers of secret adherents; and the exaggerated reports of his success induced many to declare openly in his favour. In a short time his numbers increased to fifteen hundred men, with whom he besieged Darabjird. This celebrated town, though fallen from its former greatness, is still a place of some consequence, containing from ten to fifteen thousand inhabitants. The importance of such a conquest led Lootf Ali Khan to make every effort for its reduction: but the alarm excited by his reappearance at the head of an army had spread to Teheran, and a large force was sent against him under a noble^a of the Kajir tribe, while Hajee Ibrahim detached his youngest brother^b with a strong corps of infantry to reinforce the garrison of Darabjird^c. The approach of these troops compelled Lootf Ali Khan to raise the siege and retreat. He endeavoured to

⁷ Ali Reza's History of the Zend family.

⁸ Ali Nuckee Khan.

^a The name of this leader was Mahomed Hoossein Khan, Kajir.

^b Mahomed Hoossein Khan.

^c Ali Reza's History of the Zend Family.

make a stand at the fortified village of Rooneez; but, after some days' skirmishing, he was obliged to hazard an action, in which the superior number of his enemies prevailed, and he was compelled once more to seek protection from the ruler of Tubbus. That chief, however, though he received him kindly, began to entertain apprehensions that his friendship, which could not save his guest, might involve himself in his fall. He advised Lootf Ali to proceed to Candahar, and seek the aid of Timoor Shah, the reigning monarch of the Affghans, who alone possessed the power of restoring him to the throne of his ancestors. The prince acquiesced in the wisdom of this advice, and set out on his journey to the court of the Affghan king; but he had proceeded only a few marches, when he heard of Timoor's death, and the intelligence led him to relinquish the design of leaving Persia.

While Lootf Ali Khan hesitated on the course he should next pursue, he received letters from two chiefs of Nerman-sheer^d, the eastern district of Kerman, entreating him not to abandon his country, and pledging themselves, if he would return, to give him every support in their power^e. A Persian author has truly remarked, that "the slightest spark always rekindled the flame of hope in the breast of this warrior." He hastened to Nermansheer: encouraged by seeing a few soldiers again assembled round his standard, he formed the daring resolution of making himself master of the city of Kerman. Having approached it by rapid marches, he directed his brave uncle Abdûllâ Khan, the most distinguished of all those who had adhered to his fortunes, to advance with half his force, and make a false attack on the town. He kept the remainder in reserve; and when he saw the attention of the enemy wholly occupied by the corps with Abdûllâ, he led the troops under his immediate command to another part of the fort: being furnished with scaling ladders, they had mounted the walls

^d The names of these chiefs were Mahomed Khan and Jehangheer Khan.

^e Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

before they were perceived. The garrison, though surprised, made an obstinate resistance; but were ultimately driven from all their posts, and obliged to take shelter in the citadel: even that they were soon compelled to abandon. The officers' who commanded in Kerman effected their escape; but a great number of their men were slain, and the whole baggage fell into the hands of the conquerors. Lootf Ali once more assumed the style of a sovereign: coins were struck in his name, to commemorate this last of his glorious achievements. The historian^f of his reign observes "that the fortune of this prince, like the splendour of the meteor which he resembled, shone brightest at the moment of its close."

Aga Mahomed Khan, when he heard of the fall of Kerman, marched, with all the force he could collect, to encounter a foe who seemed to rise greater from every misfortune. Lootf Ali Khan was not dismayed by the vast superiority of numbers; his soldiers were encouraged by some partial successes, to second his heroic ardour; but after the siege had lasted four months, they began to suffer great distress, and several corps became discontented. One body of infantry, which had charge of some towers, gave them up to the enemy, and between two and three thousand of Aga Mahomed Khan's troops had entered, before the information of this treachery reached Lootf Ali Khan. The moment he heard of it, he hastened to the spot, and, after a severe contest, repulsed the foe^h; but this was his last success. One of the chiefsⁱ in whom he had most confided, determined to betray him. The traitor had charge of the citadel, which joined in one part with the outworks. He opened the gates at this entrance; and Aga Mahomed Khan introduced between ten and twelve thousand men,

^f These were Mahomed Hoossein Khan Karagoozooloo, the present chief of that tribe, and Abdool Raheem Khan, the brother of Hajee Ibrahim.

^g Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

^h Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

ⁱ Nujuff Kooli Khan of Khorassan.

and prepared to support them with his whole army. Looft Ali Khan, when he heard of this second act of treachery, attacked them with the most determined valour, but in vain : their numbers were too great, and he was obliged to retire, after seeing his bravest followers either slain or put to flight.

Aga Mahomed Khan, whose principal object was to prevent the escape of Looft Ali, had surrounded Kerman, and posted a strong body of men opposite every gateway. The young prince, beset on all sides, maintained the contest in the town during three hours : at night he crossed the ditch by a small bridge of loose planks, which were removed when they had served their purpose^k. The lines of the enemy were yet to be passed. He threw himself upon them with a courage that derived energy from despair, and, with three attendants, broke through the troops by whom he was opposed. He fled toward Nermansheer, and reached that district in safety.

When day dawned, and Aga Mahomed found, to use a Persian phrase, that "the lion had burst his toils," he wreaked^l his vengeance on the unfortunate inhabitants of Kerman : nearly twenty thousand women and children were

^k Ali Rezá's History of the Zend Family.

^l I find in one of my manuscripts a remarkable anecdote of Aga Mahomed Khan's conduct on this occasion. The meerza or secretary of Looft Ali was made prisoner, and brought before him. He demanded, how he had dared to write firmauns, or mandates, to him who was a sovereign ? "I wrote them," said the man, "by the order of my master, Looft Ali : my fear of him when present, was greater than my dread of you who were at a distance."—"Strike off his hands, and tear out his eyes!" exclaimed the enraged monarch. The savage order was instantly obeyed. Next day he sent for the son of the man whom he had so inhumanly treated, and said : "Tell your father that the prophet has upbraided me in a dream for my cruel usage of him : what can I do to repair the injuries I have done ?"—"He will desire, if he lives," (said the youth,) "to pass the remainder of his days at the tomb of the holy Ali, at Nujuff." The king immediately directed that mules, tents, and every necessary equipment, should be furnished for his journey. He also sent him a present of three hundred tomâns, (about three hundred pounds sterling,) and entreated the young man to solicit his father to forgive him, and to remember him in his prayers.

given as slaves to his soldiers; all the males who had reached maturity were commanded to be put to death, or deprived of their eye-sight. Those who escaped his cruelty, owed their safety neither to mercy nor to flight, but to the fatigue of their executioners, who only ceased to glut the revengeful spirit of their monarch, when themselves exhausted with the work of blood. The numbers slain were great, and exceeded even those deprived of sight; though the latter are said to have amounted to seven thousand^m. Many of these miserable wretches are still alive. Some, who subsist on charityⁿ, wander over Persia, and recount to all who will listen the horrors of this day of calamity.

Lootf Ali Khan was at first kindly received by the governor of Nermansheer; but that chief inquired anxiously after his brother, who had accompanied the prince to Kerman^o: he was told that he would soon arrive: three days, however, passed in anxious expectation, satisfied his mind that, if alive, he was in the power of Aga Mahomed Khan; and he naturally concluded that his fate would be decided by his own conduct on this trying occasion. His love for his brother, and his fears for his own safety, silenced the dictates of honour and good faith: he determined to seize his royal guest, and to offer him as a ransom for the life and pardon of one who was dearer to him. The companions of Lootf Ali discovered this plot just before its execution: they hastened to inform him, and entreated he would escape; but their advice was disregarded; nor was he awakened from

^m I follow the MS. of a contemporary. When I have asked any chief present at this massacre how many men were deprived of sight, their answer was always, "Many thousands." It has been stated, that Aga Mahomed Khan directed that a number of pounds weight of eyes should be brought to him: nor is the tale in the least incredible.

ⁿ When at Shiraz on the 4th of June, 1800, I thought the best mode of celebrating the birth-day of our beloved monarch was to distribute alms to the poor: a great number assembled; among them were more than a hundred men whose eyes had been taken out at Kerman.

^o Ali Rezâ's History of the Zend Family.

his dream of security by seeing those^p who had remained faithful in every danger, abandon him as one resolved not to avoid death. Soon after, the approach of armed men convinced him that the information was too true. He grasped his sword, and rushed on those who were advancing to seize him. A momentary terror prevailed; and the prince was already on the back of his favorite horse^q, when one of the assailants made a blow with his sabre at the legs of the noble animal, and brought him to the ground. Lootf Ali Khan started up again, and renewed an unequal contest, in which he at last fell, having received two severe wounds, one on his arm, the other on his head. In this state he was carried to the camp of Aga Mahomed Khan. The page of history would be stained^r by a recital of the indignities offered to the royal captive, when brought to the presence of his cruel and implacable enemy. Suffice it to observe, that his eyes were torn out, and that he was sent a prisoner to Teheran, to languish out a miserable and protracted existence, far from his native province, and from all to whom his name was dear: but the fears of his conqueror made him at last more humane; and an order was sent to terminate the life of a prince, who, even in this wretched state, was still an object of dread^s to the proudest and most powerful of his enemies.

^p One of the persons with him, whose name was Khodah-bukah, fled to India. He afterwards obtained a small command of horse in the service of the Nizam of the Deccan, and was attached to a party that served under me in the campaign of 1799 against Seringapatam. The account he gave of the life of Lootf Ali Khan, and of his conduct on this occasion, exactly corresponds with that of Ali Rezâ.

^q The name of this horse was Kurrund. He was of the Arab blood, but bred in Persia. Though a low horse, his activity and strength were wonderful; and credibility is staggered with the accounts given by all Persians of his speed, and of the extraordinary distance to which he at different times carried his royal master, who regarded and treated him with the greatest affection and care.

^r The brutal insults offered to Lootf Ali when he was carried before Aga Mahomed are too shocking to be described. The English reader would revolt from the narration of a scene which disgraced human nature.

^s Though Aga Mahomed Khan cherished implacable resentment against

Lootf Ali Khan closed his extraordinary career before he was twenty-five years of age. There is in the character of this young prince, and in the events of his life, what must excite both pity and admiration; but, amid the blaze of his achievements, we can discover nothing but the qualities of a soldier. Had he been born to the undisputed sovereignty of a large kingdom at a period when allegiance to the reigning prince was at once a habit and a principle, his fame might have emulated that of a Chenghiz or a Timoor. But in the condition of his country at the time when he succeeded to the throne, every quality he possessed, except his personal valour and his ability as a leader, was against him. He had knowledge without prudence; and his judgment was subdued by his passions. His pride was extreme; even when his fortune was at the lowest, he scorned to conciliate or attach those whom he considered himself born to command. He was violent and unrelenting, and never tried to conquer by other means than fear: wherever success favoured him, he used his power with a severity which might have strengthened an established ruler, but which could have no effect but creating enemies to one, like him, always struggling against the stream of adversity. Yet his faults, which were numerous, have been forgotten by his countrymen, who speak only of the manly beauty, the elevated courage, and the cruel destiny, of the last prince of the family of Kerreem Khan.

The princes of the Zend dynasty ruled over a great part of Persia for nearly half a century; but, after the death of their founder, their power never possessed any stability. This is, in the first place, to be attributed to their internal divisions, and next, to the genius of their enemy, Aga Mahomed Khan. That monarch, from the hour he fled

all the Zend family, particularly against this prince, he, nevertheless, admired his character. Some time before he took Kerman, he received accounts that his nephew and heir, the present king, had several sons born to him in one night. "May God grant," said Aga Mahomed, "that one of them may resemble Lootf Ali Khan!"—*Persian MS.*

from Shiraz, had laboured incessantly to destroy them : his task was now completed. He owed this triumph more to his foresight and perseverance, than to any brilliant successes of his arms. His present object was to prevent the claims of those whom he had subdued ever being revived : almost every person[†] who could have formed the most remote pretensions from his birth to the throne, was put to death or deprived of sight ; and not only the tribe of Zend, but all those who had been the active supporters of the family of Kerreem Khan, were removed from Fars into the most distant quarters of the kingdom. It has been before mentioned, that the native tribes of Persia had been encouraged by that monarch to assert the superiority which had belonged, in former days, to their ancestors. Their efforts had been successful, and they had enjoyed power for a short period ; but their use of it had not been such as to lead the more peaceable inhabitants of Persia to regret their downfall. This race of men were brave and warlike ; but the habits of long subjection had rendered them even more rude and barbarous than those who rose to fortune upon their ruins.

[†] Abdüllâ Khan, the uncle of Lootf Ali Khan, was, I believe, the only exception. He had married the sister of Hajee Ali Kooli Khan of Kazeroon, and his pardon was granted in consideration of that chief, for whom Aga Mahomed Khan had great regard and respect.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE STATE OF PERSIA AND THE NEIGHBOURING NATIONS, AT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POWER OF AGA MAHOMED KHAN, THE FOUNDER OF THE REIGNING FAMILY.

BEFORE we give the history of the family which now occupies the throne of Persia, we must review its condition, and that of the neighbouring states, at the time when Aga Mahomed Khan overcame the last prince of the Zend dynasty. We shall thus better understand the progress which the reigning dynasty have made in establishing their power, and restoring Persia to the rank which it once held among Asiatic nations.

At the death of Lootf Ali Khan, Aga Mahomed Khan was the actual, as well as acknowledged, sovereign of the provinces of Asterabad, Mazenderan, Ghilan, the whole of Irak, Fars, and Kerman. These countries, extending from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, could only be deemed settled and obedient by comparing their condition to Khorassan and other parts of the empire, which had been broken into a number of petty principalities at the death of Nâdir Shah; and had subsequently thrown off their allegiance to those rulers who assumed the title of sovereigns of Persia.

The territories now under Aga Mahomed Khan had enjoyed tranquillity during the latter years of Kerreem Khan, but since his death had become a scene of continual contests. Though the efforts to obtain the crown had been confined to the descendants of that prince, and to their enemy, Aga Mahomed Khan, as each pretender had needed the support of the chiefs of tribes, that class had risen into a consequence much beyond what they had ever before possessed. The events which have been related, shew that the attachment of these chiefs was seldom to be depended upon. It rested on no honorable basis; and defection, from being common,

had almost ceased to be disgraceful. A selfish feeling had taken the place of that loyalty for which the nobles of Persia were once distinguished; and their descendants shewed, even in action, a cautious prudence, which rendered their courage equivocal as their faith. The greatest battles of this period are only trifling skirmishes. When the armies met, a few men (generally belonging to the tribe of the ruler for whom they fought) attacked each other with the ardour of inveterate hostility. The other tribes kept aloof till they saw one or other prevail, when, if they did not betray their leader, they joined in flight or pursuit, according to the issue. In many of these bloodless battles², though there were twenty or thirty thousand men on each side, not more than fifteen or twenty were killed, and perhaps double the number wounded. This fact alone accounts for the extraordinary victories which the personal valour of a leader and a few brave adherents often obtained over the most superior numbers.

Though some chiefs of tribes were compelled to place their families at the capital of the ruler they served, as hostages for their fidelity, others, and among them the most powerful, had lodged their wives and children, and the wealth they had accumulated by plunder, in their native towns or villages, which they had fortified on the plea of providing against predatory attacks, but with the real view of rendering themselves in some degree independent of their sovereign.

The condition of the military nobles, or feudal lords, of Persia, was not favorable to Aga Mahomed Khan; but that politic prince had united the efforts of his own tribe, who were all devoted to him. To effect this, he had made what were deemed the greatest sacrifices. He had forgiven, when he had the power to revenge, the blood of his father

² I have become acquainted with many of the principal chiefs and leaders who acted in these scenes, and all agree in their account of the warfare in Persia since the death of Nâdir Shah.

and uncles, and had pardoned the grossest personal insults to himself when in captivity. His magnanimity was rewarded by the unanimous support of his tribe; and he derived the greatest strength from their fidelity and attachment.

Asterabad had long been the residence of the Kajir chiefs: it was impossible, from its situation in a distant corner of the empire, to make it the capital; but many reasons rendered Aga Mahomed Khan desirous of being near to his hereditary possessions, and to the pastures of those Turkish tribes on whom he was in a great degree dependent for maintaining the crown he had acquired. He determined therefore to fortify Teheran, at the base of that lofty range of mountains which divide Irak from Mazenderan. The fortifications of Isfahan and Shiraz were dismantled. Those of Kerman^{*} had also been razed to the ground; and the inhabitants of these cities, harassed with sieges, saw without sorrow the work of demolition; and though some of the military classes might sigh after their lost power, and regret that their harvest of plunder was over, the other inhabitants of the provinces subject to Aga Mahomed Khan were prepared to welcome the establishment of any government promising to afford them effectual and permanent protection.

The ancient province of Carduchia, (the modern Kûrdistan,) which is bounded to the east by the plains of Irak and Aderbejan, to the west by the Tigris, to the north by Armenia, and to the south by the territories of Bagdad, had formerly, as at present, always maintained its own rude go-

^{*} This city had formerly been one of the richest and most populous in Persia. When the European factories were established at Gombroon, it became a great emporium of trade between Europe and India, and the countries of Persia, Cabool, and Tartary. The province of which it is the capital, was not productive; but it had some rare articles of commerce, particularly the wool of its goats, which approaches nearer than any other in fineness to that of Cashmere.

vernment^y; and though its mountain-chiefs had generally acknowledged a paramount lord, they had for ages enjoyed more real independence than those of any other province in this quarter of Asia. Xenophon^z informs us, that the chiefs of Kûrdistan were disobedient and turbulent vassals to the most powerful Persian monarchs; and there are grounds for believing that the valour of this race emancipated their country from the successors of Alexander. For a short time the legions of Rome occupied a part of Carduchia; but they probably possessed little more than their military positions; and none of the Tartar tribes who have overrun Persia, have ever permanently established themselves in this province^a, which is still inhabited by an original and rude race: though they have departed from the religion, they maintain the usages and habits of their forefathers, and speak a barbarous dialect of the ancient language of Persia.

The causes which have enabled this people to preserve their soil^b from strangers are obvious. Their country is mountainous and barren; and the few beautiful and fertile valleys interspersed among its clustering hills offer no ade-

^y A Kûrdish writer, in his preface to a history of his native country, says that authors differ about the origin of the Kûrds. Some believe them to be descended from those persons who were saved from the cruelty of Zohâk. Others trace them to the jin or genii; while many state that the deeves, or demons, connected themselves with women of the earth, and begot the Kûrds.—*Tuarih Akared*, by SHERRIFF-OD-DEEN.

^z The prisoners informed Xenophon, that the Carduchians, who inhabited the mountains along the Tigris, through which he desired to march, "were a warlike nation, and not subject to the king; and that once the king's army, consisting of one hundred and twenty thousand men, penetrated into their country, whence not one of them returned, the roads being hardly passable."—SPELMAN's *Cyrus*, p. 111.

^a There are some Arabian tribes in this country; and several of the principal Kûrdish chiefs boast their descent from families of that nation.

^b The historian of Kûrdistan includes all Lâristan in that country: which, according to him, extends to the Persian Gulf. He says, that Kûrd signifies "valiant;" that Roostem, though born in Seestan, was of a Kûrdish family; and that the common reading of Roostem-e-Goord in Firdousee is erroneous, for it should be Roostem-e-Kûrd, or Roostem the Kûrd.—*Tuarih Akared*, by SHERRIFF-OD-DEEN.

quate reward for the effort that would be necessary to reduce it: for its warlike and robust inhabitants are singularly attached to their native land; and their rugged mountains would be as difficult to conquer, as they would be unprofitable to maintain. This race has never been united^c under one ruler; and perhaps this, which, had they possessed a more inviting country, must soon have led to their subjugation, has been one of the causes enabling them to preserve their independence. Their chiefs constantly at war with each other have always sought the protection of some great power, whose influence or occasional aid enabled them to preserve or increase their territories. They have repaid this support by acknowledging the monarch who granted it as their paramount sovereign; and have discharged the obligation they incurred, sometimes by tribute, sometimes by military service. Their most powerful neighbours preferred the professions of allegiance and the real aid, which they received from the petty rulers of Kûrdistan, to the hazardous attempt to subdue them. The situation of their country, which has generally been the frontier dividing great empires, has been favorable to the policy of its chiefs; and we may conclude that in ancient days they vacillated between the Emperors of Rome and the Sassanian monarchs, as they now do between the kings of Persia and the emperors of Turkey.

The districts of Kûrdistan near the Tigris and vicinity of Bagdad, admit the supremacy of the Turkish government^d;

^c We are told by Greek historians, that when Artaxerxes Longimanus entered their country with an immense army, he was only saved from destruction by one of his allies fomenting a division between the two great rulers of Carduchia, which led to their consenting to a peace with him. Sherriff-ood-deen, in his history of this nation, relates, that when an envoy from a chief of Kûrdistan came before Mahomed, the prophet was so struck by his fierce looks and gigantic body, as to pray to God that so formidable a race should never be united: hence (the pious author concludes) those divisions, which have ever since distracted them.

^d The largest half of the Kûrds at present term themselves subjects of the Turkish empire, which they prefer to Persia, as it is less able to enforce the payment of tribute or military service.

while those more to the northward and eastward profess to be under the protection of the king of Persia. Among the latter chiefs, the Waly or Prince of Ardelân*, is far the most powerful. His territories, bordering on Irak and Aderbejan, are nearly two hundred miles in length, and about a hundred and sixty in breadth. The revenues of this tract are not great; but its princes, who maintain almost regal state, boast their descent from the celebrated Salladin†. Their title to this honour is not clearly made out; but the history of their country proves that the government of this province has continued in the same noble family for more than four centuries. The patriarchal character of their rule, and the cheerful obedience of their subjects, are calculated to make the inhabitants of the rich plains of Persia envy the lot of these rugged mountaineers; but, though the kings of Persia have seldom interfered with the internal administration of Ardelân, and have never attempted to set aside the family who govern it, they have often exerted their influence and power to alter the direct line of succession; and, by supporting the pretensions of younger branches, they have created feuds, which have rendered its rulers more dependent upon them.

Khoosroo Khan, who at the death of Lootf Ali Khan was Waly of Ardelân, had professed allegiance to Kerreem Khan; but withdrew all support from his descendants, and became the open enemy of Jaffier Khan, whose nephew Ismael‡ had fled to Sennah and thrown himself on his pro-

* Sennah, the capital of Ardelân, lies in latitude 35° 12' N., and longitude 40° E., sixty miles from Hamadan. It is pleasantly situated in a small valley encircled by mountains. I encamped there for several days in the autumn of 1810, and was entertained in a hospitable and princely manner by the ruling Waly, Amân-ollâ Khan, the son of Khoosroo Khan, who was Waly at the period of which I am writing.

† This is the name which European writers give to Sallah-ood-deen, the famous enemy of the crusaders. The family of Ardelân trace their lineage to him through female descent; but in the history of Kârdistan their title to their possessions rests on an actual occupation for four centuries and a succession of twenty-five male heirs.

‡ In the history of this family which I obtained from the reigning waly,

tection. The defeat of Jaffier Khan near Hamadan was chiefly ascribed to the valour of the troops of Ardelân; and as their chief could not hope after such an event to effect a reconciliation, he attached himself to the cause of Aga Mahomed^b, and sent him all the arms and other trophies which he had taken in this action, as an acknowledgment of his paramount power. From that moment Khoosroo became one of the most powerful supporters of the Kajir monarch, who, when he overcame the Zend dynasty, had a right to expect that the allegiance of the Waly of Ardelân would ensure the submission of all such districts of Kurdistân as had formerly acknowledged the supremacy of the King of Persia.

The family of the princes of Armenia had been extinct for centuries; and that disunited province was hardly entitled to a name, which had long been borne by the country of a brave and independent people. The greatest part had fallen under the Turkish rule; but the north-eastern districts, along the banks of the Araxes¹, and between Aderbejan and Georgia, had in general been subject to Persia: the chiefs of these districts had never been powerful enough to resist the sovereign of that kingdom.

The fine province of Georgia, which is bounded to the north by the Caucasus, to the east by the lofty mountains of Dâghestân and Shirwan, and to the west and south by ancient Armenia, was governed by a waly or prince, who usually acknowledged the sovereign of Persia as his paramount lord. This province boasts a singular salubrity of climate; and is alike famous for the fertility of its soil, the

it is stated that Khoosroo never meant to support Ismael Khan, till the suspicions and intended hostility of Jaffier Khan forced him to it.

^b Khoosroo Khan, when very young, had been expelled from his territories, and deprived of his birth-right. He owed his restoration to Mahomed Hoosein Khan, the father of Aga Mahomed, and was thus led to entertain a partiality for a family from whose aid he had derived such benefit.

¹ This river is now called the Arras.

luxuriance of its diversified scenes, its rich plains, clear streams, and wooded mountains, and for the courage and beauty of its inhabitants; but for many centuries all these apparent blessings had operated as curses. Its inhabitants, professing the Christian religion, from their situation between two great Mahomedan nations, Turkey and Persia, were subject to a violence and oppression, which had sunk their character to the lowest state. Besides, the internal government was bad. The power of the waly was not only checked by the divisions which his neighbours always fomented in his own family, but by the great authority possessed by his insubordinate nobles, who exercised the most despotic tyranny over their miserable vassals. In a country so situated, the richness of the soil only produced indolence. Men would not labour beyond what was necessary for their subsistence, and that the earth yielded almost spontaneously. The manly form and courage of the male, and the beauty and vivacity of the female youth, made their Mahomedan neighbours always anxious to obtain them as slaves. As they lived in misery at home, and often attained the highest ranks^{*} among other nations, even parents did not hesitate to sell their offspring. Nobles made offerings of their vassals; and the walys themselves were often compelled to send, as part of their tribute to the paramount sovereign, some of the fairest of their family and of their subjects¹. When this

^{*} In Turkey it is the usage to promote slaves from Georgia and Circassia to the principal offices of government. This custom has its origin in the policy of despots, who, fearing the natural influence of the chiefs of tribes and men of high families, desire to raise those only whom they can cast down at pleasure.

¹ Joseph Emin, a brave and adventurous Armenian, who tried in vain about this period to excite his countrymen and the Georgians to throw off their degrading subjection, informs us, that Kerreem Khan had sent to Heraclius to demand "that his daughter-in-law (the widow of his eldest son), his heir Goorgeen Khan, his son-in-law the Prince David, twelve noblemen's sons, and twelve beautiful Georgian virgins, (none of whom was to be above twelve years of age,) should be sent to him." They were required as hostages, and as slaves of his pleasure. The messenger threatened an

tribute was withheld, or any other cause gave a pretext for war, the Mahomedan armies rejoiced at an invasion which enabled every soldier to gratify his love of plunder and his brutal lust by the possession of Christian captives: nor had they much to apprehend from opposition, for the princes and nobles were too divided by the collision of their personal interests, to be united even by the approach of a danger which nothing but their union could avert.

There had been no period for many years at which the Georgians appeared more capable of throwing off their yoke, than when Aga Mahomed Khan became the monarch of Persia. The waly Heraclius had attended Nâdir Shah in his campaigns, and had gained the reputation of a good soldier. Favored by the distractions which had prevailed in Persia since the death of that conqueror, he had preserved his native province in tranquillity; but aware that it would be impossible to maintain himself without powerful aid, he sought and obtained the alliance of Russia. The treaty which placed Georgia under the protection of that state will be noticed hereafter: it transferred (as far as the ruling prince had the power of doing so) the allegiance of the waly of Georgia from the sovereigns of Persia to those of Russia.

The kingdom of Persia is bounded to the east by the great province of Khorassan^m, upwards of four hundred miles in length, and near three hundred in breadth. This celebrated region contains many fruitful plains, some lofty and irre-

invasion of the country if the demand was not instantly complied with. The degraded nobles urged their prince to compliance; but he refused; and Kerreem Khan, being forced to march to another quarter, could not execute his threat. The same writer furnishes us with many curious facts relating to the condition of Georgia. He gives no very favourable character of any class of its inhabitants; and he expresses his opinion of the nobles in this very odd but emphatic manner: "They were born twenty-four hours before the devil."

^m This province has Irak to the west, Candahar and Cabool to the east; it stretches to the north as far as the Oxus, and is bounded to the south by Seestan.

gular ridges of mountains, and several wide tracts of desert. Except in its most fertile districts, it is but partially supplied with water; and from its position, it has perhaps been more exposed to predatory invasions than any other country. Whenever Persia was distracted by internal factions, or had to sustain foreign attack, the tribes of Tartary crossed the Oxus and spread themselves over Khorassan. This was the province which Roostem had to defend against the continual inroads of Afrâsiâb. The Seljookian chiefs invaded it long before their rule extended over the other parts of the empire. It suffered greatly from the ravages of Chenghiz and of Timoor; and, during the reigns of the first Seffavean kings, the Oosbeks, who had conquered Bokhara, made annual attacks upon its fields and cities. Abbas the Great checked these ruinous inroads; and Nâdir made these plundering Tartars tremble for their own possessions. But the death of that conqueror left his native province more exposed than ever; for, while his descendants, stript of the vast inheritance which he had bequeathed them, exercised a mock sovereignty over the city of Meshed, several military chiefs seized on the different forts of Khorassan, and establishing a number of small principalities, exercised an almost regal sway, making war or peace with their petty neighbours as suited their interest; and sometimes defying, and at others paying homage and tribute to the more powerful monarchs by whom they were surrounded.

Khorassan is peopled by many races: its warlike inhabitants boast their descent from Arabian, Kûrd, Turkish^a, and Affghan tribes, who came at different periods to subdue or to defend it: but neither their having so long inhabited the same soil, nor a sense of common danger, has softened those inveterate prejudices, or abated that rooted hatred, with which these races regard each other; and it had been the

^a The word Turkish is always used to describe the inhabitants of Târkistan or Tartary, or those who derive their origin from that country, and continue to speak its language.

policy of the Persian monarchs to increase divisions, enabling them to keep in subjection a country, the inhabitants of which, if united, would have been dangerous; for the men of Khorassan, from the robustness of their frame, and from being continually inured to war, are proverbially brave; and Nâdir Shah, with the vanity of a native, but not without truth, used to call this fine province "the sword of Persia."

Meshed, the capital of Khorassan, had been for some years the residence of Nâdir's court; and it was all that his successors saved from the wreck of his dominions. It has been already mentioned*, that the generous gratitude of Ahmed Shah, the monarch of the Affghans, had assigned it, and the districts in its immediate vicinity, to the unfortunate Shah Rokh, the grandson and heir of Nâdir. From this period, Meshed became a scene of distraction, owing principally to the incompetence of its unfortunate ruler, and to the disputes of Nâser-ollâ Meerza and Nâdir Meerza, his unworthy sons, who, with alternate success, combated for the sole possession of their father's power. The chief ornament and support of Meshed is the tomb of the Imâm Rezâ, to which many thousands of pious pilgrims annually resort, and which had been enriched by the bounty of sovereigns. But the sanctity of this mausoleum did not save it from the sacrilegious sons of Shah Rokh; they plundered its treasury, and despoiled the monument of its most massy^p and valuable ornaments, which they converted into coin to pay their clamorous soldiers. Nâser-ollâ Meerza, who had been compelled to fly, sought the aid of Kerreem Khan; but that prudent prince having declined giving him support, he returned to Khorassan, where he soon afterwards died. This

* Vol. ii. page 57.

^p Nâser-ollâ Meerza carried away the golden railing round the tomb, and Nâdir Meerza took down the great golden ball from the top of the dome over the grave, which was said to weigh sixty maunds, or four hundred and twenty pounds. The carpets fringed with gold, the golden lamps, and every thing valuable, were plundered by these necessitous and rapacious princes.—*Persian MS.*

event left Nâdir Meerza without a competitor within the walls of the city; but he was attacked by the chief of a neighbouring district^a, who took Meshed, and held it for five years: after this, Shah Rokh was restored to nominal authority by the arms of Timoor Shah, King of the Affghans, and son to the monarch who first allotted this city for the support of the family of Nâdir Shah.

The inhabitants of Meshed were reduced at this period to less than twenty thousand^r; and its revenues had suffered a still greater decrease; for the Oosbegs made constant inroads, plundered the fields close to its walls, and often led those who ventured to till them, into captivity. To complete the wretchedness of Nâdir's degraded descendant, he was obliged to give a great portion of the small revenue he received, to purchase of neighbouring chiefs an exemption from that attack which, his weakness invited.

Shah Rokh still possessed many of the jewels which Nâdir had brought from India; and we are told^s, that this had already excited the cupidity of Aga Mahomed Khan, who looked to the termination of his contest with the Zend dynasty with increased impatience, when he heard of any war in Khorassan that exposed those rich ornaments to hazard. He considered them to belong to the crown of Persia; and he thought, till he was at liberty to reclaim them, they could not be in better custody than with the weak ruler of Meshed.

The town and district of Nishapore, situated about sixty miles to the south-west of Meshed, had been seized, on the death of Nâdir Shah, by Abbas Kooli Khan, a chief of the Turkish tribe of Byât^t. His usurpation was supported by

^a Mâmeish Khan of Chinnarân.

^r We are told, that Meshed at this period had not more than three thousand inhabited dwellings. In the time of Nâdir Shah it had sixty thousand; but it was then the residence of a great court.—*Persian MS.*

^s *Persian MS.*

^t The powerful tribe of Byât came originally from Tartary with Chenghiz Khan. They were long settled in Asia Minor; and a number of them

ten thousand families of his tribe, settled near that city; and he remained in undisturbed possession until attacked by Ahmed Shah Abdâllee, who took Nishapore, and carried its lord a prisoner to Cabool; but the good qualities and good fortune of Abbas Kooli rendered this misfortune the means of his advancement. He became a favorite of his conqueror, who married his sister; and the daughter of the Affghan monarch was bestowed on the eldest son of his captive.

The chief of the Byâts, strong in the friendship and alliance of the royal house of Abdâllee, returned to Nishapore, and devoted the remainder of his life to improving that town, and the districts dependent upon it; but, though there is reason to believe that he was a moderate and just ruler², we must smile when we are told by his flatterers, that Nishapore under him approached its ancient splendour³. That town, now become a fastness for a petty Turkish chief, whose subjects lived amid its ruins, once vied with the proudest cities in Persia. It is said to have been founded by Tahamurs, and destroyed by Alexander. We know that Shahpoor the First rebuilt it, and gave it the name⁴ it now bears; and his statue was overturned and broken by

fought in the army of Bajazet against Timoor. After his defeat, many families of this tribe were sent by the conqueror to Diarbekir; but, having quarrelled with the ruler of that province, they went to the territories of Bagdad, and lived there till the time of Shah Tâmasp, who brought them into Persia. One half was settled at Souj-Bulâgh, a district of Teheran; the remainder at Ashráff, in Mazenderan. They remained on these lands till Abbas the Second transplanted a number of them to Khorassan. The Byâts are still more numerous in Turkey than in Persia; but in the latter country they were registered in the reign of the Seffavean monarchs at forty thousand families.—*Persian MS.*

² Abbas Kooli Khan has the character of a mild and humane man; nevertheless he obtained power over the branch of Byâts by murdering his relation, Ahmed Khan, who was their legitimate chief.

³ Persian MS.

⁴ The name is a compound of *Ni*, reed, and Shahpoor. The prefix *Ni*, denoting the produce of the plain it stands in, distinguishes it from the city of Shahpoor in Fars, which was also founded by Shahpoor the First.

the Arabs, when they first took and plundered this royal city^a. It had afterwards been inhabited by Sultan Mahmood of Ghizni, when he was ruler of Khorassan, and was restored to considerable splendour by the first princes of the Seljookian dynasty: but it had subsequently been twice completely destroyed by the hordes of Tartary, whose progress it had been fortified to oppose. Nothing could have enabled this city to regain the degree of prosperity it had again attained, except its fine soil and delightful climate^a: but, after all, we only discover the shadow of its former greatness; for those limits, which could formerly boast a population of more than two hundred thousand persons, were inhabited by less than a twentieth part of that number; and many of the fields around, that were now waste, were intersected by the dry channels of innumerable canals, shewing what labour had once contributed to their verdure and fertility.

At the death of Abbas Kooli, his eldest son^b appears to have been set aside as incompetent; and the second son, Ali Kooli, seized on the government. His claims, however, were disputed by the next brother, Jaffier Khan, who, after a short struggle, prevailed, and deprived him of his eyesight. The other acts of this chief were all of the same nature; and we may conclude that his subjects looked forward with satisfaction to that change in their condition, which the recent success of Aga Mahomed Khan must have led them to expect.

Among the most powerful chiefs of Khorassan, was Meer Hoossein Khan of Tubbus, who offered an asylum and aid

^a Kinnier's Persia, p. 186.

^a The fruits of Nishapore are uncommonly fine, particularly the melons; its mountains are cultivated to the very summit. The Ferouzah, or "Turquoise stone," is found in them.—*Persian MS.*

^b He had eight sons. The manuscript I write from states that the eldest, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, had no talents for rule. It then proceeds to describe the contests between the two next; the other five are never noticed.

to the unfortunate Lootf Ali Khan. The possessions of this chief, situated in the southern part of the province, were so surrounded with deserts, as to be almost inaccessible to a numerous army. Meer Hoossein Khan was the chief of the Arabian tribe Ben-Shaibân, which had been settled at Rhé when Persia was under the Caliphs of Bagdad, and was transplanted to the soil they now inhabited by one of the Seffavean kings. Favored by situation, by the valour and attachment of their tribe, and by the unsettled condition of the empire, the chiefs of this race had for centuries maintained themselves in the possession they now enjoyed; and their rule at different periods had extended over several other districts of Khorassan. They had usually acknowledged the King of Persia as their paramount sovereign; and, when the empire was in a settled state, had neither withheld their tribute nor a quota of their troops; and the most powerful monarchs of Persia had preferred the benefit derived from this qualified submission, to the hazard of an effort to subdue them.

The immediate predecessors^c of the ruler of Tubbus had

* Ali Murdân Khan, the father of the present chief, had not hesitated, with an army of six or seven thousand men, to advance to Goonâhâbâd, the frontier of his possessions, and engage an Affghan force nearly treble his numbers, which Ahmed Shah had sent to attack him. He completely defeated them; and was equally successful in an action against still superior numbers sent by the same sovereign to revenge his disgrace. But the gallant chief continued his pursuit of the latter force with an imprudent ardour: he fell into an ambush and was slain, after a desperate resistance; not one of the party who accompanied him fled or surrendered: they all fell near the body of their chief. But the enemy were ignorant of the importance of their victory, till a dying soldier, whom they were stripping, exclaimed, "Why do you waste your time on me, when the body of the noble Ali Murdân Khan lies near that well?" They hastened to inform the Affghan general of this, who collected his fugitive army; and the troops of Tubbus, dispirited by the loss of their chief, fled before those whom they had so lately conquered. Meer Mahomed Khan, the eldest son of the deceased chief, succeeded him; and, after Ahmed Shah left Khorassan, formed the project not only of subduing that province, but of carrying his arms into the territories of the Affghans. He took Meshed, and several other towns in Khorassan. But his ambition was checked by divisions in his own family;

been remarkable for their courage and enterprise. He was himself deemed a sensible and moderate man, who, solely intent upon preserving his family possessions, cherished no schemes of attacking those of others. His territories were about a hundred and fifty miles in length, and nearly as much in breadth; but a great part of them was barren waste. The town of Tubbus, which was rudely fortified, owed its principal strength to being surrounded for more than thirty miles in every direction by a desert. Meer Hoossein Khan maintained an army of two thousand horse and six thousand foot; and his followers were surpassed by none in valour or attachment to their chief. The whole population of the country is not estimated at above thirty thousand families; but many of these are affluent, and almost all of them possess property^d. From the chief to his lowest subjects, they traffic in sheep and camels, but mostly in the latter, which they breed in their arid plains in great numbers. These they either sell or let; and the chief of Tubbus has generally more than a thousand camels hired out to the merchants of his own country, or to others who dwell in its vicinity.

The Arab tribe of Ben-Shaibân have now dwelt in this country for nearly two centuries, under the family of their present chief. The author of a Memoir on the actual state of Khorassan observes, "that they have never been expelled from their homes, (even for a day,) nor do they live in fear of any such calamity^e." The means of their rulers, though limited for the purposes of ambition, are ample for those of defence; and the inhabitants of Tubbus and its dependent districts^f, may hear, without a sigh, the travellers over their

and, after he had settled them, his life terminated like that of his father. He had defeated the troops of a neighbouring chief, Ali Yâr Khan, of Sub-zâwar. When pursuing his enemies, his horse fell, and he was killed on the spot. He was succeeded by his brother, Meer Hoossein Khan.

^d This country is celebrated for producing the best tobacco in Persia.

^e Persian MS.

^f The principal of these is Toon, which lies at the distance of about sixty miles: it is defended by a very strong ark, or citadel.

barren mountains and sandy deserts, tell of those fruitful fields and delightful streams, which are at one moment the abode of plenty and enjoyment, and at another, a scene of rapine and desolation.

The town and district of Kayn, to the south-east of Tubbus, were under an Arabian family^c of high rank, whose ancestor, Meer Ismael Khan, received a grant of it, to maintain his tribe, from the last Seffavean monarch. This chief served with distinction in the army of Nâdir Shah : his grandson now inherited this sterile possession^d. Numbers of camels are reared in the plains of Kayn, and its mountains are covered with sheep; from the wool, carpets of different textures are made, of a quality equal to any produced in Persia. The rulers of this province usually pay their tribute in this manufacture^e; but the military service of their followers has always been an object more desired by their paramount lord than the revenue of their lands; for the Arabs^f of Kayn have long enjoyed the reputation of being the hardiest and bravest infantry of Khorrassan. Their present chief^g had aided Looft Ali Khan; but the nature and situation of his country left him little to fear from Aga Mahomed, whose wisdom, he knew, would at all times prefer his proffered allegiance, to the hazard

^c They were Syuds, of the tribe of Khâzinâh.

^d A part of the district of Kayn borders on the Desert of Seestan, while it is bounded in another quarter by the territories of the Affghans. The Desert of Seestan, which borders on Kayn, is called by the Mahomedan author whom I follow, "the Desert of Lot." He asserts, in the same passage, "that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God destroyed, and heaped the ruins upon the heads of their guilty inhabitants, were situated in this part of Persia."

^e The revenue of Kayn was estimated under the Seffavean princes at twelve thousand tomâns in specie, and as many khârwârs, or ass loads of grain. The tomân is about forty shillings, and the ass load one hundred maunds Tebreez, or seven hundred pounds weight.

^f They are computed at about twenty thousand families. The usual force which their chief maintains, is between two and three thousand infantry, and a few horse.

^g Meer Ali Khan.

his troops must be exposed to in an unprofitable expedition amid barren deserts and rugged mountains.

The district of Tursheez, immediately north of Tubbus, is in possession of another tribe of Arabs^m. Their chiefⁿ, who had been governor both of Kermanshah and Herat, was forced, after the death of Nâdir Shah, to leave Irak with his tribe. He was invited by his brother^o to settle at Tursheez, of which the latter had made himself master. Like other rulers of similar condition, the chiefs of this place were often engaged in petty wars with their neighbours, and in internal disputes^p; but the authority of Moostâphâ Kobli Khan^q was at this period acknowledged by the whole tribe. The district of Tursheez is very productive^r. It abounds in grain, and in fruits^s of all descriptions; but the Oosbegs, for several years past, had annually laid waste its fields and plundered its villages.

About thirty miles to the north-east of Tursheez, a chief, called Isaak Khan, had established an influence and power, perhaps inferior to that of no petty ruler of Khorassan, and rendered more remarkable from having been entirely created by his personal exertions. Amid the sameness of scenes of usurpation, the attention is forcibly arrested by a man who had overcome every prejudice and every obstacle that could prevent his aspiring to or attaining authority. Isaak Khan had not even the rank which belongs to the lowest individual

^m They are called Meishmust, or "the wanton sheep;" a name they are said to have derived from having entered into a war about a sheep. They belonged, before that event, to the tribe of Jûmâllee.

ⁿ The name of this chief was Abd-ool Ali. He was a soldier of reputation, much esteemed by Nâdir.

^o Khulleel Khan.

^p MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

^q The son of Abd-ool Ali Khan.

^r Its revenue is estimated at thirty thousand tomâns Khorassanee (about sixty thousand pounds) a year. This is the nett produce to the ruler, besides all payment of collection, and the lands made over for the maintenance of his tribe.

^s The grapes, figs, and pomegranates of Tursheez are deemed equal, if not superior, to any in Persia.

of a military tribe. He was born a Taujeck^t, and, according to prejudice, was by birth unwarlike; but his father, who was servant to a chief of the branch of the tribe of Kârâ 'Tâtâr', had shown himself above the duties of a shepherd, which was his first employ, and had latterly been trusted with the command of a hundred men. The young Isaak, who derived claims from the character of his father, was appointed one of the mace-bearers to his chief, whom he persuaded to depute him to Turbut-e-Hyderée, (then an inconsiderable place,) to rebuild a caravansary for the use of travellers. Having obtained a considerable sum of money for this purpose, he commenced his task. But his plans, which had been long laid, now approached to maturity. He gradually converted the caravansary into a square fort; and his intrigues to foment divisions in the tribe he was attached to were so successful, that by the time his work was completed, his chief was slain by some of his own officers, and his sons were compelled to fly the country, to save themselves from a similar fate.

These events produced feuds in the tribe of Kârâ Tâtâr, which added to the power of Isaak Khan; all the discontented found refuge with him; and, strengthened by these adherents, and by that wisdom which enabled him to turn every occurrence amid the revolutions around him to advantage, the shepherd's son soon became one of the most powerful nobles in Khorassan. In the early part of his career he had been greatly aided by the monarch of the Affghans, whose army he had joined, and whose court he had visited; but when his power increased, he threw off his allegiance;

^t The word Taujeck has been before explained. It is always applied to unwarlike peasants and citizens.

^u The black Tâtârs, or, as Europeans term them, Tartars. This tribe had come from Tartary with Timoor. He had settled part of them in Turkey, and part in Khorassan. After his death they had dispersed. Nâdir Shah had desired to reassemble them, and seven or eight thousand families had been brought together under Nujuff Ali Khan, the chief in whose service Isaak Khan and his father were employed.

and the troubled state of Cabool left him without apprehension from that quarter.

A writer, who was in Khorassan the year before it was invaded by Aga Mahomed Khan, states, "that the possessions of Isaak Khan extend on the north to the gates of Meshed, a distance of more than a hundred miles; and almost as far south in the direction of Khâf^x. His revenue is very considerable; and he maintains a force of six thousand men; but he trusts more to policy than to arms for his future security. This extraordinary man has hitherto never failed in conciliating, when necessary, the good opinion and confidence of his superiors. He is dreaded and hated by those who deem themselves his equals; who have seen with envy and astonishment the success of all his measures: but no ruler was ever more beloved by his subjects; and none ever more merited to be so, for to them he devotes himself. He manages all his own affairs. In the most remote districts, there are no great renters, or deputies, who have the power to oppress his people. His mind is incessantly occupied, and he was never known to spend an idle moment. No one is intrusted with the secrets of this inscrutable man; but experience has led all to repose with confidence in his wisdom. He is the first merchant in his country; and derives from this source half as much revenue^y as he takes from his subjects. The integrity and regularity of his dealing is so remarkable, that his bills are current not only in Khorassan, but all over Cabool and Persia. This chief reads a great deal, and is esteemed a good Arabian and Persian scholar. He is thoroughly versed in the history of his

^x The direct line is rather south-east.

^y His whole revenue is computed at a hundred thousand tomâns (two hundred thousand pounds); thirty thousand are stated to be from his own estates, almost all of which he has purchased; forty thousand from his subjects; and twenty thousand, profits of his merchandise. He is said to have three thousand camels continually on hire with the caravans between India and Persia. He exports all the dried fruits and other produce of his own estates, and imports the produce of other countries, which he sells.

country, and of neighbouring nations; and he appears careful to give his sons the best possible education, particularly those by the daughter of the chief of the Kârâ Tâtârs, whom he married soon after her father's death. His politic preference of this part of his family, and his declaration that the eldest son of this high-born lady shall be his heir, has reconciled many of her tribe to his authority*.

The greatest relaxation which Isaak Khan permitted himself, was perhaps of a nature more calculated to give stability to his power, as it advanced his reputation, than all his labours. Turbut-e-Hyderee, which he had raised from an inconsiderable village into a town of consequence, was a place of great resort to pilgrims, merchants, and travellers. The Persians boast, not without some reason, that they excell all other nations in hospitality. It is natural therefore, that they should dwell with exultation on this part of the character of Isaak Khan: his Mehmân Khânâh, or hall of entertainment, which could contain nearly five hundred guests, was always open; and from it none, however low, or of whatever persuasion, were excluded. The author before quoted says, "his hospitality and charity are so boundless, that even the Hindus^a who apply here are supplied with money, that they may purchase and eat apart that meal which their religion forbids their enjoying in the society of others." Isaak Khan is represented^b as delighting in this part of his establishment. He always dines with his guests; and his attentions are so divided that, in the words of the Persian author^c, "princes and beggars are equally pleased." It is in these hours of relaxation that he displays his great knowledge of men and books, and adds to his vast stock of

* MS. History of the chiefs of Khorassan.

^a A number of Hindus are settled in Khorassan, and many pass through it on their way to other parts of Persia.

^b Meerza Ali Nuckee, a very sensible Persian, who had travelled a great deal, and was several weeks at Turbut-e-Hyderee, was still more enthusiastic in praising the extraordinary talents and the hospitality of Isaak Khan.

^c MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

knowledge. We cannot be surprised that those who for days, weeks, and months have listened to his conversation and partaken of his hospitality, should spread his name in every direction. This reputation was of itself a safeguard; for the most absolute sovereigns of Asia are the slaves of public opinion; and the monarch who, without an adequate pretext, should diminish means so justly accumulated and so nobly used, would be exposed to reproach from all who had either enjoyed or heard of the bounty of this extraordinary man. This account of Isaak Khan is taken from one who knew and admired him; but it is confirmed by more impartial observers; and, though it may be highly coloured, there can be no doubt that it is substantially true.

The town and district of Subzâwâr^d, which lies between Turbut-e-Hyderee and Irak, has, since the death of Nâdir Shah, been in the possession of Ali Yâr Khan, the chief of a Turkish tribe^e; who has endeavoured, by fortifying some strong holds, to render himself independent; but he possesses little power, and has often been in danger from the attacks of the petty rulers in his vicinity. To the north of Meshed, along the more mountainous part of Khorassan, (which borders on the country of the Turkumans, who now inhabit the ancient kingdom of Khaurizm,) two Kurdish chiefs, high in the favour and employ of Nâdir and his successors, established their tribe. These chiefs were both dead, but their sons had inherited their possessions. Ameer Goonâh Khan^f was the ruler of Kâbooshân, and Mâmeish Khan of Chinnarân. Nothing in the history of these two nobles merits notice. They had fortified the towns they resided in sufficiently to resist an army unprovided with artillery; but their fields were continually exposed to the

^d The revenue of this province has been estimated at twelve thousand tomâns (twenty-four thousand pounds), twenty-four thousand khârwârs of grain, one thousand of cotton, and three hundred of silk.

^e The name of the tribe is Ghilichi. They are a branch of the tribe of Tochtamish, the first of the tribes of Kapchack.

^f The name of his tribe is Zufferânloo.

inroads of the Turkuman tribes in one quarter, and to the ruler of the Oosbegs in the other. The former they were able to oppose: but they were compelled to purchase an exemption from the violence of the latter, by a present, or rather tribute, repeated every time that he made or threatened an incursion into their territories. Though the tract of country under their authority was not large, it was very productive. Some part of their revenue, particularly of Mâmeish Khan, was derived from his superior stud of horses: these were descended from the fine Arabians brought by Nâdir Shah to this quarter; and the progeny, from being crossed with the stronger breeds of the country, and nourished with rich pasture, attained to considerable size and strength as well as beauty; and so great was their value, that the monarchs, whose paramount power he was compelled to acknowledge, always made it a condition, that part of his tribute should be some of his highest bred colts.

To the east of the possessions of these chiefs stands the once celebrated city of Merv, the capital of the ancient Margiana. This city was founded by Alexander the Great, and became the residence of one of his successors, Antiochus Nicator, who called it Antiocha. In more modern days it was deemed one of the four royal cities^c of Khorassan, and was often the residence of powerful monarchs. When the Seffavean kings fixed their capital at Isfahan, Merv, which became the frontier city in the most exposed quarter of the empire, was always committed to a military leader of the highest rank. In the reign of Tâmâsp the First, a branch^d of the Kajir tribe had been sent to Merv; and their chiefs had, with some vicissitudes of fortune, ever since remained its governors. After the death of Nâdir Shah, Byram Ali Khan maintained it for a long period against the annual attacks of the Oosbegs: but the contest was unequal; and

^c Meshed, or Toos, Nishapore, Herat, and Merv.

^d The name of this branch is Azdânloo.

the gallant chief, after a noble struggle¹, was defeated and slain in an action near the Oxus. His son, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, every way worthy of his father, maintained for a short period the walls of the city of Merv, which were his only inheritance; for the Oosbeks had rendered the country round it a barren waste. Though denied aid by the chiefs of Khorassan, and very inefficiently supported by the Affghan monarch, Timoor Shah, he continued, while a ray of hope remained, to strive against adversity; but the inhabitants of Merv, who began to experience all the miseries of famine, at last compelled him to surrender^k.

The court of Constantinople was at this period too deeply involved in the result of those changes which distracted Europe, to take any concern in the affairs of Persia. It left the management of these to the rulers of its eastern provinces, the principal of whom was Sulimân Aga, for many years Pâchâ of Bagdad. This chief has been already mentioned as the brave defender of Bussorah, when it was attacked by the troops of Kerreem Khan. He had subsequently attained his present high station, and had used every means to strengthen himself, that he might escape the usual fate of Turkish governors. He had been completely successful, and was considered firmly established in his

¹ In the *Life of Byram Ali Khan*, which is given at some length in a Persian manuscript in my possession, he is said, by his valour and conduct, to have gained frequent and great advantages over the Oosbeks.

^k Mahomed Hoossein Khan was carried a prisoner to Bokhara; and for some time after his arrival was treated with honour and distinction; but he soon became an object of jealousy to his conqueror, and was obliged to save his life by sudden flight. After wandering for several years as an exile, and suffering all the vicissitudes of fortune, he reached the court of Persia, where he was received in the warmest manner; and he at this moment enjoys the friendship of the king, who honours him with peculiar regard. But even royal favours cannot banish from the memory of this able and respectable nobleman the traces of his misfortunes; for he has not only been deprived of his inheritance, but has survived the destruction of his tribe and the death of all his family, most of whom were sacrificed to appease the tyrannical bigot from whose power he had fled.

pachalik. His mild virtues¹ had contributed as much as his wisdom and courage to the fulfilment of this object. He was beloved by the inhabitants of Bagdad and of the cities under his immediate rule. The tributaries of his government, the Arab tribes^m who feed their flocks on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates between his capital and Bussorah, and the different chiefs of Kûrdistan who acknowledged themselves subjects of the Turkish government, viewed Sulimân Pâchâ with respect, and granted him a willing obedience: while the court of Constantinople, after discovering that his authority was too strongly established to be easily subverted, declared itself satisfied with his rule. His moderation and good sense led him to preserve the most amicable relations with all his neighbours; and since the death of Kerreem Khan no circumstance had disturbed the good understanding between Persia and Turkey.

The rise of Ahmed Shah Abdâllee to the sovereignty of Cabool and Candahar has been before noticed. That prince had greatly added to the wealth and fame of his own family and of his kingdom, by six invasions of India, in all of which he was successful; and in one he obtained the highest renown among Mahomedans, by the memorable defeatⁿ of

¹ I visited the court of Sulimân Pâchâ in A.D. 1800, and was struck by the simplicity and manliness of his character. This chief, like most of those who enjoy a high station in the Turkish territories, had been a slave; but no unpleasant feelings seemed associated with the recollection of his former condition. After he had introduced me to some of his chief officers, he called up a person, and said, "This, Captain Malcolm, is the son of my first master. He treated me with the greatest kindness. I try to repay the obligation by considering his son as my own child!"

^m The rule of the Turkish government over these tribes is very lenient; and they have been rescued, by submission to it, from a condition of continual war with each other. They are sensible of this benefit: I heard a chief of one of them say, "That if there was no Pâchâ of Bagdad, he would put a Turk's cap upon a stick, and not only offer it allegiance, but recommend all the tribes in his neighbourhood to do the same."

ⁿ This famous action was fought in January A.D. 1761. It was a contest between the Mahomedans and Hindus for the sovereignty of India. The Mahomedan army amounted to sixty thousand men, of whom not half were Affghans; but his own troops were those on which Ahmed Shah

the Marhatta army on the plains of Paniput, a few miles to the north of Delhi. This victory was the first effectual check to the power of that great Hindu nation, whose conquests a few months before extended from the southernmost regions of India to the Indus.

Ahmed Shah, as has been already mentioned °, subdued the greater part of Khorassan; and he was acknowledged as their paramount sovereign by almost all the chiefs of that quarter. He was continually occupied in foreign wars: in fact, he had no other means of supporting his army, or preserving the obedience of his turbulent vassals. He received but a small revenue from his extensive territories; for the countries of Cabool and Candahar had almost all been made over to different tribes, who, in return for their lands, gave their military service: and Ahmed was too able and considerate, to hazard his power by attempting to subdue his rude subjects into a submission incompatible with their usages. He was grateful for their attachment, and patient of their disobedience; and endeavoured by every means to improve the advantage he derived from belonging to the venerated family of Sedoozehi †. By accommodating his rule to the character and prejudices of his subjects, he became a powerful monarch. But his authority had never any other foundation than his popularity with the warlike tribes; and as these were devoted to their respective chiefs, and distracted by internal feuds, we can hardly conceive a more uncertain and dangerous inheritance than that which he bequeathed at his death ‡ to his son, Timoor Shah †. This prince, more intent on enjoying than increasing his power, seemed only desirous of repose. He removed the

most depended. The Marhattas were computed between seventy and eighty thousand. They were defeated with great slaughter.

° Vide vol. ii. p. 56.

† See the description of this tribe, vol. i. p. 403.

‡ He died in June 1773. He was only fifty of years age.

† Timoor had to overcome some opposition before he obtained the crown, the vizier of Ahmed Shah having, when that sovereign died, attempted to raise his younger brother to the throne.

seat of government from Candahar to Cabool, because he preferred the peaceable disposition of the latter city to the turbulence of the former. He maintained hardly any troops except a body of guards, formed chiefly of men not belonging to Affghan tribes; and far from attempting foreign conquests, he allowed the great feudatories of the empire to withhold their tribute, and some even to throw off their allegiance, without an effort to subdue them. Notwithstanding his weakness and inaction, Timoor Shah, aided by the impression of his father's character^{*}, occupied the throne for twenty years. But the repose which had marked his reign terminated with his life; and his son, Zemaun Shah, was assailed by the open or secret attacks of all his brothers, who found ready adherents among martial tribes, hating that tranquillity which condemned them to inaction.

Several of the southern provinces in the Affghan kingdom had thrown off their dependence on the monarchs of Cabool. The government of Scind had been usurped by a race of chiefs[†] whose ancestors were converted from the Hindu faith; and that fine province was now ruled by three brothers of this family, who had established an authority even more rude and barbarous than what they had subverted. Seestan, Balochistan, and Mekran, since the death of Ahmed Shah, had granted no more than a nominal obedience. The chief of a principal tribe in the former province, though he only enjoys a revenue of a few thousand rupees[‡], and his whole force hardly amounts to five hundred men, styles himself the descendant from the ancient kings of Persia, and adds to his name the proud title of Kaianee. This plunderer, for such he is, inhabits a small town called Julla-

^{*} One author states, that he was greatly indebted to his full treasury for the tranquillity his territories enjoyed. This may have had that effect, as it placed him above the necessity of acts of violence and oppression.

[†] Scind may be described as a delta where the mouths of the Indus fall into the ocean; bounded by the sea to the south, and by deserts that divide it from the provinces of India to the east, it is separated to the north and west by lofty ranges of mountains from Balochistan and Affghanistan.

[‡] Captain Christie's Journal.

labad, situated amid the vast ruins of the ancient city of Seestan, or Dooshak ; and among those that obey him are the tribe of Noosheerwan, who feed their flocks in the Vale of Soohrab. We cannot but smile when the former glory of Persia is thus brought before our thoughts : but the existence of these ancient names among this rude and unaltered people, and the immense ruins found in every part of this deserted but once flourishing province, afford strong evidence that there is a foundation in truth for what has ever been deemed the most fabulous part in the ancient history of Persia *.

Balochistan and great part of Mekran were at this period under the rule of Nâser Khan, whose ancestors had enjoyed considerable power over these barren countries for nearly two centuries. The conciliating policy of Ahmed Shah had induced this chief to become his vassal : but a regular treaty was drawn up between the sovereign and his powerful dependant ; and it was stipulated, that neither Nâser Khan nor his successors should ever be called upon to interfere or aid in settling any internal disputes among the Affghans. Since the death of Ahmed, that chief had withdrawn himself from the court of Cabool, and his territories could not therefore be deemed subject to it. The kings of Cabool still retained a part of Khorassan : their principal possession in that province was the city of Herat, which had been committed to the care of a son of the reigning monarch, Zemaun Shah.

This chapter would be incomplete without reviewing the condition of the part of Tartary between Khorassan and the Jaxartes. Its inhabitants had from the earliest ages made constant inroads on the frontier provinces of Persia ; and they several times overran and subjugated the whole kingdom. Four centuries since, the sword of Timoor had laid waste its fields and destroyed its cities : but the traces of desolation still remained, to remind the inhabitants of what

* The History of Roostem and his Family. See vol. i. chap. ii. and iii.

their ancestors had suffered; and they watched with anxious alarm every appearance like the gathering of clouds in that quarter, whence those storms had overwhelmed their country in ruin.

The provinces immediately north of Khorassan, between the Oxus and the Caspian, which formed part of the kingdom of Khaurizm, are possessed by a number of tribes, tracing their descent from some men of a Moghul family⁷, who are represented to have emigrated at a very early period from the northern parts of Tartary to the provinces they now inhabit. According to this account, they married the women of the country where they settled; and though their descendants were not deemed worthy of being ranked in the tribe of their fathers, they were a robust and warlike race, and were denominated Turkuman⁸, which signifies “like or resembling Turks.”

In former parts of this History, we have made frequent mention of these tribes. They had enjoyed large possessions in Asia Minor, on the plains of which many of them still dwell. Their chiefs at one time attained sovereign power in Persia; and two families⁹ of Turkuman princes are among the dynasties who have possessed that empire. The tribes which now occupied the pasture lands on the east of the Caspian, were too disunited to attempt conquest or pretend to power: but they were too bold and restless to remain at peace; and, during the whole period between the death of Nadâr Shah and the establishment of Aga Mahomed Khan, they had made almost annual predatory inroads into Persia: nor were their enterprises confined to the provinces in their vicinity; they even extended into

⁷ D’Herbelot, on the authority of Mirkhond, states that they were of the tribe of Oghooz Khan, who was the third prince of the Moghul dynasty, being the grandson of Moghul Khan, its founder.

⁸ Turkuman is an abbreviated form of Turk-manund: the latter word signifies “resembling.” This etymology is so simple and probable, that we can hardly doubt its correctness.

⁹ The families of the white and black sheep.—See vol. i. p. 316.

Irak. Parties of twenty or thirty Turkuman horse often ventured within sight of Isfahan. They expected success in these excursions from the suddenness of their attack, and from the uncommon activity and strength of their horses. Their sole object was plunder. When they arrived at an unprotected village, the youth of both sexes were seized, and tied on led horses, (which the Turkumans took with them for carrying their booty,) and hurried away into distant captivity, with a speed^b which generally baffled all pursuit.

Although the hostility of these barbarians was a serious evil to the districts which they visited, they had no collective strength that could render them formidable as an enemy to Persia; but the condition of the tribes which dwelt beyond the Oxus, as far as the Lake of Arral in one direction, and the Jaxartes in another, was very different. These had been subdued by the arts or the power of a prince called Beggee Jân, who, clothed in the humble garment of a mendicant, and deriving aid at one moment from superstition, and at another from his sword, had established his authority over the kingdom of Maver-ool-Naher, or Transoxania.

A great tribe, or rather horde, who dwell on the plains of Kapchack, adopted the name of their ruler, Oosbeg Khan, a prince of the race of Chenghiz. The appellation of Oosbeg afterwards became that of a considerable nation, which boasted some of the most warlike tribes of Tartary. The defeat of this race by Timoor has been already related, as well as their subsequent success against his descendant, the celebrated Baber^c. The Oosbeg chief who overcame that

^b The Turkuman horse is a fine animal between fifteen and sixteen hands high. He is bred from the Arabian; but the cross with the breed of the country, and the fine pasture, have given him great size and strength. Probably no horses in the world can endure so much fatigue. I ascertained after minute examination, that those small parties of Turkumans who ventured several hundred miles into Persia, used to advance and retreat nearly a hundred miles a day. They train their horses for these expeditions as we should for a race; and their expression to describe a horse in condition for a chapow, (which may be translated a foraye,) is, that his flesh is marble.

^c See vol. i. p. 315.

prince, was in his turn overthrown and slain by the gallant Shah Ismael, the first of the Seffavean monarchs. But his descendants continued for three centuries to reign over the territories of Bokhara. Their power had been declining for some years before Nâdir Shah invaded their country; and that event, by degrading their authority, may be said to have terminated their rule. The few princes subsequently elevated to the throne, were merely pageants in the hands of powerful chiefs. When the male line of the race of Chenghiz^d became extinct, a son of a pious Syud, said to be descended from a female^e branch of the royal family, was raised to the throne; and to this pageant, proud and jealous tribes granted their nominal allegiance. This internal discord had reduced the government of the Oosbeks to the lowest weakness. Its power was restored by one of the most extraordinary characters that any age or country has produced.

Beggee Jân^f was the eldest son of the Ameer Daniel,

^d Raheem Beg, who commanded the ten thousand Oosbeks sent with Nâdir, after his death usurped the chief power at Bokhara. He slew Abool Fyze Khan, and elevated his infant son, Abd-ool Momin Khân; but hearing some years afterwards, that the young prince, when practising archery, had aimed at a water-melon, in which he saw a fancied resemblance to Raheem Beg, and said, "Now for the head of Atta Baba," or father-tutor, the name he gave to Raheem Beg, the latter conceived he cherished designs of revenging his father, and directed his death in a manner that should make it appear accidental. This was effected by one of his companions running against him when standing on the brink of a well. He was the last male descendant of Chenghiz.—MEER YUSUPH ALI'S *MS.*

^e The prince so elevated is termed Khaujah Zadah, or son of a Khaujah. The title of Khaujah, or Shaikh, is in Tartary given only to the descendants of the prophet, or of the three first caliphs, Aboobeker, Omar, and Osman. But it is the custom for the kings of Tartary, as it had been for those of Persia, to marry their daughters to pious Syuds; and the children selected as pageants were descendants of the royal family by female branches.

^f The name of this extraordinary man was Ameer Maâssoom: his title was Shah Moorâd, which signified the "desired king;" but he is best known by his more familiar appellation of Beggee Jân, the name used by almost all his countrymen when speaking of this favorite prince. I shall, therefore, adopt it in preference to the others.

who, during his latter years, having obtained possession of the person of the nominal prince^g, exercised an almost absolute authority over the Oosbeg tribes inhabiting the territories immediately dependent on Bokhara. At his death, he divided his great wealth among his numerous family, but declared Beggee Jân his heir. That chief, however, who had for some time^h clothed himself in the patched garment of a fakeer, or religious mendicant, instead of taking part in the contests for power among his brothers and near relations, shut himself up in a mosque, and forbade any person to disturb his religious meditations. He also refused to accept the share left to him of his father's wealth. "Take it," he said to those who brought it to him, "to the managers of the public charities. Bid them reimburse, as far as they can, those from whom it was extorted. I can never consent to stain my hands with money obtained by violence." The writer who states this fact asserts, that he attired himself in the coarse dress worn by those who supplicate for mercy, and, having hung a sword round his neck, proceeded to every quarter of Bokhara, imploring, with tears in his eyes, the forgiveness and blessings of the inhabitants for his de-

^g The name of this pageant was Abd-ool Gházee Khán. He was the son of a Syud, or Khaujah, called Abd-ool Raheem Chakboottee, or "old clothes," (according to the MS. I here follow) from his custom of picking up old clothes, washing them, and making them up again, to bestow on the poor, or to use as garments for himself. Meer Yusuph Ali (the author of the MS.) adds, that the youngest son of Abd-ool Raheem had been chosen by Raheem Beg, when he conquered the tribes of Khaurizm, to be their king; and these turbulent subjects had yielded an obedience to the young Syud, which they would have given to no Tartar chief. But when Raheem Beg died, they put the pageant he had placed upon the throne to death.—*MEER YUSUPH ALI'S MS.*

^h The Manuscript of Mahomed Ali Gunjavee states, that he had for many years led this life: but Meer Yusuph Ali asserts, that in his youth he was very licentious, that he did not retire from the world till he was thirty-five years of age, and that his father's death happened about a year afterwards. If we credit his account, Beggee Jân (like Henry V.) had been severely reprehended by the chief judge of his father's capital: but, unlike our generous prince, Beggee Jân, the moment he had the power, put the venerable Vizier of Bokhara, who had censured his conduct, to death.

ceased father, and offering his own life as an expiatory sacrifice for any sins or crimes which the Ameer Daniel might have committed. The character of Beggee Jân already stood high among the learned and religious; for he was deeply versed in theology, and had written many valuable tracts; but this was the first time he had presented himself to the people. At once astonished and delighted at such humility and sanctity in a person of his rank, they crowded around him as if he had been a prophet, and joined with him in prayers for blessings on his parent. After having thus¹ eradicated those feelings of revenge which the violence of his father's rule had excited, he retired to the principal mosque of the city, and gave himself up for several months^k to devotion and mental abstraction. No one was allowed to approach him during this period, except some of his favorite disciples.

Beggee Jân, when he first assumed the holy mantle, had adopted the tenets of a Soofee. He now openly professed himself one of those visionary devotees, who, from having their souls continually fixed on the contemplation of the divine essence, expect to attain such a state of mental beatitude, as leads them to despise all the pleasures of this world,—above all, earthly power. Consistency required that, while he professed this doctrine, he should not easily comply with the inhabitants of Bokhara; who, wearied with the internal troubles caused by the ambition of his relations, earnestly solicited him to assume the government. The

¹ In this account I have followed the Manuscript of Mahomed Ali Gunjavee. Meer Yusuph Ali states, that he only went over part of Bokhara, and deputed Moollah Meer Hashem to go over the remainder of the city. The difference is immaterial. We are told by the former, that one man alone refused to join in the prayer for the Ameer Daniel. "That noble," he said, "extorted money from me, and I cannot render the act lawful by forgiving him." The sum was large; but Beggee Jân was instantly enabled to pay it, by the voluntary contributions of his enthusiastic followers.

^k One of the writers of his life says, that he remained in this state of abstraction for twelve months, during which he composed the best of his works, the *Eyn-ool-Hikmut*, or "The Eye of Science."

populace, who were entirely devoted to him, assembled daily at the mosque where he resided, and attended him wherever he went. The first instance in which he used the influence and authority he had acquired, was in destroying all the drinking and gambling houses in Bokhara. These are said to have amounted to several thousands; and we are assured¹ that, so extraordinary was the veneration for the commands of this holy prince, even those who were ruined by this act aided in its accomplishment.

Some of Beggee Jân's brothers had been slain; and the danger in which his family were placed, from an increasing spirit of revolt among their followers, at last led them to join in the general request, that he would assume the government: but all was in vain, until a serious commotion in the capital, in which about a thousand citizens lost their lives, excited his compassion. On this occasion the nominal king, Abd-oöl Ghâzee Khân, and all the nobles, assembled; and, coming to the mosque where he dwelt, compelled him to attend them to the tomb of his father, Ameer Daniel; and at that sacred spot he was solemnly invoked to support a falling state. Apparently overcome by their urgent entreaties, he promised to give his counsel and aid in the management of public affairs: but he refrained from active interference, till Niyâz Ali, a chief who had rebelled during the rule of his father, and had seized on the city of Sheher-sebz, made an inroad on the territories of Bokhara. This so roused his indignation, that he accepted the title of regent, and marched at the head of a large army to attack the invader; he not only forced him to retreat from the territories of Bokhara, but to abandon some of those countries of which he had for some time been in possession. Beggee Jân may, from this date, be deemed the actual ruler of the Oosbegs; for though he never assumed any title but that of regent, and continued to pay a nominal obedience to Abd-oöl Ghâzee Khan, he exercised during

¹ Persian MS.

the remainder of his life an absolute and undisputed authority. No prince was ever more unanimously chosen to fill the seat of power; and his first care, after assuming the government, was to shew his gratitude by some salutary regulations for the administration of justice, the collection of revenue, and the payment of the army.

Beggee Jân studiously rejected all those claims to respect and obedience which he had inherited from his father, the Ameer Daniel; who had not only been for a short period the ruler of the Oosbegs, but was the chief of a powerful tribe. His artful son knew too well the jealousies and resentments with which such claims were associated, to desire that they should appear as the foundation of his authority: therefore, in framing regulations for the management of public affairs, he gave to every institution a shape suited to his own character; and he desired always to be considered as a religious recluse, who had been compelled by his countrymen to exercise regal power; but who was resolved, so far as the discharge of his duties would permit him, to maintain, amid all temptations, the same rigid austerity and self-denial, as he should if he had never been called to a throne. The splendid court at which the nobles had been accustomed to attend was abolished: in its place he established what may be termed a hall of justice, in which he sat as president, aided by forty moollahs^m, or learned menⁿ. All who had complaints to make came to this hall; but the prosecutor was never allowed to speak, unless the accused was present. No person, however high his rank, dared to refuse^o a sum-

^m One Manuscript states that these courts were only held on Mondays and Fridays. It also asserts that each moollah held in his hand a volume of Beggee Jân's works.

ⁿ They were supported by a daily stipend, from the fund for public charity; which, on account of its more sacred character, was made the general treasury of the empire.

^o This is the case in all patriarchal governments, particularly among the Arabs. The Imâm of Muscat, a powerful prince, is compelled by usage to appear before the cauzee, or judge, of his own capital, if summoned by any of his subjects who deems himself aggrieved.

mons to attend this court. A slave could cite his master before it. Beggee Jân^p listened with great patience to the statement of both parties; and, in all cases not criminal, sent them away, recommending an amicable adjustment of their difference. If they complied, the cause terminated; if not, he took notes at their reappearance of the evidence produced; and these were given, with his opinion, to the moolahs, who were directed to prepare a fetwâh, or decision, according to the holy law. The parties, even after this proceeding, had a week allowed them to accommodate their dispute; but if that elapsed without their doing so, the sentence was passed, and became irrevocable.

Criminal justice was administered according to the Koran. Robbers were punished with death; thieves by the loss of their right hands; drunkards were publicly whipt; and smoking tobacco^q was forbidden under severe penalties. The strictest performance of their religious duties was enjoined to all classes: the police officers of Bokhara, we are told^r, were continually employed in driving the inhabitants to the mosques to hear the stated prayers^s; and they were authorized to use their whips, to awaken the devotion of the negligent^t. Any person desirous of improving in religious knowledge was admitted to the colleges of the city, and received daily subsistence. We can hardly credit the accounts of the number of these students, who are said at one period to have exceeded thirty thousand.

Beggee Jân abolished all duties except on foreign goods.

^p Persian MS.

^q The learned and religious Mahomedans are divided in their opinion about the legality of smoking tobacco, drinking coffee, &c. which have come into general use since the death of Mahomed. The more severe maintain that, as they have an inebriating quality, they are virtually prohibited by the Koran.

^r Persian MS.

^s These are said five times a day.

^t We are also informed, that each of these officers had a small book, to aid him in interrogating those he met on their knowledge of the proper prayers; and if he found any ignorant, he had a right to punish him.

No monopolies were suffered; and revenue was only collected from crown lands. But the Jizyât^u, or "regulated tax on infidels," was exacted; and the Zukât^z, or "established charity," was levied on all believers, not excepting the soldiers, who had before been exempt. The money thus collected was put into the treasury; which was also supplied by the Khums, or "fifth part of all plunder taken from the enemy." This holy ruler, in imitation of the prophet Mahomed, claimed this share for the expenses of his government.

Abd-ool Ghâzee Khân, the nominal king, and his family, were supported by the royal estates. The feudal usage of paying chiefs for their military service, and that of their adherents, had long prevailed among the Oosbegs; and the heads of the principal families possessed large estates, and had rights of pasture for themselves and their followers on particular tracts. These grants were to provide for their subsistence; but Beggee Jân, when he obliged his soldiers to pay the tax of charity, enabled them to do so by giving them, according to their rank, a regular allowance in money^y, paid from that public treasury to which they contributed. These institutions were copied from those of Mahomed, and were meant to increase the veneration of the Oosbegs for their ruler, who in his own person gave an example of extraordinary frugality. He drew daily from the same fund from which he paid his soldiers, for the support of himself, his cook^z, his servant, and his tutor, a tungâh each, (a coin worth about five pence,) being the stipend allowed to the

^u A tax of thirty per cent. on their property was levied from Jews, Christians, and Hindus.

^z *Zukât* means *purification*; and is applied to this sacred tax, its payment being considered to purify and legalize the property on which it is paid. It is two and a half per cent. on personal property: but the rate of collecting it on different kinds of property varies; and no one is liable, who has not possessed the property nearly twelve months.

^y He gave them on an average five tomâns (about five pounds) per annum.

^z He gave his cook the name or title of *Helâl-Puz*, or "the dresser of what is lawful."

poorest student. The wife of Beggee Jân, who was of the royal family, was allowed only three tungâhs^a. This princess had a fortune of her own, that placed her above the necessity of receiving this pittance; however, she took it daily, to please her husband, who often told her it was too much. "That which is necessary," Beggee Jân used to say to her, "is alone lawful;" and when she remonstrated, he was wont to add, "Learn, lady, to be content with little, that thy God may be content with thee." But the joy which he felt at the birth of a son^b made him break through his rigid economy. No less than five pieces of gold^c were allotted for the daily subsistence of the mother and her infant; and an equal sum was given for the support of two other sons the moment they were born. By this and other acts, Beggee Jân showed that he had determined to educate his children in those luxuries which he affected to despise; for he allowed his family to reside in a palace, while he himself dwelt in a small unfurnished room, or rather cell, into which persons of every class were admitted at all hours. He was generally clad in a coarse garment, and had the appearance of a common mendicant; but when he went to see his family, the skin of a deer was thrown loose over his shoulders.

The class of devotees to which Beggee Jân belonged, pride themselves not only on the contempt of dress, but of cleanliness; and a thousand anecdotes of him prove that he was not above seeking fame, by compliance with the most disgusting usages of the sect. We neither can nor ought to condemn conduct which assisted this extraordinary man in giving union and strength to the distracted and hostile tribes of his nation. No sentiment short of that reverence bordering on adoration, with which the Oosbegs regarded

^a Persian MS.

^b The present monarch, Hyder Turrâh. The name of his mother was Yeldeez Begum: she is termed in the MS. the daughter of Abd-ool Ghâzee Khân.

^c About five pounds.

Beggee Jân, could have enabled him to accomplish the great objects he had in view; and all his knowledge, firmness, and justice, would have availed him nothing, had he not disarmed his enemies and attached his adherents, by a life of privation and the most rigid austerities. Ignorance and superstition are ever united; and the Tartars were easily persuaded, that a leader who contemned the worldly pleasures they prized, and who preferred the patched mantle and crooked staff of a mendicant priest to a royal robe and sceptre, must act under the immediate direction of the Divine Being. Their habits were not such as made it easy for them to understand how any man placed in such a situation could, from any other motive, be content to resign those enjoyments, which in their minds constituted the essence and charm of regal power.

The sacred character of Beggee Jân gave him strength to subdue almost the whole country^d between the Oxus and Jaxartes. His army was chiefly composed of horse; his constant plan of war was by predatory invasions. After he had reduced almost all the tribes of his own nation, he was engaged in a war with Timoor Shah, King of the Affghans, over whom he obtained some advantages, more by his policy than his arms.

The reduction of Merv by Beggee Jân has been already noticed. This conquest enabled him to invade Khorassan: in the year after he advanced to Meshed; but finding it difficult to make himself master of it, he informed its inhabitants and his own army, that the holy Imâm Rezâ^e, who was interred there, had appeared to him in a dream, and commanded him to spare the holy city and its dependencies.

^d The city of Sheher-Sebz, formerly called Kesch, opposed him for some years, but was at last taken; its governor, Niyâz Ali Khan, saved himself by flight.

^e Beggee Jân told his followers, that the daily supplications made to the Imâm by the distressed inhabitants, deprived that sacred personage of sleep. "I know," said he, "that the Imâm liveth; and he shall not have to reproach me with disturbing his rest."

In obedience to this pretended mandate, he refrained from plundering the open suburbs and neighbouring villages, but he laid waste all such districts as were not deemed under the protection of the sacred city, and carried their inhabitants into bondage. Before he returned to Bokhara, he wrote circular letters to Shah Rokh Meerza and the other chiefs of Khorassan, informing them of his intention to revisit that province next season. He advised them to consult their own safety, and that of their subjects, by early submission and by adopting the creed of the Soonees. "Your conversion," he stated in these letters, "will prove a blessing to you; and it will add to the number of the miracles I have already performed."

From this period till his death, Beggee Jân made annual inroads into Khorassan. The heavy baggage, with a part of the army, were left several marches in the rear, while the advance, consisting wholly of cavalry, spread over the country. Every man of this corps carried seven days' provision for himself and horse; their object was, either to surprise the forts and walled villages, or to make prisoners of all the inhabitants travelling or labouring in the fields. If not ransomed, they were carried into bondage; the spoil in general consisted equally of men, women, cattle, sheep, and grain. The leader of the Oosbeks usually extorted a considerable sum of money from those towns which he could not reduce; for as the invasion always took place before the harvest, a refusal was followed by the instant destruction of every field within the reach of his followers. The plunder, we are told, was fairly divided. A fifth part belonged to the ruler, and constituted a considerable part of his revenue. Beggee Jân always led his own troops. He generally rode at the head of the army, dressed like a religious man of the poorest class, and mounted upon a small pony. He maintained a strict discipline in his camp^f; but this means no more than that there was a good police, and that his soldiers

^f Persian MS.

yielded a prompt and implicit obedience. Attention to the duties of religion was rigidly enforced, even amid these scenes of violence; a number of moollahs, or priests, marched with every division; and were sent, when occasion required, to negotiate with the chiefs whose territories were attacked. They were fitted for this employ by their superior education; and they were protected by their sacred character from insult and danger.

The policy of Beggee Jân, while he condemned himself to every privation, made him desire to be surrounded with splendour: nothing could present a greater contrast than the mean and disgusting appearance of this extraordinary man and all that personally appertained to him, with the wealth and magnificence of his nobles and principal officers. The writer of one of the tracts from which we have taken his history, was in the employ of Mameish Khan, chief of Chinnarân, when Beggee Jân invaded Khorassan. He was deputed to the camp of the invaders; and has given a very curious account of his mission.

Mameish Khan, it appears from this memoir, was in correspondence with Ishân Nukeeb^a, a noble of high rank among the Oosbegs, and a great favorite of their ruler. He gave his envoy a letter to this chief, with charge of two colts; one for his friend, the other for Beggee Jân. But the particulars will be best told in the words of this intelligent writer.

“I was introduced to Ishân Nukeeb, who was seated at the further end of a magnificent tent. He was a man of handsome appearance, uncommonly fair, but had a thin beard^b. He asked after my health, and then after that of Mameish Khan, adding, ‘Why has he not come himself?’

^a Ishân Nukeeb-ul-Ashráff, or “the illustrious,” was the son of Ishân Mukdoom, the chief of Juzák, who had married the daughter of Ameer Daniel. Ishân Mukdoom was consequently the nephew of Beggee Jân, with whom he was always a great favorite.

^b This Tartar feature is deemed a great deformity by the Persians: according to their idea of manly beauty, the beard cannot be too long and bushy.

On my making some excuse, he added, 'I understand the reason: had I been alone, he would have paid me a visit; but he is afraid of Beggee Jân.' After these observations, he rose and retired to another tent, desiring me to repose myself where I was. A rich sleeping-dress was brought before me, and every person went away; but I had hardly lain down when I was sent for to attend Ishân Nukeeb, who very graciously insisted on my dining with him. The repast was luxurious: an hour after dinner tea was brought, and the favorite drank his in a cup of pure gold, ornamented with jewels: the cup given to me was of silver, inlaid with gold. Three hours after noon, he carried me to a large tent with five poles, where a number of persons were saying their prayers: we did the same; and then returned to his tent, which he had hardly entered, when a servant in waiting announced Utkhoor Soofee. This religious personage, for such he was, from the moment he entered occupied all the attention of Ishân Nukeeb, who appeared to treat him with the profoundest respect. When tea and coffee were served, he held the cup while Utkhoor Soofee drank. We had not sat long, before an officer came into the tent, and told Ishân Nukeeb that Beggee Jân desired he would wait upon him, and bring his guest. We arose immediately, mounted our horses, and proceeded with him. After riding a short distance we came to a one pole tent, which, I judged from its size and tattered appearance, must belong to some cooks or water-carriers. An old man was seated on the grass, so near it as to be protected from the sun by its shade. All dismounted, and advanced towards the old man, who was clothed in green, but very dirty. When near him, they stood with their hands crossed, in a respectful posture, and made their salutation. He returned that of each person, and desired us to sit down opposite to him. He appeared to shew great kindness to Ishân Nukeeb, but chiefly addressed his conversation to Utkhoor Soofee¹.

¹ The author states that Beggee Jân spoke to the Soofee at times like a

“ After some time, the subject of my mission was introduced. I gave my letter to Ishân Nukeeb: he presented it to the old man in green, who, I now discovered, was Beggee Jân. That ruler opened it, read it, and put it into his pocket. After a short pause, he said, ‘ No doubt Mameish Khan has sent me a good horse; ’ and desired him to be brought. After looking attentively at the animal, he began to whisper and laugh with those near him: then addressing me, said, ‘ Why has not your master sent the horse Kârrâ-Goz^k, as I desired? ’—‘ That horse has defects,’ I replied, ‘ or he would have been sent. ’—‘ With all its defects,’ said Beggee Jân, smiling, ‘ he is twenty times better than the one you have brought. ’

“ While we were conversing, a great number of nobles came in; and I could not help observing the extraordinary richness and splendour of their arms and dresses. Beggee Jân returned the salute of every one in a kind and affable manner, and bade them be seated; but the shade of his small tent did not protect half of them from the sun. Soon after the chief fell into a deep reverie; and, till evening prayers were announced, appeared wholly absorbed in religious contemplation. At the time of prayer all arose, and retired. I slept that night in the tent of Ishân Nukeeb. At day-light, the army marched, and passed within a few miles of Chinnarân. After Beggee Jân had reached his encampment, he sent for me, and honored me with a private audience, at which he was very affable. ‘ Your master, Mameish Khan, is, I hear, always drinking wine. ’—‘ I have not seen him drink,’ I replied, ‘ and cannot speak to that point. ’—‘ You are right,’ said he, ‘ not to state what you have not seen. Tell Mameish Khan I have a regard for him; but as to Nâdir Meerza, (the ruler of Meshed,) he is a fool. Bid Mameish Khan write to Jaffier Khan, of

very young, and at others like a very old man; by which he means, that there was a mixture of the gay and grave in his conversation.

^k Kârrâ-Goz means “ black eye.” It is usual to give names to high-bred horses in Persia.

Nishapore, and advise him to solicit my friendship, if he wishes to save his country from destruction.' A handsome dress was now brought for me, with a present in money. Every article of the dress was good, except the turban, which was of little or no value. This, however, Beggee Jân took himself, giving me his own in exchange¹, which was a great deal worse. I took my leave, and returned to the tent of Ishân Nukeeb, to whom I repeated all that had passed. He laughed very heartily, made me a handsome present; and I was on the point of retiring, when two men came at full gallop with a letter from Mameish Khan, stating that, notwithstanding the protection he had received, some of his followers had been taken by the Oosbegs. Ishân Nukeeb took me again to Beggee Jân, whom we found seated in his small tent on a goat's skin. He directed the captives to be brought, and made them over to me. He had before written a letter to Mameish Khan, which he reopened, wrote what he had done, and again committed it to my charge. As this affair was settling, his cook, a diminutive person with weak eyes, came into the tent. 'Why do you not think of dinner?' said Beggee Jân: 'it will soon be time for prayer.' The little cook immediately brought a large black pot, and making a fire-place with stones, put four or five kinds of grain and a little dried meat into it. He then nearly filled it with water, and having kindled a fire, left it to boil, while he prepared the dishes, which were wooden platters, of the kind used by the lowest orders. He put down three, and poured out the mess. Beggee Jân watched him; and the cook evidently understood from his looks when more or less was to be put into a dish. After all was ready, he spread a dirty cloth, and

¹ The exchange of turbans is deemed a pledge of friendship. If the author of this Memoir has not been led by vanity into exaggeration, there cannot be a more remarkable proof of the humility which Beggee Jân affected than his exchanging his turban with one allotted as a present to the envoy of an insignificant chief.

laid down a piece of stale barley-bread^m, which Beggee Jân put into a cup of water to moisten. The first dish was given to the ruler of the Oosbeks, the second was placed between Ishân Nukeeb and me, and the cook took the third for himself, sitting down to eat it opposite to his master. As I had dined, I merely tasted what was put before me. It was very nauseous, the meat being almost putrid; yet several nobles who came in ate the whole of our unfinished share, and with apparent relish, that could only be derived from the pleasure of partaking in the same fare with their holy leader.

“After dinner I obtained leave to depart. On my return to Chinnarân, Mameish Khan was pleased with the result of my mission: but he afterwards informed me, that, notwithstanding the fair promises of Beggee Jân, eighty-two of his people were during this season carried away by the Oosbeks.”

The above account is alike descriptive of the character of Beggee Jân and of his court. It also shews the nature of his annual incursions into Khorassan; and exhibits a picture of despotic power under a very disgusting but imposing garb. This artful and able ruler fully succeeded in the great object of his life; for at his death, a few years after the events that have been recorded, his eldest son, Hyder Turrah, ascended the throne of Bokhara, and assumed, as his father had always intended, the name and dignity of a sovereign.

Beggee Jân's army is said to have amounted to sixty thousand horse; but in his invasions of Khorassan he was seldom attended by more than half that number. Though occasionally severe, his administration was on the whole lenient and just. He never assumed the title of king. On the seat which he generally used, his name, Ameer Maasoom, the son of the Ameer Daniel, was engraven in the centre; round it was inscribed the following sentence:—“Power and dignity, when founded on justice, are from God; when not, from the devil.”

^m The author adds, “God knows in what year of the Hijrah this bread had been baked.”

The union of the various Oosbeg tribes under Beggee Jân, and the exaggerated reports of his character and success, had spread such alarm over Persia, that all who were unbiassed by family or feudal feelings rejoiced in a termination of internal wars, which had raised an able and warlike monarch to the throne, and placed their country in a condition to resist invasion; for the glory of the best of those conquerors who had issued from the plains of Tartary was associated with rapine and death. And though Persia had attained its greatest happiness^a and splendour under some of their descendants, men who had the prospect of being swept away by the torrent could find little consolation in the hope that, when its destructive waves had subsided, it might improve and fructify the soil over which it had passed.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LIFE OF AGA MAHOMED KHAN, KAJIE, THE UNCLE
AND PREDECESSOR OF THE PRESENT KING: WITH A
BRIEF NOTICE OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS SINCE THE
ELEVATION OF THE REIGNING MONARCH.

MANY events in the life of Aga Mahomed Khan have been necessarily anticipated; but the interest which attaches to his extraordinary character, and the claim he has on our attention, not only as the founder of a dynasty, but as the uncle and immediate predecessor of the reigning monarch, call for a short retrospect of those causes which enabled him to mount the throne of Persia.

The history of his tribe has been before given. When they were settled in Armenia, the circumstance of one part

^a There can be no doubt that the happiest and most glorious era of Persian history was when it was governed by the first monarchs of the Seljookian dynasty.

having their pastures higher on a river than another, first separated them into two branches, termed "the higher" and "the lower^o." These two great divisions were subdivided into many smaller. Some families took their names from a chief, or from a village^p, near which they fed their flocks. When the Kajirs were divided, and sent to different quarters of the empire, by one of the Seffavean monarchs, the most considerable part was settled at Asterabad^q. It consisted of families of both branches; and the heads of the Youkhâree, or "the higher," were considered as the first in rank, till Fattéh Ali Khan, who belonged to the Ashâkâ, or "the lower," was nominated general of the forces of Tâmâsp the Second. This station enabled him to assume the superiority in his tribe: but his right was reluctantly admitted; and, when he was put to death by Nâdir Shah, those who deemed themselves aggrieved by his usurpation rejoiced in his fall, and endeavoured to involve his only surviving son^r, Mahomed Hoossein Khan, in his ruin. The young chief was compelled to fly to the Turkumans, who dwell in the plains to the east of the Caspian. Several of his family^s followed him; and he carried on a petty warfare with his enemies, whom he would probably soon have overcome, had they not been supported by Nâdir Shah and his descendants.

Adil Shah, the nephew and successor of Nâdir, when he established himself in Mazenderan, sent for two infant sons of Mahomed Hoossein, who had some time before been

^o The Youkhâree-bâsh and Ashâkâ-bâsh.—*Persian MS.*

^p Thus the Kajirs of Duwânloo took their name from Duwânloo, a village near Erivân, in the vicinity of which they were long encamped.

^q The Zeâd-oghloo, or sons of Zeâd, have continued at Ganjah since the time of Abbas the Great. Their chief, Juâd Khan, was slain by the Russians.

^r Fattéh Ali Khan had two sons, Mahomed Hoossein Khan and Mahomed Hussun Khan: the latter died young.

^s Among these was Aliverdi Khan, the father of Nou Rôze, the *Yeshkâ-gâssee-bâshee*, or lord of requests to the reigning king.

taken prisoners, and commanded that the eldest^{*}, Aga Mahomed, then a child between five and six years of age, should be made an eunuch. This act of cruelty was meant to destroy every hope of accomplishing that very end which it ultimately promoted; for, by depriving the representative of a great family of those sensual enjoyments which in eastern countries too often enervate both the body and mind of such as, from their rank and condition, have the means of unbounded indulgence, it forced him to seek gratification from other sources: the attention of Aga Mahomed, from his early years, appears to have been directed to views of ambition and aggrandizement; and he pursued them through life with a callous perseverance and unrelenting severity, which at once marked the insensibility of his nature, and the deep impression made by the recollection of early wrongs.

After the death of Adil Shah, Aga Mahomed had obtained his release and joined his father, whom he accompanied, while yet a youth, through all the vicissitudes of his fortune. When his father was defeated and slain, he fell into the power of Kerreem Khan, by whom he was latterly treated with great kindness and indulgence. The whole time which he passed as a prisoner at Shiraz was employed in preparing himself, by the study of men and books, for the great scene in which he was destined to act; and Kerreem Khan used often to consult him in affairs of state^u. Aga Mahomed did not withhold his counsel, though he cherished the most implacable hatred to the whole Zend family. He

^{*} His name was Mahomed Khan; the title of Aga, or master, which is one of considerable respect, was always given to the principal eunuchs of the royal haram. It was applied to the young prince, and he bore it through life.

^u Kerreem Khan used to call him *Peeran-wisa*. This celebrated minister of Afrásiab, it has been before mentioned, was the Nestor of the Turks; and the highest encomium on the political wisdom of an individual is to call him by this name.

often related an anecdote², which displays his feelings at this period, and gives an insight into his extraordinary character. "I had no power," he said, "of declaring openly that revenge which I always harboured against the murderers of my father, and the despoilers of my inheritance; but while I sat with Kerreem Khan in his hall of public assembly, I often employed myself in cutting his fine carpets with a penknife which I concealed under my cloak, and my mind felt some relief in doing him thus secretly all the injury I could." When Aga Mahomed Khan mentioned this, the carpets that he had tried to destroy were become his own; and he used to add, "I am now sorry for what I did: it was foolish, and showed a want of foresight."

The misfortunes of his early life had not only taught him patience, but rendered him a profound adept in dissimulation: during the very period that he cherished the most inveterate resentment against Kerreem Khan and all his family, he had so won on the confidence of that ruler, that Kerreem not only gave him a liberal allowance to live upon, the freedom of going wherever he chose in the city, and the use of his best horses, with liberty to hunt over the neighbouring country, but proposed to employ him in quelling a rebellion which his brother, Hoossein Ali Khan, had excited in Mazenderan. Meerza Jaffier, the minister of Kerreem Khan, prevented the execution of this design; and Aga Mahomed Khan had the generosity, when sovereign of Persia, to mark, by his kindness to the relations of the minister, his gratitude for his conduct³. "Meerza Jaffier," he observed, "acted from no feeling but attachment to his master: he nevertheless saved my life; for had I been sent to Mazenderan, I should have been compelled to rebel; and the power of Kerreem Khan was so great, that I must have been destroyed."

² This anecdote was related to me by Hajee Ibrahim, who was for many years the sole minister of Aga Mahomed Khan.

³ MS. History of Aga Mahomed Khan.

The manner in which Aga Mahomed Khan made his escape^{*} from Shiraz, on the death of Kerreem Khan, has been already noticed: he fled with almost incredible speed to Mazenderan, and immediately declared himself independent. He was at this period thirty-six years of age. Though his frame was slender, his frugal diet and his habits of exercise made him capable of suffering any fatigue or hardship. He might be said to live on horseback; every moment that he could spare from other occupations was given to the chase, which was his only amusement. His heart is said to have been as hardened as his body; but the natural severity of his temper, during his progress to that sovereign power which after a struggle of eighteen years he attained, was checked by his prudence, which led him not only to conciliate his friends by kindness, but to forget his wrongs, and even to forgive some of his most inveterate personal enemies. We cannot praise too highly the wisdom which, when he had the power of revenge, pardoned those chiefs of the hostile branch of the Kajirs who had not only been concerned in murdering his father and other relations, but had deprived him of his title to the name of man, and had rendered him, with all his power, an object of pity to the lowest of his subjects. The generous policy which terminated the blood feud that had so long subsisted among the Kajirs, gave the throne of Persia to their chiefs; and Aga Mahomed was too sensible of the importance of the union he had established, to disturb it by the recollection of past injuries. He obtained attachment by bestowing confidence: among those who were most honoured in his government, were persons from whom he had received the greatest insults^{*} in his adversity.

When he fled from Shiraz, he was only attended by seventeen followers. He refused to halt at Isfahan, though invited to do so; but he rested one night near Teheran,

^{*} He reached Isfahan on the third day of his flight. The distance is about two hundred and fifty-one miles.

^{*} Some of those chiefs still enjoy the favour and confidence of his successor, the reigning monarch.

and was kindly treated by the governor^b. The moment he entered Mazenderan^c, he was joined by a number of his tribe, who acknowledged him as their chief: but he soon discovered that he had the most serious opposition to expect from his own family. Some of his brothers^d declared against him: one of them, Moorteza Kooli, who had assembled a body of troops, proclaimed himself king. A petty war was carried on for four years with various fortune. Aga Mahomed, though at first successful, was surprised and made captive at Balfrosh, through the treachery of his brother, Rizâ Kooli, who loaded him with chains, and deliberated whether he should deprive him of sight or put him to death^e. His prisoner, however, had secret friends among the persons employed to guard him; and their exertions, with the efforts of his two brothers, Jaffier Kooli and Moostâphâ Kooli, who remained faithful to his interests, restored him to liberty and power. His brother, Rizâ Kooli, was compelled to fly, and retired to Meshed, where he died. Moorteza Kooli soon afterwards took refuge in Russia, where he became the instrument of the ambitious designs of the Empress Catherine.

It has been before stated, that the moment Aga Mahomed received intelligence of the death of Ali Moorad Khan, he collected all the troops he could, and entered Irak. His army increased as he advanced: the flight of Jaffier Khan made him master of Isfahan without a battle, for the skirmish at Kashan deserves not that name. When compelled to retreat by the defection of part of his army, instead of returning to Mazenderan, he repaired the fortifications of

^b Meerza Ali Nuckee.

^c He intercepted part of the revenue of Mazenderan, which was proceeding under a weak convoy to Shiraz.

^d Aga Mahomed had five half-brothers by a different mother: Moorteza Kooli Khan, Rizâ Kooli Khan, Moostâphâ Kooli Khan, Jaffier Kooli Khan, and Mehdee Kooli Khan. His own brother, Hoossein Kooli Khan, had been put to death by the Turkumans, when he fled from Zuckee Khan. He left two sons, of whom the reigning monarch is the eldest.

• Moollah Mahomed's *History of the Kajirs*.

Teheran^f, which he appears to have resolved to make his capital; from its vicinity to Mazenderan, and its central situation amid the pasture lands of those Turkish tribes on whose support he chiefly depended.

Several powerful chiefs of Aderbejan, Kûrdistan, and Irak, had joined the standard of Aga Mahomed; some still wavered between him and Jaffier Khan; while others, presuming on the numbers of their followers, hoped that the struggle between the Kajir and Zend tribes might favour their own views of ambition. In his conduct toward these nobles, Aga Mahomed exhibited profound dissimulation. His object was to destroy all whom he could not expect to attach; but he always tried every expedient that art could suggest, before he had recourse to violence. Ali Khan, a chief of the Affshâr tribe, had shown a disposition to aspire to the throne, and had assembled a number of followers in Aderbejan. Instead of treating him as an enemy, Aga Mahomed addressed a letter to him as an equal, inviting him to a meeting, and calling on him, by their affinity as chiefs of Turkish tribes, to combine against the princes of the Zend family. Ali Khan was a sensible and brave man; he preferred open hostility to so dangerous a friendship; and, expecting an attack, awaited him on the plains of Sooltaneah^g. Aga Mahomed marched towards him, apparently intending to give him battle: but when the armies met, he sent one of his brothers, accompanied only by two horsemen, to the camp of Ali Khan, with the following message to be delivered in the hearing of all his officers and attendants. "I am desired by Aga Mahomed Khan, to ask why two brave Turkish tribes should give delight to their enemies by shedding each other's blood? Let the Affshârs enjoy their present lands, their chief, his government^h, and continue united with the Kajirs in friendship,

^f The citadels of Persian walled towns are called Argh: they are generally square, with very high walls flanked by lofty turrets.

^g Persian MS.

^h The Khumsâ, or five districts, of which Zunjân is the capital.

which must tend to their mutual advancement, and to the destruction of all their enemies." This overture made some impression on the chief, and more on his followers. It led to further negotiation; Aga Mahomed prevailed, and Ali Khan consented to be the first noble of his court. His army was retained; and he was treated with such regard and even confidence, that all his alarm vanished. When lulled into fatal security, he was invited to a banquet given by one of the principal persons of the court: late at night, when inebriated with wine, he received a message from Aga Mahomed, desiring to consult with him immediately on a subject of importance. He hastened to obey, and would not even wait to put on his arms. The moment he entered the palace, he was seized and had his eyes put out, without any of his adherents knowing what had happened. Part of his troops were disbanded next morning, and part taken into the service of Aga Mahomed. The whole transaction was conducted without the loss of a life or the slightest disturbance. The treachery which had deceived and destroyed a gallant rival, was by flatterers called justifiable policy; and there can be no doubt, that the terror impressed on a number of ambitious nobles by the fate of Ali Khan, greatly promoted the success of his enemy.

The events of the war against Jaffier Khan, and his son, Lootf Ali, have been related. The inhabitants of Kerman were massacred. The pillage continued nearly three days; but, as it was stopped the moment intelligence was received of Lootf Ali having been made prisoner, we must conclude that Aga Mahomed in this, as in almost all instances, acted less from passion than policy: he believed his enemy had escaped, and meant, by a terrible example, to prevent any other city or province of Persia from granting him their support.

In surveying the conduct of a monarch like Aga Mahomed Khan, we should guard ourselves against those impressions which many of his actions are calculated to make. Living under a government protected by laws, we associate

cruelty and oppression with every act of a despot. His executions are murders; and the destruction of helpless citizens (who in an assault too generally share the fate of the garrison) is deemed a horrid massacre. But we must not assume that justice is always violated, because the form of administering it is repugnant to our feelings; and we should recollect, that even among civilized nations the inhabitants of towns taken by storm are exposed to pillage and slaughter, without any charge of barbarity against those by whom they are plundered, or put to the sword. The punishment of bodies of men to deter others of similar condition, is, perhaps, the only mode by which uncivilized nations can be preserved in peace. When martial clans, united in name, in feeling, and in action, are so devoted to their leaders, that neither imprudence nor crime can absolve their allegiance, it becomes impossible to take away power from the chief, without depriving his followers of the means of opposition or revenge; and it is only by making examples of whole classes of his rebellious subjects, that an absolute monarch, who rules over a warlike and turbulent people, can expect to strike the terror indispensable to preserve himself upon the throne, and to establish the tranquillity of his dominions.

The extraordinary rise of Nâdir Shah and of Kerreem Khan had destroyed that sacred regard for the royal family, which had protected the weakest of the Seffavean monarchs. Every leader who had followers thought that chance might give him the crown. The usurpation of the kingly name was so common, that it was no longer held in respect; amid the continual change of rulers, men lost their habits of obedience to the only paramount authority recognised by the usages of the country. This is no overcharged picture: when the success of Aga Mahomed Khan obtained him the rule of Persia, the kingdom was in a state of complete anarchy. The chiefs of the principal tribes cherished plans of inordinate ambition. Their followers, accustomed to scenes of revolt and plunder, were adverse to any power

which deprived them of their harvest. The towns and villages had been pillaged so often, that many of their inhabitants, compelled to abandon their homes, sought relief in the violence by which they had been ruined ; while others became voluntary exiles. Commerce had greatly declined ; for, besides the hazards which merchants incurred from the upstart rulers of the day, the public roads were infested by plunderers, who seized on all property found unguarded.

Never was a character better formed to remedy these evils than Aga Mahomed Khan. The flatterers who praise his justice, admit that he had no mercy. Punishment, they argue, was never wantonly inflicted ; but the guilty were never spared. His object was to restore Persia to tranquillity ; and to effect this, he resolved to destroy all in any way likely to disturb it. He had forgiven some of his most inveterate enemies ; but when policy did not require him to renounce his resentment, he seemed prone to implacable and extravagant revenge. This disposition was shewn after his triumph over Lootf Ali Khan. Not satisfied with putting to death or depriving of sight¹ all the relations of that prince, he dug up the bones of the virtuous Kerreem Khan, and directed their removal to Teheran ; where they were deposited with those of Nâdir Shah, (which were subsequently brought from Khorassan) at the entrance of the palace^k, that he might every day trample on the graves of the two principal foes of his family. Such an act could only excite disgust and indignation : but on this occasion, the usual policy of Aga Mahomed gave way to a callous malignity ; from long brooding on past injuries, he appears to have found delight in a base triumph over the remains

¹ Zein-ool-abdeen's Anecdotes.

^k A Persian poet had the boldness to write this satirical epigram on the sacrilegious act. " The malice of revenge has been disappointed ; and the sacred depository of the remains of the virtuous Kerreem Khan are, by the just decree of Providence, constantly illuminated by his enemies." Such was the case ; for the place where he was interred, being the entrance of the palace, had lamps burning through the night.

of his enemies, and in the unmanly indulgence of a posthumous revenge.

Every action of Aga Mahomed was calculated to inspire dread among the higher ranks of his subjects : but though severe to all who exercised power, whether from station or birth, he was kind and indulgent to his soldiers and to the mass of the population ; and every step he took to spread the terror of his name, and to secure the crown for his family, promoted their happiness and prosperity. On every occasion, he shewed a perfect knowledge of the characters by whom he was surrounded ; of which we have a remarkable instance in his conduct to Hajee Ibrahim. When he was encamped in Kerman, and his minister was proceeding to join him, one of the royal guards, who met the latter on the road, behaved to him with extreme insolence. The Hajee directed some of his followers to seize the man and chastise him : it was in vain that those who were with him begged him to refrain from an act which, they conceived, would inevitably ruin him. " If Aga Mahomed Khan," said he sternly, " can countenance by his protection the insolence of a fellow like this to a man of my rank, the sooner I am destroyed the better." When he arrived in camp, he found the monarch informed of the transaction : at their meeting he exclaimed, " So you have punished one of my servants, Hajee ? I am grateful to you for having done so : you are exactly the person I want to keep these rascals in order !" A short personal knowledge confirmed all his favorable impressions of the talents of Hajee Ibrahim ; and he early resolved on making him prime minister. No measure of his reign contributed more to his success than his employing this extraordinary man, whose genius was suited to his high office, and who continued, while Aga Mahomed lived, to merit and enjoy the unbounded favour and confidence of his sovereign.

Three of Aga Mahomed Khan's brothers, who were competitors for the throne, had fled from Persia. Moos-tâphâ Kooli Khan, whom he suspected of designs against

his person, was deprived of sight. There remained only Jaffier Kooli Khan, to whose courage and enterprise he was in a great degree indebted for his crown. This prince had always preserved his allegiance, and had on several occasions been the successful mediator between Aga Mahomed and other members of his family. Although he was known to be ambitious, there never was any cause to believe that he cherished designs against his elder brother; but it was not expected that he would grant equal submission to his nephew, who had been declared heir to the throne. Jaffier Kooli had asked his brother to give him the government of Isfahan: but he had been refused; and he was subsequently appointed to the rule of a district in Mazenderan. Irritated at this treatment, which he suspected to proceed from a doubt of his fidelity, he tried by excuses to evade a summons to attend at court. Aga Mahomed was alarmed at this symptom of disaffection: he dreaded the valour of Jaffier Kooli, and feared an open rupture with a chief who was the idol of the soldiers of his own tribe, and towards whom any suspicion or harshness must appear the blackest ingratitude. He had recourse to art therefore, and prevailed on his mother¹ to go to Mazenderan, and appease her son: he desired her to promise him the government of Isfahan, or any thing that would restore his confidence and friendship. All he required was, that the brother he loved would come to Teheran on his way to Isfahan, and assure him of his forgiveness. The brave and generous Jaffier Kooli, though deceived by these protestations, still hesitated about trusting himself in Aga Mahomed's power. At last however he con-

¹ Olivier says, that Aga Mahomed Khan went himself to his brother, and regained his confidence by his humility and art. The violent temper of Jaffier Kooli, he informs us, led him to load his brother with reproaches; they were patiently borne by the cool, designing monarch, who at last succeeded in lulling him into security. There is no difference in other points between the relation of this traveller and the MS. I have followed. The latter is written by one who professes to have been a witness of the whole transaction.

mented; but not before he had received the most solemn assurances of safety, and a promise that he was only to stay one night at Teheran before he proceeded to his government. When he reached Teheran he was welcomed with every appearance of cordiality; and the night passed in peace. Next day Aga Mahomed, after giving him some instructions for his conduct at Isfahan, observed, "You have not, I believe, yet looked at my new palace; walk there with Bâbâ Khan, and after you have seen it, return to me." He went to look at it: at the moment he entered the portico, some assassins who had been stationed there, fell upon him and slew him^m. The body was carried to Aga Mahomed Khan, who mourned over it with an appearance of the most frantic grief. He desired Bâbâ Khan (by which name he always called the present monarch, then quite a youth) to approach; and 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 animated that body would never have permitted my crown to rest upon your head! Persia would have been distracted with internal wars. To avert these consequences, I have acted with shameful ingratitude, and have sinned deeply against God and man!" These sentiments might be sincere: the public expression of them had the effect of mitigating the horror at this murder; and men believed, or affected to believe, that the desire of promoting the general weal was paramount to all other feelings in the breast of their sovereign.

The Turkuman tribes who inhabit the plains near Astarabad have been described. Aga Mahomed Khan's father had always found a refuge among them when in distress. They gladly welcomed a fugitive of rank, whose name and

^m In one account of this horrid transaction it is stated, that Bâbâ Khan (the present king, then a boy of fourteen) was informed of what was intended, and directed to complain of slight indisposition and remain in the rear, when his uncle reached the place where the assassins were stationed.

followers aided them in plundering the neighbouring countries: but they had slain his brother, Hoossein Kooli, when pursued by Zuckee Khan, and had recently committed the most cruel excesses upon the inhabitants of Asterabad. These acts of aggression and violence Aga Mahomed resolved to revenge. Having marched into their country, he retaliated with a severity that filled even their savage minds with terror. He brought away a number of their wives and children, some of whom were made slaves, and the rest kept as hostages for the good conduct of their families. We are informed by the historian of Aga Mahomed Khan, that many of these high-minded women perished by their own hands, to escape a captivity which they thought might subject them to insult or dishonor.

The condition of Georgia, when Aga Mahomed Khan became the sovereign of Persia, has been already noticed. Its tributary prince, the aged Heraclius, taking advantage of the distracted situation of Persia, had by a formal act transferred his allegiance from the kings whose paramount authority his ancestors had acknowledged for centuries, to the sovereigns of Russia. His motive was declared to be a desire to release his Christian subjects from the violence and oppression of Mahomedan superiors, and to place them under the protection of a great nation of their own religion. It was not to be expected that any monarch of Persia, whenever his kingdom was restored to union and peace, would submit to have one of its finest provinces thus alienated; and Aga Mahomed Khan, the moment he had subdued his rivals, resolved to compel Heraclius to return to obedience. But before an account is given of his measures to re-establish his power over Georgia, it will be necessary to trace the progress of the connexion which its prince had formed with Russia, as that was the immediate cause which provoked the vengeance of the Persian sovereign.

Peter the Great had formed plans, in concert with the court of Constantinople, for partitioning the north-western

parts of Persiaⁿ. These projects had been defeated by the genius of Nâdir Shah ; but the distracted state of the kingdom led Catherine to revive in part the schemes of her predecessor. She accepted the overtures of Heraclius to place his country under her protection ; and a formal treaty^o was

ⁿ See vol. i. p. 455.

^o The following is the substance of this treaty :—

Article 1st. Heraclius, the Prince of Georgia, renounces his dependence upon Persia, and places himself, heirs, and successors, under the protection of the Empress Catherine, her heirs, and successors.

2nd. The Empress Catherine grants her protection to the Prince of Georgia, and not only guarantees his actual possessions, but all which may become his in future partitions.

3rd. The Prince of Georgia agrees that his heirs shall solicit and receive their investiture from the empress, her heirs, &c., and shall swear to be faithful to the monarchs of Russia.

4th. The Prince of Georgia agrees that he will have no communication with neighbouring states, except with the advice and knowledge of the Russian general commanding the forces, or the ambassador residing in his country.

5th. The ambassador whom the Prince of Georgia keeps at the empress's court, is to have suitable rank.

6th. Her majesty the empress promises, for herself and successors, first, That she will regard the enemies of Georgia as her enemies, and that the people of that country shall be included in any peace with the Ottoman Porte or any other state ; secondly, That she will maintain the Prince Heraclius and his heirs and posterity on the throne of Georgia ; and thirdly, That she will leave wholly and entirely to the Prince of Georgia the internal administration of his country and the imposition of taxes.

7th. The Prince of Georgia promises, for himself and heirs, first, To be always ready with his army to serve the Empress of Russia ; secondly, To act in all that relates to her service with the advice of her commanders, to comply with their requisitions, and to guarantee her subjects against all injustice and oppression ; thirdly, In the promotion of officers in his service, to consider chiefly those who have deserved well of Russia, because on that empire the safety and prosperity of Georgia depends.

8th. Her majesty the Empress of Russia consents that the first Archbishop of Georgia shall rank with the metropolitans of the eighth class, taking precedence after the Metropolitan of Tobolsk ; and the empress is to give him the title of a member of " the Most Holy Synod."

9th. The nobles of Georgia shall, in every part of the Russian empire, enjoy the same prerogatives and advantages as the nobles of Russia.

10th. The inhabitants of Georgia shall be at liberty to settle in Russia, and to return to their own country. The Georgian prisoners, released either by

concluded, by which that prince, in his own name and that of his heirs, transferred his allegiance from the kings of Persia to her and her successors; while she, on the part of herself and heirs, engaged to protect him and his people: and, by a specific article, she not only guaranteed all his actual possessions, but promised to extend the same protection to "other territories that might hereafter fall to his share." This expression^p, and an attempt made the same year to form a settlement^q near the city of Ashraff in Mazenderan, give reason to conjecture that Catherine cherished plans beyond an alliance with Heraclius: if this was so, circumstances must have prevented their prosecution, as the settlement in Mazenderan was abandoned, and the corps sent to aid the Georgian prince, after it had remained four years, was suddenly recalled, when employed at the siege of Gunjah, which was raised in consequence.

arms or capitulation, shall return to their homes on paying what has been disbursed for their ransom or expenses. The Prince of Georgia promises to act in the same manner toward Russians made captives by neighbouring states.

11th. Georgian merchants shall pass and repass into Russia at pleasure, and enjoy equal privileges with Russian merchants; and the Prince of Georgia promises to concert measures with the Russian generals to give more facility to the commerce carried on by Russians in his territories.

12th. The present convention or treaty shall be for ever.

13th. The articles of this treaty shall be ratified in six months, or sooner if possible.

Executed in the fortress of Georges, the twenty-fourth of July, 1783.

Signed { PAUL POTEKIN, PRINCE IVAN-BAGRATION.
{ PRINCE GARSEWAN-ISCHAWTS-CHAWDSEW.

^p It has been asserted, that this merely alluded to Gunjah and parts of Imeretta, which Heraclius claimed.

^q The historian of the Kajir family states, that in the year 1783 a Russian nobleman, with some armed boats, arrived near Ashraff, and requested leave to establish a commercial factory; but his companions bought so dear and sold so cheap, that it was apparent pecuniary profit could not be their object. Aga Mahomed consequently suspected them of some sinister design, and directed them to be imprisoned. They were invited to a feast, and having drunk freely, were seized; but when sent to the king, he listened to their excuses, released them, and gave them dresses of honour. He warned them however against evil designs.

Aga Mahomed Khan, when he resolved on attacking Georgia, determined, by the celerity of his movements, to prevent Heraclius receiving support from Russia. The chiefs of his army had been directed, when he returned from the conquest of Kerman, to assemble with all their followers very early in the ensuing spring; and we are informed that the forces which met near Teheran, in the month of April^r, were nearly sixty thousand men^s. Their destination was unknown till the moment of their march, when they moved in three divisions. The right column took the route of Mogâm, Shirwan, and Dâghestan; the left moved towards Erivân, the capital of Armenia; and the centre, with Aga Mahomed Khan at its head, proceeded to Sheshâh, the principal fortress in the Kârâbâgh, a fine district which stretches for many miles along the left bank of the Araxes^t. The column which moved on the right through the countries near the Caspian, met with no resistance. Every chief submitted or fled: but the khans of Erivân and Sheshâh were encouraged by Heraclius to oppose the Persian monarch; and the aged waly himself, when summoned to appear at court and pay the accustomed tribute, returned for answer, “that he acknowledged no paramount sovereign but the Empress Catherine of Russia.”

The army of Aga Mahomed was almost entirely composed of horse, so that he could not hope to subdue either Erivân or Sheshâh: he resolved therefore to rest satisfied with the nominal submission of their governors, and to leave strong bodies to watch or rather blockade them; while he marched to Teflis, the capital of Georgia. He had before directed the centre and left columns to unite: they were joined at Gunjah by the right division. With this army,

^r The author of the history of the Kajirs states, that Aga Mahomed marched from Teheran fifty-three days after the feast of Nou Rôze, or the vernal equinox, which corresponds with the 14th of May.

^s Olivier says they amounted to eighty thousand.

^t He passed the river on a bridge constructed by Sulimân Khan, whom he had sent in advance for that purpose.

reduced by the corps he had detached, but still amounting to nearly forty thousand men, he advanced against Heraclius; who, though deprived of support from the Russians by the rapid operations of Aga Mahomed, nevertheless determined to meet the Persians in the field. He advanced with his whole force, which did not amount to a fourth of his enemy's, to a position fifteen miles from his capital. An action ensued: the Georgians fought with great valour; but they were overpowered by numbers^u, and compelled to fly. Their prince, with part of his family and some followers, found refuge in the neighbouring mountains; while the conquerors entered Teflis: a scene of carnage and rapine ensued pleasing to one who desired to make this city an example for such as dared to condemn his authority. The Mahomedan historian of Aga Mahomed Khan, after describing the barbarous and horrid excesses, observes, "that on this glorious occasion the valiant warriors of Persia gave to the unbelievers of Georgia a specimen of what they were to expect on the day of judgment." It is not easy to calculate the number who perished. Bigotry inflamed the brutal rage of the soldier. The churches were levelled with the ground; every priest was put to death^x. Youth and beauty were alone spared for slavery. Fifteen thousand captives^y were led into bondage; and the army marched back laden with spoil.

The condition of the unfortunate inhabitants who had fled to escape death, and who returned to mourn over their ruined

^u Aga Mahomed during the action commanded a person to recite some verses from the Shah Nameh of Firdousee, to encourage the soldiers to heroic actions. This is a common practice in Persian armies.—*Persian MS.*

^x The author of the *Life of Aga Mahomed Khan* states, that the priests were bound and thrown into the river which flows past the town.

^y Moollah Mahomed Châr in the *History of the Kajir Family* states that the number was only fifteen thousand. The accounts I have received from the best-informed Georgians and Armenians, make it twenty-five thousand; and some of these appeared to have fair data for their estimate. It is probable that fifteen thousand were taken at Teflis, and the remainder from the towns and villages in Georgia.

houses and desolated fields, was almost as severe as that of the prisoners. Slavery was the state to which many of these had been doomed from their birth: and, if we except the great misfortune to which the younger captives^a were exposed, of being educated in a different religion from their parents, their lot was not unhappy. The females from their superior beauty became in general the favorites of their harems, and some of them were married to their masters: while the males, according to the usage of the country, were treated with kindness and partiality. They almost invariably obtained their liberty when they embraced the religion of their conquerors; and as they grew up, were either enrolled as soldiers, or retained as domestics. In the former case they frequently rose to high command and station; in the latter they were always favored and confidential servants; and their children, being born in the house^b, were considered almost as relations of the family.

After having sacked Teflis, Aga Mahomed marched towards Gunjah; and being resolved to complete the subjugation of these provinces, remained during the winter encamped on the plain of Mogâm, near where the Cyrus, one of the finest streams of Georgia, unites with the Araxes. He had appointed one of the principal chiefs^b of his tribe to the government of Shirwan; but on receiving complaints of his violence and extortions, he recalled him. The inhabitants, encouraged by his disgrace, rose in a body and put him to death. This event greatly affected Aga Mahomed; and it was expected that he would make a terrible example; but he

^a Numbers of those who had attained the age of maturity preserved their own religion, and among them many females. An affluent merchant told me he had offered marriage to a beautiful Georgian, whom he had purchased from a soldier, if she would become Mahomedan, but in vain: and "she prays so prettily," he added, smiling, "to her little images, that I have been half tempted myself to become an idolater."

^b A remarkable instance of the light in which the Khânâh-zâd, or "house-born slaves," are considered, has been given in the *Life of Timoor*.—Vol. I. p. 290, *note*.

^b Moostâphâ Khan *Devânloo*.

seldom gave loose to his indignation, unless when policy dictated: when the former governor of Shirwan, who had before fled, came to solicit mercy for himself and his people, he freely forgave him; and his clemency was repaid by the complete submission of the province. The chief of Erivân^c also propitiated his favor by obeying his summons; but Ibrahim Khulleel Khan, the governor of Sheshâh, still resisted; and as the Persian troops, from the want of artillery, were unable to take his fortress, their commander was compelled to rest satisfied with directing all the country around to be laid waste and plundered.

Though he had long enjoyed sovereign power, Aga Mahomed had not yet been invested with the royal tiara. He used to observe, that he had no title to the name of king, until he was obeyed throughout the whole ancient empire of Persia. After he had subdued Georgia, his courtiers pressed him to be crowned. He yielded with apparent reluctance: having assembled all his military chiefs, he pointed to a crown that had been prepared, and asked them whether they desired he should put it on. "Recollect," said he, "if I do, your toils are only commencing; for I cannot consent to wear the Persian crown, without as much power as has been enjoyed by the greatest sovereigns of Persia^d." The leaders of his army, the ministers of his court, and the princes of his family, all joined in entreating that he would place it upon his head, and promised that their lives should be devoted to his glory. He complied; but he only assumed a small circular diadem ornamented with pearls^e. He refused to wear the gorgeous crown of Nâdir Shah^f, the rich plumes of which denoted the kingdoms he had subdued: but he consented to gird on the

^c His name also was Moostâphâ Khan.

^d Persian MS.

^e It was called the Kullah Kaianee. He only wore it on state occasions.

^f Nâdir wore four plumes in his crown, to denote his power as paramount ruler of Affghânistan, India, Tartary, and Persia.

royal sabre, consecrated at the tomb^s of the holy founder of the Seffavean family; and by that act became pledged to employ the sacred weapon in the defence and support of the Sheah faith, which, from the commencement of that dynasty, had become the national religion.

Aga Mahomed Khan collected a force still more numerous than that which had conquered Georgia, to subdue Khorassan. He proceeded thither by the route of Astabad, to punish the Turkuman tribes, who had recommenced their plundering inroads. His march was directed to Meshed: as he advanced, he received the submission of all the petty chiefs^b; none dared to oppose so numerous an army, led by a monarch known to be relentless. Among those who proffered their allegiance was Isaak Khanⁱ, of Turbut-e-Hyderee. His enemies had endeavoured to prejudice Aga Mahomed against him by representing him as a Tajuck of low birth, whose usurpation of power was a dangerous example. The wise sovereign, however, disregarding these representations, distinguished him by his peculiar favor. Isaak Khan alone was not required to give hostages for his fidelity; and his attachment repaid this generous confidence.

The condition of Meshed, against which this expedition was chiefly directed, has been before described. The weakness and distraction of its rulers had reduced the inhabitants to a wretchedness which it appeared hardly possible to aggravate: but the late inroads of the Oosbegs had added to their misery; and they looked forward with more hope than alarm to the approach of Aga Mahomed, who professed

^s The tomb is at Ardebil, whither the monarch must go to put on the sacred sword. The weapon is left one night on the tomb; during which the saint is invoked to be propitious to the sovereign who is to wear it. Next day, when it is girded on, the nobles are feasted, and large sums distributed to the poor.—*Persian MS.*

^b The first that submitted was Ameer Goonáh Khan, of Kábooshán, to whom Aga Mahomed Khan sent a Koran, containing an oath, with the royal seal affixed, promising him safety and protection.

ⁱ For the history of this chief, see vol. ii. p. 146.

that his only design was to pay his devotions at the tomb of the Imâm Rezâ ; to restore the city, where the remains of that sacred person were interred, to prosperity ; and to punish those who had sacrilegiously dared to plunder the mausoleum of the holy descendant of the prophet. His real motives were,—to establish his power over Khorassan ; to check the inroads of the Turkumans and Oosbeks ; and to possess himself of the wealth still appertaining to the miserable descendants of Nâdir, against whom it was believed by many that he cherished a vindictive spirit, on account of his grandfather's murder, and of the cruel wrongs he himself had sustained from the immediate successor of that conqueror.

Nâdir Meerza, the ruler of Meshed, fled, on Aga Mahomed's advance, into the Affghan territories, leaving his blind parent, the unfortunate Shah Rokh, to deliver the city to a monarch against whom resistance was deemed useless. When the Persian army advanced near the walls, Shah Rokh went out to meet its leader ; who, after receiving his submission, walked on foot, attended by his nobles, to the tomb of the Imâm Rezâ, and knelt and kissed the ground in token of his devotion to the sacred remains.

Avarice was almost as strong in Aga Mahomed as the love of power ; and he appeared even more desirous of possessing jewels than treasure. On the death of Lootf Ali Khan, he had obtained some of the richest brought from India by Nâdir Shah ; and since his arrival in Khorassan he had recovered several of inferior value from the chiefs who had shared in the spoil of Nâdir's successors, and who now surrendered their dangerous wealth : for Aga Mahomed treated as the guiltiest of criminals all such as retained what he deemed the property of the sovereign. Shah Rokh, who had long ceased to exercise power, was yet believed to possess many precious stones of great value, which he had concealed even from his sons. They were demanded by Aga Mahomed : he denied his possessing them with the

most solemn oaths^k; but in vain. Torture in all its forms was applied: and we almost cease to pity this degraded prince, when we find that his discoveries kept pace with the pains inflicted. Treasures and jewels were produced, which had been sunk in wells and built up in walls; and at last, when a circle of paste was put upon his head, and boiling oil poured into it, he discovered a ruby of extraordinary size and lustre, which had once decorated the crown of Aurungzebe, and was the chief object of Aga Mahomed's desire. That monarch^l, the moment he heard this jewel was found, expressed the greatest joy: he directed the tortments to cease; and accused Shah Rokh, not altogether without justice, of being the author of the great miseries he had suffered. However, he most inhumanly directed that he should be immediately conveyed with his whole family to Mazenderan; and the wretched grandson of Nâdir terminated his life^m a few days after.

Aga Mahomed Khan had despatched a missionⁿ to Bokhara, with a letter to Abd-ool Ghâzee Khân, stating, "That he had heard of the usurpation of the royal power by a son of the Ameer Daniel, whence many evils had arisen; and true believers, made prisoners in Persia, were sold like cattle at the market-place of Bokhara." He called on Abd-ool Ghâzee Khân immediately to restore all the captives, and to beware in future how he provoked his vengeance. Beggee Jân, who received this letter, affected to

^k Olivier, on what authority I know not, gives him the highest merit for his efforts to conceal riches which he deemed the only future dependence of his absent son. The mind is gratified at being able to feel unqualified indignation against an oppressor, and to compassionate the oppressed: but all the authorities in my possession give an opposite account.

^l Persian MS.

^m He died at Dâmghân in consequence of his tortures. He was sixty-three years of age.

ⁿ The MS. from which the account of Aga Mahomed's transactions at Meshed is drawn, is written by an intelligent and learned man, who was at Meshed when it was taken, and who appears to possess a full knowledge of the events of that period.

treat the Persian king with equal if not greater contempt. "I have heard," said the old priest, in a circular letter to the chiefs of Khorassan, "that *my lord eunuch*^o is come among you: seize him if you can; if not, inform me, and I will punish him." These able rulers never encountered; had they lived to do so, it is difficult to pronounce which would have triumphed.

Aga Mahomed had sent an ambassador to Zemaun Shah, King of Cabool, to explain his motives for invading Khorassan, and to propose a union of forces for the conquest of Bokhara. If we may believe the Persian historian^p, the Affghan monarch agreed to the alliance; and every thing was prepared for an expedition into Tartary, when Aga Mahomed was called to protect his own dominions, invaded by a formidable army of Russians.

The Empress Catherine had learnt with horror the dreadful punishment inflicted on a prince and people whose crime was having sought her protection, and who were tempted to provoke their fate by their expectation of her support. Various conjectures have been formed about the reasons which prevented that support at an earlier period. An inhabitant of Georgia, who has given an account of this invasion, states that General Goodavitch was within six marches of Teflis in command of a Russian force of sufficient strength to defend it, but he refused to advance, though repeatedly solicited by Heraclius. He would not believe that the danger was so imminent, but thought that the account of Aga Mahomed's force was exaggerated; and that at all events he would never attack the capital of Georgia, before he had made himself master of Sheshâh and

^o Beggee Jân constantly called Aga Mahomed Khan "Akhtâ Khan;" a title, of which "my lord eunuch" is a very delicate translation.

^p Mahomed Hoossein Khan Karagoozooloo was the envoy to the King of Cabool; and the historian of Aga Mahomed Khan states, that he obtained a cession of Bulkh to facilitate the intended operations against Beggee Jân. This is not probable; and if the King of the Affghans ever entered into such an engagement, he had probably no intention of fulfilling it.

Erivân. But the fact^a is, that the Russian commander, who was himself at Georgievsk, and whose corps was scattered on the line of the Caucasus, could not have assembled his troops and reached Teflis in less than three or four weeks; and it is probable that Heraclius, deeming the presence of a Russian force no slight evil, delayed calling for aid till it was too late, in the hope that something might defer, if not prevent, the advance of Aga Mahomed.

The impression made on the mind of Catherine is fully proved by the measures she adopted. They showed that her designs went far beyond restoring her influence in Georgia, and preserving that province in future: she, no doubt, contemplated subverting the power of Aga Mahomed. But whether her ultimate design was to place his brother (who had fled to Russia and entreated her aid) upon the throne, or to render the north-western part of Persia a province of her empire, is unknown, except to those intrusted with the secrets of her council. The moment the account of the defeat and flight of Heraclius reached Petersburg, Goodavitch was directed to advance into Georgia with eight thousand men. A Russian general had proceeded with a small corps to Derbund, and passed the winter under its walls, where he was joined in the ensuing spring by thirty-five thousand men, commanded by Valerian Zuboff. That general instantly commenced active operations. The forts of Derbund, Bâku Talish, Shâmâ-kee, and Gunjâh, either surrendered or acknowledged the authority of the invaders. Before winter, the Russians were masters of all the coast of the Caspian, from the mouth of the Terek to that of the Kur, or Cyrus; and they established along the banks of the latter river a line of communication with Georgia. After these successes, Zuboff with

^a I state this on the most authentic information. Klaproth, who gives a short narrative of these events, makes no mention of the causes that delayed the Russians. He exaggerates the force of Aga Mahomed in a most extraordinary degree, asserting that he assembled two hundred thousand men.

the main army crossed the Araxes, and fixed his winter quarters on the celebrated plain of Chowâl Mogâm^r: the whole of Aderbejan was open to his invasion; and the subjugation of it was likely to be followed by an attack on Teheran. The rear of Zuboff's army was protected by the troops in Georgia; a corps had been sent from Astracan to cover his left. The advance of this corps already occupied the Island of Lankeroon on the shores of Ghilan, and threatened with immediate attack the neighbouring ports of Resht and Enzelee.

When he heard of the progress of the Russians, Aga Mahomed appointed a chief of his own tribe governor of Meshed; and, having placed a force which he deemed adequate for its defence under his orders, proceeded towards Teheran. It was too late to commence operations that year^a; but the army was commanded to assemble very early in spring; and every chief was summoned to collect all his adherents, "in order to punish the insolent unbelievers of Europe, who had dared to invade the territories of the faithful^b."

Persia had not for many ages been threatened with more serious danger; but the storm vanished on the death of Catherine at the close of this year. One of the first acts of her son and successor was to recall the army under Zuboff^c, which returned without any loss in its retreat. The countries through which it marched were friendly^d; and its

^a For a description of this plain, see vol. ii. p. 15.

^b He reached his capital on the 20th of September. In Aderbejan, the winter often sets in in October; and it is not unusual to have very heavy falls of snow in that month. In 1810 the whole country was covered with snow by a storm that commenced on the 20th of October.

^c Persian MS.

^d The hatred of the Emperor Paul for the leader of this army, who was the brother of Plato Zuboff, the favorite of the deceased empress, was probably one of his chief motives for evacuating Persia. A separate order was sent to the commandant of every regiment in this army to retreat, but not a line was addressed to the commander-in-chief.

^e One general officer went unguarded and unmolested in his carriage



commander had observed so strict a discipline, that he left in the provinces he had invaded as strong an impression of the justice as of the power of his sovereign. The reputation of Catherine had spread to every quarter of the East. The inhabitants of Persia had heard from the merchants who travelled over Russia, the most exaggerated accounts about the wisdom of her internal administration, and the success of her foreign wars. The admiration of her conduct was increased by her sex. To a nation among whom females are only esteemed as the slaves of pleasure, it was almost an inexplicable wonder to see a woman⁷ ruling a great empire with more than the genius of man. Her fame gave strength to her armies; and, if she had lived, there is every ground to suppose that she might have made a serious impression on Persia, particularly if her designs had been limited, as was professed, to placing another monarch upon the throne: but the ultimate success of this project to extend the influence, if not the power, of Russia in this quarter of Asia, must have depended more on the disposition of the inhabitants of Persia, than on the numbers or valour of the Russian army, which would have been exposed to difficulties such as nothing but the aid of a party in the country could have enabled it to overcome.

Aga Mahomed Khan always expressed great confidence in his means of repelling this attack; and his plan was undoubtedly that which was calculated, above all others, to ensure success. He told the assembled leaders of his army, that the Russians had presumed during his absence in Khorassan to invade the opposite frontier of his dominions. "But my valiant warriors," he added, "shall be led against them; and, by the blessing of God, we will charge their celebrated lines of infantry and batteries of cannon, and cut

from Derbund to Astracan. We could not have a stronger proof of the settled state of the country.

⁷ Catherine the Second is known in Persia by the name of "Khooraheed Kullah," or "the sun crowned;" which, from being used to denote the sovereign of an empire, has become the personal appellation of this empress.

them to pieces with our conquering sabres." The chiefs applauded the heroic resolution of their sovereign, and promised to support him with their lives. When they had gone, the monarch directed his minister, Hajee Ibrahim, to approach; and asked him, if he had heard what he had said. The minister said he had. "And do you think," said he, "I will do what I have told them?" "Undoubtedly, if it is your majesty's pleasure," was the reply. "Hajee," said Aga Mahomed Khan, 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 *."

When Aga Mahomed learnt that the Russians had retreated, he determined to move towards Georgia. Heraclius had died soon after the loss of his capital. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Goorgeen Khan: this prince, on the departure of the Russian troops, dreaded the vengeance of the Persian king so much, that he had recourse to the dangerous expedient of taking into his service a large corps^a of Lesghees, a race of mountaineers, who continually made inroads into the valleys of Georgia, and whose desire of plunder was not likely to subside, from the opportunity thus given them of indulging it.

The Persian army left Teheran early in spring. When within about sixty miles of the Araxes, Aga Mahomed received intelligence from the principal inhabitants of Sheshâh,

* On my first public mission to Persia in 1800, four years after this period, I lived during my stay at the capital with Hajee Ibrahim, who repeated this conversation to me.

^a A manuscript by an intelligent native of Teflis says fifteen thousand Lesghees entered Georgia; and adds, "These friends were more to be dreaded than any enemies."

that they had endeavoured to seize their governor, Ibrahim Khan, but that he had fled to the mountains of Dagheshân; and they requested the monarch to hasten and take possession of the fortress, which they were ready to deliver over to him. The moment this intelligence was received, Aga Mahomed left all his heavy baggage, and a part of his army to guard it, and proceeded with a light corps to occupy the important fortress which had so long baffled all his attempts. He found the Araxes full, but commanded his troops to cross. The boats were insufficient to carry them over; but so great was the dread of disobeying his orders, that those who could not get boats threw themselves into the river. Many were drowned, as the stream was deep and rapid; but the object was gained. The monarch entered Sheshâh before the friends of Ibrahim Khan could make an effort for its recovery: this fortunate commencement led all to expect a glorious campaign; but as the army of Aga Mahomed were indulging in anticipated victories, one of those events occurred, which, in nations subject to despotic rule, are the chief cause of the sudden and great changes they are continually afflicted with.

Three days after Aga Mahomed entered Sheshâh, a dispute occurred between Saduk, a Georgian slave, who was a personal attendant of the monarch, and another servant^b, about some money that was missing. The king was enraged at the noise they made, and directed that both should be put to death^c. Saduk Khan Shâkâkee, a nobleman of high rank, solicited their pardon. This the king refused; but said, as it was the night of Friday, and sacred to prayer, he would not take their lives till next morning. It almost induces us to believe the reports spread at this period, that

^b His name was Khudâdâd. He was a *ferâsh*, or person employed in pitching and taking care of the tents.

^c I find in the accounts of this transaction a slight difference as to the offence committed by these servants. One MS. states, that Saduk had some days before enraged the king by spilling some water on the carpet on which he was praying.

Aga Mahomed was deranged in mind^d, when we are informed, that these attendants, whom he had sentenced to death, and who knew from his character that the sentence was irrevocable, were yet permitted to perform, during the night they had to live, their usual avocations about his person. Despair gave them courage: when the monarch was asleep, they entered his tent, accompanied by a man named Abbas, whom they had associated in their design, and with their poniards put an end to the existence of one of the ablest monarchs who ever sat on the throne of Persia. It was conjectured, that they were encouraged by Saduk Khan Shākākee; and subsequent events confirmed the suspicion; for this ambitious nobleman not only afforded them protection, and accepted the crown jewels which they brought him, but, having assembled his tribe, endeavoured to seat himself on the throne of Persia.

Aga Mahomed Khan was murdered in the sixty-third year of his age. He had been a ruler of great part of Persia for upwards of twenty years; but had only for a short period enjoyed undisputed sovereignty. His person was so slender, that at a distance he appeared like a youth of fourteen or fifteen. His beardless and shrivelled face resembled that of an aged and wrinkled woman; and the expression of his countenance, at no time pleasant, was horrible when clouded, as it very often was, with indignation. He was sensible of this, and could not bear that any one should look at him^e. In the early part of his life, he had suffered the

^d One of his ministers assured me, that his mind was at this period in a state approaching to insanity.

^e A manuscript in my possession relates the following remarkable anecdote. Aga Mahomed Khan was subject to fits, and when attacked, used to remain insensible for one or two hours. When he was one day hunting near Kerman, he had separated from his followers. His horse got into some swampy ground; and while the animal was struggling to get free, the monarch fell into a fit. An attendant came up, and seeing his situation, extricated him with great difficulty, and watched him till he came to his senses. Aga Mahomed, on perceiving the soldier standing over him, was at first alarmed; but, on being told what had occurred, he thanked the man and

most cruel adversity ; and his future conduct seems to have taken its strongest bias from the keen recollection of his misery and wrongs. His first passion was the love of power ; his second, avarice ; his third, revenge. In all these he indulged to excess, and they ministered to each other ; but the two latter gave way to the first, whenever they came in collision. His knowledge of the character and feelings of others was wonderful ; and it is to this knowledge, and his talent of concealing his secret purposes, that we must refer his extraordinary success in subduing his enemies. He never employed force until art had failed ; even in war, his policy effected more than his sword. His ablest and most confidential minister, when asked if Aga Mahomed Khan was personally brave, replied, “ No doubt ; but I can hardly recollect an occasion where he had an opportunity of displaying courage. His head never left work for his hand ! ”

The first great effort of Aga Mahomed Khan's life was to acquire power ; the second, to render it permanent in his family. Before he obtained the crown, he controlled every passion that could obstruct his rise ; but when the mask was no longer necessary, he threw it aside : as policy no longer restrained his revenge and avarice, he destroyed and plundered all whom he considered in any way hostile to his government. Every chief, who from birth or character was likely to aspire to the throne, was either put to death or deprived of sight : by this politic but barbarous proceeding, he suppressed that spirit of rebellion which had so long distracted Persia. He had persuaded himself that the means

promised to reward him. He did so, but, in the man's opinion, not sufficiently ; and when on duty, as one of the personal guards, he continued to look the king full in the face as often as he could. Aga Mahomed was so enraged at this, that he one day ordered the man's eyes to be put out. He afterwards appeared struck with his own ingratitude, and directed that the poor fellow should retire to his home, and enjoy double pay for life.

‘ I have given the very words of Hajee Ibrahim, when I questioned him about the personal valour of Aga Mahomed.

he took to preserve the throne, were not directed to a selfish object ; and he used often to exclaim, when speaking of his successor, the present King of Persia, “ I have shed all this blood, that the boy, Bâbâ Khan, may reign in peace.”

The dreadful scenes at the close of the life of Nâdir Shah had effaced all the favorable impressions made by the auspicious commencement of his reign ; and the state in which he left the empire was every way unhappy for his successors. The moderation and humanity of Kerreem Khan were, perhaps, from the condition of Persia, among the causes of the anarchy and confusion that followed his death. The means used by Aga Mahomed to remedy the evils he found, to promote the future tranquillity of his country, and to secure the undisputed throne to his appointed successor, were completely successful ; and we are reluctantly compelled to admit, that some of those acts which we contemplate with the greatest horror, principally contributed to this desirable result. To illustrate this, and to obtain a better knowledge of the causes which produced so great a change in the condition of Persia, it is necessary to say a few words on the conduct of Aga Mahomed towards every class of his subjects.

To his own family, after his power was established, he was cruel and severe in the extreme, except to his nephews^b, Fatteh Ali Khan and Hoossein Kooli Khan, to whom he acted as a parent. He had always employed the former in the administration of public affairs ; and this young prince, for some years before his uncle's death, held the high station of Governor of Fars. It does not appear that the delicate relations between the monarch and his successor were ever disturbed by suspicion or alarm ; and our opinion of Aga Mahomed is raised by the conduct he invariably pursued towards the person whom from the first he had destined to succeed to the throne.

^a Persian MS.

^b They were the sons of his full brother, Hoossein Kooli Khan.

To the religious men of his kingdom, Aga Mahomed was attentive, and sometimes generous. He appeared pious; and was not only regular in observing the forms of prayer at the stated hours, but arose at midnight, whatever had been the fatigues of the day, to perform his devotions. His mind was not free from superstition: one author, who gives some remarkable anecdotes of him, informs us, that after he had slain Jaffier Kooli Khan¹, he directed the corpse to be immediately removed from Teheran, that he might not break the solemn vow he had taken on the Koran, not to detain his brother beyond one night in the city. It is difficult to believe that the human mind can either cheat itself, or expect to impose on others, by such sacrilegious mockery.

Aga Mahomed Khan was rigid in the administration of justice. He punished corruption in the magistrates, whenever it was detected. Such as committed crimes which according to the Koran merited death, were seldom forgiven: and he never pardoned persons who in any shape disturbed the tranquillity of his dominions. The first noble in the land who aspired beyond his station, the soldier who disobeyed his orders, and the thief who plundered on the road met the same fate. His conduct to his ministers and the chief officers of his court was often harsh and abrupt, and sometimes cruel. Hajee Ibrahim was an exception. The monarch discovered at once the talents of that extraordinary man; whose plainness of manner, blunt speech, manly fortitude, and astonishing knowledge of public affairs, whether it was to manage the police of a village, to collect the revenue of a district, to conduct a negotiation, or to govern an empire, led Aga Mahomed to give him his entire confidence: during the latter years of his life, the king would hardly allow any communication, however trifling², to be

¹ See vol. ii. p. 186.

² Hajee Ibrahim told me, that one day, when part of the army was engaged with the enemy, the zumbooruks, or "camel swivels," were badly managed, and that Aga Mahomed demanded of him in a passion why this was the case? "I answered," said the Hajee, "that I really could not tell;

made to him through any other channel. No confidence was ever better rewarded. The minister, though he studied the character of his master, and gained on him by supplying his avarice, and forwarding his plans of ambition, laboured to promote the prosperity of the empire; and, from his kind disposition, was the medium of obtaining mercy to others, whenever he could interfere without danger to himself.

Even the ministers of Aga Mahomed were not exempt from the attacks, which avarice and policy led him occasionally to make on his nobles and principal officers. As a mode of levying fines, he was in the habit of selling those whom he meant to plunder; and the purchaser, that he might raise the sum required, was vested with power over every thing except the life of the person whom he bought. When the king desired to obtain a sum of money from Meerza Shuffee¹, who had been his principal minister before Hajee Ibrahim, he sold him to his rival for a specific amount. The transaction took place in public court: a servant of Hajee Ibrahim advanced, and, having ungirded the band from his waist, threw it over Meerza Shuffee, and led him to his master's house, where he was treated with kindness and attention. The Hajee endeavoured to satisfy him that he had acted from a knowledge of the monarch's character, who, he saw, was resolved to obtain the money, and might have had recourse, had he not offered it, to proceedings more harsh and disagreeable to both; and he gave a proof of his sincerity by advancing a part of the sum which

it was the fault of the commander of the corps." "That may be," said Aga Mahomed Khan; "but I shall blame no one but my prime minister, who must see that every department is in proper order." "This was very unreasonable," added the Hajee, smiling; "for he knew I never pretended to be a soldier."

¹ It is stated in one of the manuscripts which notices this transaction, that the minister owed a balance to the monarch; and another asserts that Aga Mahomed first offered to sell Hajee Ibrahim to Meerza Shuffee; but the latter dreaded the influence of his rival too much to venture on the purchase.

Meerza Shuffee was unable to raise. When the amount was paid, the minister was released, and returned as usual to his duties^m. However generously Hajee Ibrahim behaved, we are not to conclude that he was insensible to the strength he obtained from this public disgrace of a rival who was one of the oldest and most favorite servants of Aga Mahomed; and this occurrence added greatly to the animosity with which these ministers had long regarded each other.

It had always been the policy of Aga Mahomed Khan to promote union in the tribe of the Kajirs. He had seen the Zend family destroy itself: warned by their example, he wisely endeavoured to secure a happier fate for the dynasty which he founded. Flatterers have imputed his conduct towards his brothers to his anxiety for this object. He knew, they say, that nothing was likely to disturb that harmony which gave strength to his tribe, except contests between the members of his own family for the throne. To the chiefs of other tribes whom he did not suspect of ambitious designs, he was neither ungracious nor unjust; but he compelled them to keep part of their family at Teheran. By this precaution; and by employing their followers in opposite quarters of the kingdom, and sometimes removing them from one province to another, he studied to deprive them of the means of disturbing his government, or that of his successor.

The good sense of Aga Mahomed led him to alter some of the lesser forms of his court: he would seldom allow the inhabitants of his capital to come out to meet him, when he returned from an expedition; and he disdained to circulate,

^m In all the arbitrary governments of the East, the disgrace and punishment of a minister are deemed no obstacles to his immediate resumption of his office. When I was at the court of Doulut Row Scindiah in 1804, one of his ministers, Annâ Sic-novees, was kept under a vertical sun without a turban for several hours, till he agreed to pay three lacks of rupees, (37,500 pounds sterling,) that had been demanded of him. The day after I was surprised not only to see him restored to his office, but employed in a negotiation of importance.

(as was the usage,) on every trifling advantage that his arms obtained, exaggerated accounts of his success. In all written communications to the officers of government, it had been customary to use the most hyperbolic style. Aga Mahomed insisted that the substance of his commands should be given in plain language. The eloquent meerzas, or secretaries of his court, unwillingly adopted a change which struck at the root of all their excellence in composition; but when they commenced their flowery introductions, it was not unusual for the impatient monarch to desire "that they would pass over the nonsense, and proceed to the subject of the letter at once". But though he despised useless forms, no sovereign was ever more sensible of the necessity of enforcing such as were in any way essential to support the royal dignity. His minister, Hajee Ibrahim, used to recount a remarkable anecdote on this point. Two persons of indifferent character, but possessed of wealth, desired to farm a district, and had made an offer far exceeding any other which had been received. The minister, knowing his master's avarice, thought that this proposition would afford him great delight, and desired the men who had made it to attend him to the king. As he advanced, Aga Mahomed Khan exclaimed in a loud voice, "Who are you bringing with you?"—"Two persons," said the Hajee, repeating their names, "who wish to farm a district, and have offered most advantageous terms."—"I cannot see them," said the monarch.—"But, please your majesty," replied Hajee Ibrahim, "they will give nearly double what any other person offers, with the best security for payment."—"No matter," said Aga Mahomed, "the money must be given up; men like these cannot be admitted to my presence". The royal name had been so degraded in Persia, that it required all the efforts of Aga Mahomed to restore the attributes in which absolute

^a Persian MS.

^o The Hajee related this anecdote to me, as a proof that even avarice, strong as it was in Aga Mahomed Khan, was always under subjection to his policy.

power must be clothed, in order that it may be efficient. The consequence he attached to every act or speech that could tend to degrade the name of king, was shown on a remarkable occasion, when he punished by a most inhuman beating and by confiscating the greatest part of his property, the principal lord in waiting, for having exclaimed, when he presented an envoy from Timoor Shah, "that an ambassador from the king of the Affghans was come to the earth at the feet of the slaves of his exalted majesty." He is said to have been in such a rage, that he could hardly be induced to spare the life of this officer, who was of high rank and belonged to the tribe of Kajir. "Did you hear what the villain uttered?" exclaimed the monarch to those who interceded for him; "that an ambassador from one he styled king was come to the earth at the feet of my slaves! How dared he use the sacred name of 'majesty, to expose it to such degradation! But he has suffered, and my character is retrieved!" The nobleman meant to flatter his own monarch. Perhaps the policy of Aga Mahomed, while he pretended to vindicate the name of king, took this mode of repairing an insult which his servant had cast on a powerful sovereign.

Aga Mahomed Khan treated his soldiers with more liberality and indulgence than any other class of his subjects. The issue of their pay and provisions was generally regular; and though he enforced the strictest obedience, and allowed none to plunder except when he authorized them, that permission was frequently granted; and what they obtained amid violence and rapine, became their legal property. Several women and children of the first families of Kerman were brought away by the troops when that city was sacked. Soon after, some of the principal inhabitants were encouraged, by the promised intercession of one of the most revered Persian priests, to go to the capital and solicit the restoration of their wives and children. The pontiff, Shaikh

Mahomed Lâhsâee, presented their petition, and enforced its prayer with all his eloquence. He was held in high veneration by Aga Mahomed; and a request from him was hardly ever refused: but though he had the boldness to repeat his entreaties, the monarch was not to be moved; and at last he said with some sternness, "I cannot grant your wish. I will never irritate my soldiers by desiring them to restore what they took under my sanction. I have no objection, however, to the inhabitants of Kerman ransoming their wives and children; nor to those in whose possession they are, restoring them if they choose; but I desire you to urge me no more on this subject, as I am resolved not to use compulsion." The great body of his army were naturally attached to a leader who treated them with such consideration. They knew that, if they yielded a prompt obedience to his orders, they had nothing to apprehend from others; for the meanest soldier could always complain to Aga Mahomed, who might be said to live with his troops. When not employed in the field against his enemies, he was constantly engaged in hunting excursions, to which he proceeded with a greater number of attendants, not merely with the view of enjoying a favorite amusement, but to inure himself and his followers to continual action.

Unless on occasions of ceremony, Aga Mahomed Khan was dressed in the plainest manner. His contempt of luxury was shown on all occasions; and his policy made him seize every opportunity of giving his leaders and troops a pride in those hardships and privations to which their profession doomed them. After a march, or when fatigued with hunting, he would seat himself on the ground, and share with his officers in any repast that was brought. It happened one day, as he was eating some of the hard black bread and sour milk, which form the common fare of the Persian soldier, that one of his principal ministers, who was seated near him, began to eat of the same food. The monarch instantly commanded him to desist. "Eat as much as you like of your rich pillaws and fine sweetmeats," said he;

“ but never again let me see a fellow of a secretary^a, like you, touch the food of my soldiers.” The minister, with an inward smile, heard himself condemned to eat none but good and delicate viands, while the military chiefs and soldiers that sat around felt it as a distinction to live on a coarse diet which their sovereign shared, and from the very taste of which he had just debarred one of the first civil officers in the realm.

The merchants in Persia were efficiently protected by Aga Mahomed; during the latter years of his reign, commerce revived in every quarter. This was not more the consequence of his justice, than of the general security which his rule inspired; and of the extinction, through the severity of his punishments, of those bands of robbers with which the country had before been infested. To the farmers and cultivators he gave no further protection than what they derived from the terror of his name; but that was considerable: from the collector of a district to the governor of a province, all dreaded a complaint made to a monarch, by whom the slightest deviations in those who exercised power, were often visited by the most dreadful punishment.

Aga Mahomed had probably experienced great distress from the want of money; and, in a government where credit is unknown, a full treasury is essential to the support of regal power. From the habit of amassing riches, he became at last avaricious in a degree hardly to be believed. We are informed by one writer, that having overheard a poor man, whose ears he had ordered to be cut off for some trivial offence, offer a few pieces of silver to the executioner if he would take off only a part of them, the king called to the man, and told him, that if he would give him double the amount he had just offered to his servant, his ears should

^a This anecdote was first told me by Hajee Ibrahim, and I find it mentioned in a manuscript *Life of Aga Mahomed Khan*. The term secretary has been used to translate the Persian *meerza*, which implies a man whose occupation is to write, and whose habits of life are civil.

not be touched. The peasant threw himself on the ground to return thanks, and was going away, deeming the demand for money a mere pleasantry; but he was recalled, and soon convinced that his pardon depended on his instantly satisfying the mean avarice of the monarch. From another account we learn, that Aga Mahomed actually combined with an artful religious mendicant to obtain money from his courtiers. The man met him at a place appointed, when surrounded by officers of state. Apparently struck by his appearance and story, the king ordered a large amount to be given to him, and recommended the holy man to equal attention from others. The example of the sovereign was followed by the whole court; and the mendicant received a considerable sum. It was late at night before the impatience of Aga Mahomed revealed the secret. "I have been cheated!" he exclaimed to his minister; "that scoundrel of a mendicant, whom you saw this morning, not only promised to return what I gave him, but to give me half of what he received from others!" Horsemen were sent in every direction; but the wily fellow evaded all pursuit; and the courtiers secretly rejoiced in the disappointment of their monarch's cupidity.

Many similar anecdotes are told of Aga Mahomed Khan. It is probable that they are exaggerated; but their circulation and credit prove that avarice was indulged to a very great extent by this extraordinary man, whose rule, chequered as his character was by great and mean qualities, restored tranquillity to a distracted kingdom, and fixed his family on a splendid throne.

On the death of Aga Mahomed Khan, his army was thrown into the greatest confusion. Sheshâh was abandoned; and the corpse of the monarch was left to be insulted by the lowest of his enemies. Saduk Khan Shâkâkee marched away with his tribe, and some other chiefs followed his example; but, after the first confusion was over, Hajee

Ibrahim proclaimed his allegiance to the declared heir; and, having reassembled a considerable body of troops, advanced towards the capital, the gates of which were shut on all by Meerza Mahomed Khan^a, till the arrival from Shiraz of Fattah Ali Khan, the nephew and appointed successor of the deceased sovereign. That prince, though instantly proclaimed king, was not publicly crowned till the beginning of the next year. It is not the intention to write the history of the reigning monarch of Persia: it will be sufficient to notice in a cursory manner the principal events which have taken place since he came to the throne.

Saduk Khan made a weak effort to oppose him, but was attacked and defeated. This example of rebellion was afterwards followed by the king's brother^b, and a prince^c of the Zend family; but these attempts were subdued without an action, and the internal tranquillity of the empire has never since been disturbed.

Fattah Ali Khan, in a series of campaigns, has established his power over the greatest part of Khorassan; and the chiefs^d whom he has not actually subdued, yield a nominal obedience, and send an occasional tribute to propitiate his favour and protection. The Affghans have for some years

^a This respectable chief is of the Kajir tribe, but of the opposite branch to the reigning family. He had been at one period very hostile to Aga Mahomed; but was forgiven and employed in the highest stations. His conduct on this occasion, and on every other, evinced his gratitude and attachment.

^b Hoossein Kooli Khan.

^c The name of this prince was Mahomed Khan; he was the son of Zuckee Khan, and had for some time been residing at Bussorah. He advanced to Isfahan with only twenty or thirty attendants; but they were enough to alarm its inhabitants into submission. Mahomed Khan only kept possession of the city one or two days; his followers dispersed, and he was obliged to fly. He was successful in reaching the Turkish territories.

^d Isaak Khan, the ruler of Turbut-e-Hyderee, whose history has been given, may be deemed at this moment by far the most powerful of the chiefs of Khorassan. He has been induced by the distinction with which he has been treated by Aga Mahomed and the present monarch, to aid in establishing the rule of the Kajir monarchs over that province.

past been in too distracted a state from their internal divisions, to support those rights which their monarchs pretend to inherit from Ahmed Shah on this province; and its peace is not now annually disturbed by the invasions of the Oos-begs, over whom Beggee Jân no longer reigns. He died soon after Aga Mahomed; and his son, Hyder Turrah, who succeeded to the sovereignty, has performed no deeds yet which can lead to a belief that he either inherits the talents or the power of his extraordinary parent and predecessor.

The Persian monarch has not been so successful in maintaining his north-western frontier. After a warfare continued with various fortune for many years, Georgia has at last become a province of Russia; and the garrisons of that nation now extend to the Araxes, and along the southern shores of the Caspian.

The court of Persia, within the last fifteen years, has been again visited by the ambassadors of European nations. The power possessed by its sovereign of checking the Affghans, who threatened to invade India, and of repelling the ambitious views of France, if ever directed to that quarter, led the Governor-General of the British possessions in the East, to form an alliance with Fatteh Ali Khan, immediately after he was raised to the throne. This policy had the temporary success which was desired, of diverting the Affghans from their meditated invasion of India; and an impression was made of the power of the English nation, both on the King of Persia and his subjects, favorable to the performance of the engagements into which he had entered, to oppose, if ever required by circumstances to do so, the European enemies of Great Britain⁷. This alliance

⁷ Monsieur Langleé, in his *Notice Chronologique*, at the end of his excellent edition of Chardin's *Travels*, observes, "that though Captain Malcolm and his suite are still praised by the Persians, on account of the great sums they expended on their route from Abusheher to Teheran, *their propositions, which were ridiculous, and even injurious, were rejected with indignation by the king and his ministers!*"—*Voyages de CHARDIN*, vol. x. p. 232.

I can only remark on this last sentence, that it is exactly opposite to the

was attended with the further advantage of promoting the intercourse and increasing the commerce between India and Persia.

The ambition of Buonaparte gave eager attention to every plan, offering the most distant prospect of augmenting his means of injuring the principal power that impeded his progress to universal dominion : and however visionary his plans may appear to those acquainted with the vast difficulties he had to encounter, he certainly cherished the project of invading the British dominions in India. The friendship of the King of Persia was courted, as necessary before he could make this attempt ; and the nature of the relations between France and Russia at this period afforded him every advantage. The Court of London took considerable alarm at these proceedings : and the efforts deemed necessary to counteract them have led to a more direct intercourse with the Government of Persia, which, within the space of five years, has been honored with two embassies from the King of England.

The King of Persia had listened to the overture of Buonaparte, in the hope that his mediation or his power would enable him to recover Georgia : but when changes in the condition of Europe compelled the French Emperor to abandon his designs on Asia, he reverted to his alliance with the English ; who, from the situation of their Indian territories, were possessed of means, which he saw them prepared to use, either to aid or attack him, as he determined to oppose or support their European enemies. It is not necessary to enter into any detail of the negotiations between the English government and that of Persia ; or to say more, than that relations of general amity subsist be-

truth. Every object desired by the Indian government, when it sent a mission to Persia in 1800, was obtained ; and that mission received from the king, his ministers, and all others with whom it had any intercourse, uniform kindness and attention. The learned orientalist, who has made this incorrect statement, will, I am assured, satisfy himself, on further inquiry, that he has incautiously given his name to an error of some magnitude.

tween the two countries, and have been confirmed by treaties. The object of the British nation must invariably be the same. It can only desire the strength and prosperity of a kingdom, which interposes a barrier between Europe and its Asiatic dominions. Fortunately Persia is at present happier and more tranquil than it has been for a long period; and its reigning monarch, who has already (1814) occupied the throne seventeen years, by the comparative mildness and justness of his rule has already entitled himself to a high rank among the Kings of Persia.

CHAPTER XX.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE RELIGION OF THE PERSIANS.

THE history of a nation would be incomplete without some account of its religious belief. Whatever shape it assumes, religion has always exercised a supreme power over the human mind; but its effects are most remarkable when it influences the fate of nations. The feelings it inspires in the breasts of individuals, gather strength as they spread. The attachment entertained for peculiar dogmas is heightened by the force of example and the desire of pre-eminence: and a creed adopted by a large community becomes the strongest tie by which a people can be united. But this vehement passion of the soul, which ought, from its heavenly nature, to be the bond of peace, has too frequently been used by designing and ambitious men as a torch to kindle the flames of war. Religion has been marshalled against religion; schism against schism; kingdoms have become powerful, not from the patriotism of the inhabitants, or their love to each other, but from an irreconcilable hatred to their neighbours, on account of some slight difference in

the form or substance of their paying their adoration to the Creator of the universe.

These observations, which unfortunately describe the general condition of human society, apply with peculiar force to those nations which have adopted the belief of the Arabian Prophet: he expressly commanded his followers "to strike off the heads of unbelievers;" and told them, that, "though God had the power to avenge himself of his enemies, he had chosen them to fight ² his battles ³." Though some of the commentators have tried to limit this passage to a particular war in which Mahomed was engaged when it was written, all agree that, according to the principles of the religion and the example of its first teacher, the sword is a legitimate and hallowed instrument of conversion.

In describing the religion of the Persians, it is not intended to dwell on the forms of the Mahomedan faith, nor to enter into any minute details on the tenets of the leading or subordinate sects. The object is, by a general account of their religious belief, to illustrate their past history, and to enable the reader to judge of the future events that may be expected from causes connected with this powerful motive of human action.

After a short view of the Mahomedan faith, it will be necessary to describe the tenets of the Sheah sect, which, from the establishment of the Seffavean dynasty, may be termed the national religion of Persia. The doctrines, or rather principles, of the Soofees, or philosophical devotees, which have lately spread very widely in Persia, will also merit a portion of our attention.

² Mahomed did not propagate the doctrine of the legality of force till the thirteenth year of his mission. He declares in several of the chapters published at Mecca, that he had no right to use any other means than admonition for propagating his faith. The law laid down on the slaughter of infidels in the forty-seventh chapter is believed by the sect of Haneefa to relate particularly to the war of Bedr, in which he was then engaged: but this interpretation is not general among Mahomedans.

³ Sale's Koran, vol. ii. p. 304.

The precepts of the religion of Mahomed are contained in the Koran. The principal doctrine which he taught was the unity of God; and he proclaimed that the chief object of his mission was to bring men back to the belief of that great and important tenet. There never was, he contended, nor ever could be, but one orthodox religion; and though its laws and ceremonies were temporary and subject to alteration, the substance, being eternal truth, must be immutable. He taught that, whenever this religion became corrupted, God in his goodness had sent apostles and prophets to recal mankind to the true path. Of these there had been several; but the principal before him were Moses and Jesus^b. He declared himself the seal of the prophets; and that none would come after him.

The doctrine^c of Mahomed is divided by his followers into two distinct parts: the first is termed faith; the second religion, or practice. The former consists in a belief of the creed; that there is no God but one, and that Mahomed is his prophet: and the profession of this implies a belief in God, his angels, his scriptures, his prophets, in the resurrection, in the day of judgment, and in God's absolute decree and predetermination of good and evil. The duties of religion or practice are prayer according to the prescribed forms, alms, fastings, and the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Nothing can be more exalted than the opinion which the followers of Mahomed are taught to entertain of the Almighty. Their religion may be termed pure Deism; for

^b Jesus is made to exclaim, in the sixty-first chapter of the Koran, "O children of Israel! verily I am the apostle of God sent unto you, confirming the law which was delivered before me, and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, and whose name shall be Ahmed." Ahmed is derived from the same root as Mahomed, and was one of the prophet's names. This prophecy is founded on a paraphrastical translation of the sixteenth chapter of John in the New Testament, in which the Paraclete is promised. This, it is contended by Mahomedans, should be read Periclete, or "the illustrious;" a word of the same signification as Ahmed.

^c The doctrine is termed Islâm. Faith is termed Imân; and Religion, in its practical sense, Deen.

the mind is every where directed to one God, as the only object of worship; and that adoration, which is his due, cannot, according to their fundamental principle, be shared by any other object; because all else, whether animate or inanimate, is created, and cannot therefore be elevated to the same rank with its Creator. The Mahomedan is taught by the Koran to believe in the existence and purity of angels. They consider them to be beings created of fire, which neither eat, drink, nor propagate their species. These angels are continually employed in different occupations: some are hymning the praises of their Maker; some are recording the actions of men; while others intercede with God to pardon the sins of the human race. The angel Gabriel, who is believed to have brought the Koran from heaven, is termed the holy spirit; and the angel of revelations, Michael, is deemed the friend and protector of the Jews; Azrael is the angel of death; and Israfeel is appointed to sound the trumpet at the day of resurrection^d.

The Mahomedan faith also teaches, that the devil was once an angel, but was banished from heaven because he refused to pay homage to Adam when God commanded him. They also believe in the existence of a number of good and evil spirits called jin, or genii, who are made of fire, but of a grosser mould than angels, as they eat and drink, propagate their species, and are subject to death, and liable, like men, to future reward and punishment^e.

The doctrine of the angels, and of the jin, or genii, is taken from the Jews and ancient Persians; and was probably introduced to flatter the belief and meet the prejudices of those whom he sought as converts.

With regard to the belief of Scripture, Mahomed taught that God had, in various ages of the world, sent these sacred books^f by his prophets. An immense number of pro-

^d Sale's Preliminary Discourse, vol. i. p. 94. • Ibid. p. 96.

^f The number of these sacred volumes were one hundred and four: "of which, ten were given to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Edris, or Enoch, ten

phets^s have, from time to time, been sent to instruct mankind; but of this army of heavenly missionaries, only three hundred and thirteen were appointed apostles to reclaim men from their errors and infidelity; and six alone of the latter number brought laws and revelations, which were ordained to abrogate what had been before established: these were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mahomed.

The Mahomedans believe in the resurrection and the day of judgment; they affirm that, when the corpse is laid in the grave, a heavenly spirit gives it notice of the approach of the two examining angels, who, the moment they come, demand of the deceased, whether he believed in the unity of God and the mission of Mahomed? If he answers properly, the body is suffered to rest in peace, and is refreshed by the air of paradise; if not, his torture^h commences, and con-

to Abraham; and the other four, being the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Koran, were successively delivered to Moses, David, Jesus, and Mahomed; which last being the seal of the prophets, those revelations are now closed, and no more are to be expected. All these divine books, except the four last, they agree to be now entirely lost, and their contents unknown, though the Sabians have several books which they attribute to some of the antediluvian prophets; and of those four, the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel, they say, have undergone so many alterations and corruptions, that, though there may possibly be some part of the true word of God therein, yet no credit is to be given to the present copies in the hands of the Jews and Christians.”—SALE’s *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 97.

The learned author, from whom the above is quoted, says, (p. 98,) that “the Mahomedans have a Gospel in Arabic attributed to St. Barnabas, wherein the history of Jesus Christ is related in a manner very different from what we find in the true Gospel, and correspondent to those traditions which Mahomed has followed in his Koran.” I made every inquiry for this Gospel when in Persia, but never could find it. I do not believe the inhabitants possess it, or the Pentateuch, complete.

^s Their numbers, according to one tradition, are two hundred and twenty-four thousand: another author states them at only one hundred and twenty-four thousand.

^h “When a corpse is laid in the grave, they say he is received by an angel, who gives him notice of the coming of the two examiners; which are two black livid angels, of a terrible appearance, named Monker and Nakir. These order the dead person to sit upright, and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, and the mission of Mahomed: if he answer rightly, they suffer the body to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by

tinues till he receives his final doom at the day of judgment.

The soul is separated from the body by the angel of death; but the souls of prophets only are at once admitted into paradise; those of all others remain in an intermediate state of bliss or misery, according to their merits¹.

The period of the resurrection is known to God only. Mahomed has informed his followers, that even the angel Gabriel, when he interrogated him, confessed his ignorance on that point. It will be preceded by many terrible signs²; but even these will leave the hour uncertain. "On the day of resurrection," (to use the words of Mahomed,) "the whole earth shall be but a handful to the Almighty; and the heavens shall be rolled together in his right hand. The trumpet shall be sounded; and whoever are in heaven, and whoever are on earth, shall expire. It shall sound again, and all shall arise and look up." Then, according to the text¹ of the Koran, God will proceed to judgment; and

the air of paradise; but if not, they beat him on the temples with iron maces till he roars out for anguish so loud, that he is heard by all from East to West, except men and genii. They then press the earth on the corpse, which is gnawed and stung till the resurrection by ninety-nine dragons, with seven heads each; or, as others say, their sins will become venomous beasts, the grievous ones stinging like dragons, the smaller like scorpions, and the others like serpents; circumstances which some understand in a figurative sense."—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 100.

¹ Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*, vol. i. p. 104.

² These signs are described at length by Pocock, and in Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*. They include the rising of the sun in the West; the appearance of a smoke which shall fill the earth; the eruption of Gog and Magog; the speaking of beasts and birds, &c.

¹ In the text of the Koran, two sounds of the trumpet are alone mentioned; but the orthodox Mahomedans, on the ground of traditions, believe there will be three. The first is called the blast of consternation, from the horror it will strike into all that exist. The second they call the blast of examination, at the sound of which all that live will die, even the angel of death himself. The third and last sound is termed the blast of resurrection, at which all will revive. The last will be sounded forty years after the second by the angel Israfeel, who, with Gabriel and Michael, shall be restored to life, and stand upon the rock of the Temple of Jerusalem. For a full

every soul will be rewarded according to that which it has wrought. Unbelievers will be sent to hell, to dwell there for ever; and the faithful^m will be admitted into paradise.

The pains of hell are described at great length in the Koran and the traditions. Mahomed appears to have desired to terrify his followers by pictures of the most horrid suffering. There are degrees of torture ordained for every description of guilt; but the slightest punishment awarded to a sinner, is to have his feet shod with shoes of fire, "the fervor of which will cause his skull to boil like a cauldron";ⁿ but infidels alone are to suffer these pains for ever. Those who have professed the religion of Mahomed, after a period of expiation, are to be released from hell, and admitted into paradise. A narrow bridge, Ool-Aruf^o, divides the mansion of pain and suffering from that of joy and eternal bliss. The bridge itself forms a part on which those will remain whose good and bad deeds are equally balanced. Another bridge called Ool-Serat passes over the centre of hell, and is finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword; over it all mankind must pass: the virtuous and good will proceed with ease and with the swiftness of lightning; but the wicked, in attempting to follow them, will fall into the bottomless pit.

Taking the form of the heavens from the system of Ptolemy^p, Mahomed places his paradise in the seventh

account of the mode in which the resurrection of the body is effected, see Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 110.

^m God, it is said, will come in clouds, attended by his angels, to judge mankind, for whom Mahomed will become intercessor after that office has been refused by Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus, who shall beg deliverance only for their own souls.—SALE'S *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 115.

ⁿ Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 122.

^o Ool-Aruf may be translated "the partition," as it is derived from the Arabic verb a rafā, "to part."

^p The writings of this celebrated astronomer, who is conjectured to have been born about the year seventy of the Christian era, were translated into Arabic; and this work, the *Almagestum*, has continued for seventeen centuries to be deemed the true system of the heavenly bodies by the greatest part of the Asiatic world.

heaven. At its entrance is a delicious fountain^a, one cup of the waters of which would allay thirst for ever. The soil is said to be musk and saffron; its stones, pearls and jacinths; the walls of its palaces are enriched with gold and silver; and the trunks of all its trees are of gold. Among these the chief is called Tuba, or "the tree of happiness," which stands in the palace of Mahomed; and a branch, bearing delicious fruit^r, reaches to the dwelling of every believer. From the root of this extraordinary tree, the shade of which extends further than the swiftest horse could gallop in a hundred years, flow rivers^s of milk, of wine, and of honey; and the bowers of paradise are refreshed^t by numberless streams and fountains, with pebbles of rubies and emeralds, beds of camphire and musk, and banks of saffron. But all these glories are eclipsed by the beautiful houries, the enjoyment of whose charms is the great reward promised to the faithful. Their prophet assured them, that they should repose on couches covered with silk interwoven with gold, and be surrounded with fruit gardens, refreshed with pure streams and inhabited by beauteous black-eyed damsels, whose complexions are like rubies and pearls, and whose eyes shall never wander to any but their

^a This fountain is called "the pond of Mahomed," and is a month's journey in compass.—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 126.

^r This tree is laden with pomegranates, grapes, dates, and other fruits of surprising bigness, and of tastes unknown to mortals. If a man desire to eat of any particular fruit, it will immediately be presented to him. If he prefer flesh, roasted birds will appear on its branches, and its boughs will bend to meet his extended hand. This tree will also furnish the faithful with fine horses richly accoutred to ride upon, which will burst forth from its fruit.—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse*, vol. i. p. 127.

^s The most celebrated of these was Kooser, or "the stream of life;" from the waters of which the fountain of Mahomed at the entrance of paradise was filled.

^t "Therein are rivers of incorruptible water; and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changeth not; and rivers of wine, pleasant unto those who drink; and rivers of clarified honey: and therein shall they have plenty of all kinds of fruits; and pardon from the Lord."—*Koran*, vol. ii. chap. xlvii. p. 365.

husbands". "They who approach near to God," the prophet adds, "shall dwell in gardens of delight; reposing on couches adorned with gold and precious stones; sitting opposite to one another thereon. Youths, who shall continue in their bloom for ever, shall go round about to attend them, with goblets, and beakers, and a cup of flowing wine; their heads shall not ache by drinking the same, neither shall their reason be disturbed; and with fruits of the sorts which they shall choose, and the flesh of birds of the kind which they shall desire. And there shall accompany them fair damsels, having large black eyes, resembling pearls hidden in their shells, as a reward for that which they shall have wrought. They shall not hear therein any vain discourse, or any charge of sin; but only the salutation, Peace! peace^x!"

The meanest among the faithful will have seventy-two houries of paradise, besides the wives^y which he had in this world. He will inhabit a tent of precious stones, and live on the most delicious viands. His garments and furniture will be proportioned to the magnificence of his condition; to enable him to enjoy all these blessings, he will possess eternal youth; all his desires will be granted the moment they are formed; and, that no sense may be ungratified, his ears will be delighted by the voice of angels, and the songs of the daughters of paradise. Even the trees will celebrate the divine praises, with a harmony far exceeding "what man hath ever heard."

This is only a picture of the delights which await the lowest among the blessed: for the reward of purer faith and higher virtue, the Prophet, copying the very expression of Scripture, has promised enjoyments, "which the

^x Koran, chap. lv. vol. ii. p. 399.

^y Koran, chap. lvi. Sale's Translation, vol. ii. p. 401.

^z It is a vulgar mistake to suppose that Mahomed denied females to have souls, or excluded them from paradise: he has, however, given them no higher rank in the regions of bliss than in this world. They are still only esteemed as they contribute to the pleasure of men.

eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive^a."

The paradise of Mahomed was not an invention of his own: he borrowed much of it from the Jews, the Persians^a, and the Hindus; and some from the Christians. The Jews had planted the mansion of the blessed in the seventh heaven, and had furnished it with beautiful gardens. The magi had peopled it with the Hoorâni Behesht, or the houries of paradise, who are the black-eyed virgins of the Koran. The wonders of the Hindu abode of bliss appear almost literally copied. Its celestial gunga or sacred stream; its âpsâras, or heavenly nymphs; its tarucalpa, or tree of desire, dispensing delicious fruits, exquisite viands, and rich vestments; all find their place in the paradise of the prophet. The mansion prepared for the good is metaphorically described in the Christian volumes, as a glorious and magnificent city, built of gold and precious stones, with twelve gates; through the streets of which run the water of life, that flows past the tree of life, which bears various fruits, and has leaves of a healing virtue^b. Jesus also had said that the blessed should eat and drink at his table^c: but when Mahomed borrowed from this description of future felicity, he rejected the doctrine, that the inhabitants of this world, in the resurrection, "neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven^d." A sensual paradise, in which man is to derive his chief felicity from continuing to indulge the passions of his present nature, is a fundamental principle of the religion. Numerous passages in the Koran place this beyond doubt; and

^a Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 132.

^a The Hoorâni Behesht, or "black-eyed nymphs" of paradise, are mentioned in the Saddir; and Hyde, in his Treatise on the ancient religion of Persia, page 265, states, that the charge of them was committed to the angel Zamyad.

^b Revelations, chap. xxi. xxii.

^c Luke, chap. xxii. verse 30.

^d St. Matthew, chap. xxii. verse 30.

though some of his followers have revolted at so gross a doctrine, the orthodox continue to believe in its literal sense all their prophet has said about the future state of reward and punishment.

The Mahomedans believe that the whole brute creation will be assembled at the resurrection, and that after the weak have been allowed to take vengeance on the strong, for the injuries they have received from them, they will be reduced to dust. The genii will be judged, like men, according to their actions. The bad will be condemned to the infernal regions, and the good will have a delightful dwelling on the verge of paradise^c.

Predestination is inculcated in the Koran, in which God is declared to have said, "The fate of every man have we bound about his neck^f." This verse has given rise to numerous disputes. It has been contended, that its literal sense would be at variance with the justice of the Creator; and the most orthodox have concurred, that it only applies to man in his spiritual state^g. Notwithstanding, the belief of this doctrine is general over all Mahomedan nations, and its effects are very visible. Blind fatality renders men alike insensible to the beauty of virtue, or the deformity of vice. They meet the vicissitudes of fortune with patience and resignation, because they deemed them pre-ordained and unavoidable. They are courageous in battle, from the same motive; and this doctrine was probably first taught by the warlike prophet, with a view of producing that effect on his followers.

Among the points of form or observance, the first is prayer, which is denominated "the pillar of faith." This duty is often inculcated in the Koran^h. "Glorify God when the evening overtaketh you, and when ye rise in the morning: and unto him be praise in heaven and earth; and

^c Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 114.

^f Sale's Koran, chap. xvii.

^g D'Ohsson's Ottoman Empire, vol. vii. p. 121.

^h Sale's Koran, chap. xxx.

at sunset, and when ye rest at noon¹." This, in its literal acceptation, appears only to command four times of daily prayer: but a slight difference in the signification of the words has led the expounders of the sacred law to decide that five were meant; and every true believer is summoned by the public criers to pay his devotions five times a day, with his face turned towards the Temple of Mecca. Ablutions, which are enjoined on almost all occasions, are peculiarly necessary at the moment of prayer; the purity of body is essential, as an emblem of that purity of mind with which man ought to address his Creator. Rich clothes and ornaments are to be laid aside: these trappings of earthly vanity and power inspire a pride inconsistent with that humility with which a suppliant should address the Almighty. Women are not allowed to join in the public prayers at the mosques. They are to offer up their devotions at home; or, if they attend the place of public worship, it must be when the male sex are not there. This practice is founded on the traditionary sayings of the prophet, and confirms that inferiority and seclusion to which the female sex are doomed^k.

In the usage and form of prayer, Mahomed copied the Jews, even to the position of the body: but though he regarded Jerusalem as a sacred city, he taught his followers that a superior sanctity belonged to the Temple of Mecca; towards which he directed them to turn when they offered up their supplications to God. In this reverence to Mecca,

¹ The appointed times of prayer are:—1st, in the morning before sunrise; 2d, when noon is past; 3d, in the afternoon, before sunset; 4th, in the evening, after sunset, but while day remains; 5th, when day is closed, but before the first watch of night.

Sale, (vol. ii. p. 245,) in a note on the translation of this part of the text, makes the following remark: "Some are of opinion, that the five times of prayer are intended in this passage. The evening, including the time both of the prayer of sunset and of the evening prayer properly so called; and the word I have rendered at sunset, marking the hour of afternoon prayer, since it may be applied also to the time a little before sunset."

^k Sale observes, on the authority of a Mahomedan doctor of eminence, that the moslems thought the presence of females inspired a different kind of devotion from that required in the worship of God.

Mahomed accommodated his doctrine to local prejudices, and to the superstition of the Arabians: they had long paid their devotions at the temple in that city, which became hallowed in the eyes of the Mahomedan world, from being the birth-place of their prophet.

Charity is imposed by his religion on every Mahomedan. There are two descriptions of alms: the one obligatory, the other voluntary. What can be legally demanded amounts to two and a-half per cent.¹ on the principal of the estate; but it can only be claimed from those who have a certain sum, and who have been in possession of the property subject to it upwards of eleven months. This legal alms, which is termed *zukat*, which was rigorously exacted by the prophet; who employed it in relieving the poor, and in maintaining^m those who served him in his wars. When the religion spread, this tax was found to be not only difficult to collect, but unequal and invidious. It has in consequence been generally abandoned. Men are left to their consciences; but the obligation of charity is so strongly enforced, that few strict Mahomedans evade this sacred duty; which is recommended not only in the Koran and traditions, but by all the writers on their law, as one of the most certain means of obtaining respect on earth and eternal happiness in heaven: "Prayer," says one of the caliphsⁿ, "carries us half way to God; fasting brings us to the door of his palace; and alms procures us admission^o."

The Mahomedans are enjoined fasting as a sacred duty. They are taught that in the month of Ramazan God sent

¹ The *zukat*, or legal alms, is one in forty, or two and a-half per cent. It is commanded to be paid on cattle, sheep, money, corn, fruits, and on all wares that are sold. There are many different opinions among Mahomedan doctors about the proportion and mode in which it should be collected on property of various kinds.

^m The *khums*, or a fifth part of the spoil of infidels, which was always set aside for the use of Mahomed, formed with the *zukat* the whole of his revenue, and that of his immediate successors.

ⁿ Omar Ebn Abdool Azeez.

^o Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 146.

the Koran from heaven; during that month, every true believer must refrain from day-break till sunset, from eating, drinking, and all sensual gratifications. None are exempt, but travellers, sick persons, women with child, or those who are giving suck; and even these are required to make amends for their involuntary neglect, by fasting at some other period, or by giving extraordinary alms to the poor.

The pilgrimage to Mecca is enjoined on all who can perform it^p. The sacred temple at which they pay their devotions stands near the centre of the city. The Caaba, a square stone building, is the part of it which is most revered. It was probably built by the idolatrous Arabians for their idols; but the Mahomedans are instructed to think that God, in compliance with the prayer of Adam, let fall from heaven a model of the holy building, the resemblance of which our first father had seen in paradise. Adam was wont to turn towards the representation of the celestial temple, when he prayed: his son, Seth, built a house of the same form, of stone and clay. This was destroyed by the deluge, rebuilt by Abraham, and his son, Ishmael, on the same spot, and of a similar shape, which he was enabled to do from having its dimensions explained to him by a divine revelation^q.

The celebrated black stone^r within the Caaba is an object of the greatest veneration; every pilgrim kisses it, and hears

^p Sale's Koran, chap. iii. Every person is to perform the pilgrimage who has a beast to ride upon, and who can supply himself with provisions for the journey. Ool-Shaffei says, those who have money, if they cannot go, should perform this journey by deputy. Malik thinks all who have strength sufficient should go to Mecca: but Ool-Haueefa deems both money and health of body requisite, before it can be deemed obligatory.

^q Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 155.

^r This celebrated stone is set in silver, and fixed in the south-east corner of the temple. It is deemed one of the precious stones of paradise that fell to the earth with Adam; being preserved at the deluge, the angel Gabriel brought it to Abraham when he was building the Caaba. It was at first white, they say, but its surface has become black from coming in contact with those who are impure and sinful. Many other fables are told of this object of idolatrous worship.

of its extraordinary history and wonderful properties. Another stone, hardly less sacred, is shown at a spot called the Palace of Abraham, where the devout visitor is told to observe the prints of that patriarch's footsteps, made when he came to see his son; and his attention is particularly directed to the holy well of Zemzem, which burst forth at the command of God to relieve the drooping Hagar, when she brought the infant Ishmael to the barren plains of Arabia*.

The Temple of Mecca has since been enlarged and ornamented by the piety and munificence of Mahomedan sovereigns, and is annually crowded with pilgrims[†] from every region to which the faith has extended. It would occupy too much space to give a minute description of all the forms of this important ceremony; the enemies of the religion have justly described them as closely allied to idolatry and superstition. Mahomed probably compromised with his first converts: when he discovered that he could not withdraw them from their habitual veneration to the place of devotion of their fathers, he conciliated them by adopting this sacred object of their affection and reverence; and was satisfied, if he could transfer their adoration from their idols to the true God, that they should retain a small portion of the mummerly of their former worship.

Both wine and games of chance are forbidden by the Koran, on the ground that their sinfulness is greater than their use[‡]. Mahomed also forbid his followers to eat the blood of animals, the flesh of swine, or of any creature that died of itself. Among the ancient Arabians, four months of the year were deemed so sacred, that all wars ceased. Mahomed commanded his followers to preserve this usage, if their enemies did; but under all circumstances he authorized instant retaliation of attack. It cannot be surprising

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse, vol. i. p. 157.

† For a full account of the pilgrimage, see Sale's Preliminary Discourse.

‡ Koran, chap. ii.

that an ordination so difficult to observe, and so easy to evade, should have met with little attention. Obedience may often have been given to this institution as a matter of policy, but seldom, if ever, from piety.

Friday^{*} is the day appointed by Mahomed on which his followers are to assemble at the mosques to attend prayer[†]; but is not, like the sabbath of the Jews and Christians, a day of rest. The people assemble in the mosques; the Koran is read and expounded by the priests; and the day, from this ceremony, has a sacred character; but it passes unmarked by any other observance than attending public worship[‡].

The fast of Ramazan, and the cause of its institution, have been mentioned. The Mahomedans have two festivals, which European writers term the greater and lesser Bairam. The first commences the day after the fast of Ramazan, and is called the Eed-ul-Fitr, or "the festival after abstinence." The second, which begins on the 10th of Zilhadge, is termed the Eed-ul-Koorban[§], or "feast of sacrifice," and is insti-

^{*} Various causes are assigned for Friday being fixed by Mahomed as a day of public prayer. Some say it was the day of his arrival at Medinah; others, that the day received its name from one of Mahomed's ancestors, because on it the people assembled before him. It is also affirmed that it was declared sacred, because, according to the Mahomedans, God finished the creation on that day.—SALE's *Koran*, vol. ii. p. 425, note.

[†] Sale's *Koran*, vol. ii. p. 425.

[‡] Though Friday is the day set apart for public worship, it is not the only one on which that is performed. The mosques are always open; and the Paish-Námáz, or officiating priest, attends three times every day at that to which he belongs—before the sun rises, in the afternoon, and after sunset. Those who are very exact in performing their religious duties accompany him. The priest says his prayers in the mosques, as in private, in an inaudible tone: the people, who stand behind him, also pray in silence. Once every day the Paish-Námáz should preach from the pulpit for half an hour or more; but on Friday this duty is obligatory. He takes for his text a verse from the Koran, or from one of the books of traditions, and expounds its meaning to the people. If the mosque be small, there is only one Paish-Námáz, or priest; when large, it is not uncommon to have two or three, and they all perform the religious service at the same time.

[§] The 10th of Zilhadge is the day appointed for slaying the victims by the pilgrims at Mecca.

tuted in commemoration of Abraham offering up Isaac. The rite of circumcision is not once mentioned in the Koran. It is considered as an act of imitative practice^b, founded on the example of the disciples, but not on that of the prophet himself^c. It may be omitted where, from the age of the convert or any other cause, there might be danger from the operation; but it is seldom neglected. It is deemed the outward mark of a true believer; and the very fear that his corpse might in a day of slaughter be confounded with infidels, and thus be denied the holy rites of sepulture, is sufficient to make every man who professes the faith, anxious for its performance.

The Koran, which consists of a hundred and fourteen chapters, was not produced at once; and unbelievers may admire the policy which led to its gradual appearance. Mahomed early taught his disciples that it was sent entire from God to the lowest heaven by the hands of the angel Gabriel^d, by whom it was communicated to him in detached portions^e. Between the first revelation and the last, twenty-three years intervened; and the Prophet declared, that during this whole time he held a continual intercourse with Gabriel, and was wont to dictate to a writer the different chapters, as that angel brought them to him. No mode could have been better calculated to preserve and to promote his power. He was at once the civil ruler and the military leader of his followers; and he drew at pleasure, from a source which they deemed divine, those laws and mandates which were to regulate their lives, and to excite them to

^b It was taken from the Jews; and Mahomedans believe that it was first instituted by Abraham.

^c Mahomed is said to have been born circumcised.

^d This took place on the night of Ool-Kadr, or "the night of power, or glory." It is believed to be that between the 23rd and 24th of Ramazan; but Mahomedan doctors are not agreed about this date, except that it was during the month of Ramazan, the whole of which is deemed sacred on account of this auspicious event.

^e The Koran was not even sent in chapters, but in small portions, several of which are often included in one chapter.

actions of virtue and valour. To guard against the errors of precipitation, he inculcated, that the commands he received from the Almighty were sometimes revoked; and he also warned true believers against literally interpreting all the passages in the Koran. Some parts were to be understood as they were written; while others were to be taken in a figurative sense^f. By these precautions he was prepared to evade every charge of inconsistency or of false prophecy.

Mahomed was possessed of a graceful person, of ready eloquence, of courage, and of wisdom. In the state he found his country in, the means taken by this extraordinary man to propagate his doctrine and establish his power could hardly fail; and even his enemies must admit, that he entitled himself to the gratitude of his countrymen. The great majority of the Arabians, when he first proclaimed his mission, were ignorant idolaters, whose superstition was disgraced by the grossest and most inhuman usages^g. They were divided at home and despised abroad. By adopting his religion, they learnt to pay exclusive adoration to one true and only God; and they obtained a strength from that political union, which was the consequence of their common creed, that enabled them to become masters of the fairest portion of the globe.

The Koran is written in the purest Arabic, and is deemed by Mahomedans of such surpassing beauty and eloquence, that they consider it impossible an uninspired human being

The following passage in the Koran exemplifies its character in this respect :—

“There is no God but he, the mighty, the wise. It is he who hath sent down unto thee the book, wherein are some verses clear to be understood; they are the foundation of the book; and others are parabolical. But they whose hearts are perverse will follow that which is parabolical therein, out of low schism, and a desire of the interpretation thereof; yet none knoweth the interpretation thereof except God.”—SALE’S *Koran*, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 53.

^f Female infanticide was common over all Arabia, and is frequently reprobated in the Koran.

should have composed it. It cannot be expected that others should view either the language or the contents with equal enthusiasm. It has been summarily described by Volney as containing a few ordinances concerning polygamy, divorces, slavery, and the laws of succession; some emphatical declamations on the attributes of God; and a collection of puerile tales and extravagant fables. But in the pride of better knowledge, we should hardly venture to pronounce that puerile or contemptible, which has so fully answered its purpose, and which is still considered the standard of truth and perfection by so large a portion of the world. The Koran, with many of the defects ascribed to it, abounds in the finest passages in praise of the Almighty: its author dwells on the great and holy theme with an eloquent and enraptured fervor. The other parts were suited to the character, prejudices, and habits of those to whom the religion was offered, and whose degraded condition it was meant to improve. His success was astonishing: even those who shudder at his presumptuous profanation, have accorded an admiration to the man, which they refused to the prophet; and have not been able to consign to that contempt, which belongs to schemes of superstitious and idolatrous worship, a religion which, with all its errors, is grounded on one of the most rational and sublimest principles.

The purpose and manner of the Koran rendered it a volume of law, as well as of religion. Its author not only meant to instruct his followers in their duty to God, but towards each other; and his precepts have been acknowledged throughout Mahomedan nations as the sole basis of all their jurisprudence. The different passages and chapters were never put into any order by the prophet, and at his death were a confused heap of loose sheets. The important labour of forming them into a volume devolved on the first caliph, Aboobeker, who arranged them, without any attention to the times at which the revelations were made; but this was of no consequence, as each chapter is distinct, and

has no necessary connexion with that which precedes or follows it. The transcript made from the original sheets was committed to the custody of one of the widows of Mahomed; but, some years afterwards, the caliph Osman, discovering that many spurious editions were dispersed over the empire, directed that a number of copies should be taken from the one which Aboobeker had made, and that they should be distributed to the faithful, who were commanded to burn and destroy all other editions as erroneous^b.

The spirit of division, which appeared among the followers of the Prophet, even before his death, broke out with great violence after it; and the rapid strides of his successors to imperial power only afforded this spirit a wider sphere of action. It would fill a volume even to name the various sects which have sprung up. It is only meant to describe that of the Sheahs, which has become the national religion of Persia, and to notice the doctrines of the Soofees, which have spread over that kingdom; but it will be necessary first to say a few words on the progress of the Soonee faith; which, from the great majority who have concurred in it, claims the distinction of being the orthodox religion.

The Koran, as a book of law, was only suited to a rude society, like the Arabian tribes for whom it was framed. When the power of the caliphs was extended, it became impossible to govern their numerous subjects by the comparatively few rules and maxims which this volume contained; and the difficulty was increased, from a great portion of them being local, and altogether inapplicable to many of the nations who had embraced the Mahomedan religion. The fundamental principle however of this faith required, that, wherever it was introduced, all former usages and laws should be abolished; it was deemed profanation to desire knowledge on such a subject from any other than a divine source. There appeared therefore no remedy, but to render it more copious. An account of the actions and tradi-

^b Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 86.

tionary sayings of the prophet, who was believed never to have acted or spoken but by inspiration, and whose every act and word was in consequence considered as a law, was collected from his wives and companions. This immense collection was termed *Soona*, and regarded by the *Soonees*¹, or those who believed in it, as of equal authority with the *Koran*. But the materials for the government of great empires were yet incomplete. Some part of the *Koran* was obscure and figurative; many of the traditions were vague, and still more contradicted each other. To remedy the confusion and evils arising from these causes, the most learned and able Mahomedan divines devoted themselves to the explanation of these holy records; but it was evidently impossible that they should limit themselves to the mere exposition of texts. They sought to acquire fame by propagating their own opinions, and by adding their dogmas to those of their prophet and his immediate successors. Schisms were multiplied in every quarter; but the great mass of believers settled at last in recognising the authority of four eminent doctors, *Haneefa*, *Malik*, *Shaffei*, and *Hanbal*; who were considered holy and learned men in their lives, and since their deaths have been canonized as the four *Imâms*^k, or high priests, of the established orthodox religion.

¹ The Jews had also a code of traditions; and it was a saying with the Pharisee, (who may be termed the Jewish Soonee,) that the words of the *Scribes* were lovely, above the words of the law, and more weighty than the law and the prophets. In allusion to this it is said: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your traditions."—*Matthew*, xv. 6.

^k The sacred title of *Imâm* is by the *Sheahs* given only to the immediate descendants of the prophet, who are twelve. The last of these, the *Imâm Mehdy*, is supposed by them to be concealed (not dead), and the title which belongs to him cannot, they conceive, be given to another; but among the *Soonees* it is a dogma, that there must be always a *visible Imâm*, or "father of the church." The title is given to the four learned doctors who are the founders of their faith. It was long maintained that the *Imâm* must be descended from the Arabian tribe of *Koreish*; but the Emperors of *Constantinople* (who are of a Tartar family) have assumed the sacred title, which they claim on the ground of the formal renunciation by Mahomed the

These saints differed in expounding parts of the Koran and the traditions; but their followers have concurred in tolerating their differences, which relate more to forms than essentials, and have become consolidated into one belief: this is termed the Soonee, in other words, the belief of those who assent to the Soona, or oral traditions, and who consequently acknowledge the first caliphs, from whom most of these traditions were derived, as the chosen companions and legitimate successors of the prophet. The four sects mentioned above have been called the four pillars of the Soonee faith: each has a separate oratory at the Temple of Mecca; but this and their other distinctions have not disturbed their union, which has been cemented by their common alarm at the progress of schisms, that threatened, if they spread, not only to alter the faith, but to overthrow the whole system of their jurisprudence; for this was established on authorities, the purity and legality of which the heretics openly denied.

Among the principal schisms was that of the Sheahs; which, from the commencement of the Seffavean dynasty, became the religion of Persia. The term Sheah has been already explained, and a short account has been given of the sect. From the death of Mahomed, the adherents of Ali maintained his right of succession to the caliphate, and deemed those by whom that right had been set aside the greatest of sinners. The talents, the piety, and the reputation of the three first caliphs preserved the empire from the effects of this discontent; and the ultimate elevation of Ali satisfied for a time the clamour of his friends: but his death and that of his sons, and the misfortunes of his descendants, who, though admitted to the rank of Imâms, were excluded from all temporal power, led numbers to cherish in secret the principles of the Sheah sect, and to mourn over the hard lot of the descendants of

Twelfth, the last caliph of the race of Abbas, in favour of Selim the First. The acknowledgment of this title renders the Emperor of Turkey the spiritual head of all orthodox Mahomedans.

their holy prophet. The Persians were the first nation who proclaimed themselves of this sect, and who vowed eternal hatred and war against the Soonees. More than three centuries¹ have elapsed since the Sheah faith became the adopted religion; and, during that whole period, a regard for its tenets has been the cause or the pretext of almost every war. Surrounded by Soonees, whether the Persian has been called upon to invade the territories of the Turks, the Affghans, or the Tartars, or to repel their attacks, he has always been summoned by the same watchword; and the belief that the Sheah faith was in danger has never failed to rouse him. Nâdir Shah, at the summit of his power, attempted to destroy a feeling, of which he had proved the efficacy for the purpose of defence, because, as it excited hatred in other nations, it might obstruct his plans of extended conquest; but the attempt failed, and the attachment of the Persians to their faith continues as decided as ever. It is important, therefore, to understand those feelings which have had, and continue to have, so powerful an influence; and we cannot, except by a careful study of the tenets peculiar to the Sheahs.

The great and radical difference between the Soonee and Sheah doctrine, arises from the latter maintaining the divine and indefeasible right of Ali to succeed to the caliphate at the death of the prophet. His claims, they assert, rested on his being the first convert, and consequently the eldest in the faith; on his nearness of kindred to Mahomed, of whom he was a cousin; and on his having married Fatima, the only offspring of the prophet. They also affirm that he was expressly declared his successor^m; and that those by whose

¹ Ismael, the first Seffavean king, ascended the throne A.D. 1499, and proclaimed the Sheah faith the national religion.

^m Sheah writers say, that when the angel Gabriel informed Mahomed he must prepare to die, the prophet proceeded towards Mecca. On the road, he came to a place called Khoom-e-Ghuddeer, where he declared Ali his heir, on the 18th of Zehadge, which is celebrated by an annual festival, called the Eed-ul-Ghuddeer, or "the festival of Ghuddeer."

intrigues he was deprived of his inheritance, acted in direct contradiction to the will of God, as signified through the prophet. The same great temporal and spiritual power, which they conceive should have immediately descended to Ali, ought, in their opinion, to have been transmitted to his lineal descendants; and they deem not only the three first caliphs, Aboobeker, Omar, and Osman, but all the caliphs who took the title of "Lord of the Faithful," illegal usurpers of power. This belief is hostile to the whole fabric of the Soona, or traditions of the Soonee sect; it denies all that part of the traditions which rests on the authority of the three first caliphs, whose very names are abhorrent to the Sheahs. They admit, however, the legality of the Soona, except where its source is contaminated by crime or disobedienceⁿ to God. Their leading principle is an adherence to the relations and descendants of Mahomed, whom they deem to have partaken in a lesser degree of his sacred nature; and the title that Sheahs love to be distinguished by, is that of "the friends of the family."

The Sheahs disbelieve and condemn the four great Imâms, the founders of the Soonee doctrine. These learned doctors, they affirm, have propagated many erroneous and impious opinions, both in matters of faith and practice; and they contend, that the worldly policy, which has led to the monstrous compound of their contradictory tenets into one faith, must involve all who adopt it in inexplicable difficulties. In support of this opinion, they argue that, as it is acknowledged there is only one path of truth, it becomes evident, that if the followers of Haneefa, or any other Soonee saint, are right, those of the remaining three must be wrong; and after all, they ask, "Is it not better to trust to what we have received from God and his prophet, and from those who lived during his mission, and have transmitted his sayings,

ⁿ They accuse the three first caliphs of disobedience, on the ground of their knowledge of Ali's superior right, and of the prophet's desire that he should be his successor.

than to give our minds over to these pretending doctors of divinity and of law^o; and thus to constitute their fallible works the standard of our faith and the rule of our lives^p?"

The difference in these points between the Soonee and Shea sect is rancorous and irreconcilable. It is one in which the passions are easily arrayed; for it relates to no speculative or abstruse points of faith, but is interwoven with the history of their religion. Names which are never mentioned but with blessings by one sect, are hourly cursed by the other. The hypocrisy, ingratitude, and disobedience of the three first caliphs are the essential dogmas of the Sheahs; while the leading principle of the Soonees is, that, next to

* The orientalists have ever been fond of illustrating arguments by anecdotes. A Sheah doctor of laws was summoned to a meeting, in which four doctors of the orthodox sects were to decide whether Sultan Khodâh-bundâh, the great grandson of Chenghiz, could take back a wife whom he had divorced three times, without conforming to the prescribed usage, founded on the Soonee law, of her first marrying and cohabiting with another. The Sheah doctor, with a pretended clownish manner, instead of leaving his slippers at the door, secured them under his arm. This action produced much mirth; and the reason of it was demanded. "We have a record in my family," said the man, "that one of our ancestors, who lived in the days of the prophet, had his slippers stolen by a follower of Haneefa!" All burst into laughter; and he was informed that Haneefa did not propagate his doctrine till a century after the prophet's death. "It must have been a follower of Malik, then." The mirth became louder: the ignorant doctor was instructed that Malik came after Haneefa. "Then it was Shaffei;" but he was still later. "It must have been Hanbal!" said the Sheah, affecting anger. This holy man, he was informed, did not publish his works till the second century of the Hijrah. The Sheah doctor started back with pretended surprise at this information, and exclaimed, "Why, if all you say is true, these holy saints, whose opinions you desire to make our laws, lived so long after the prophet, that they could know no more than you and I, gentlemen, except as they might happen to be more or less learned!" Saying this, he arose and took his departure; but was soon sent for by the king, who asked him if he thought he might take back his wife, without first allowing her to be married to another? "If there is no greater authority than the opinion of these modern saints against it, I can see no sin in your doing so," was the reply. The king was rejoiced, and immediately acted on his opinion: and this circumstance is supposed to have had no slight weight in disposing Mahomed Khodâh-bundâh to believe in the Sheah doctrines.—*Persian MS.*

^p Persian MS.

VOL. II.

R

the prophet, these rulers were beyond all others entitled to regard and veneration. A stranger to the name of Mahomed is more acceptable to a zealot of either religion than the opposite sectary, who insults him with an hourly attack of his favorite tenets; and their disagreement, as has been stated, relates to matters of faith, or rather opinion, more than of practice. The differences in their mode of worship and customs are slight¹, and have arisen out of the hate they bear each other, and their dislike to have any usage in common. Innumerable volumes have been written on these disputes. Their effect has been like that of most works in religious controversy: they have oftener irritated than convinced; but it is justice to their authors to observe, that they frequently display taste and learning. Every effort is made to arrest the attention of the reader. The arguments are often shaped into a dramatic form, to render them attractive; and the zealous writer condescends to amuse the fancy, in the hope that it may aid his object of informing the judgment.

It has been before observed, that the religion and laws of a Mahomedan nation always flow from the same fountain; the consequence is, that they regard with sacred veneration all those by whom their laws are made or expounded. These must, generally speaking, be acknowledged as saints before they are recognised as lawgivers; and an attack on the sanctity of their character strikes at once at the faith and jurisprudence of the countries where their authority is acknowledged. It has ever been one of the great disputes between the Soonees and Sheahs, that the latter deny all respect and confidence to the four great lawgivers on whom the former rest the whole superstructure of their usages and ordinances, if not their religion. It will elucidate this subject to state some of the objections made to the dogmas of these reputed saints.

¹ They consist in the mode of holding the hands, of prostration, and other forms equally immaterial.

Aboo Haneefa, who lived^r in the first century of the Hijrah, who is represented to have been a man uniting great modesty and piety with a plain, solid understanding, and whose tenets are praised from their being founded more on reason than on traditions, is accused by the Sheahs of ignorance and presumption. They assert, that among other deviations from the true path, he departed from the obvious text of the Koran, in allowing his followers to drink wine^s, after its spirit had been a little evaporated by boiling; and that he also altered a number of practices concerning prayer and purifications, which are inculcated in that volume and the admitted traditions. As a proof of his ignorance, the Sheah writer^t with triumph alleges, that he confessed his inability to decide whether a hermaphrodite could be admitted into paradise, or a genius become perceptible to the human vision.

Imâm Mâlik was also born^u in the first century of the Hijrah; and, if we believe Soonee writers, he was no less remarkable than Haneefa for his modesty and piety. We

^r Haneefa-ool-naaman-ebn-Thabet was born in the eightieth year of the Hijrah, and died in the hundred and fiftieth. His followers assert that he was designated by an huddees, or saying of the prophet, that Aboo Haneefa was "the lamp of the faithful;" but this was probably invented by some zealous disciple, to give him superiority over the others. We are told by Ool-Ghazali, a respectable writer, that Haneefa ended his life in prison at Bagdad, because he refused to accept the office of judge, for which he thought himself unfit. When urged by his friends to take this station, he replied, "I choose rather to be punished by men than by God." When asked the reason why he said he was unfit, he answered, "If I have spoken the truth, I am unfit; if I have uttered a falsehood, a liar is not fit to be a judge."—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 206.

^s I follow the author of the *Absar-ool-Moostubsureen*, or "The Eyes of Acute Observers;" a work of considerable reputation. He accuses Haneefa of allowing his disciples to drink *nubees*, a kind of wine made from dates or raisins; which, he asserts, is in direct opposition to the sacred tradition, "that every thing which intoxicates is wine," and that "every wine is unlawful."—*Absar-ool-Moostubsureen*.

^t *Absar-ool-Moostubsureen*.

^u The Imâm Abd-ool Mâlik was born between the year of the Hijrah ninety and ninety-five, and died A.H. 177.

are informed, that out of forty-eight questions which were put to him, he returned thirty-two with a declaration that he could not answer them. "A noble and frank confession of ignorance," observes a Mahomedan writer^x, "which, in a man of such learning and reputation, could only proceed from a mind, the sole object of which was truth and the glory of God." This modest and wise doctor, however, is accused by Sheah writers of being the bold propagator of falsehood and vice. They assert^y, that he taught that the flesh of all animals, except swine and beings endowed with reason, might be eaten; and they quote his writings to prove that, in certain cases, he affirmed the legality of a practice which cannot be named, but which all other Mahomedan teachers have deemed infamous.

Shaffei^z, the third Imâm of the Soonees, who was born^a in the second century of the Hijrah, is said by all Soonee writers to have been a learned and virtuous man, who laboured to arrange the traditions^b so as to render them useful as a code of laws. He introduced several alterations of religious forms, but advanced few doctrines that can be deemed innovations. We may judge of the injustice of his enemies from their accusations; one of the principal is, that he departed from that text of the Koran which prohibits gambling, by allowing his disciples to indulge in a few games of chess^c.

Hanbal, the fourth Imâm^d, was at first an opposer and

^x Ool-Ghazali.

^y Absar-ool-Moostubsureen.

^z Chardin (vol. ii. p. 237, old edit.) observes, that the Sheahs are almost all followers of Shaffei, the Soonees of Haneefa. This is an error of extraordinary magnitude in a writer of so much experience and observation. The Sheahs have always held Shaffei and his doctrines in abhorrence.

^a Ebn Edris-ool-Shaffei was born at Ascalon in Palestine, A.H. 150, educated at Mecca, and died in Egypt A.H. 204.

^b One Mahomedan author wittily observes, "that the relaters of the traditions were asleep till Ool-Shaffei came and awakened them."—SALE'S *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 208.

^c He limited them to three games at a sitting.

^d Ebn Hanbal was born in A.H. 164. Some authors state, that "he was

afterwards a follower of Ool-Shaffei, from whom he boasted to have learnt most of the traditions he knew; and we are assured that he was able to repeat a million^c. He appears to have been bolder than any of his predecessors, and to have taught doctrines which subjected him to the most cruel persecution. The Sheahs accuse him, not only of having allowed his followers to relieve occasional lowness of spirits by intoxicating drugs^f, but of propagating the most profane doctrines concerning the nature of the Almighty, whom his followers were taught to believe a corporeal being.

One Sheah author^g describes the God of the sect of Hanballee as “having curled locks; of being immaterial from the head to the breast; but consisting from the breast downwards of one solid soft mass:” and he asserts, that this learned doctor explained the verse in the Koran which states, that “the merciful God is upon the heavens,” to mean, “that the Deity sat four fingers above the firmament in such a manner that his knees reached below it.” He adds, that the followers of Hanbal have proclaimed opinions still more impious. “They believe that on the day of resurrection, when men shall be called before God to worship him, Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed, shall advance to the judgment-seat to petition for justice on the murderers of her sons, Hoossein and Hussun; but God, they say, will show his thigh, and display a cloth that covers a wound upon it; while a voice will be heard to exclaim, ‘The arrow which Nimrod^h shot at heaven with intention to destroy me,

born at Merv, in Khorassan, of which city his parents were natives; and that his mother brought him from thence to Bagdad at her breast: while others assure us, that she was with child of him when she came to Bagdad, and that he was born there.”—SALE’S *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 208.

^c Hamilton’s *Commentary on Mahomedan Laws*, P. D. p. 29.

^f He allowed his disciples, the author of the *Absar-ool-Moostubsureen* asserts, to take *bung*, a very intoxicating drug, in a quantity not exceeding the size of a pistachio nut; which, another Sheah writer remarks, was probably his own dose.

^g I translate from the *Absar-ool-Moostubsureen*.

^h According to Mahomedan legends, Nimrod pretended to divine power, and shot an arrow at the heavens to kill the Almighty.

wounded my thigh. I have not permitted it to heal, that I might show it you; and that, if the God you adore sustained so great a wrong from a being whom he created, you should not be surprised at the sufferings your sons endured from their own tribe.'” The followers of this doctor, the same writer observes, assert, “that the Almighty had one day a pain in his eyes¹, and informed the inquiring angels that it was an inflammation brought on by the torrents of tears which he had shed at the deluge:” and they also affirm, “that every Thursday night God assumes the shape of a beautiful boy, and descends from heaven upon an Egyptian ass; and that it was very common to build a small manger on the tops of their mosques, near which they burnt incense, and deposited some fine straw and grain, for the refreshment of the animal on which the Almighty rode, in the event of his descending at that spot.”

It is evident from this example, that the Sheah writers endeavour to defame and discredit the Imâms of the Soonees, by ascribing to them not only every doctrine propagated by the most absurd or visionary of their followers, but also those of other sects. The impious tenets here charged on the disciples of Hanbal, should properly be ascribed to those of the Ebn-ul-Keram, the celebrated founder of the Keramites: that sect, by their literal acceptance of the figurative parts of the Koran, have been led into a gross heresy, deemed at once monstrous and blasphemous by almost all other Mahomedans, who, generally speaking, entertain the purest and most sublime belief of the divine nature and attributes.

The Sheahs also accuse the four Imâms of having altered several sacred institutions, particularly that about the division of the khums², or fifth share of spoil taken in war;

¹ The author of the *Ahsar-ool-Moostabsureen* states, that he takes this fact from the *Mouakiff*, a work which he asserts is held in high estimation by the sect of Hanballees.

² The Khums is described in the Koran as the property of God, his prophet, and his relations, or men of his tribe, (*Benee Haschim*,) who are poor

with respect to which, they affirm, the Soonee doctrines are at complete variance with the practice of Mahomed and the text of the Koran. They also assert, that they have altered forms of prayer, and made deviations on other points from traditions of acknowledged authority, for the express and sole object of establishing usages¹ opposite to those of the Sheahs: on all these grounds they hold the names of Haneefa, Malik, Shaffei, and Hanbal, in abhorrence, and consider as wanderers from the true path all who follow their heretical doctrines.

It would be tedious to enter into a methodical disquisition on the innumerable points of difference between these two sects: a short reference to some of their most popular productions will be the best mode of elucidating their tenets, and of showing the style of their most esteemed theological disputants.

In a letter written by some Soonee priests with the army of a Tartar monarch^m who attacked Meshed, to the Sheahs

and destitute. The right of the Benees Haschim to a share in the khums is grounded on their being excluded from any portion of the zukaat. The Ubsar-ool-Moostubsureen expressly states, that when "the fifth of the captured property had been separated, Mahomed divided it into *six* portions; *three* the prophet took for himself, and the three remaining he divided equally among orphans, beggars, and travellers, of the tribe of Benees Haschim, to compensate them for the religious charity (zukat), in which, by the Koran, it was considered unlawful for them to share."

It is one of the most serious charges which the Sheah writers make against the three first caliphs, that they altered this usage, and took the whole of the khums to themselves, to the exclusion of the sacred family, and the tribe of the prophet; but we find it stated in a learned work on Mahomedan law, that, according to the Soonees, shares of the khums should be given to orphans, the poor, and travellers.—*Commentary on Mahomedan Law*, vol. ii. p. 179.

¹ The Soonees are accused of making the tops of graves convex instead of flat, (the shape ordered by a tradition,) for no reason but opposition to the Sheahs.—*Absar-ool-Mustubsureen*.

^m Obeid Oollá, sovereign of the Oosbegs. He was the nephew of the celebrated Shahibeg Khan, the conqueror. He commenced his reign about A.D. 1642.

in that city, we find a catalogue of the heresies with which the Sheahs are charged, and for which they are doomed (if we are to believe the authors of this anathema) to total destruction in this world, and everlasting misery in that to come. They are accused of not only denying the authority, but vilifying the character of those who are declared in the Koran to be the chosen companions of the holy prophet. They are reminded that even Ali, the Lord of the Faithful, whose undaunted valour was never questioned, submitted to the three first caliphs; and that these cannot be accused of usurpation, without implicating him in base submission to illegal authority. The Sheahs are upbraided with their calumnies against Ayesha, and are accused of having dishonoured the prophet by their abuse of his wife. On the ground of these and many other heresies, they are denounced as the worst of infidels. "Your property," it is said, "is legitimate plunder for those who fight for the true faith: and as to the fields and gardens around Meshed, which, you inform us, are the unalienable property of the holy Imâm Rezâ, consecrated to him by the ancestors of the present Persian monarchs, we can only reply, that, in a country which it is proper and lawful to plunder, the army of the faithful cannot stop to distinguish the lands appropriated for religious purposes, from those that belong to the profane inhabitants; but, supposing the distinction made, the revenues of this holy property would, after all, be expended by true believers: and if it cannot from circumstances be given to those who should receive it, it becomes the duty of our conquering prince to divide it in legal shares among his brave warriors."

This anathema, which is supported by verses from the Koran, by traditions, and by stanzas from pious poets, breathes the same spirit, and recapitulates the same arguments, as are to be found in the declarations of all the Soonee princes who have invaded Persia since the Sheah doctrine was established. This particular document has

probably been preserved, on account of the eloquent answer to it by a Sheah priestⁿ, resident in Meshed.

This able divine, whose name was Moollah Mahomed, declares in the commencement of his letter, that he intends to oppose to the charges of heresy made against the Sheahs no arguments but from the Koran, and from those traditions, the authenticity of which is acknowledged by the learned of both sects: he proceeds to prove from one^o of these authorities, that when the prophet was dying, he heard disputes in his chamber, and called for pen, ink, and paper, exclaiming to those around him, "I wish to write what will keep you in the true path after my death." But Omar (the future caliph) forbade it to be given, observing, that Mahomed was in a delirium. "Have we not the Koran?" he added: "what more can we want?" The prophet, enraged at these words and at their disputes, commanded them to leave him. He adduces other acts of disobedience in the three first caliphs; and concludes, on the authority of that verse in the Koran which states "He who obeys not the person I have sent is an infidel," that they were infidels, and ought to have been excluded from the caliphate on that ground, even if they had possessed legal claims.

The writer denies the truth of the tradition brought forward to show that Mahomed praised the caliphs; but observes, that if admitted, it proves nothing; for that his praise could only refer to their past lives, and could never be used as a shield to cover errors and crimes^p subsequently

ⁿ This priest is called in the original MS. Moollah Mahomed Roostem-daree; but the latter term was, no doubt, the name of his tribe or family.

^o The Mouakiff, by Humdee. This fact is also mentioned in the *Sabeh-e-Bochara*.

^p The author does not deny that the prophet might have had prescience of their guilt; but this, he states, gave him no power to prevent it. Ali, he adds, returned his sword to the son of Muljim, observing, "I shall be slain by that weapon; but justice forbids my preserving my life by a crime." Such that holy personage deemed the punishment of guilt before its perpetration.

committed. He ridicules the importance which the Soonee divines have given to the term companion, which Mahomed used to Aboobeker when concealed with him in the cave. "Its obvious signification," he observes, "is the best refutation of such an argument. It merely means the person that is with another, and has no relation to his virtue or religion:" to prove this he asserts, that "the most learned commentators have declared, that the prophet quoted the very expression^a used by Joseph when imprisoned in Egypt: and the companions who were addressed by the son of Jacob were both idolaters."

In answer to the accusation that Ali, by submitting to the other caliphs acknowledged their right, he replies, "that the number of followers they had collected, and the measures they had adopted, while Ali was occupied with the obsequies of the prophet, made it impossible for him to assert his right, without a civil war, which, whatever its issue, would have caused great bloodshed. This forbearance can never be an argument against his right; for Ali, though brave, was certainly exceeded in courage by his uncle, Mahomed, who, when surrounded by the first heroes of the faithful, fled before the infidels of the tribe of Koreish, and after a long period, rejoiced to obtain a truce; yet this never led to a conclusion that the Koreish were right, or that the prophet, by making peace with them, admitted them to be so. But it is evident, that God himself has often shown forbearance towards infirm mortals, who have aspired to his throne; and if the Almighty, clothed in all his power, has for inscrutable causes acted thus to the wicked, who shall arraign the conduct of Moortezâ Ali on this occasion?"

Though Mahomedans are generally agreed that power can neither descend to or be transmitted by females, the Sheahs labour to prove that Fatima, the only offspring of

^a When Mahomed was in the cave, he exclaimed, "Oh! my two companions in this prison, is your trust in many gods, or do you believe in him who has no companion in power, and is invincible and omnipotent?"

Mahomed, was an exception to this rule; and that Ali had an additional claim to succeed his uncle, from having married her; while the right of his descendants to inherit the throne was still stronger, they being the only race who could boast the blood of the prophet. But they refuse that respect for the wives which they claim for the daughter of Mahomed, and justify their abuse of Ayesha, by urging, that she not only joined Moâveah in making war upon Ali, whom she knew to be the appointed successor^r of her husband, but, by appearing at the head of an army, departed from the law which the prophet laid down, concerning that privacy in which it is the duty of the female sex to live. The author supports this latter accusation against Ayesha, by asserting, that it is written in one of the most authentic books of tradition, that when a blind man^s was sitting with the prophet, one of his wives passed through the room. The lady, on being reproved, observed, that the man was blind. "But thou seest," was the answer of Mahomed; which, to such as believe in this tradition, is a law prohibiting a female from looking on any man but her husband or nearest male kindred. The same writer repels the attack made on his sect, for including the prophet in the reproaches thrown upon Ayesha^t. "If you were to establish," he tells his opponents, "a necessary connexion of character between a man and his wife, the conclusion would not only prove fatal to the reputation of Mahomed, but to the good prophets, Noah and Lot; and Assiah, the virtuous consort of Pha-

^r All Sheah authors assume, that Mahomed positively declared on one occasion his desire that Ali should be his successor.

^s His name was Omah Mukhtoom.

^t "Soonee authors," Mollah Mahomed states, "have written that the holy prophet placed Ayesha upon his shoulders, in order that she might see a show in the public street; and that after she had looked at it for some time, he exclaimed, 'O my red-cheeked! art thou yet satisfied with the show?' She replied, 'No.' This story," the indignant Sheah adds, "which you relate of Mahomed, would not be believed of the most depraved of men; indeed, its enormity appears beyond all comment."

raoh, would be implicated in all the guilt of her wicked husband."

The Sheahs had claimed some consideration, on the ground of their being admitted to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, and associating, when there, with wise and pious men. To this their enemies had replied, in the words of the poet Jami^u, "He who has not got good in his heart, can derive no benefit from looking on the countenance of the prophet." An inaccuracy in this quotation gave Moollah Mahomed an advantage, which he seized with all the skill of an able disputant. "I certainly expected," he observes, "that men who have, or ought to have, read the Koran, and all the commentaries on that sacred volume, could have copied a Persian stanza without a mistake; but you have altered and rendered ungrammatical the words of the poet: no doubt conceiving, that after you had plundered and defaced his native province, it was but a trifling additional injury to spoil one of the beautiful lines of the celebrated Jami. This may appear a light remark, but it may be useful in teaching you not to be precipitate in forming a judgment on what you do not thoroughly understand^{*}."

A number of proofs are brought forward to establish the superiority of the Sheah faith; and the writer concludes by saying, that if those who believe in this faith are wrong, their error is no cause for dooming them to destruction. "What knowledge," he demands of his antagonists, "can you have of the inward thoughts of those on whom you have pronounced so dreadful a sentence? The passions of kings are as a consuming flame, on which it behoves wise and good men to pour the water of moderate councils: but the anathema you have promulgated, when in the hands of

^u Jami, who takes his name from his birth-place, the village of Jam, near Herat, was not more famous for his fancy and skill as a poet, than for his learning and sanctity as a divine. His poems (many of which are very beautiful) breathe in every line the most sacred rapture; hence he is oftener quoted by the writers on theology, than any other poet.

^{*} MS. Letter of Moollah Mahomed.

the soldier, is the pretext for every excess and violence. And suppose that they who suffer from this act were infidels, such a proceeding could never be pleasing to God; for it is written, that in the day of judgment Noah shall stand abashed in the presence of his Creator, for having desired the death of sinners."

Among the works on the difference between the Soonee and Sheah sects, the latter esteem none more than a small tract, called Hussunneah, by one of their most learned divines. To mark his contempt for his adversaries, he has made a female slave, who gives her name to his work, the successful champion of his faith, in a public dispute supposed to be held before the caliph, Haroon-oor-Rasheed. It appears impossible to convey a better idea of the arguments by which the Sheahs support their principal dogmas, or of the style in which such subjects are treated, than by translating a part of this popular work; which, after shortly describing the history and character of Hussunneah, gives an account of her first disputation before the caliph.

The learned author[†] informs us, "that a merchant at Bagdad, when reduced to poverty from persecution on account of his religious persuasion, applied to a favorite and accomplished female slave to know what he should do to save himself from ruin. This lady, whose name was Hussunneah, or 'the beautiful,' and who had been carefully educated in the principles of the Sheah sect, in the house of the holy Imâm Jaffier[‡], advised her master to go to the palace of Haroon-oor-Rasheed, and offer her for sale. 'Demand,' said she, 'a hundred thousand pieces of gold^{*}; and if the caliph should ask why you put this immoderate

[†] Shaikh Aboul Futtovah.

[‡] Jaffier was the sixth Imâm. He was born A. H. 83, and died in A. H. 148. The scene is laid in the reign of Haroon, about A. H. 170, twenty-two years after the Imâm died: but the original only states, that Hussunneah was educated in Jaffier's family, not by him.

^{*} The term in the original is *dinar zere* caliphate, a coin which may be estimated at nine shillings and twopence.

value on your slave, tell him to assemble his ablest disputants in theology, and that she will refute them all.' The merchant replied, 'I can never consent to this plan: the bigoted tyrant^b will be enchanted by my praises of thee, and take thee from me; and I cannot exist without thee, who art the only delight I have left in the universe. 'Fear not,' said Hussunneah; 'by the blessing of the family of the holy prophet, no power shall separate me from thee while I live: rise up, and trust in God, who will order every thing for the best.' After much importunity, he was persuaded to go to Bermekee^c, the vizier of Haroon, to whom he stated his own situation and the qualifications of his slaves. The vizier directed him to bring her. The distressed merchant did as he was commanded. When Bermekee contemplated her beauty, and heard her eloquence and wisdom, he was struck with admiration. He proceeded instantly to his master, and explained all he had heard and seen. Hussunneah was ordered to attend. She came before the caliph veiled, and recited some verses in his praise, which delighted him. He desired her to unveil, and found her face a just index of her mind. Haroon sent for her master, and inquired the price of his slave. He replied, a hundred thousand pieces of gold. Haroon demanded in a rage, how he could ask such a price? 'I ask it,' said the man, 'because I know that the assembled religious men of your dominions will be unable to contend with her in a theological argument.' Haroon exclaimed in anger, 'Will you consent, if your slave should lose the victory, that I shall strike off your head, and take her for nothing?' 'What will you do,' said the man, 'if she is not defeated?' 'I will not only,' said the caliph, 'give you a hundred thousand dinars, but your slave back again.' The mer-

^b The Sheahs always speak of Haroon-oor-Rasheed as a tyrant, from his persecution of the sect of Ali.

^c The celebrated Jaffier Bermekee, for seventeen years the favorite vizier of Haroon-oor-Rasheed.

chant hesitated : ‘ Allow me,’ said he, ‘ a little time, that I may again see Hussunneah ?’ Haroon consented : he went and spoke to his slave, who requested him not to hesitate a moment ; for, through the aid of the holy prophet, she firmly hoped to triumph over her opponents. The merchant returned to Haroon, and agreed to his terms : the caliph immediately sent for Hussunneah, and asked her what faith she professed ? ‘ I profess the faith of the prophet and his descendants,’ said she, ‘ thanks be to God !’ Haroon next asked whom she considered the proper successor of the prophet ? Hussunneah replied, ‘ O Haroon, assemble thy learned men, and then I will state all I can ; and if any object to my faith, he will speak and I shall answer him.’ Haroon understood from this that she was an adherent of the family^d, in modern phrase, a Sheah. He immediately called his minister, Bermekee, and said, ‘ This slave is not of our faith ; let her be put to death.’ The minister replied, ‘ O Commander of the Faithful ! she has undertaken a great task, and one in which she will probably fail. The moment of her discomfiture will be the proper one for her execution : but if she succeed in confuting the holy and wise men of the empire, it would be wrong to put such a person to death ; on the contrary, she will merit favour and notice.’ Haroon was satisfied, and ordered all the learned men^e in his kingdom to be assembled. About four hundred obeyed his summons ; among whom Ibrahim Nizam of Bussorah was deemed the first in sanctity and in knowledge. He had composed many works on theology, and a hundred volumes of his writing had been

^d The title of Ahely Bayt, or “ adherents of the holy family of the prophet,” is one of which the Sheahs are very proud. They deem it a distinction between them and those Mahomedans who have neglected, injured, and persecuted his descendants.

^e In the Persian MS. they are termed moollahs, which may be translated “ learned men.” Shaffei is described as one of the chief of those at Bagdad, and his fame appears grounded on a victory he had obtained in a public disputation over Abou Yûsuf Razei.

dispersed over Syria and Egypt. When this distinguished personage arrived at the capital, the principal inhabitants and nobles were directed to pay their respects to him ; and when the assembly met, he was placed in a golden chair, as a mark of his pre-eminence and of the favour he enjoyed. As soon as the caliph was seated, Hussunneah was called. She came veiled, attended by some women ; after paying her respects to Haroon-oor-Rasheed, and wishing him prosperity and health, she proceeded, without waiting to have her place pointed out, to a seat on a level with that of Ibrahim Nizam, who looked quite magnificent in his golden chair.

“ Haroon made a signal for Hussunneah to commence the disputation. She comprehended him, turned to Ibrahim Nizam, and said, ‘ Thou art the man who hast spread a hundred volumes of thy works among mankind, and who considerest thyself heir to the knowledge of the holy prophet, on whom be the blessing of God !’ Ibrahim Nizam replied in a rage, ‘ Dost thou begin to treat me with contempt ? But what business can I have to argue with a female slave ? Indeed, it is clear my doing so will bring ridicule on my holy profession.’ ‘ It will be more honourable to your character and to your profession,’ said the Vizier Bermekee, ‘ to object to the reasoning of Hussunneah than to her sex. It is a maxim among disputants, that words are to be attended to, not persons.’ Encouraged by this, Hussunneah said, ‘ O Ibrahim ! by the grace of God I shall bring thee to the ground with disgrace from that golden chair in which thou art seated !’ and she began to put questions to him : but Ibrahim stopped her, and said, ‘ I have come from a distance, and therefore have the first right of interrogation.’ ‘ Very well,’ said Hussunneah, ‘ take the advantage you desire ; question me.’ The learned man commenced, and received the most eloquent answers to seventy questions that he put to Hussunneah. It is not necessary to say more, than that she replied to them all in the most prompt and convincing manner, and that Haroon-

oor-Rasheed and his whole court were filled with admiration at her extraordinary talents and genius. Hussunneah, observing the impression she had made, said, 'O Ibrahim! this mode of proceeding is very tedious, I fear the caliph will become weary; allow me now to interrogate you.' Ibrahim replied, 'I have yet three more questions to ask; if you answer them, I shall be satisfied.' 'Ask them,' replied the lady. 'Well, Hussunneah,' said he, 'declare who you think should have succeeded the holy prophet.' 'The person,' she replied, 'who was oldest in the faith.' 'Who was the oldest in the faith?' said the moollah. She answered, 'Ali, who was the son-in-law, cousin, and adopted brother of the holy prophet.' The brow of Haroon was clouded with a frown. Ibrahim saw this, and became bolder. 'Tell me,' said he, 'on what ground thou considerest Ali the oldest in faith. I say that Aboobeker was forty years of age when he embraced the religion of our prophet, at which time Ali was a boy; and the belief or unbelief, the obedience or disobedience of a child is of little consequence.' Hussunneah instantly exclaimed, 'If I prove to you that the faith and obedience, or want of belief and disobedience of a boy have consequence, and that a child, as you term him, is amenable to divine reward or punishment, wilt thou confess the faith of Ali in his boyhood?' Ibrahim replied, 'If thou dost so by sound and convincing argument, I will confess it.' 'Well,' said Hussunneah, 'what say you about the boy that Elias^f put to death, as

^f The text of the Koran calls the person who travelled with Moses Ool-Kadr, a saint, who is believed by Mahomedans to be the same as Elias; though some have confounded him with Phineas, and others with St. George. It is supposed by all commentators that Ool-Kadr is the saint to whom Mahomed alludes in the account of the adventures of Moses, in the eighteenth chapter of the Koran; a tale which will excite more curiosity in an English reader, from being obviously that on which the beautiful story of Parnell's Hermit is founded. "And coming to the rock," the Koran states, "they (Moses and his servant Joshua, the son of Nun) found one of our servants, unto whom we had granted mercy from us, and whom we had taught wisdom from before us. And Moses said unto him, 'Shall I

stated in the story of that prophet and of Moses, handed down to us in the holy Koran? What do you say to the answer which Elias gave to Moses, when interrogated on the murder of the child? 'As to the boy,' said he, 'his

follow thee, that thou mayest teach me part of that which thou hast been taught, for a direction unto me?' He answered, 'Verily thou canst not bear with me; for how canst thou patiently suffer those things, the knowledge whereof thou dost not comprehend?' Moses replied, 'Thou shalt find me patient, if God please; neither will I be disobedient unto thee in any thing.' He said, 'If thou follow me, therefore, ask me not concerning any thing, until I shall declare the meaning thereof unto thee.' So they both went on by the sea-shore, until they went up into a ship; and he made a hole therein. And Moses said unto him, 'Hast thou made a hole therein that thou mightest drown those who are on board? Now hast thou done a strange thing.' He answered, 'Did I not tell thee that thou couldest not bear with me?' Moses said, 'Rebuke me not, because I did forget; and impose not on me a difficulty in what I am commanded.' Wherefore they left the ship, and proceeded until they met with a youth, and he slew him. Moses said, 'Hast thou slain an innocent person, without his having killed another? Now hast thou committed an unjust action.' He answered, 'Did I not tell thee that thou couldest not bear with me?' Moses said, 'If I ask thee concerning anything hereafter, suffer me not to accompany thee: now hast thou received an excuse for me.' They went forward, therefore, until they came to the inhabitants of a certain city, and they asked food of the inhabitants thereof; but they refused to receive them. And they found therein a wall, which was ready to fall down; and he set it upright. Whereupon Moses said unto him, 'If thou wouldest, thou mightest doubtless have received a reward for it.' He answered, 'This shall be a separation between me and thee: but I will first declare unto thee the signification of that which thou couldest not bear with patience. The vessel belonged to certain poor men who did their business in the sea: and I was minded to render it unserviceable, because there was a king behind them who took every sound vessel by force. As to the youth, his parents were true believers, and we feared lest he, being an unbeliever, should oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude: wherefore we desired that their Lord might give them a more righteous child in exchange for him, and one more affectionate towards them. And the wall belonged to two orphan youths in the city, and under it was a treasure hidden which belonged to them; and their father was a righteous man: and thy Lord was pleased that they should attain their full age, and take forth their treasure, through the mercy of thy Lord. And I did not what thou hast seen of mine own will, but by God's direction. This is the interpretation of that which thou couldest not bear with patience.'—*SALE'S Koran*, vol. ii. pp. 117, 118, 119.

parents were believers, and we feared, lest he, being an unbeliever, should oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude.' Now tell me, Ibrahim, was it proper to put this boy to death, or was Elias unjust? If Elias was unjust, is it not strange that he should be praised by the Almighty, and his praises be written in the Koran?' Ibrahim was at a loss how to answer. 'I abandon this point,' said he: 'but what do you say concerning Ali, and Abbas, his uncle; they disputed about the right of inheritance to the prophet; each asserted he had the right, and they carried their complaints to Aboubeker. When two persons go to a judge, one must be right and one wrong?' The design of Ibrahim in putting this question, was to oblige Hussunneah either to offend the caliph and hazard her life, by declaring Abbas (who was the immediate ancestor^s of Haroon-oor-Rasheed) in the wrong; or, should fear lead her to pronounce Ali wrong, to make her give up the whole argument, and abandon her creed. Hussunneah replied, 'I must answer thy question, Ibrahim, from the holy Koran.'—'Let us hear it,' said the learned man. 'God,' said Hussunneah, 'has told us through the prophet, that the angels Michael and Gabriel carried a dispute before David, in order to expose more strongly his crime in taking the wife of his poor subject Uriah. Now tell me, Ibrahim, which of these two disputing angels was in the wrong, and which in the right?' 'Both,' said Ibrahim, 'were in the right; it was to correct and punish David that they went before him with their dispute.' 'Thank God for this admission,' said Hussunneah: 'in like manner, both Moortezza Ali and Abbas were in the right; and it was to correct the crime of Aboobeker that they went before him. Abbas said, 'The right of inheritance is mine, because I am the uncle of the prophet.' Ali said, 'It belongs to me, as his

^s Abbas was the uncle of Mahomed. His grandson was promoted to the caliphate; and the house of Abbas enjoyed power for several centuries. Haroon was the fifth caliph of his family.

cousin, son-in-law, adopted brother, and heir; and his daughter is now in my house, and Hoosseïn and Hussun (who are the lords of the Syuds and the sacred inheritors of paradise) are my children: I am indeed identified with the prophet.' When^h Aboobeker heard all this, he said: 'God knows whose claim is just; but I have myself heard the prophet say, 'Ali is my heir', and the lord of my religion.' When Abbas heard this from the mouth of Aboobeker, he was enraged, and said, 'O Aboobeker, if thou hast heard this speech from the holy prophet, how comes it that thou sittest where thou art, as caliph, to the injury of Ali's right, as declared by thyself?' Aboobeker now perceived that both parties had come to expose his guilt. 'You are come,' he observed, 'to quarrel with me, not to appeal to my decision:' and having said this, he immediately left the assembly.' When Ibrahim heard this reply from Hussunneah, he said, that he also gave up this point: 'But tell me, he added, 'which you consider the most excellent, Ali, or his uncle Abbas?' 'Tell me,' said Hussunneah, quickly, 'which you deem most excellent, Humzâ or his nephew Mahomed? Why do you puzzle yourself so much with Ali and Abbas? If Ali was the most excellent, it was the glory of Abbas to have such a nephew; and if Abbas was superior, it must add to the honour of Ali to have such an uncle.' Haroon, who had marked with wonder the ingenuity and ability of Hussunneah, turned to Ibrahim Nizam, and said, 'I pity thy knowledge.'

"Hussunneah having answered all the questions which had been put to her, required permission to ask one of her holy and learned antagonist; 'and if he can reply to it in a satisfactory manner,' she added, 'I confess myself conquered. Tell me, Ibrahim, when the prophet left this earth, did he nominate an heir, or did he not?' Ibrahim

^h The Sheah author adds a curse to the name of the first caliph.

ⁱ By another reading of this term in the MS., it is "payer of my debts," which is synonymous with heir, as it describes one of the first and most sacred duties of a legal inheritor.

said, 'He did not.'—'Was this omission,' said she, 'an error, or was it right? and was the election of caliph an error, or was it right in those by whom it was made? To which do you ascribe the error, Ibrahim; to the prophet or to the caliphs?' Ibrahim gave no answer: he could not say the prophet had committed an error, without injury to the faith; and if he admitted the caliph had been in the wrong, he gave up the point in dispute. He had also a dread of Haroon, and was silent. His distress for an answer was evident to all; a smile was to be seen on every face in the assembly; and the wise man of Bussorah was reproached with being defeated by a woman."

The work from which this has been translated, gives a series of disputations about dogmas on which the Sheahs and Soonees entertain opposite sentiments: in all the victory is given to Hussunneah; and it is added that Haroon-oor-Rasheed, convinced by her arguments, desisted from his persecution of the Syuds; that he also gave her a hundred thousand pieces of gold, according to the terms fixed, and directed her to return to her master, on whom he bestowed a dress of honour. However, he secretly advised this heroine of the Sheah faith to quit Bagdad, lest some misfortune should happen to her. The lady left the assembly in triumph: besides the presents she received from Haroon, many were bestowed on her by princes of the blood and other great persons. Ibrahim Nizam came down from his golden chair quite ashamed, and retired with Aboo Yusuph, Shaffei, and some other enemies of the Sheahs: the people laughed at them; and a cousin of Haroon was particularly witty at their expense. But notwithstanding this approbation, Hussunneah and the merchant, fearing the consequences of her victory, departed, as the caliph had advised, and took up their abode at Medinah.

The Persian author of this work says, that when he was returning from Mecca he stopped at Damascus, and obtained from a Syud of Syria the Arabic manuscript which he has translated. The probability is, that the book was first

written in Persian; and it is ascribed to Shaikh Abool Fut-toyah of Rhe, a very eminent and zealous Sheah divine.

According to the doctrine of the Sheahs, a man, under circumstances of danger, may not only conceal his faith, but make a temporary profession of opposite sentiments. This unmanly tenet was originally forced on this sect by the oppressed and persecuted state in which they so long remained; and the pride of the Persians has brooked its continuance, rather than abandon the pilgrimage to Mecca: for they cannot perform it without testifying a respect for the memory of the first caliphs, as they visit their tombs^{*}; and such an act is contrary to their belief. The strictness with which the Soonee possessors of Mecca enforce these concessions has greatly diminished the number of pilgrims from Persia; the mass of the population being satisfied with a pilgrimage to the sepulchre of Ali and his sons Houssein and Hussun, whose remains are deposited at Nujuff and Kerbelah, in the province of Bagdad; or to that of the Imâm Rezâ at Meshed in Khorassan. The sepulchres of these Sheah saints have been enriched with the most magnificent presents by pious devotees: monarchs have emulated each other in adding to their revenue, and increasing the splendour of their appearance. In the worship at these shrines, as at Mecca, many ceremonies have been introduced, bordering on a superstition remote from that pure Deism on which the Mahomedan religion is professedly grounded. But the followers of the prophet have relaxed from the primitive principles of their religion, and have granted a kind of adoration not only to him and his immediate descendants, but to a number of

^{*} It is not a duty of the Sheahs to curse the first caliphs; but this reserve is more from prudence than feeling. When they hear any one execrate them, they never pass a heavier censure than to blame his indiscreet zeal. Omar is the particular object of their hatred. This probably proceeds from his great character. I was one day conversing with a very sensible and moderate Persian on the history of Omar, and praising him as the greatest of the caliphs. He assented to all the facts I stated, but said, *Een hummâh râst est laikher aukher sag-bood*; "This is all true, but he was a dog after all."

learned or pious men, who have been canonized as saints. The gratitude and veneration which the conduct of individuals¹ first created, has grown, by excessive indulgence and the passions excited by contrary opinions, into sacred reverence and devotion. Their very garments have become relics^m of inestimable value; and in the course of time the same properties have been assigned to them as are supposed to have belonged to their possessors. From this common progress of superstition hardly one of the numerous sects into which the Mahomedan religion is divided can be deemed exemptⁿ. The Sheahs not only pay this devotion

¹ The inordinate veneration paid to the early martyrs and confessors by their pious contemporaries, was the cause of many evils in the Christian church.

^m There are relics at almost every shrine, particularly at that of Ali at Nujuff.

ⁿ The modern sect of Wáhâbee pretend that they are an exception. This sect was founded near a century ago by an Arab named Shaikh Mahomed, the son of Abd-ool Wáhâb, whose name they have taken. Shaikh Mahomed connected himself, in an attempt to reform the religion of his country, with Ebn-Saoud, the Prince of Dereah, the capital of the province of Nujud. Through the efforts of the saint, and the temporal power of Ebn-Saoud, and his son and successor, Abd-ool Azeez, the religion of the Wáhâbees is now established over the peninsula of Arabia. Their tenets are peculiar. They profess that there is one God, and that Mahomed is his prophet; but as the Supreme Being neither has nor can have any participator in his power, they say it is blasphemy to hold that Mahomed, the Imâms, or any saints, have any superintendence over the affairs of men, or will render them any aid hereafter. They deem Mahomedans infidels who deviate in any way from the plain, literal meaning of the Koran, and maintain, that to make war on all such is the duty of every Wáhâbee. It is one of these tenets, that all titles showing respect and honour to men are odious to God, who alone is worthy of high name: and they assert, that in conformity to what is revealed in the Koran; true Mahomedans should wage continual war against unbelievers, till they are converted, or agree to pay the tribute imposed on infidels; and that in the latter case they should be compelled to wear the coarsest garments, not be allowed to ride on horses, nor to live in splendid dwellings. They maintain, that the taxes (including zukaat and khums) levied by Mahomed are alone lawful: that swearing by Mahomed or Ali, or any person, should be prohibited, since an oath is calling a witness to our secret thoughts, which no one can know but God. They deem it a species of idolatry to erect magnificent tombs; but to kiss relics, &c. is idolatry itself: and they therefore affirm, that it is an action acceptable to God to

at the principal shrines that have been mentioned, but have an immense number of inferior saints and martyrs, at whose tombs they offer up their prayers. Every village in Persia can boast of some shaikh or holy person, whose character has obtained him a local reputation, and rendered his shrine sacred among the few acquainted with his name.

The Sheahs observe the same feasts as the Soonees; but the former have set aside the ten first days of the month Mohurum to mourn over the cruel fate of Hoossein and Hussun, the sons of Ali. On the last days of this feast they beat their breasts with violence, and, calling on the names of the two martyrs, pour curses on their enemies. It is during this ceremony that the lower order of the Sheahs give offence to the Soonees, by publicly cursing the three first caliphs, and particularly Omar. The Sheahs also observe a feast^o on the day on which, according to their traditions, Mahomed named Ali his successor; an occurrence which the Soonees deny.

It has been before stated, that the Persians refuse their

destroy the tombs of Mahomedan saints in Arabia and Persia, and to appropriate their rich ornaments to worldly purposes, for which they were designed. They say, that it is wicked to mourn for the dead; for if they were good Mahomedans their souls are in paradise, at which their friends should rejoice. The Wáhábées reject the traditions, limiting their belief to the Koran, which, they say, was sent from heaven to Mahomed, who was an excellent man, and much beloved by God. They continue to preserve the usages of circumcision, ablution, &c., which they found established, but consider them more as matters of practice and usage than of faith. The leading principle of this sect is their right to destroy and plunder all who differ from them; and those Mahomedans who do not adopt their creed, are represented as far less entitled to mercy than either Jews or Christians. Their progress was so great about ten years ago, as to excite considerable alarm in the Turkish government. Among other places, they plundered the rich tombs of Ali and his sons at Nujuff and Kerbelah. Their inroads are always dreadful, for they spare none who do not conform to their opinions; but they have lately met with some severe checks, and appear to be declining.

^o The Persians also observe the 20th of Seffer, to commemorate the burial of the Imám Hoossein's head at Kerbelah. It had been cut off when he was slain, and carried to Moáveah at Damascus; but was brought back to Kerbelah, and buried, forty days after his death.

assent to many of the traditions admitted by the Soonees; the latter also reject many which their opponents deem authentic, as these traditions not only relate to the faith, but to the form of prayer, and the usages and laws of those who believe in them. There are several points of practice, both in religious worship and civil usages, in which these sects differ widely. They neither agree in the manner of performing their ablutions, nor in the mode of holding their hands at prayer. They also differ in the law of divorce: and the Persians admit a legal concubinage, by which the parties are united for a limited period; a practice deemed by the Soonees a great profanation of the divine law. It would, however, be endless to describe the minute differences between the two sects. All that are essential have been noticed; and more is not necessary to convey a full idea of their opposite and irreconcilable nature.

The establishment of the Sheah faith as the national religion of Persia, gave to a country, in which patriotism was unknown, a principle of union, of equal, if not greater force. The Persians, however, are not so violent at present as they once were in their religious prejudices^p: they deem their Soonee neighbours lost in error, but do not term them infidels. "They are believers^q," they say, "because they recognize the holy mission of Mahomed, and worship God; but they have forfeited their claim to be denominated faithful^r, by adopting those who refused allegiance and acted with cruelty toward the nephew, the daughter, and the lineal descendants, of the holy prophet." The Soonees are not so charitable; though some of their ablest divines^s have de-

^p This change is not to be ascribed, as has been supposed, to the progress of civilization, but to the decrease of that fervor which attended the first introduction of the Sheah faith.

^q The term Moslem signifies believer.

^r Moumeen signifies faithful.

^s According to a writer before quoted, Ool Ghazali, Shaikh Asháree, and several other celebrated Soonee doctors of law, have declared that the Sheahs should not be considered as infidels.—*MS. Letter of MOOLLAH MAHOMED.*

clared that the Sheahs, though deluded, were still Mahomedans, almost all Soonee monarchs have been led by a mixture of religious and political motives, to treat them as a race of heretics worse than infidels; and, on this ground, the most pious of the rulers of Bokhara¹ have considered themselves entitled to make slaves of their Sheah prisoners; an act that would be impious, if these were deemed Mahomedans. The blasphemous tenets of the sect of Ali-alah-yahs², or those who deem Ali a divinity³, have been attributed by their enemies to the Sheahs; but the latter entertain a just abhorrence for the principles of this sect, whose numbers are not great, and who endeavour to conceal their usages (some of which are said to be of an obscene nature) under a veil of mystery.

In a chapter on the religion of Persia, it is impossible to pass over the Soofees. That extraordinary class of devotees has been before noticed; but they claim a fuller description. We discover from Mahomedan authors, that these enthusiasts were co-existent with their religion. Their rapturous zeal perhaps aided in no slight degree its first establishment; but they have since been considered among its most dangerous enemies. There can be no doubt that their free opinions on its dogmas, their contempt for its

¹ It has been before shown, that the bigoted Beggee Jân, ruler of Bokhara, did not hesitate to make his Sheah captives slaves; and he is reproached by Aga Mahomed Khan with allowing true believers to be sold like beasts in the market-place of his capital. The savage Turkuman tribes follow the example of this prince, but from other motives than those of religion. I one day asked a man of these tribes on what ground they made their Persian captives slaves? "Because," said he, "they are heretic Sheahs." "But suppose," I added, "those whom you took were Soonees." "Then," replied he very coolly, "we must turn Sheahs, for slaves we must have."

² For a description of this sect, see Mr. H. T. Colebrooke's Paper on the Origin and peculiar Tenets of certain Mahomedan Sects.—*Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 339.

³ The accurate and learned Sale, in his Preliminary Discourse, has partly fallen into this error, and unjustly charges the Sheahs with considering Ali as equal, if not superior, to Mahomed.

forms, and their claim to an immediate communion with the Deity, are all calculated to subvert that belief for which they outwardly profess their respect; their progress has consequently been deemed as synonymous with that of infidelity. There is no country over which the tenets of the Soofees have, at different periods, been more widely diffused than over Persia. The great reputation acquired by one of their priests, enabled his descendants to occupy the throne for more than two centuries⁷; but the Seffavean monarchs were too sensible of the aid which their power derived from an established and understood religion, to indulge in the visionary dreams of their pious ancestors. Their country, however, continued to abound with persons believing the tenets which these had taught; and the increase of their numbers has of late years been so great in Persia, that the Mahomedan divines have called on the reigning king to defend the true faith from the attacks of several popular teachers, who, from the sanctity of their lives, and the delusive character of their doctrines, had acquired an alarming popularity. The monarch has adopted the most rigorous proceedings; and his severity has for the moment repressed a flame, which it would appear more calculated to increase than to extinguish.

It would be vain to attempt giving a full history of the Soofee doctrine; traces of which exist, in some shape or other, in every region of the world. It is to be found in the most splendid theories of the ancient schools of Greece, and of the modern philosophers of Europe. It is the dream of the most ignorant, and of the most learned; and is seen at one time indulging in the shade of ease, at another traversing the pathless desert. Every where it professes to be adverse to error and superstition, but exists by the active propagation of both. The wild and varied doctrines of their teachers are offered to the disciples, in place of the forms

⁷ Ismael the First ascended the throne in A.D. 1500, and his family was subverted by Nâdir Shah, A.D. 1736.

and usages of their religion. They are invited to embark on the sea of doubt, under the guidance of a sacred teacher, whom they are required to deem superior to all other mortals, and worthy of a holy confidence bordering on adoration. It is in India, beyond all other climes, that this delusive and visionary doctrine has flourished. There is in the habits^a of the Hindus, and in the character of their religion, much which cherishes a mysterious spirit of holy abstraction; and we may approve of the conjecture, that India is the source whence other nations have derived the mystic worship of the divinity.

The general name which the Persian followers of this sect have adopted, is Soofee^a; a term implying pure: by this all who adopt this creed are known, from the revered teacher, who is followed by thousands of disciples, to the humblest dervesh or fakeer, who travels about naked, begging alms to support him in a life of prayer voluntarily adopted^b.

^a The same remark is applied by our ecclesiastical writers to Egypt; to which country they trace the mystic, the hermit, and the monk. These writers speak of the propensity to an austere life as a disease in Syria and Egypt.

^a The Arabic term Soofee, which means "wise, pious," and is metaphorically used to denote a religious man, is supposed to be derived from *Saaf*, "pure, clean;" or *Suffû*, which signifies "purity." Some have traced it to *Soof*, "wool," or "wool-bearing," in allusion to the coarse woollen garments usually worn by its teachers. These terms, however, are all from the Arabic, and the accounts we have of the Soofees are comparatively modern, being all subsequent to the conquest of Persia by the Caliph Omar. It is not very unlikely, therefore, that the name has been originally adopted from the Greek Σοφοι (Sophoi), wise men.

^b A life of mendicity, which many adopt from motives of piety, is assumed by others whose fortunes are desperate, as a means of livelihood. It is related, that a man came to Mahomed, and exclaimed, "O prophet! I am poor!"—"Poverty is my glory," replied Mahomed. Another person came afterwards, and used exactly the same phrase: but Mahomed answered him, "Poverty causes men to blush in both worlds. You wonder," the prophet then said to his companions, "at the apparent inconsistency of my answers to two men seemingly of the same condition: but the first of these men is virtuous, and has abandoned the world from principle; the second fellow has no such merit; the world has abandoned him."—*Mujatis-ool-Moumenan*.

The Soofees represent themselves as devoted to the search of truth, and incessantly occupied in adoring the Almighty, an union with whom they desire with all the fervour of divine love. The Creator, according to their belief, is diffused over all his creation^c. He exists every where, and in every thing. They compare the emanations of his essence or spirit to the rays of the sun; which, they conceive, are continually darted forth and reabsorbed. It is for this reabsorption into the divine essence, to which their immortal part belongs, that they continually sigh. They believe that the soul of man, and the principle of life which exists throughout all nature, are not from God, but of God; hence those doctrines which their adversaries have held to be the most profane, as establishing an equality of nature between the created and the Creator.

The Soofee doctrine teaches that there are four stages through which man must pass, before he can reach the highest, or that of divine beatitude; when, to use their own language, "his corporeal veil"^d will be removed, and his emancipated soul will mix again with the glorious essence from which it had been separated, but not divided." The first of these stages is that of humanity^e, which supposes the disciple to live in an obedience to the holy law^f, and an

^c It is difficult to understand what the Soofees state as their opinion concerning matter. Some of them term the world *alum kheal*, i. e. "a world of delusion;" by which it is implied, that we are constantly, with regard to all *maddah*, or "matter," under an illusion of our senses, and that it exists only from the light of God, or the animating principle which enables us to see it and makes it visible; otherwise it is in itself nothing. "The creation," they say, "proceeded at once from the splendour of God, who poured his spirit on the universe as the general diffusion of light is poured over the earth by the rising sun; and as the absence of that luminary creates total darkness, so the partial or total absence of the divine splendour or light causes partial or general annihilation." They compare the creation in its relation to the Creator, to those small particles discernible in the rays of the sun, which are gone the moment it ceases to shine.—*Persian MS.*

^d *Purdâh Jasmâneâh*.—*Persian MS.*

^e *Nâsoot*.

^f The *Sherrâh*.

observance of all the rites, customs, and precepts of the established religion; these being admitted to be useful in regulating the lives of the vulgar, and restraining within proper bounds such as cannot reach the heights of divine contemplation, and might be corrupted and misled by that very liberty of faith which enlightens and delights those of superior intellect or more fervent devotion^s. The second stage, in which the disciple attains power or force^b, is termed the road¹, or path; and he who arrives at it, leaves that condition in which he is only admitted to admire and follow a teacher, and enters the pale of Soofeeism. He may now abandon all observance of religious forms and ceremonies, as he exchanges "practical for spiritual worship"^k: but this stage cannot be obtained without great piety, virtue, and fortitude; for the mind cannot be trusted in the neglect of usages and rites, necessary to restrain it when weak, till it hath acquired strength from habits of mental devotion, grounded on a proper knowledge of its own dignity, and of the divine nature. The third stage is that of knowledge¹; and the disciple who arrives at it is deemed to have attained supernatural knowledge; in other words, to be inspired: and he is supposed, when he reaches this state, to be equal to the angels. The fourth and last stage denotes his arrival at truth^m, which implies his complete unionⁿ with the Divinity.

^s I have been greatly aided in this part of my subject by a MS. on the Soofees, delivered by Captain Graham to the Bombay Literary Society. There cannot be higher authority than this gentleman, who adds to great learning a singular knowledge of the opinions and usages of these remarkable oriental devotees.

^b Jubroot.

¹ Turrekât.

^k The term used to express practical worship is Jushmânee Amul, "the acts of the body." Spiritual worship is styled Roohânee Amul, "the acts of the soul."

¹ The Arabic term is Aruf, which signifies "having attained knowledge; scientific."

^m Hucceekât.

ⁿ This junction is termed Wâsil, "joined, united."

The Soofees are divided into innumerable sects, as must be the case in a doctrine which may be termed the belief of the imagination. By enumerating a few of the most remarkable, the character of the whole will be understood : for though they differ in name and some minor usages, they all agree in the principal tenets ; particularly in those which inculcate the absolute necessity of a blind submission to inspired teachers, and the possibility, through fervent piety and enthusiastic devotion, of attaining for the soul, even when the body inhabits the earth, a state of celestial beatitude.

Authors are divided, whether there were two or seven original sects among the Soofees : but a very learned writer^o, whose bigotry made him direct all his ability to explain and confute their doctrines, after enumerating the seven^p supposed to be original, states his opinion, that but two are entitled to that distinction. These are called the Hulooleâh, or “ the inspired,” and the Itâhedeâh, or “ the unionists.” He deems the other five sects only branches from these two. The principle maintained by the Hulooleâh, or “ the inspired,” is, that God has entered or descended into them ; and that the Divine Spirit enters into all who are devout and

^o Aga Mahomed Ali, the late Mooshtahed, or high priest of Kermanshah. I was well acquainted with this learned Persian, who, when I was in Persia, in 1800, enjoyed the highest respect and confidence of the king. He was a man of considerable information ; and there was nothing in his appearance or manners to indicate that violence and relentless zeal with which he some years afterwards persecuted the Soofees.

^p Aga Mahomed Ali observes, that “ the Soofees are divided into a great number of sects. Some affirm, that only four are original ; the others being no more than branches from them. The first of these is the Hulooleâh, or ‘ the inspired by the Divinity.’ The second is the Itâhedeâh, or ‘ the unionists.’ The third is the Wâsâleâh, or ‘ the joined.’ The fourth is Ashakeâh, or ‘ the lovers.’ Some add two more. The fifth they term the Tulkeneâh, or ‘ the learned,’ or ‘ the teachers ;’ and the sixth are the Zeerukeâh, or ‘ the penetrating.’ Others have mentioned a seventh sect, whom they call Wâhdatteâh, or, ‘ the solitudinarians.’” He concludes by stating his belief, that there are only two original sects of Soofees, and that all the others are derivatives.

have an intelligent mind. The Itâhedeâh, or "unionists," believe that God is as one with every enlightened being^q. They compare the Almighty to flame, and their souls to charcoal; and say, that as charcoal when it meets flame becomes flame, their immortal part, from its union with God, becomes God. It has been affirmed, the learned author states^r, that these two sects, now deemed original, are derived from a sect called Hermâneâh, who borrowed their tenets from the Sâbetteâh, or "ancient Sabians." "Impious men," he observes, "desiring to conceal from themselves the great error into which they had fallen, have tried to connect the doctrines of these sects with that of the twelve holy Imâms, to which they have not the slightest affinity: but the principal tenets of the Hulooleâh certainly approach the creed of the Nazarenes, who believe that the Spirit of God entered into the womb of the Virgin Mary; whence the doctrine of the divine nature of their prophet, Jesus."

The Wâhdatteâh^s, or "the solitudinarians^t," whom this author terms a branch of the Itâhedeâh^u, are considered by many other writers one of the original sects of Soofees. They believe that God is in every thing, and every thing is God. This class of Soofees are deemed followers of the ancient philosophers of Greece, particularly of Plato, who, they assert, has said, "that the God of the world has

^q Aga Mahomed Ali's Letter.

^r "This is affirmed," Aga Mahomed Ali says, "by the author of the *Beân-ood-deen*, or 'expounder of religions.'"

^s In a work written by the late Shânâvâz Khan of Delhi, I find a very full account of the first peers or saints of the Soofees. He mentions Abdool *Wâhid*, the son of Zyd, as the founder of a great sect; and it is not improbable that the sect of *Wâhdatteâh* derive their name from him.

^t The Arabic term *Wahid*, from which this name is derived, also means singular, incomprehensible.

^u Aga Mahomed Ali states, that "this sect were not known in the time of the celebrated Soofee teachers, Bayezed and Helâj:" but his comment to prove this only shows, that the tenets they now openly declare were then held in secret, and were deemed mysteries; for he states, that "Helâj, when he declared himself a god, was not blamed by them for being blasphemous, but for being a revealer of secrets."

created all things with his own breath², and that every thing, therefore, is both the Creator and the created." The tenets of the Wâdhatteâh are very prevalent among the modern Soofees; and many sects deem themselves branches of this stock. The author, hitherto followed, enumerates twenty³ that follow the Wâdhatteâh, each of which has

² The Persian word for breath is *nufs*: as applied to man, it is deemed the human part of animation, and is quite distinct from Rooh, "the soul, or the immortal part."

³ These are,

1st. The Dheri, or "the eternal," who are described in the text.

2d. The Wâsâlêâh, or "those who have mixed or joined with God."

3d. The Hubbeebeâh, or "the friends," who, from having attained the friendship of God, claim exemption from all the forms observed by other men.

4th. The Wulleêâh, or "the holy favorites, who are described in the text."

5th. The Mushârukeâh, (also called Afzuleâh,) or "the companions."

6th. The Shemrâkeâh, which means in one sense, "liberal," in another, "a cluster of dates." They are supposed to be derived from the Khârijâh, or "the separatists." This sect are accused of being great sensualists.

7th. The Mâhâbeâh, or "the revered." This sect are said to maintain the community of property and of women.

8th. The Mullâmetteah, or "the reproached." Aga Mahomed Ali observes, when speaking of this sect, "Many Soofees maintain the doctrine of necessity, which confounds all virtue and vice: but this sect proceed further, and give a preference to what the world call vice; hence their name of "the reproached." But it is probable that this name is only given to them by their enemies.

9th. The Hâleâh, or "persons in a proper state;" or, as it might be translated, "the good state." This sect maintain, that the clapping of hands, dancing, and singing, to which they are accustomed, are involuntary. They affirm that, when they are in these fits, God comes to them and tells them secrets. "They lay their heads," they say, "in his bosom, and he lays his head on theirs. It is the stirring of the divine nature," they assert, "which leads to their dancing, and to all their extravagant joy."

10th. The Houriâh; so called, because they assert, that, when they dance till they fall down insensible, they enjoy the society of the houries, or nymphs of paradise; and these delightful mistresses, they say, tell them of mysteries.

11th. The Wâkuffeâh, or "the knowing;" so called from asserting that none but themselves know God. Reason, they say, can never lead to that knowledge: it must be attained through the aid of a holy teacher.

some difference in the subordinate parts of their belief and their usages. Among the most remarkable are the Dheri, or "eternals," who believe the world is uncreated and indissoluble; and conceive that a man is taught his duty by a mysterious priesthood, whose numbers and ranks are fixed, and who rise in gradation from the lowest paths to the sublimest height of divine knowledge: the Wulleâh, or "holy favourites," whose teachers claim a share in the attributes of the Almighty, and assert, that they have power to raise the

12th. The Tusleemâh, or "the obedient;" a name given from their profession of a blind and devoted obedience to the commands, whatever they may be, of their teacher. When they are proved faithful, they receive a small chain or string, called the Reshtâh Tusleem, "the string of obedience," from their teacher. Aga Mahomed Ali states, "that the sects of Ursulleâh and Kullundereâh have a usage."

13th. The Tulkeeneâh, or the Nezereâh; that is, "the teachers or the observers." They maintain, that to read any book, except one written by a Soofee, is unlawful: but even from these nothing can be learnt without the aid of a holy teacher: such, however, when initiated, can give the disciple more knowledge in one hour, than a moollah could in seventy years. Faith, they say, is *not created*; which, in one meaning, signifies "*faith is God*." The followers of this sect are generally dressed in khirkâs, of patched garments," and wear a felt cap. They condemn worldly knowledge, and pretend to mysteries, in which they are instructed by a preparatory fast, hardly tasting food, and remaining in complete solitude.

14th. The Kummâleâh, or "the perfect," described in the text.

15th. The Khâmeâh, or "the inspired," described by Aga Mahomed as a sect of Epicureans, who seek nothing but the enjoyment of the present hour, and are said not even to believe in a future state.

16th. The Nooreân, or "the enlightened;" so termed from their professed attachment to Noor, "light, or virtue," and their horror at Nâr, "fire," which is with them the symbol of vice.

17th. The Bâtteneâh, or "the mysterious." This sect, Aga Mahomed states, deem madmen holy, and term them, "the abstracted."

18th. The Joudeâh, or "the thirsty." This sect are accused of delighting in fables and allegories, of wearing silk and embroidered garments, and of indulging in sensual gratification.

19th. The Ashakeâh, or "the lovers." The severe writer, who gives this account of the Soofees, says, that "the Ashakeâh profess themselves ardent lovers of God; but they continually address the fairest part of the creation with a favorite sentence, *that worldly love is the bridge over which, those must pass who seek the joys of divine love.*"

20th. The Jumkhooreâh, or "the collected," are described in the text.

dead or to kill the living; and who, pretending to imitate that God of whom they declare themselves a part, have neither wife nor dwelling. The Mushârukeâh, or "companions," who assert, that they are greater than the prophet, because they hold direct communion with God; the Hâleâh, or those who have reached "the good state," are distinguished by their singing and clapping of hands, and by their falling into occasional trances, in which they pretend to visitations from the Almighty. The Kummâleâh, or "the perfect," reject all worldly occupation, except singing, dancing, and music; or, to use their own words, "those pursuits in which the soul takes delight." "This sect," the author who describes them observes, "even sing their prayers." The Nooreân, or "the enlightened," teach, that men's actions should neither proceed from the fear of punishment nor the hope of reward, but from innate love of virtue and detestation of vice: the twentieth and last branch of the Wâhdatteâh is denominated Jumkhooreâh²; "the collected;" a name given them from their belief in the collected creeds of all the other sects. Their leading doctrine is, that nothing which exists should be rejected; for all things contain a portion of the Divinity. They are accused of being complete optimists: everything is good with them; religion and infidelity; the lawful and unlawful. "Like the Nazarenes," the author who gives this account observes, "they deem dogs and hogs clean animals; and, like them, admit that females may go about unveiled. The greater part of the modern Soofees³ belong to this sect; and they dignify their indiscriminate belief and conduct with the exalted name of divine love."

² Jumkhooreâh, considered as a compound word, may be translated "the collected;" but jumkhood signifies "hollow" (as a reed). If their name has this signification, it must have been given by their enemies.

³ Aga Mahomed Ali states, that "there is another branch called Zerâkeâh, who "have formed a creed, like the Jumkhooreâh, from those of almost all the preceding Soofees."

The Mahomedan Soofees have endeavoured to connect their mystic faith with the doctrine of their prophet, who, they assert, was himself an accomplished Soofee; and they interpret^b many verses in the Koran, and some of his traditional sayings, so as to give themselves the benefit of his great name. The Persian followers of this sect deem Ali, his sons, and all the twelve Imâms, teachers of Soofeism. They state, that Ali deputed his two sons and two other holy men to teach the mysteries of this faith; and from these many of the principal Khâlifâs, or teachers, who have founded sects, derive their title to the sacred mantle^c, which was the symbol of their spiritual power.

^b They quote a tradition of the prophet, from which they state that their four stages to perfection are derived. Mahomed is asserted to have said, "That the law (canonical) is as a vessel; the road or path is as the sea; knowledge of divine things is as the shell; and knowledge of the Divinity is as the pearl: but he who desires to obtain the pearl, must first embark in the vessel."—Captain GRAHAM'S *MS. on the Soofees*.

^c It appears, that though the khirkâ or mantle was in general only transferred to a beloved pupil at the death of his master, some superior saints possessed a power, even while living, to invest others with this sacred and mysterious garment. Shahnâvâz Khan informs us, in his Essay (the Moorut Aftâb Nameh) on this sect, that four persons were empowered by Ali to disseminate the doctrines of the Soofees. These were his two sons, the Imâms Hoossein and Hussun, and two learned men, Hoossein of Bussorah, and Kummyl the son of Zeât. Hoossein of Bussorah was succeeded by Abd-ool Wâhid, the son of Zyd, and Hubbeeb-e-Ajumei, or Hubbeeb of Persia. The following five sects of fakeers, according to this writer, are derived from Abd-ool Wâhid.

1. The Zydeân, who devote themselves to remain in deserts, and never enter towns or villages. They live entirely on vegetables and roots, holding the slaughter of any animal that has life to be unlawful.

2d. The Albâzeân take their name from Albâz, a Khâlifâ or teacher who was invested with the mantle by Abd-ool Wâhid. They affect solitude, and have neither wives nor children. They profess not to solicit alms but to spend freely what comes unsolicited.

3d. The Adhumeân trace their origin to the famous Sultan Ibrahim Adhum, who resigned the royal dignity to become a mendicant. They are always travelling, and are companionless. This sect continually move their lips in devotion.

4th. The Bâhâreeân, from Bâhâree of Bussorah, who derives his mantle

The dignity of Khâlifâ can only be attained by long fasting and prayer, and by complete abstraction from all worldly pursuits. The man must die before the saint can be born. The preparation for the third class of Soofeeism,

through two descents of Sultan Ibrahim Adhûm. This sect are very reserved and practise abstinence.

5th. The Khaujah Isaak. Their Khâlifâ was Khanjah Ulloo of Deenawar, who derives his mantle through two descents from Bâhâree of Bussorah. Their teacher avoided cities. He is said to have been of a very amorous disposition.

According to Shahnâvâz Khan, nine remarkable sects derive their origin from Hubbeeb-e-Ajumees.

1st. The Ajumeesân take their name from their founder. They chiefly dwell in mountains, are very abstemious, and wear no dress but what is barely sufficient to cover their nakedness. This sect attach themselves to animals and birds, with which they form friendships.

2d. The Tyfooreân take their name from Bayezed of Bustâm, one of whose names was Tyfoor-Bayezed. He was one of the most celebrated Soofees of Persia, and derived his mantle from Hubbeeb-e-Ajumees.

3d. The Kirkeeân derive their name from Mâroof of Kirkee, a favored disciple of the Imâm Rezâ, to whom he is said, in another MS., to have been a porter. Some of the most celebrated modern teachers pretend to derive their authority from this saint.

4th. The Sâkettee (this word means a metal-seller; sâket signifies metal) derive their name from Serees Sâket, a disciple of Mâroof.

5th. Junydeân take their name from Shaikh Junyd of Bagdad, a Khâlifâ or teacher of celebrity, who received his mantle from Serees Sâket.

6th. Kazerooneân. This sect has its name from Aboo Isaak, of Kazeroon, who derives his mantle through two descents from Shaikh Junyd.

7th. Tooseeân take their name from Allah-u-deen, of Toos, who after five intermediate gradations or descents, (the term in the original is *Punj-Wâsâtâtâh*.) inherited the mantle of Shaikh Junyd.

8th. Sohrâverdees, who take their name from Aboo Nujub of Sohrâverdee, who through five descents derived his mantle from Hubbeeb-e-Ajumees.

9th. Ferdosiân, who take their name from Nijum-u-deen Ferdosi, the Khâlifâ or teacher of Aboo-Nujub of Sohrâverdee.

The same author gives a long list of other sects derivative from the above; the Khâlifâs or holy teachers of every one have, or pretend to have, a hereditary right to their mantle from some holy saint: among these a sect of fakeers called the Suffaveans trace themselves to Shaikh Suffee-u-deen (the ancestor of the Suffavean Monarchs of Persia) of Ardebil, who, he observes, derived his mantle through some gradations from Shaikh Junyd of Bagdad.

which elevates to the rank and knowledge of angels, requires a long and awful probation. Great numbers perish in their efforts to reach it. The person making the attempt must be a holy mooreed or disciple, who, by devotion and abstraction, has already advanced beyond the necessity of the common usages and forms of religion. He must commence his endeavour to attain a state of higher beatitude by a long fast, which some sects conceive should not be less than forty days. During this fast he remains in solitude, and in a contemplative posture; and receives no sustenance but what is necessary to preserve life. On the patience and fortitude which he displays during this severe test, his character greatly depends: but when the skeleton (for such, after this fast, the disciple always appears) walks forth, he has still many years of trial to endure. He must either wander over deserts, or remain companionless in some frightful solitude, occasionally seeing the Khâlifâ or teacher to whom he is attached; for the chief merit of Soofees, through all their ranks, is devotion to their spiritual leader. When the Khâlifâ dies he bequeaths his patched garment, all his worldly wealth, to the disciple whom he esteems the most worthy to be his successor; and the moment the latter puts on the holy mantle, he is vested with the power of his master.

The Persian Soofees, though they have borrowed much of their belief and many of their usages from India, have not adopted, as a means of attaining beatitude, the dreadful austerities common among the visionary devotees of the Hindoos. Practices so abhorrent to nature required for their support all the influence of ignorance and superstition over the human mind. The most celebrated Soofee teachers in Persia have been men as famed for their knowledge as their devotion. In the list of these, modern Soofees desire to include every name which has obtained pre-eminence in the history of their country, or in the world^d. They claim

^d The Mahomedan Soofees claim the Patriarch Abraham as one of their principal teachers. "That holy man," they say, "turned day into night,

all who by their writings or sayings have shown a spirit of philosophy, or a knowledge of the divine nature, which elevated them above the prejudices of the vulgar. But though many of the wisest and ablest men of Persia have been remarkable for their attachment to the forms and dogmas of the established worship, the Soofees can boast that great numbers eminent for their learning and genius have adopted their opinions. Among these the most distinguished are poets. The progress of improvement is the same in all nations. The first ray of light that illumines a dark and barbarous age, emanates from the poet, whose page long continues to be that which is chiefly, if not solely, admired. The natives of Persia are enthusiastically devoted to poetry: the meanest artisan of the principal cities^e can read or repeat some of the finest passages from their most admired writers; even the rude and unlettered soldier leaves his tent, to listen with rapture to the strain of the minstrel who sings a mystic song of divine love, or recites the tale of a battle of his forefathers. The very essence of Soofeism is poetry. The raptures of genius expatiating on a subject that can never be exhausted, are deemed holy inspirations by those who believe that the emancipated soul can wander at large in the regions of imagination, and even unite with its Creator. The *Musnavi*^f, which teaches, in the sweetest strains, that all nature abounds with a divine^g love, causing even the lowest plant

and night into day, by his constant and undivided adoration of the most high God."—*Persian MS.*

^e I was struck with this during my residence in Persia. Several of my servants were well acquainted with the poetry of their country; and when I was at Isfahan in 1800, I was surprised to hear a common tailor, at work repairing one of my tents, entertain his companions with repeating some of the finest mystical odes of Hâfiz.

^f This celebrated work was written by Shaikh Jellal-ood-deen, usually called the Moollah of Room.

^g Sir William Jones has translated a passage from the *Musnavi*, which will fully illustrate this observation: "Hear

to seek the sublime object of its desire; the works of the celebrated Jâmi, which breathe in every line the most ecstatic raptures; the book of moral lessons of the eloquent Sadi, and the lyric and mystic odes of Hâfiz, may be termed the scriptures of the Soofees^b of Persia. To them

“ Hear how yon reed, in sadly-pleasing tales,
 Departed bliss and present wo bewails !
 With me, from native banks untimely torn,
 Love-warbling youths and soft-ey’d virgins mourn.
 O ! let the heart by fatal absence rent,
 Feel what I sing, and bleed when I lament :
 Who roams in exile from his parent bow’r,
 Pants to return, and chides each ling’ring hour.
 My notes, in circles of the grave and gay,
 Have hail’d the rising, cheer’d the closing day :
 Each in my fond affections claim’d a part,
 But none discern’d the secret of my heart.
 What though my strains and sorrows slow combin’d !
 Yet ears are slow, and carnal eyes are blind.
 Free through each mortal form the spirits roll,
 But sighs avail not. Can we see the soul ?

Such notes breath’d gently from yon vocal frame :
 Breath’d, said I ? no ; ’twas all enliv’ning flame.
 ’Tis love, that fills the reed with warmth divine ;
 ’Tis love, that sparkles in the racy wine.
 Me, plaintive wand’rer from my peerless maid,
 The reed has fir’d, and all my soul betray’d.
 He gives the bane, and he with balsam cures ;
 Afflicts, yet soothes ; impassions, yet allures.

Hail, heav’nly love ! true source of endless gains !
 Thy balm restores me ; and thy skill sustains.
 Oh, more than Galen learn’d, than Plato wise !
 My guide, my law, my joy supreme, arise !
 Love warms this frigid clay with mystic fire,
 And dancing mountains leap with young desire.
 Blest is the soul, that swims in seas of love,
 And long the life sustain’d by food above.
 With forms imperfect can perfection dwell ?
 Here pause, my song ; and thou, vain world, farewell.”

Sir WILLIAM JONES'S *Works*, Vol. 1. p. 458.

^b The names of Sâhibi, Oorfee, Rudiki, and many others, might be added.

they continually refer ; and the gravest writers who have defended their doctrine, take their proofs from these and other poets, whom they deem inspired by their holy theme.

The Soofee tenets, as may be supposed from what has been said, are involved in mystery : they commence in doctrines of general piety and virtue, and inculcate forbearance, abstemiousness, and universal benevolence. This is their profession ; but they have secrets and mysteries for every gradation, which are never revealed to the profane. Munsoor Helâj, one of their most eminent spiritual leaders, who, they believe, had attained the fourth or last stage of Soofeism, proclaimed, " I am the truth ;" or, in other words, " I am God ¹." The constant repetition of this impious phrase alarmed the orthodox priests, and he was seized and empaled. An inspired Soofee is said to have demanded of the Almighty why he permitted Munsoor to suffer ? The reply was, " This is the punishment for the revealer of secrets ^k." Among the many fables related of this holy person, one marks the manner in which they desire to reconcile their doctrines with the faith of Mahomed. When Munsoor Helâj was carried to the stake, the executioners could not perform their duty : in vain they endeavoured to seize him ; his body eluded their grasp, and appeared seated in a composed posture in the air at some distance from the stake ^l. While this was occurring on earth, his soul sought the regions of paradise. He was accosted by Mahomed, who admitted that he had arrived at the stage of

ⁱ Many fables have been invented to account for the imprudence of this wise teacher. One of these states, that he observed his sister go out every evening : he followed her ; having seen her communicate with the houries, and receive from these celestial nymphs a cup of nectar, he insisted on drinking one or two drops that remained of this celestial liquor. His sister told him he could not contain it, and that it would cause his death. He persisted ; from the moment that he swallowed it he kept exclaiming, *An-ool-huk !* that is, " I am the truth !" till he was put to death.

^k Persian MS.

^l Captain Graham's MS.

Wâsilâh or "union," and that his saying, he was God, was truth; but he entreated him for the sake of practical religion, which was necessary to keep men within proper limits, to permit himself to be empaled. The soul of the holy man, convinced by what the prophet said, returned to earth to reanimate his body, and endured the death to which he had been sentenced.

The principal fables of the Soofees relate to those of their sect who have suffered martyrdom. Of these one of the most celebrated is Shems Tubreezee, who was sentenced to be flayed alive ^m, on account of his having raised a dead person to life. We are told that, after the law had been put in force, he wandered about, carrying his own skin, and solicited some food to appease his hunger: but he had been excommunicated as well as flayed, and no one would give him the slightest help. After four days he found a dead ox: but he could not obtain fire to dress it. Wearied out with the unkindness of men, he desired the sun to broil his meat. It descended to perform the office; and the world was on the point of being consumed, when the holy Shaikh commanded the flaming orb to resume its station in the heavens ⁿ. The general belief in these monstrous fables as to the divine nature of their spiritual leaders, is a just subject of reproach against the whole body of Soofees. They are also accused by orthodox Mahomedans of having no fixed faith, but of professing a respect they do not feel for religion, that they may smooth the path of those whom they desire to delude; of pretending to revere the prophet and the Imâms, yet conceiving themselves above the forms and usages which these holy personages not only observed, but deemed of divine institution.

Though predestination appears to be inculcated by the Koran, few orthodox Mahomedans give a literal construc-

^m Captain Graham's MS.

ⁿ Ibid.

tion to the words of their prophet on this subject. Indeed they deem it profane to do so, as it would make God the author of man's guilt : but almost all the Soofees are predestinarians. They believe that the principle which emanates from God, can do nothing without his will, and can refrain from nothing that he wills. Some of them deny the existence of evil, because every thing proceeds from God, and therefore must be good. The Soofees of this class exclaim with the poet, "The writer of our destiny is a fair writer, and never wrote that which was bad." While those who admit that there is evil in this world, but contend that man is not a free agent, repeat from Hâfiz, "My destiny has been thrown into a tavern ° by the Almighty. In this case, tell me, O teacher ! where is my crime ?"

The Soofees, we are told by one of their most violent and able enemies, deem every thing in the world a type of the beauty and power of the Divinity : but, he adds, it appears from both their actions and writings, that it is in the red cheeks of beautiful damsels that they contemplate his beauty ; and in the impious daring of Nimrod and of Pharaoh, that they see and admire his power. A celebrated Soofee teacher ^p, he observes, has written, "That the secret of the soul was first revealed when Pharaoh declared himself a god : " and another ^q has said, "The host of Pharaoh were not lost in the sea of error, but of knowledge : " and has asserted in the same page, "that the Nazarenes are not infidels because they deem Jesus a God, but because they deem him alone a God." The Soofees are stated by the author ^r so often quoted, to deny the

° Tavern is undoubtedly used here to signify the sinful world.

^p Sahel-ebn-Abdullâh, of Shuster.

^q Shaikh Mohee-u-deen. This assertion is to be found in the work of this great Soofee teacher.

^r Aga Mahomed Ali.

doctrine of reward and punishment ; which is as incompatible with their ideas of the re-absorption of the soul into the divine essence, as with their literal belief of predestination. But they do not admit the truth of this assertion ; and some of their most celebrated teachers, who have revolted at a literal interpretation of the Koran, have maintained that sinners will be punished, and that the good will enjoy a higher and purer bliss than can be found in a sensual paradise. While others, more visionary, believe that the imagination will have as great a power in the other world as in this, and that the punishment of hell will consist in a delusion. Men, they say, will see a fire which they will conceive is to burn them ; but which, when it reaches them, will prove cold. One writer * of this sect goes so far as to assert, that those who are condemned to hell, will soon, from the habit of living there, not only be reconciled to its heat, but deem it a blessing, and look with disgust on the joys of paradise †.

The Soofees are accused of seeking to delude the Persians into their tenets by the most extravagant praises of their favorite Ali ; who, according to them, was acquainted with all the mysteries of their doctrine ‡ : whereas they are equal admirers of the three first caliphs when with Soonees, on the same principle that leads them to be in raptures with Ali when with Sheahs : but the fact is, Aga Ma-

* Kysuree.

† This author, according to Aga Mahomed Ali, says, that a sinner in hell will in a short time be like a beetle in the midst of dung, which, delighted with its unclean mansion, abhors all sweet scents.

‡ The poet Jellal-ood-deen makes Ali, when he is wounded by an assassin, declare, " I am the lord of the country, but with my body I have no concern. You have not struck me ; you are a mere instrument of Providence ; and who shall pretend to revenge himself on Providence ? Be not grieved therefore at what you have done, for to-morrow I am your advocate ! " Aga Mahomed Ali after this quotation, asks " To what does such doctrine lead ? To the most infamous sinners attaining the reward of the just in paradise. "

homed adds, "they are in general complete unbelievers; and it is easy for men to conform to every faith who believe in none *." In his account of the different sects of Soofees he states a number of facts, to shew the extravagant blasphemy of the teachers, and the blind credulity of their followers. "A Soofee †," he says, "has told us, that one day, when he was intoxicated, he saw God, in the figure of a man, with a coat on, his hair plaited, and his cap cocked on one side. 'I struck him on the shoulder,' this Soofee writes, 'and exclaimed, By the truth of thy unity I know thee; and if thou assumest a hundred shapes, it will not conceal thee from my sight!' This is one of those impious madmen whom fools have worshipped as a saint." The spiritual leaders of the Soofees, the same author states, are not only believed to perform miracles, but to live in continual communion with God; one of the most celebrated of them, whose life, with all the fables ‡ attached to it, is a

* Aga Mahomed Ali quotes an Arabic sentence, which, he says, is often repeated by their writers. Literally it means, "a Soofee knows no religion;" but they interpret it, "a Soofee thinks ill of no religion:" in other words, having none themselves, they treat all with equal favour and consideration.

† Shaikh Rozabahr Tursee, a teacher of the Wádhatteáh, or "Unionists." He is the author of a work entitled the *Tufseer-ul-Aserár*, or "Commentary on mysteries," in which the passage is to be found.

‡ In one of my Persian manuscripts on the Soofees, is the following curious account of Shaikh Mohyudeen Abd-ool Kauder, of Ghilan, who was born A. H. 471, and died in 561.

His mother, declared, that when he was at the breast he never tasted milk during the holy month of Ramzan: and in one of his works he gives the following account of himself. "The day before the feast of Araf, I went out into the fields and laid hold on the tail of a cow, which turned round and exclaimed: 'Oh Abd-ool Kauder, am I not that which thou hast created me?' I returned home and went up to the terrace of my house: I saw all the pilgrims standing at the mountain of Aráfát at Mecca. I went and told my mother I must devote myself to God: I wished to proceed to Bagdad to obtain knowledge. I informed her what I had seen, and she wept: then taking out eighty deenars, she told me that, as I had a brother, half of that was all my inheritance. She made me swear, when

favorite theme with his sect, is said to have ascended corporeally to heaven seventy times every night: and the

she gave it to me, never to tell a lie; and afterwards bade me farewell, exclaiming, 'Go, my son, I give thee to God. We shall not meet again until the day of judgement!' I went on well till I came near to Hamadan, when our Kâfilâh was plundered by sixty horsemen. One fellow asked me what I had got? 'Forty deenars,' I said, 'are sewed under my garment.' The fellow laughed, thinking, no doubt, I was joking him. 'What have you got?' said another. I gave him the same answer. When they were dividing the spoil, I was called to an eminence where their chief stood. 'What property have you, my little fellow?' said he. 'I have told two of your people already,' I replied; 'I have forty deenars sewed up carefully in my clothes.' He desired them to be ript open, and found my money. 'And how came you,' said he with surprise, 'to declare so openly what has been so carefully hidden?'—'Because,' I replied, 'I will not be false to my mother, to whom I have promised that I will never conceal the truth.'—'Child,' said the robber, 'hast thou such a sense of thy duty to thy mother at thy years; and am I insensible, at my age, of the duty I owe to my God? Give me thy hand, innocent boy,' he continued, 'that I may swear repentance upon it.' He did so. His followers were all alike struck with the scene. 'You have been our leader in guilt,' said they to their chief, 'be the same in the path of virtue:' and instantly at his order they made restitution of their spoil, and vowed repentance on my hand."

Mohy-u-deen arrived at Bagdad in A. H. 488, and consequently when this event happened, must have been sixteen or seventeen years of age. His learning and virtue are spoken of with rapture. According to the author I write from, God granted all his requests; and the Divine vengeance fell on those he hated. In A. H. 521 he began his public lectures. High Soonee authorities of the sect of Shaffei report many of his miracles. He himself gives the following account of his fasting, previous to his becoming a disciple of his teacher. "I was eleven years in a *burj* (tower,) and when there I declared to God I would not eat or drink till some one caused me to do so. I remained forty days; after which a person brought a little meat, put it before me, and went away: my life was nearly springing out at the sight of the victuals, but I refrained: and I heard a voice from within me call out, 'I am hungry, I am hungry;' at that moment Shaikh Aboo Syud Mukzomee (a celebrated Soofee) passed, and hearing the voice exclaimed: 'What is that?'—'It is my mortal part,' I replied; 'but the soul is yet firm and awaits the result.'—'Come to my house,' he said; and went away. I resolved however to fulfil my vow, and remained where I was: but Elias came and told me to follow the Syud, whom I found at his door waiting. 'You would not comply with my wish,' said he, 'till it was enforced by Elias.' After this he gave me meat and drink in plenty, and then invested me with a *khirkâ*, (or sacred mantle,) and I became his confirmed friend and companion."

Moollah of Room, Jellal-ood-deen, whose poems they deem inspired, was, they believe, taken up into heaven when only six years of age.

Aga Mahomed Ali treats every Soofee sect with a severity that must detract from the credit due to his extensive knowledge. There is no doubt that many of the most eminent Soofees have been men of piety and learning, whose self-denial and wisdom have attracted a fame which they did not seek^a: while others have clothed themselves in humility, to attain greatness, and have fled from observation only to attract it. There is no path to fame and power, however unseemly and rugged, on which man will not enter; the same passions which excite the worldly votary of ambition to the attainment of royal robes and a sceptre, fill the breast of the mendicant devotee, striving for the holy staff and sacred mantle that are to vest him with power over the minds of the multitude. It has been truly observed, the greatest objection to Soofeeism is, that in itself it is no religion: wherever it prevails, it unsettles the existing belief; but it substitutes no other of a definite and intelligible nature. Though it professes to leave the mass of the people in the state it found them in, it never can. They are taught to consider an attention to the forms of religion as a mere worldly duty, from which they are to be emancipated by an increase of knowledge or devotion. No attack can be more insidious, or more likely to be effectual. It is to praise the beauty and utility of an edifice, that leisure may be given to sap its foundations. The Soofee teacher does not deny the mission of Mahomed: but while he instructs his disciples to consider that prophet and his successors as instruments for preserving the order and good

^a The author of the *Ayeen Akberry* relates, that Wyss Kerânee, a Soofee who had given up the world, used to say to such as sought him, "Do you seek God? If you do, why do you come to me? And if you do not seek God, what business can I have with you?"

government of the world, he boasts a direct and familiar intercourse with the Deity; and on that ground claims their entire confidence and obedience in all that regards their spiritual interests.

A Persian author ^b of very high reputation for his piety and judgement has given an excellent account of the Soofees and their doctrine. Like many other writers of equal authority, he conceives some of the principal Mahomedan saints to have been Soofees: but, when he applies the term to them, he obviously means no more than religious enthusiasts: and he throughout makes a wide distinction between those who, while they mortified the flesh and indulged in an enraptured love of the Deity, still kept within the pale of revealed religion: and the wild devotee who, abandoning himself to the wanderings of a heated imagination, fancied he should draw nearer to God by departing from everything deemed rational among men.

"The Almighty," this author writes, "after his prophets and holy teachers, esteems none more than the pure Soofees; because their desire is, to raise themselves through his grace from their earthly mansion to the heavenly regions, and to exchange their lowly condition for that of angels. I have stated what I know of them in my preface^c. The accomplished and eloquent amongst them form two classes, the Hookâmâh, or *men of science*, and the Oulamâh, or *men of piety and learning*. The former seek truth by demonstration: the latter through revelation. There is another class

^b Cauzee Noorollâ of Shuster in the Mojalis-ul-Momineen, a treatise on the Sheah faith.

^c "The Soofees (he there says) are of two classes: those who desire human knowledge, and pursue it in the accustomed way, observing the common ordinances of religion, are called Mootâ-kullum (*advocates or observers*): those who practise austerities and strive to purify their souls, are called Soofees." This word literally means *pure, clean*. The celebrated Moollah of Room has the following play upon it in one of his lines. *Soofee nâ shevud sâfee tâ dir nâ râseed jâmee*: the Soofee will not be pure till he takes one cup. This is said to have a mystical meaning.

called Arufâh or *men of knowledge*, and Ouledh or holy men, who in endeavouring to reach a state of beatitude have abandoned the world. These are also *men of science*; but, as through divine grace they have attained to a state of perfection, their fears are believed to be less than those of others who remain in worldly occupations^d. Thus they are more exalted, and nearer to the rich inheritance of the prophet than other men^e. No doubt there are imminent dangers along the path; there are many false teachers and many deluded students pursuing the vapour of the desert, like the thirsty traveller; and these, if they do not rush into their death, return wearied, grieved, and disappointed, from having been the dupes of their fancy. A true and perfect teacher is most rare; and when he exists, to discover him is impossible; for who shall discover perfection, except he that is perfect; who shall tell the price of the jewel, but the jeweller? This is the reason why so many miss the true path and fall into all the mazes of error. They are deceived by appearances, and waste their lives in the pursuit of that which is most defective; conceiving all along that it is most perfect; and thus lose their time, their virtue, and their religion. It is to save men from this danger that God, through the prophet, has warned us to attend to established usages, and to be guided by care and prudence. What has been said," this sensible writer observes, "applies equally to those who live in the world, and to those who have abandoned it; for neither abstinence nor devotion can exclude the devil, who will seek retired mendicants, clothed in the garb of divinity; and these, like

^d The disciple of a celebrated Soofee, having some money in his pocket when travelling, expressed his fears. *Cast away thy fear*, said the old man. *How can I cast away a feeling?* he replied. *By casting away what excites it:* was the answer. He threw away his money, and having nothing to lose, felt no fear. Persian MS.

^e Shaikh Ab-ool-Senna, or Avicenna (the author says), has given the same account of the Soofees in his *Mukâmât-ool-Arafyn*.

other men, will discover that real knowledge is the only talisman by which the dictates of the good can be distinguished from those of the evil spirit. The traveller on the path of Soofeeism must not therefore be destitute of worldly knowledge; otherwise he will be alike exposed to danger from excess or deficiency of zeal; and he will certainly act contrary to the most sacred of his duties. A senseless man is likely to exceed the just bounds in the practice of abstinence and abstraction, and then both his bodily and mental frame become affected, and he loses his labour and his object. It is to men of this description that the prophet adverts, when he says, 'God will not accept the irrational devotee:' and again, when he exclaims, 'My back has been broken by pious fools, and useless learned men.'"

This writer, after some remarks on the affinity between virtuous Sheahs and Soofees, observes, "that many of the latter have disguised their real sentiments from their alarm at persecuting tyrants; and have given general answers, and pretended to be of no particular faith, to escape the effects of that fury which was pointed at the Sheahs. The consequence of this conduct has been, that they have subjected themselves to the reproach of having no religion at all: and, for the reasons I have stated, it has become a tenet among Soofees not to confess their religion. It is indeed considered among them a crime of the deepest turpitude to do so.

"The Soofee teacher," (according to Cauzee Noor-ôlla,) "professes to instruct his disciple how to restore the inward man by purifying the spirit, cleansing the heart, enlightening the head, and anointing the soul: and when all this is done, they affirm that his desires shall be accomplished, and his depraved qualities changed into higher attributes¹, and he shall prove and understand the conditions, the revela-

¹ Or qualities: the same word Akhlâk is repeated.