

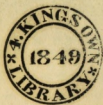
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NARRATIVE  
 OF  
 'A TOUR THROUGH'  
 ARMENIA, KURDISTAN, PERSIA,  
 AND  
 MESOPOTAMIA.

WITH  
 OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONDITION OF MOHAMMEDANISM AND  
 CHRISTIANITY IN THOSE COUNTRIES.

By the REV. HORATIO SOUTHGATE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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NARRATIVE

ARMENIA, KILIKIA, PERZIA

MESOPOTAMIA

BY THE REV. JOHN BRADSHAW

OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

IN THE YEAR 1830

1831

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Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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# TOUR THROUGH PERSIA, &c.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### TEBRIZ.

ANTIQUITY OF THE CITY—CLIMATE—POSITION—GARDENS—MY HOUSE—  
PRESENT AND PAST CONDITION OF THE CITY COMPARED—REMAINS—  
ARSENAL—SHAWL MANUFACTURERS—THE TURKISH OF PERSIA—GERMAN  
MISSIONARIES—THEIR SYSTEM OF OPERATIONS—PERSIAN AFFABILITY—  
QUALIFICATIONS.

I WILL not speculate on the long-contested and still unsettled question of the origin of Tebriz, farther than to say, that the dispute itself is an evidence of its great antiquity. The opinion of the old travellers, that it is the ancient Ecbatana, the capital of the Medes, is now generally abandoned. It is pretty clear, however, that it received its present name as late as A. D. 750, and that it was given to it on account of the salubrity of its climate, the name signifying *fever-dissipating*, a commendation which it certainly deserves, if its tendencies in this respect are compared with those of Tehran, the present capital of the country. The inhabitants still extol its healthiness, and, I believe, with good reason.

During my stay, in August and September, the weather was very fine, excepting when the south wind blew. At such times the sky assumed a lowering aspect, and the air seemed to have lost its vitality. I have felt the peculiarly enervating effects of this wind, in Constantinople, in Persia, and in Bagdad. We had strong winds almost daily at Tebriz, but, excepting that just mentioned, they brought a refreshing coolness with them, though they covered the city with a cloud of dust.

The position of Tebriz is remarkable. On the West there is a plain reaching, unbroken, to the lake of Ourmiah, thirty miles distant. As the traveller approaches from this direction, he enters an amphitheatre of hills, none of which are of extraordinary height. The curve is towards the East, and the two arms sweep round and go off to the West. The city lies at the inner extremity of this amphitheatre, with the hills on three sides and the great plain on the other. It has a wall of sun-dried brick, with bastions, and seven or eight gates. Two of the latter are decorated with lacquered tile, which gives them rather a showy appearance. I used frequently to ride round the city, and estimated its circumference at less than four miles. A large portion of the population reside without the walls, and the plain around is covered with gardens and human habitations. As the hills in the vicinity are entirely barren and are discoloured by a green and ochreous appearance, the sight of so much vegetation in the plain below is doubly agreeable. The general aspect of the gardens, however, is much finer than when they are entered and examined in detail. Those which I visited had no regularity of plan, and displayed no pretensions to horticultural taste. They had no flower-plots, or gravelled-walks, or trimmed hedges, or gay parterres, like a

European garden, and seemed in quite a neglected state. In many of them the vine abounded. It was planted in rows on the summit of ridges, from four to five feet high, and was watered by directing a stream through the intervening trenches. I was permitted to walk about, and to pluck and eat at pleasure, without any other charge than a small stipend to the keeper on leaving the garden. The varieties of the grape about Tebriz are numerous, and most of them are of very superior quality. It was altogether the greatest luxury, at that season, which the city afforded.

As I intended to prosecute extensive and protracted investigation at Tebriz, I found it most for my comfort and convenience to take a house. I secured one at the rate of two tomans, or about £1 sterling, a month, for as long a time as I chose to occupy it. It was low, like all Persian houses, and consisted of two apartments on the ground, and one above, in a kind of tower, rising from the middle of the main building. There were, also, a kitchen and a servant's room in the cellar. One of the apartments on the ground I reserved for myself, and John took possession of the other. The upper room I devoted to the use for which it was intended, as a place of retirement and repose during the heats of the day. The house was open only in front, and on that side there was a large court surrounded by a high wall. The entrance from the street was through a low gate in the wall, where a child could hardly pass without stooping. The court was adorned with a profusion of the *Gul-i Sabah*, or Morning Flower, which presented a great variety of hues, and made a most brilliant display from the time that the sun declined in the afternoon till it felt his heat again in the morning. During the rest of the day, its petals remained closed, and the modest

flower seemed to shrink from the light and glare of the world. In one corner of the court was a reservoir, which, at a trifling expense, I kept filled from the public stock, for the purpose of watering the garden. All the grounds in the vicinity of the city are irrigated in the same manner, the proprietor paying a certain sum for having a stream turned through his gardens, so as to furnish a determinate quantity at regular intervals. My furniture I hired by the month, from the bazars; and Mr. Nisbet, the British agent in Tebriz, added to my Persian stock an English chair and table. The care of my larder and the superintendence of my kitchen department, I committed entirely to John, of whose honesty, in pecuniary concerns, I had already had ample proof. I was thus left at liberty to pursue my work unmolested, and for the space of nearly two months, I enjoyed tolerable comfort and quiet. The solitude only was irksome, for, although I found at Tebriz several very agreeable friends, one in particular, who was unwearied in his endeavours to aid me, I had never as yet felt so much the burden of loneliness as now. I thought of the man who domiciliated a spider in his prison, and I did the same with a little kitten, which, from being the shyest and wildest thing in the world, became, at length, so familiar as to sit upon my shoulder by day, and sleep upon my bed at night. One morning I missed it from my room, and on going into the court, I found it stretched out on the walk, stiff and dead. I gave it a decent burial among the flowers, and felt as if I had lost a friend.

But to my work. Tebriz, though still an important city, has greatly degenerated from what it was in ancient times. The traveller no longer recognises the truth of the glowing descriptions of Chardin, Tavernier and Sir Paul Lucas. Many of the edifices described by them



are gone, and others, which were then within, are now without, the limits of the city. The three hundred caravanserais, the two hundred and fifty mosques, the splendid cafés, the *maidan*, or public place, where 30,000 men had often stood in battle-array, have disappeared, or are reduced to far narrower limits and numbers. The immense population of 550,000, or, as the Persians of those times estimated it, 1,100,000, is now diminished to 80,000, at the highest credible estimate\*. The imposing ruins which they described as existing in their day, are no more to be seen, and buildings which were then in all their glory, are ruins now. A mosque, of which Tavernier speaks as the most magnificent edifice in the city, is now only the most conspicuous remain of former times. Chardin, in his sketch of the town, has it surrounded by habitations, and quite within the limits of the city proper. It is now considerably beyond the walls, and stands solitary among the gardens. It is said to be 400 years old, and is, at present, no more than an immense mass of bricks, covered with glazed clay of various colours, and bearing numerous inscriptions. Apart of the dome and the doorway remain. Some of the arches are fallen, and others are gradually crumbling to decay. It has been very much shaken by earthquakes, and wide fissures yawn in every part.

The ark †, or citadel, is the most conspicuous building of the present city, and is enclosed in a projection of the city wall on the South. It was originally the mosque of Ali Shah, and was built 600 years ago. It consists of a lofty edifice of brick, a part of which seems to have

\* *Chardin*, i. 255. Chardin's dates are for the middle of the 17th century, and so are Tavernier's. Sir Paul Lucas travelled half a century later.

† *Arej*, or *Ark*,—a Persian term, corresponding to the Latin *Arr*.

fallen, and the remainder has been rent from top to bottom by earthquakes. It is still, however, a noble edifice, and, as a structure entirely of brick-work, is well worthy of notice. On the summit there are two or three small apartments and parapets, which afford a fine panoramic view of the city and gardens. Abbas Mirza, a son of the last Shah, and heir apparent to the throne, converted it into an arsenal, to which use it is still devoted. When I visited it, workmen were engaged in boring cannon, which was done by a simple machine turned by four oxen. The whole establishment was under the charge of an Armenian, who had contracted with the government to furnish a certain number of cannon, at a specified sum. It was related to me, on good authority, as illustrative of the financial state of the kingdom, that the contractor had upon his hands government-notes to the amount of 60,000 tomans, or about £30,000, which, (excepting one of 5,000 tomans, £2,500, that he had sold at a loss of 40 per cent.,) he was unable to dispose of at any rate. In the mean time, he was compelled to fulfil his part of the contract to his own ruin. The copper from which the cannon were made, was extracted from one of the royal mines. Another mine, of iron, had lately been opened near the city, and the works for extracting and smelting were in the course of erection, under the superintendence of an English gentleman.

Within the walls of the citadel, the process of casting and the manufacture of carriages for the cannon, were going on. In another part were barracks, erected by Abbas Mirza, and containing, at the time of my visit, a hundred Russian soldiers. They were all deserters from their own country, and their wretched appearance seemed to show that they had not improved their condition

by the change. In another part of the enclosure, a company of workmen were engaged in the manufacture of shawls. They were from Kerman, and had been brought hither by Abbas Mirza, for this same purpose. The process was so difficult that they accomplished only half an inch daily, and six months, they said, were necessary to complete a shawl of one and a half yards in length. They said that they had been brought from their native country against their will, and, when asked about their compensation, replied that it was *enough not to die upon*.

I have estimated the population at 80,000. Some of my informants stated it as high as 130,000, and others as low as 60,000. The great majority of the people are Mussulmans. They are called Persians, but, in truth, are chiefly Turks, as are the mass of the population throughout the province of Aderbeijan. I found the Turkish of this province very nearly the same with that of Erzroum, but much inferior to the pure and sweet dialect of Constantinople. It is, in comparison, like the rude and vulgar tongue of the country, in contrast with the refined and polished language of the city. It is not, indeed, a cultivated language in Persia. It has not, I believe, been reduced to grammar, excepting by the German missionaries lately labouring in Georgia. It is, or was, the government language of that province, but it has no literature and but few writings in it are extant. In Persia, the Persian and Arabic are the languages of literature and religion. I found some embarrassment, at first, in speaking the Turkish of Aderbeijan, on account of the difference in many words, especially in those in most common use, and on account of the dissimilarity in pronunciation, and even in grammatical forms. The foundation, however, being the same, I was soon at my

ease again. So general is the knowledge of this language in the north of Persia, that, although I pursued the study of Persian for two or three months in Constantinople, and renewed it with great diligence in Tebriz, I never found it *necessary* to resort to it in conversation while I was in the country.

My teacher in Tebriz was a young man, who had been a pupil of the German missionaries, lately resident in the city. These faithful labourers had recently been recalled by the Basel Missionary Society, under which they acted, because their work, though of a very promising kind, was not so direct and open as the Society wished to patronise. The plan which they had formed was, to establish a seminary of a high character, in Tebriz, for the purpose of training teachers for the nation. This plan they had begun to act upon. Several young Persians had been under their instruction; the Governor of Tebriz himself was, at one time, a pupil; Abbas Mirza, during his life-time, had patronised their undertaking; and the present Shah had declared his warmest approbation of the design, and had conferred upon one of them the unsought-for honour of the *Royal Order of the Lion and the Sun*. The foreign languages which they had taught were English and French. They had used Martyn's translation of the New Testament, as a text-book in Persian, and the same had been examined and approved by some Mollahs of the city. They had wisely avoided all controversy on doctrinal subjects, believing it inexpedient and useless. They trusted rather to the gradual impartation of knowledge, for those high and holy effects which they hoped their labours would, at length, attain. They had commenced translations of European works of science, and a volume on geography had already been laid at the foot of the throne.

The first day after my arrival, several of their pupils, who had been apprised of my coming, called upon me, and with great eagerness, inquired whether I would not take the place of the teachers who had left them. I was, of course, compelled to disappoint them, and it was with as deep regret on my part as on theirs. Notwithstanding the extreme duplicity of the Persian character, (and there was some manifestation of it on this occasion, as I afterwards discovered,) I could not then, nor can I now, believe that so favourable an opening should not be improved. Most of these young men were, indeed, seeking knowledge from merely worldly motives—motives as pure as the multitude of aspirants of the same character have in Christian lands, but not religious motives. Still, the simple fact that so many young minds were accessible and ready to receive knowledge from any motive, was one, in my view, of sufficient encouragement to have justified me in remaining among them, if the nature of my mission and other circumstances had permitted.

It is this peculiarity of the Persian character—their great accessibleness and their love for knowledge—which is the grand encouragement to efforts for their improvement. In both respects, as in most others, they are the very opposite of the Turks. Instead of being difficult of approach, they court the society of a foreigner. They converse with him with the utmost cordiality, they demean themselves towards him with affability and deference, they honour him with the same terms of respect which they address to each other, even to the salutation of peace, (*Selam Aleikum*,) which a Turk seldom utters to a man of another religion. The Persian invites the foreigner to his house, and receives him with a cordiality and politeness that puts him at once at his ease.

He has no reserved topics, excepting those which Orientals do not converse about among themselves. He talks with his guest of trade, of government, and of religion, with a freedom and frankness that greatly surprises a new-comer from Turkey. I speak now of the Persians of the city, and of well-bred Persians generally, who are not of the religious orders. The only additional qualification which I believe my remarks require, is, that the politeness of Persians is, in numberless instances, the product of pure selfishness, induced merely by a desire to gain some favour or advantage. Their love of knowledge, too, has a considerable drawback in their extreme volatility of character, which renders their pursuit of it liable to great fluctuations. Some of the earliest pupils of the German missionaries, who commenced their studies with boundless enthusiasm, gave up in despair when they found that they could not compass the attainment of all human learning in two or three months.

## CHAPTER II.

### TEBRIZ.

FOREIGNERS IN THE CITY—EUROPEAN TRADE—PROVINCE OF ADERBEIJAN—  
ARMY—DESERTIONS—EUROPEAN COSTUME—A PERSIAN PRINCE—INTER-  
VIEW WITH HIM—HIS TEACHER—ANOTHER STORY—THE TRUTH—  
EXCITABILITY OF THE PERSIANS—ILLUSTRATION—INTEMPERATE AND  
DISHONEST SERVANT—PERSIAN MORALITY—CHARACTER OF PERSIAN  
SERVANTS—HOUSES, STREETS, AND BAZARS OF TEBRIZ—ITS MUSSULMANS  
—WINE-DRINKING—MOHAMMEDAN PREACHING—THE MUSHTERED.

TEBRIZ is the most eligible point in Persia for commencing an effort at education. It has been more frequently visited by foreigners than any other city, and has been more affected by the introduction of European arts and manners. There were, at the time of my residence there, three or four English merchants in the place, besides two tailors, a shoemaker, a baker, and other artisans, all Europeans. I noticed two or three houses in European style, and the bazars were full of European articles. There is a Russian Consul, besides the English Agent, and a new Consul from England arrived about the time of my departure. Besides all these, there is a large fluctuating population of traders from every quarter. I made acquaintance with several Greeks and Armenians from Constantinople. They were all home-sick, and talked of hardly anything else than the roguery of Persian merchants. The Persians, they said, pride themselves upon their skill in overreaching the Turkish

traders, and declare it lawful to cheat an infidel to the best of their abilities. The European trade with Tebriz has received a great augmentation within a few years. An English merchant informed me that the annual importation of European goods into the city was about 15,000 packages, which might be rated at an average value of thirty pounds sterling. It consists chiefly of chintz, cottons, and woollens; and six-eighths of the whole importation is English. Sugar is also among the imports, and fancy articles of all kinds are in great demand. American tea, as it is called, is also brought into the country, the Russian being extremely dear. In return for these articles, are sent the silks of Ghilan, the great silk country of Persia, lying on the Caspian, the nut-galls of Kurdistan, the cherry-wood pipe-sticks for the Turkish markets, which are brought from the Bakhtiaree mountains in the south of Persia, the tobacco of Shiraz, besides yellow berries for dyeing, and gums of various kinds. Persian shawls are sent to Constantinople, and a few carpets to Europe, where they are sold under the name of Turkey carpets, because they are brought into Europe from that country.

I had supplied myself at Constantinople with Russian ducats, upon the testimony of the merchants there, that they were the best coin which I could carry into Persia. I was obliged, however, to sell them in Tebriz, at a very considerable loss, while the little Turkish gold that I had with me, passed at its full value. The Constantinople merchants informed me that a large part of their returns were made in Persian ducats, which sold for a handsome profit at the royal mint in Constantinople. The Shah had forbidden this exportation of coin, and a large quantity, belonging to a Greek merchant, was actually seized at Khoy, on its way to Turkey. The



méchant fortunately was provided with a Russian passport, by which, with the intervention of the Consul, he recovered his property. Money is coined in Tebriz, Ourmiah, Erdebil, and Khoy, the principal cities of the province, the coinage being carried on by private individuals, who have a licence for the purpose from the Shah.

The province of Aderbeijan, of which Tebriz is the capital, is a portion of the ancient Media. It is governed by a brother of the Shah, a young man only about twenty-one years old. The chief direction of affairs, however, seemed to be in the hands of the *Emir Nizam*, or Commander-in-chief of the Persian army, an older and more experienced man, who was residing in Tebriz, as Vezir, or Deputy Governor of the province. The principal places of Aderbeijan, after Tebriz, are Ourmiah, Khoy, and Erdebil. The province furnishes no revenue to the Shah, and it was reported to me, from one holding an office near the Prince, that they were then living upon the revenue of the next year.

The army of the province consists, I was told, of eighteen regiments of infantry, besides 400 cavalry, and 200 artillery, but I believe the statement exaggerated. The pay of each soldier had been about £3. 10s. 8d. annually, besides food and clothing, but had lately been reduced to half that amount, and numerous desertions had taken place in consequence of it. While I was at Tebriz, three entire regiments fled, and took refuge in a sanctuary near Tehran. Another from Ourmiah had deserted not long before, and returned to their homes. When the news came to the ears of the Shah, he sent orders to the Governor of Ourmiah, to seize the fugitives, take from each of them thirty tomans (about

£15), brand him in the forehead, and destroy his house. The Shah added, in no very complimentary phrase, that if these orders were not obeyed, "he would give the Governor a kick from which he would never recover in this world."

In my rides about the city, I used frequently to see two or three companies going through their drills under the instruction of an English serjeant. They were dressed in European military coats, made by one of the Frank tailors of the city, and large trousers, of an order between pantaloons and shalvars. I could not learn that this adoption of European costume had excited any prejudice, although the Persians are even more scrupulous than the Turks about the exposure of the natural figure of the body. It was first introduced, I was told, by Abbas Mirza, under the same impression which seems to have possessed the Sultan of Turkey, that European dress would make European soldiers.

On the tenth of August, I received a message from Melik Cassam Mirza, a Persian prince, and one of the numerous uncles of the Shah. Having heard of my arrival, and being partly informed of my design in visiting Persia, he sent, requesting to see me. I went immediately in quest of him. After having wasted the greater part of a day, in following the false directions that were given me, I found him, at last, in an old dilapidated palace within the walls. The building had two courts, of which the apartments around the interior one were alone inhabitable. I found the prince in the midst of a room crowded with European articles of all kinds, from which he was making a selection of such as pleased him best, while a scribe sat by, recording the names and prices of those which he chose. He

was himself seated in a chair, from which he rose upon my entrance, and saluted me with a hearty English shake of the hand, and a cordial *How do you do?* His English, however, soon run out, and we turned to French, which, he said, he had learned from an old French lady travelling in Persia. He spoke it with fluency and tolerable correctness. His dress, excepting the Persian cap, was in the style formerly described as prevailing in the Turkish court; he had a handsome and intelligent face, and wore a short beard. I had long before heard of him as one of the most zealous friends of education in Persia, and I esteemed it a providential favour that he had visited the city during my stay. His own residence was in Shishevan, on the Eastern border of the lake of Ourmiah, and he had come to Tebriz for the laudable purpose of eating fruit.

He turned the conversation, at once, to the subject of education, and went on to detail his past efforts and his plans for the future. He had established a school, some six months before, in his own village, in which he intended that instruction should be given in Persian, Armenian, French, and English. The principal was an Armenian, who had been educated in Bishop's College, Calcutta; but, although a man of ability and learning, his management of the school had not been altogether satisfactory. He wished now to procure a teacher from America; he would prefer a physician, but would be content with any one competent to the duty. He had desired to see me, hoping that I might aid him in accomplishing his object. His school, he said, was only a commencement and a very humble attempt. He had not the means to accomplish all that he was ambitious to undertake. "This is a vile country," he exclaimed,

“there are great difficulties in the way, and I am not Shah.” He was determined, he said, to make a dictionary of the Persian and English, as soon as he was qualified for the undertaking. The Shah had written to him, approving highly the plan of his school, and he was entertaining sanguine hopes of royal patronage. He spoke freely of missionary operations in Persia, and expressed his opinion that we should not engage in personal controversy, or circulate books of a disputatious character. He said that much was to be feared from the Mollahs, and that the only safe course was to instruct and enlighten the people gradually. I offered to visit Shishevan and examine the state of the school, promising, if I should consider the project a feasible one, that I would render him all the aid in my power. He demurred strongly to the proposal, and seemed to entertain some secret aversion to my knowing the exact state of things. I left him, therefore, with a general expression of my interest in his efforts, and of my desire to promote the cause of education in Persia.

A few days after this interview, the Prince's Armenian teacher made his appearance at my house. He introduced himself as a deacon of the Armenian Church, and produced very satisfactory testimonials from the late Bishop of Calcutta, and from the Principal of Bishop's College. His name was Mesrop David Taliatine. He spoke English fluently, and showed me a copy of Bishop Heber's *Palestine*, with a translation in Armenian verse from his own pen. He had been partly educated at the seat of the Armenian Catholicos in Etchmiadzin, and he gave me a long detail of his trials among his own countrymen. He came, at length, upon the history of his recent residence with the Prince Melik Cassam Mirza, at Shishevan, and told a very different story from that

of the Prince himself. The pupils in the school were the Prince's own boys, and the Prince, also, had received instruction with them. He had been engaged with an express stipulation as to the salary, but, after the first two or three months, no pay had been given him. The pupils were so irregular in their attendance, that they received little or no profit from his instructions. The Prince, who was fond of hunting, always took several of them away with him in his excursions, so that, of some fifteen who were nominally his pupils, only three had attended regularly. The Prince, he said, was no Musulman, because he drank wine and ate hog's flesh.

The teacher affirmed that the peace of his own family was endangered by the habits of the boys, for they were all addicted to vicious courses. An Armenian female, connected with his family, had been enticed into the Prince's harem, and was detained there against her will. The Prince had written to the Shah, soon after the establishment of the school, and the Shah had sent him, in return, a letter full of sweet words, but without the more substantial accompaniment that the Prince had expected. From that time, his interest in the school began to decline. The teacher had long meditated an escape, but fearing lest the Prince should find means to detain him, he had not communicated to him his intention, and, at length, had found an opportunity of absconding privately. He declared that he would not return to the Prince until all arrears had been paid; and, as this was a hopeless condition, he was ready to try his fortunes elsewhere. I advised him to go to Constantinople, where his Armenian learning would be of service to him. He was pleased with the idea, but said that he could not command the means necessary for the purpose. He succeeded, however, in accomplishing his

object, for, when I reached Constantinople the next spring, he was already there.

I found good reason, afterwards, to believe that his story respecting the seminary of Melik Cassam Mirza, was, in the main, true. I had, at first, felt a lively interest in it, as being the effort of a Persian noble, and the earliest of the kind of which I had any information as having been made in Persia. I was compelled, however, to conclude that the Prince had no just idea of the nature of his own undertaking, nor the stability of purpose necessary for its prosecution. Still, my conviction is that, in the hands of an efficient missionary, the Prince might be made the instrument of great good to his country, and his school, or a better one in its stead, might become, under the same direction, the germ of a noble work in Persia.

In developing the leading traits of the character of the Persians, it ought to be remarked that, although they are certainly among the most accessible and polite people on earth, they are subject to sudden and violent impulses, which sometimes lead to dangerous consequences. They have more of a mobbish spirit than any other people in the East, not even excepting the Greeks, and when roused, they are thoughtless and reckless.

An instance in point, though, as it terminated, not of a very serious character, occurred at Tebriz. I was riding one day with the gentleman who had accompanied me from Ourmiah, and, as we came near to the gate of the city, we passed two or three Persians reclining in the shade of a wall. Just as we had rode by, we heard an exclamation which drew our attention, and, on looking back, observed that one of the men had suddenly fallen. We turned, and, supposing he had fainted, gave some directions to the people that were gathering

around him, and left the city. On returning an hour after, I observed a group of men who eyed us very closely as we entered the gate, and, after we had passed, put themselves in our train and followed close behind. We had not advanced many rods before we were met by another body. One of them, an old man, approaching, seized my companion's bridle, and ordered him to dismount. He obeyed, when the old man told him that he had killed a Mussulman, and must die for it. It appeared that he alluded to the man who had fainted; but the charge was so manifestly false, that we at once suspected the mob had been excited by some other motive, which they did not choose to avow. The crowd gathering fast around us, and their turbulence increasing every moment, I advised my companion to insist upon being carried before the governor. He made the request, those who seemed to be the leaders of the party acceded to it, and the crowd moved forward towards the governor's house. No one had molested me, or appeared even to notice my presence. While Mr. S. entered, I remained without, ready to go in and offer my testimony if needed. Most of the crowd also tarried at the gate. Mr. S. had not been long absent, before I learned, from the conversation that was going on around me, a solution of the whole matter. It appeared that Mr. S. had just dismissed his Persian servant, and caused him to be bastinadoed for dishonesty while in his service. Instead of complaining to the Persian authorities, he had persuaded a foreigner in the employ of the government, to order his own servants to seize the offender and inflict the punishment. The servant had, forthwith, gone out into the bazars and published his wrongs. The people were excited by his story, and sought an opportunity for avenging him upon his master. The occasion just

described offered a fair pretext, and they did not hesitate to charge him before the governor, with having caused his horse to caper and kick just as he passed the wounded man, who, they affirmed, was on the point of dying from the injury he had received by a blow of the horse's foot. The whole, I believe, was a gross fabrication; but a bruise, which the man had sustained in falling against the wall, gave some plausibility to the charge. The Governor referred the matter to the British Agent, and the mob proceeded thither, with Mr. S. under close escort. The agent succeeded in procuring his release for the night, for it was now dark, and the affair was finally settled by Mr. S.'s paying a considerable sum to the man who had fainted. We thought that it was happily terminated at any rate.

While I was pursuing my inquiries, my household affairs went on quietly under John's superintendence. The only reform which he found it necessary to make in his department, was to dismiss the servant for intemperance and dishonesty. He had been frequently admonished for coming home intoxicated every second or third day, and for charging, in his account, twice the price which he paid in the bazars. The first vice he had promised to abandon, for he was a Persian, and John made him ashamed by appealing to his religion; the second he regarded as the inalienable prerogative of every Persian serving a Frank, and could not be prevailed upon to forego it. John forbade him, for a time, from going to the bazars, and undertook to make all our purchases himself. He soon found, however, that the same code of morality prevailed among traders as among servants, and that it was a thing never heard of in the bazars, that a Persian should not cheat a foreigner. Even when he knew and stated the price of



an article, he could seldom prevail upon the seller to let him have it for the same that he would sell it to a native. After trying the experiment for a week, he found that it was cheaper to endure the extortions of a servant than to trade for himself. We therefore submitted, with as good grace as possible, to all impositions accounted reasonable among servants, and demurred only when they became too flagrant to be overlooked.

The man, however, did not abandon his habit of dram-drinking, and, as this had no support in public opinion, however much it is countenanced by Persian practice, I directed John to dismiss him upon the next offence. The occasion soon came. The servant protesting his innocence, John ordered him to prove it by breathing in his face. The man did so, and being convicted, by the smell of his breath, of disobeying orders, of violating his religion, and of telling a lie, he was dismissed accordingly. If I had had more experience, I should have been more lenient, for, after changing my servants many times, I never found one more temperate or more honest than the first. The man whom we received in his place was many degrees worse, and was malignant in his temper as well as vicious.

As I have been led into so long a paragraph on servants, I will add, by way of completing the subject, that I doubt whether so great an oddity as an honest one can be found in the country. I never saw or heard of one whom it was safe to trust implicitly. Cheating is a regular and well understood accompaniment of service. I have known a servant to leave his master, because, from the nature of the duties which he had to perform, he could not defraud him so much as his fellow-servants. They practise it without remorse, and apparently without any sense of its being wrong. They will be detected in

fraud without any emotion, when it is too palpable to be denied, and when it is not, they will asseverate their innocence with the most solemn oaths and the utmost apparent sincerity. After being detected in villany and dismissed for it, they will ask a recommendation, as if the villany were no fault. If their dishonesty is resisted, they will torment their masters in a thousand ways that he cannot avoid. In my days of ignorance, before I learned the wisdom of submission, I told my servant that I would not allow more than a certain price for certain articles, whose market value I knew. He never afterwards charged me beyond the prices stated, but the articles were always of such a quality as he could obtain at half price.

Still, it must be acknowledged that a Persian servant is generally capable, active and cheerful, especially if he has a master who suffers himself to be well cheated without complaining. Servants are so numerous in Persia—a man's importance being measured by the number which he has about him—that they form a large class of the population. They have none of the scruples universal among the Turks, against serving a foreigner. On the contrary, they rather prefer it, because they receive from him double the wages which a Persian pays.

Tebriz is, in some respects, the most agreeable city which I saw in Persia. Its houses are generally more neatly built than those of the capital; its streets are superior in cleanliness and comfort, although there is nothing in them to boast of in either respect; and its bazars are more beautiful and better furnished. The bazar called Kaiserieh, by Chardin, and which was, in his time, the richest in the city, still exists, but is now eclipsed by the new bazar of Abbas Mirza.

The Mussulmans of Tebriz are, probably, the least

bigoted in the empire. They are extremely negligent in the performance of their religious duties. Wine-drinking prevails among them, as indeed it does everywhere in Persia. I was obliged to reprimand my teacher for coming to me in a state in which he was incapacitated for instruction. He used to justify himself, as transgressors do everywhere, by the example of the multitude. He protested that some of the Mollahs were as great sinners in this respect as he.

In Turkey, the offices of priest and preacher are not regularly vested in the same person. Most of the large mosques in that country have a *Sheikh* or Presbyter, as the term may be literally translated, whose duty it is to preach after the prayer of Friday noon and at other times as he pleases; the same office is exercised in Persia chiefly by the *Musteheds*, who have no official appointment, but are simply those most eminent for learning and sanctity among the people. They occasionally give lectures, as do the Sheikhs of Turkey, after the daily prayer at noon; and in both countries public discourses are very frequent during Ramazan and the two feasts of Bairam. They are the only religious services at which females are allowed to be present. Both in Turkey and Persia they use their liberty on such occasions to a very great extent, and sometimes contrive to make it available for less commendable purposes. In Persia, the eighteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first nights of Ramazan are specially commemorated. On these nights the mosques are thronged, and it is the time most commonly chosen for private assignations.

The subjects of the public lectures are various, according to the taste of the preacher. Sometimes he descants on moral duties, sometimes he lashes the vices and degeneracy of the age, and sometimes he expatiates on

some knotty point of theology or some question of ceremonial law. The lectures are often worthy of a Christian moralist, but when the preacher falls upon some article of ceremonial usage, he can hardly avoid offending the least refined delicacy. Illustrations are at hand, but here, as before on the same subject, they are inadmissible. It is just, however, to say that there are Mussulmans who question the propriety of introducing such topics when females are present.

A wood cut representing the usual dress of the Mus-  
teheds will be found on the title-page of this volume.

## CHAPTER III.

### JOURNEY FROM TEBRIZ TO MIANEH.

CONSIDERATION OF PLANS—DECISION—DEPARTURE FROM TEBRIZ—FIRST DAY'S JOURNEY—POTATOES—CARAVANSERAI—PERSIAN FONDNESS FOR PILGRIMAGES—VILLAGE SCENES—VILLAGE FARE—TURKISH AND PERSIAN VILLAGES COMPARED—RIVERS—ANCIENT REMAINS AT DIKMETASH—CARAVANSERAI—ROUTE OF THE GREAT PILGRIMAGE—PERSIAN STREAMS—PERSIAN SCHOOLS—ELIAUTS—RICE-FIELDS.

My reader may remember that when I left Constantinople, my course was not altogether determined. I had regarded it as doubtful how far I should be able to investigate alone, or how long I could endure the solitary state to which I was condemned. I had resolved to visit Persia, because the object of my mission could not be secured without it, but I had always held my judgment in reserve with regard to the long tour in that country, as well as in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt, which I had projected at the time when I was expecting an associate in my work. In a word, I had determined to make my journey into Persia a test of the practicability of prosecuting my labours single-handed, and to abide by the judgment which I should form at Tebriz.

The question now came up for decision, and, for several days, proved a severe trial of my faith and courage. I could not but foresee that, if sickness should befall me, I must be left entirely without relief, and, amidst the inces-

sant exposures of a protracted journey through the countries before me, I could not reasonably expect to escape sickness altogether. I reflected that if my life should be sacrificed, the results of my inquiries hitherto would be entirely lost, and I hesitated long upon the question, whether it would not be more prudent to return with what I had already gained, and what I might yet add to it in Persia, than to risk the loss of all, by venturing through the dangerous country which lay between Persia and Bagdad. On the other hand, I could not but feel that the test which I had proposed to myself, had issued more favourably than my most sanguine expectations had presaged. I had been brought in safety through a region never before, within my knowledge, traversed by a foreigner. I had discovered new points which might be occupied to great advantage by missionaries of the Cross. I had had some profitable experience in intercourse with a people who present, perhaps, the purest specimen of Oriental manners; and the colloquial use of the language most useful to the Eastern traveller had now become familiar to me. Besides, my mind had, from the first, been strongly turned to the Christians of Mesopotamia, who had not as yet been visited by Protestant missionaries, and my desire to see them had been greatly strengthened by what I had observed among the Nestorians of Persia.

While I was revolving these things in my mind, I met, one day, with these words in the second epistle to the Corinthians—"Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." The whole chapter deeply affected me, and the reflections to which it led brought me to a decision. From a careful survey of the motives which at first induced me to consecrate my life to the work of missions, I could not

doubt that I was exercising the ministry to which I had been "moved by the Holy Ghost, and called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ." From the moment that I had entered upon it until now, the conviction of duty had remained steadfast. Seeing, therefore, that I had this ministry, and having received peculiar mercy, both in being called to so holy a work, and in being sustained in it thus far, I felt that I ought not to faint nor to shrink from whatever the exercise of it might cost me. My work at this moment appeared so excellent and desirable that the prospect of being troubled, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down, seemed not only endurable, but even joyful, and the fear of suffering was completely lost in the thought that it would work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I determined, therefore, to commit myself once more into the hands of God and go forward.

My first business was to communicate my resolution to John, who was already tired of the journey, and wished to return. He submitted however, declared that he was willing to accompany me anywhere, and proceeded to make the necessary preparations for our departure. A medical friend, attached to the English embassy in Persia, furnished me with a new stock of medicines, and with written prescriptions for their use, to which he added much salutary advice. We paid our rent, sent back our furniture to the bazars, and left the city on the 26th of September, after a residence of nearly two months.

An hour's travelling through the villages without the walls, brought us to the low hills which skirt the plain on the south-east. One or two villages in the distance, marked, as Persian villages generally are, by a cluster of trees, gave extraordinary relief to the arid scene. One of the loftiest heights to the right was partially covered

with snow, and, on the left, rose the tall peak of the Kara Dagh, or Black Mountain, in or near which is the new iron mine. As we advanced, we opened upon a plain, over which were scattered several villages, the unusual greenness of the surrounding herbage indicating a plentiful supply of water. We stopped at one of these villages, called Vasmintch, where we saw potatoes growing in standing water. The villagers said that they could not be raised in any other way, on account of the dryness of the soil and the want of rain, but I rather believe the water had only been turned among them temporarily for the purpose of irrigation.

The next day we advanced over a country hilly as yesterday, but better watered, and, therefore, more verdant and more cultivated. We left Seidabad, apparently a large village, at some distance on the right, and, an hour farther on the road, passed an old caravanserai, attributed to Shah Abbas, like most of the works of this kind in Persia. It was an immense mass of brick, consisting internally of low domes supported on large columns. Among these, caravans used to be accommodated, but the place seemed now deserted. From the top of a high hill just beyond this caravanserai, we observed a large extent of the plain below covered with a coat of the purest white, which glistened in the sun like new-fallen snow. On descending to it, it proved to be salt, which had been left upon the surface by the evaporation of water. The soil of the Persian plains, in every part where I traversed them, seemed impregnated with the same substance.

We passed, during the day, two or three poor pilgrims going to Meshed. The Persians, although less rigid Mussulmans than the Turks, are much more infatuated with this particular species of superstition. I was never



able to discover the cause of their peculiar mania for pilgrimages, unless it arises, first, from their vanity, and next from their love of gain. A pilgrim is always held in higher estimation for his act of devotion, and receives certain honorary titles therefor. If he has performed the pilgrimage to the tomb of the Imam Riza at Meshed, or the Imam Hossein at Kerbela, he is entitled to the appellation *Meshedi*, or *Kerbelaï*. But it is only when he has accomplished the great pilgrimage to Mecca, that he receives the proud title of *Haji*, or Pilgrim. Multitudes in Persia undertake these pilgrimages because they are in vogue, and a certain degree of honour accrues from them, and as many more, perhaps, make them to fall in with some scheme of traffic that they have in hand. Thus, the pilgrim to Meshed brings back, besides his new stock of merit, a valuable supply of Bokhara skins.

We spent our second night at the village of Haji Agha, in the fine plain of Oujan. The villagers were winnowing their grain, by throwing it into the air with wooden forks. The village itself was conspicuous at a considerable distance by the tall stacks of straw which overtopped the houses, and the conical heaps of dried dung, neatly piled upon the roofs, and intended for winter fuel. The latter were decorated with green sprigs, and, so far from appearing unseemly, gave the village an air of uncommon comfort and thrift.

John procured a piece of mutton for our supper, or rather our dinner, for our practice was to eat nothing heavier than bread and yoghourt until we had finished the journey of the day. It was only in the very poorest of the Persian villages, that I could not obtain meat; but I am unable to recal a single instance in which I could procure it in a village in Turkey. The difference, how-

ever, does not arise altogether from the superiority of the Persian to the Turkish peasant in the comforts of life, although such is in general, doubtless, the fact. But the latter is, also, more subject to extortions from travellers, and these render him less disposed to hospitality. A traveller with a firman in Turkey, or a Tatar, or a man in authority, is generally sure to obtain what he needs, if it is to be had, and it is at his own option to pay for it or not, as he pleases. In Persia, he depends upon the hospitality of the people, and pays for every thing that he receives, unless, indeed, he is provided with a *mehmandar*, an officer who is commissioned to attend him in his journey, and to supply his wants by extortions from the villagers, while he secures enough, from the same source, to make the business profitable to himself.

From our resting-place, the smoke of three or four villages was discernible upon the plain of Oujan, and near by was a pleasant garden belonging to the Emir Nizam at Tebriz, with a summer pavilion in the midst of it. The country beyond Haji Agha was much finer than any we had yet seen since leaving Tebriz. The soil was a dark mould and abundantly watered. One of the streams was the Aji Sou, or Bitter Water, mentioned by Chardin, under the same name, as running near Tebriz, which it does at the present day. Whatever may be the quality of its water, it furnishes an excellent kind of fish, with which our table was often supplied at Tebriz. Chardin mentions another small stream as running through the city, which he calls the Spintcha. I heard of one under the name of Sivan, which must be the same. During the dry season it does not reach the town, being drawn off for the purpose of irrigation. Its channel, however, lies through the city, and when it is swollen, as it is in the season of rain, it is sometimes

destructive along its banks, as it was two hundred years ago.

In two and a half hours after leaving Haji Agha, we passed within sight of Dikmetash, a village on our right, which receives its name, signifying pretty nearly Stone Plantation, from some monstrous blocks of stone in its vicinity, which lie in a regular position upon the ground, and have afforded matter of speculation to travellers for centuries. Two or three miles beyond it, we scrambled over the ruins of one caravanserai, called Yamuk, passed another in a state of occupancy, and halted at a third, which, though crowded with horses and mules, was little better than a ruin. It was called Davatdar. We found here some pilgrims from Shiraz, bound to Mecca. In former ages the Persian pilgrims to the Holy City pursued the shorter route by Bagdad, but the current has been turned from that direction by the difficulties of the journey, and now follows the circuitous route by Tebriz, Erzroum, Malatieh, Aintab, and Damascus, which the reader may trace on the map.

The country presents nearly the same features as last described, until reaching Haji Ghias, a small village where we spent the fourth night. Between the caravanserai of Davatdar and this place, we noticed a range of mountains, called Busgutch, running parallel to our course, several miles to the North. We crossed small streams flowing from them to the Kizzil Euzen. The first ran through a meadow called, I suppose from its barren and sterile appearance, Kara Tchemen, or Black Meadow, and the other received its name of Turkman Tchai, from the village of Turkman, which lay two or three miles north of our road. Another very small stream runs close by Haji Ghias. All these were mere rivulets, such as, in another country, a traveller would drive his

horse through without noticing; but, in Persia, the smallest thread of water is a blessing which is thought worthy of a reputation and a name.

At Haji Ghias, the Mollah of the village, a character corresponding to the Turkish village-Imam, came to see us, and I made some inquiries respecting his school. The common schools in Turkey and Persia are nearly the same, both in the manner of conducting them and in the studies pursued. At present, I will only make a general observation with regard to those of Persia, by way of qualifying a remark which I have repeatedly met with in works on that country—a remark which is literally correct, but, as it is commonly understood, conveys a very erroneous impression. The remark is, that two-thirds of the males in Persia can read; the truth is, that in the case of a great majority of these two-thirds, the reading is the same as is taught in the schools, and consists only in repeating the words of the Koran, without understanding them.

Our next day's ride, between Haji Ghias and Mianeh, was extremely uninteresting. The face of the country presented the most desolate and dreary appearance, being everywhere broken into small hills, with dry and barren rocks protruding above the ground in every direction. We met with hardly any signs of cultivation or life, excepting a few tents of Æliauts. We had often descried the temporary habitations of these nomades of Persia at a distance, and we now had an opportunity of seeing something of their occupants. I could discover nothing more than is common to people of this character in the East. Their hue was several shades darker than that of the inhabitants of cities, and their females were unveiled. A number of horses were feeding near the tents, and the men themselves appeared to be profes-

sional horse-dealers. Some of the animals were remarkably beautiful, and the best of them were offered to us at twelve tomans, or about six pounds sterling. As we approached Mianeh, we passed several rice-fields on the banks of the river which flows near the town. They were surrounded by low dikes of earth, and were flooded, to the depth of a foot, by water brought from the river through small canals.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MIANEH AND THE KOFLAN KQH.

MIANEH — VENOMOUS INSECT — VALLEY OF MIANEH — KOFLAN KQH — THE MAIDEN'S TOWER — KURDS — SINGULAR COUNTRY — PERSIAN VICES — REMEDY — THEORY OF MISSIONARY LABOUR AMONG THE PERSIANS — OUR DUTY TO THE EASTERN CHURCHES.

MIANEH is a dirty little *Cassabah*, or second-rate town, of about 2500 inhabitants. It has considerably increased of late years. Its chief production is rice. It is notorious, throughout the province, for a species of bug, the bite of which is said to be mortal. As I was to spend a Sunday here, we searched the place for a new house, and, at last, found one half-finished, in which we bestowed ourselves. I saw nothing of the insects for which the place is famous, excepting two or three which I hired a man to find and bring to me. They infest the crevices of the wood in old houses, and come out only in the night, when, it is said, a burning candle will keep them at a distance. Those that were shown to me were of a dusky colour, almost circular in shape, and nearly a quarter of an inch in diameter, very thin, and having the mouth beneath, without any head. The people called them *meleh*. They confirmed the evil reports that I had heard respecting their noxious qualities, but said that strangers only were injured by their bite, and that even to them it was not always fatal, and might be

rendered entirely harmless by fasting. The effect, they said, may follow in two or three days, or not till after the lapse of months. Upon the whole, I suspect the place has a worse reputation than it deserves on this account. Being, however, enclosed by heights, and having numerous rice-fields in its vicinity, it is subject to fevers, which have, doubtless, been the cause in many cases of the evils attributed to insects. Although it was now the first of October, we found the heat excessive. The town has some trade with Resht, the great mart for rice, which is nine days distant, over the mountains of the Caspian.

We left Mianeh on Monday morning, and descended into the valley of the river before mentioned, which sweeps round behind the town and goes to the north-east, along the base of the Koflan Koh. The bed of the valley was covered with extensive fields of cotton and grain. The pods of the former were already open, and the grain was lying in sheaves. There were two villages to our left, on the side of the valley, one of which bore the singular name of *Ghiden Ghelen*, Going and Coming. We passed the main stream of the river on a fine brick bridge, paved with stone, and resting on twenty-two arches. I estimated its length, by the rate at which we crossed it, at nearly one sixth of a mile. The river beneath was, at this season, only a narrow stream two or three feet deep.

The southern boundary of this valley is the great range of the Koflan Koh, which forms the barrier between Aderbeijan and the Persian Irak at the present day, as it did formerly between the countries of the Medes and Parthians. We were two hours in crossing it, from which I judge that the passage is easier than it was two centuries ago, for Chardin and

Lucas found four and five hours necessary for the purpose. There are still to be seen the remains of a road which existed in their time. It appeared to have been well made and smoothly paved, but a large part of it has been destroyed by the lapse of years. In some places, the whole road had slidden down the declivities by its side, and the stones lay strewed about beneath. In others, it was still passable, and is of essential service when the heavy soil of the mountains is saturated with rain. The mountains themselves are bare of trees, and, though thrown together in rugged and confused masses, present little of the wild and majestic scenery of the Turkish ranges.

As we were descending on the southern side, we descried a ruined tower, on a solitary crag to the left. Our guide called it the Maiden's Tower, and said that the story of its origin among the people of the region, was, that the daughter of an ancient king of the country, becoming enamoured of a shepherd who fed his flocks among the mountains, and being opposed by her father, fled hither and built this tower, where she lived in secret and enjoyed from time to time the society of her lover. But another obstacle was still in her way. The shepherd, in order to reach the tower, was obliged to ford a stream which was so deep and rapid as greatly to retard his arrival. She, therefore, caused a beautiful bridge to be built over it, "which," the guide added in confirmation of the whole story, "you may see for yourself at the foot of the mountain." It proved to be the bridge over the Kizzil Euzen, which washes the southern side of the range. Though partially decayed, it was still a beautiful structure of brick, sustained by three noble arches. The river is more deep and rapid than that of Mianeh, which joins it a few miles below and goes off



with it to the Caspian. The range runs, as nearly as I could judge from the compass, as it is delineated on the map, and the river has about the same direction. It may be that this range is connected with the Taurus, and, if so, there is a great natural division extending without interruption from the Mediterranean to the heart of Central Asia.

In the valley of the Kizzil Euzen, we passed several tents, and, to my surprise, I found that the occupants were Kurds, who had emigrated from other quarters and were spending their summer here, cultivating rice and grain. They retain, however, so much of their old habits as to retire to their villages on the approach of winter.

The appearance of the country beyond the river, as we observed it from the mountains, was very peculiar. It looked as if some convulsion of nature had caused it to melt and boil, and then suffered it to congeal while in a state of ebullition. In other words, the whole surface was tossed up into little mounds, which we found, when we came among them, to abound in chalk of the purest quality, and which, as our guide informed us, furnish the best flints for traffic. We passed through this region, and stopped to rest and refresh ourselves at an old caravanserai, called Jemalabat, attributed, like the causeway upon the mountains, to Shah Abbas. It stood nearly on the site of one still more ancient, of which only the last remnants appeared. A small village occupies the place. At the entrance sat a female in gaudy attire of scarlet and blue, with unveiled face, "lying in wait at the corner\*."

I would gladly have avoided any reference to such

\* Prov. vii. 12.

incidents as that just stated, but it is impossible to convey a correct idea of Eastern character, without, at least, a passing allusion to this and to other vices by which it is deeply stained.

In Persia, there still exists, as there has existed for centuries, a custom which prevents, in some measure, the great prevalence of more public and common vice. A man is allowed to marry *pro tempore*. A regular contract is made, and the conditions and duration of the connexion specified. Many of the inferior sort of Mollahs gain, in good part, their livelihood by negotiating these contracts. The custom is not only prevalent among the Persians, but has been practised, to a very considerable extent, by foreigners resident in the country, the females, in this case, being generally, if not always, Armenians.

Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,  
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

Would that this were all that might be recorded on this painful subject! Such unhappily is not the case. The disclosures that were made to me while pursuing my investigations were shocking beyond description, and prove the almost universal prevalence of the most abandoned profligacy. Over such details, however, I gladly draw a veil.

What can cleanse such pollution, unless it be the purifying influence of the religion of Christ? And through what channel shall that influence go forth, if it be not through the Church of Christ? Here is a great work for the missionary. Whatever caution may be necessary in assailing the doctrines of Mohammedanism, or in promulgating the cardinal truths of Christianity, he need use no reserve in rebuking the vices of the Persians, and in setting forth the moral law in its utmost strictness.

The boast of Mohammedanism is the morality which it inculcates, and this boast is the weapon which can be most effectually used against it. A Mussulman not only listens with patience to the strongest delineations of moral duty, but they invariably increase his respect for the teacher. Many of the Mohammedan treatises on practical religion may be read with profit, even by a Christian. They inculcate the fear and love of God, humility, patience, resignation, purity, and kindness, very much in the spirit and manner of the Old Testament. The religious state of the Mohammedans corresponds remarkably with that of the Jews at the coming of Christ; and the introduction of Christianity furnishes us with the true model of a Christian mission among the Mohammedans. Each missionary should be a John the Baptist, preaching repentance to a guilty nation, or, like the Saviour, should go about teaching the spiritual character of the Law of God. The Mohammedans, like the Jews in our Saviour's time, have departed very far even from the original spirit of their own religion. Their moral character has degenerated, and their religious practice has become a round of vain and frivolous superstitions. It stands only in meats and drinks, in divers washings and carnal ordinances. They need first of all a forerunner to prepare the way of the Lord. They need to feel their moral necessity of another Mediator and a better Covenant.

I would not propose that missionaries should be employed for the sole purpose of preaching to the Mohammedans, but only that, while pursuing their work of translation or of instruction, they should avail themselves of the numberless opportunities of conversing upon the great themes of moral obligation. Whole days might often be profitably spent in this work, and no day need

to pass without some effort of the kind. The missionary to the Eastern Christians, also, might, in this way, greatly extend his sphere of usefulness. The influence of the German missionaries at Tebriz was most happy in this respect. The power of a holy example gained for them and for their religion a deep and abiding regard, while their instructions upon moral duty had evidently, in several individual instances, produced the effect of softening and purifying the conscience.

It is in this same relation, that the work of elevating the Christian Churches, in those countries, assumes a momentous importance. Mohammedanism, as it now is, could no more stand before a purified Christianity than the mists of the morning can stand before the purging beams of the sun. But what can we expect from our religion, when its primitive character is so far departed as to allow the followers of Mohammed to boast a higher degree of moral rectitude than the disciples of Christ? The time will come, it is even now coming, when the Churches of the Western world will no longer endure this stain upon the escutcheons of their faith; when they will no longer be heedless to the spiritual wants of their Episcopal brethren in the East, nor regardless of the welfare of the Church of Christ in the lands whence they received the blessed boon of a spiritual and living faith, which is now, in return, asked of them.

## CHAPTER V.

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### JOURNEY FROM THE KOFLAN KOH TO KAZVIN.

VALLEY OF THE ZENJAN RIVER—THE KHAN—BARBARITIES OF THE PERSIAN SOLDIERY—MODE OF IRRIGATION—HAPPY PEASANTS—ZENJAN—DOMESTIC TROUBLES—PLAIN OF SULTANIEH—REMAINS AT SULTANIEH—TROUBLE IN A PERSIAN VILLAGE—PILGRIMS—PERSIAN PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA—THE MOLLAH—PASTORAL LIFE IN THE EAST—MOURNING AT GRAVES—APPROACH TO KAZVIN.

WE stopped for the night, after crossing the Koflan Koh, at the inconsiderable village of Sertchem. The next day we kept along the valley of the Zenjan river, a small stream emptying into the Kizzel Euzen. Its banks presented frequent fields of rice, yellow to the harvest, and others of flax. Tents of Kurds lined the banks. In one place we counted twenty-eight of them. We met on the road a Khan, who had been deputed by the Shah to convey his respects to the Russian emperor, now on a visit to his southern provinces. First came a train of camels, bearing the tents and their furniture. Next, at a distance of about eight miles, followed a troop of beautiful horses, intended as a present to the emperor. Another train conveyed the baggage of the party, and after all came the Khan himself, accompanied by a retinue of about fifty followers. He drew up and made particular inquiries when the emperor was to be at Erivan, and at what time the Emir Nizam was to leave

Tebriz, to escort the young prince into his presence. This prince was the eldest son of the Shah, residing at that time with his mother at Tebriz. He was seven or eight years old, and had been named by the Shah his successor, but was not as yet recognised by the foreign powers represented at the Persian court.

The only building which we passed during the day was an old mill, which had been partly destroyed by soldiers. We heard almost daily complaints of the barbarities practised upon the peasants by marching companies of the army, in their progress from place to place. The villagers charged them with seizing their fowl and sheep by violence, tearing down the walls of their houses to procure wood for fuel, and committing many other depredations of the same character. The Persians dread a marching army more than the plague, and the wars of the Shah are infinitely more disastrous to his own country than to the enemy. We dismounted at Nikbeh, a small village with an old caravanserai, bearing an inscription which purports that it was built 200 years ago.

The next day, we proceeded to Zenjan. The valley, as we approached the town, was almost covered with fields of rice and flax. The stream, in this part, has a rapid descent, which affords a good privilege for irrigating the land. The process is effected by drawing off the water in small channels above the fields, and letting it run down upon them through small gaps in the dike. We saw two or three pleasant villages on the opposite side of the valley, and gardens of willows watered by the stream. On the road we met a troop of pilgrims from Yezd, on their way to Mecca. Among them were old men stooping with age, bound upon paying this last and chief act of devotion, and entertaining, perhaps, no

higher hope for this world than to lay their bones near the holy shrine.

We had but just passed this company when we met a throng of villagers, old and young, men, women, and children, some on foot, and some on donkeys. They were hurrying on in great haste, and every face in the company appeared a happy one. On inquiring the cause of their travelling in such numbers, they said that they were from the district of Maragha, near lake Ourmiah, that their sons and brothers had been serving in the army in Khorassan, two or three years, and, becoming discontented, had demanded permission to return and see their friends. The Shah replied to their importunities, that he would bring their friends to them, and immediately sent orders to the governor to take by force the families of these soldiers and convey them into Khorassan. The order was obeyed. They were torn away from their homes, and driven, like a herd of cattle, from Maragha to Zenjan. Here they had prevailed upon their conductors to suffer them to tarry until they could send a representation of their reduced and miserable condition to the Shah, with an humble petition of leave to return. The Shah had granted their prayer, they had been released that very morning, and were now scampering back to their homes.

We reached Zenjan at an early hour, and passed the rest of that and the whole of the following day there. It is a walled town, governed by a Khan. During the reign of Feth Ali Shah, it was the seat of one of the princes royal, the lofty turret of whose palace and the blue dome of the principal mosque are the most conspicuous objects as one approaches the town. I observed in the bazar many European articles exposed for sale, but all of which I asked the prices were extravagantly

dear. The other parts of the town present nothing inviting. The sum of the whole is, narrow and dirty streets, flanked on either side by continuous lines of bare mud walls; and this, I believe, is a fair though brief description of the interior aspect of all Persian towns.

The population of the place, which is about 8000, is entirely Mussulman, excepting seven or eight families of Jews, and the town has some trade with Tehran, Tebriz, Resht, and Hamadan. The latter place is only five days distant, and, if we had not had the capital of Persia before us, we might have turned our faces directly towards Bagdad. John had settled into a home-sickness as uncomfortable to me as to himself. The dishonesty of our servant, and the knavery of the people, irritated him beyond measure, and he began to grow so sullen and peevish that I felt disposed to join in the wish, which he never failed to ejaculate many times a day, that he were safe back in Constantinople. We could easily have joined a caravan bound to Hamadan, and John importuned me incessantly to proceed thither directly. But the interests of my mission required me to visit Tehran. John submitted with a very ill grace, and, all the rest of the way to the capital, was more a plague than a comfort to me.

Soon after leaving Zenjan, we entered upon the extensive plain of Sultanieh. In front, as far as the eye could reach, was one broad sheet of seared herbage, upon which numerous herds, appearing in the distance like black spots sprinkled over the yellow surface, were feeding. The plain was bounded on the right and left by two parallel ranges strongly marked with the common features of Persian mountains, barren, dark, and presenting bold and sharp outlines, like the skeletons of



mountains, as though nature had been interrupted while rearing them, and had left her work unfinished. We could just descry the extremity of the range on the left, breaking out boldly upon the hazy surface of the plain, like headlands into the sea.

As we surmounted a slight inequality in the plain, there appeared before us what, at first, seemed like an ancient pile in the midst of trees, with a blue dome rising near. I fancied them to be the ruins of Sultanieh, once the renowned capital of the Empire, but, on approaching, the illusion gradually vanished, and they proved to be a large, irregular brick building, on a high and apparently artificial mound rising out of the plain. The edifice was one of the numerous summer-houses of the late Shah, but was now deserted. The straggling and half-decayed trees gave an air of desolation to the spot which they were designed to enliven. Black clouds were hanging about the opposite mountains, and shrouding them in deep gloom. Darkness was gathering over the plain, the wind was whistling through the tall, dry herbage, and drops of rain began to fall. How solemn is the dreariness of a scene where silence and desolation reign in places once gay with the pageant of royalty!

Close by the mound was a small village, surrounded by a handsome wall and containing fifteen houses. It was another memento of the vanity of human ambition. The Shah projected a royal city, which should replace and rival the ancient Sultanieh. He commenced the work, but, whether he had begun without counting the cost, or whether his royal fancy changed, it ended with this little village, which has been honoured with the regal name of Sultanabad, intended for the city.

Just beyond this village, we began to enter upon the ruins of Sultanieh, which consist of nothing more than

irregular heaps of earth, the buildings which once stood there having, doubtless, long since mingled with the soil out of which they were made. At the extremity of the ruins stands the present village of Sultanieh, containing 300 families. It was built around the edifice which had attracted our attention from afar by its blue dome, and which we now learned to be the mausoleum of the Sultan Mohammed Khodabendeh, 600 years old. Travellers have reported it one of the most perfect of ancient structures to be found in Persia; which is certainly no extravagant assertion for a country where very few buildings of equal antiquity are to be found. It is octagonal in form, and had originally a minaret at each angle, only one of which still remains entire. The main part of the building is also complete, though rent, as if by earthquakes. The interior is vacant and in ruin. The tomb of the monarch who reared this proud memorial for himself, has entirely disappeared, and Time is erasing the inscriptions on the walls. I ascended with some difficulty to the top of one of the broken minarets, from which I obtained a good view of the surrounding plain. Two or three other buildings of the same character, though of humble pretensions, appeared at a distance, one of which, apparently new, my guide called the Imaret of Feth Ali Shah.

The next day we advanced to Hiyeh, a village of 100 families, our whole course, a distance of more than twenty miles, lying over the plain. We passed the ruins of several villages, and went through one which was occupied. On my arrival at Hiyeh, I took lodgings in a house, which, like the guest-houses of Turkey, accommodated me and my horses in the same apartment. John, partly from attachment to Turkish habits, and partly for the sake of economy, still retained the

saine dress he had worn in Turkey. As soon as we were settled in our stable, he went abroad, and ere long made acquaintance with one of the principal men of the village, who invited him to his house. John immediately returned and extended the invitation to me. As I was to spend the next day, which was Sunday, in the place, I gladly accepted it, and we repaired together to the house. The master met us at the gate, but appeared surprised to find that John had a companion with him. He had taken him for a Mussulman, and seemed evidently chagrined when he learned that he had invited Christians under his roof. I made a motion to return, but he recovered himself, and insisted upon our entering, crying out at the same time to the females of the house to veil themselves. He had prepared his harem, which was a handsome and well-furnished apartment, for our reception. He still appeared, however, ill at ease, and we found substantial reason on our part to be discontented also. His house was thronged with vermin, and we were not a little startled at finding, the next morning, that, among other varieties of insects, we had been molested by bugs of the same description that we had seen at Mianeh. Our host insisted that they were of a more innocent character, and as we felt no immediate bad effects from them, we were ready enough to believe him. After a few days, however, the parts that had been bitten began to swell, and other effects soon followed, which I need not here describe. When we left Tehran, more than a month afterwards, John was still unable to draw on his boots, and to the latest day of our companionship in travel, we had cause to regret having imposed upon our host at Hiyeh a ceremonial uncleanness at the expense of receiving so real and abiding an impurity in return.

From Hiyeh there are two routes to Kazvin, one

more circuitous, over the plain, and the other across the mountains on the opposite side. The former appeared the most pleasant, for we could discover, soon after leaving Hiyeh, an almost unbroken line of gardens, extending off, through a fine valley, upon the western edge of the plain, and we heard of several flourishing villages in that direction. But our muleteer insisted that the mountain road was shorter, and that it was the only one ever travelled by men of his profession. When an Oriental comes to the argument, *It is the custom*, there is no more hope of convincing him to the contrary, so we submitted, and struck across the plain towards the mountains.

We met, on our way, another train of pilgrims to Mecca, coming from Kazvin. In the company were two females, who were carried in covered pavilions, suspended from the sides of a horse. All the party were arrayed in new apparel, and appeared fresh and strong. It was curious to remark the variety of feeling which their countenances expressed. Some rode proudly forward, without deigning a look at us; others moved along with their faces bent down, as if in sober meditation; and some of the youngest among them were as full of animation and glee as if bound upon an excursion of pleasure.

One of the company was a Mollah, who entered into conversation with us. From him we learned that there were, that year, 2000 pilgrims from Kazvin to Mecca, meaning, doubtless, from the city and its villages. I made repeated inquiries at different points in Persia, to ascertain the average number of pilgrims who annually go from all parts of the country to pay their devotions at the Kaabah. If my information is correct, there are not less than from 25,000 to 30,000. Making all fair allowance for the Persian propensity to exaggeration, the

number would still be very large, when we consider the difficulties and even dangers of the road, and the ignominy to which they are compelled to submit in their journey through the country of the Sunnites, and even on the sacred ground of Mecca. I have often heard it affirmed by Turks that Persians are not allowed to enter the inclosure of the temple, and are compelled to perform their devotions without. If so, they do not drink of the well Zem-zem, nor kiss the black stone of the Kaabah, two acts of piety which are among the principal objects of the pilgrimage. I am slow, however, to believe that the assertion is correct. The Persian Manual (Jumah Abasi) gives particular directions for the due performance of the religious ceremonies on entering the inclosure and while within it, which would seem to show that no such prohibition existed formerly, if it exists at present. It is certain, however, that they are obliged to conform to the custom of the Sunnites in their religious observances at the temple, and, indeed, their own Doctors allow them to make such concessions, at all times, while travelling in Turkey. Notwithstanding so many of them are found ready to undergo the expense and hazard of the journey, they do not hold the pilgrimage to be as obligatory as the Turks are accustomed to regard it. The difficulties attending it, the large amount of means necessary, the vexations consequent on travelling through a Sunnite country, and the contumelies to which they are exposed at Mecca, justify them, in their view, in neglecting the duty for very trivial reasons.

The old Mollah with whom we were conversing, offered us his kalioun. I declined it because he was not yet informed that I was a Christian, and I had no wish to inflict any more ceremonial uncleannesses. John, however, accepted the offer, and, when he had returned

the pipe, the Mollah inquired if he were a Mussulman. John confessed his faith, and saw the politeness of the Mollah end in ordering the kalioun to be washed all over before his eyes.

After leaving the plain, we continued our way over the mountains on its eastern border. Their appearance, in crossing them, was rather more grateful than the distant view, for, though they were chiefly barren, we noticed here and there a watered valley and a deserted or inhabited village. The path, though uneven and rocky, was not difficult, and we reached Kereshken, a walled village, containing 100 families, just as the shepherd was driving in the village herds. The practice here, as in many other parts of the East, is for the peasants to employ one of their number in tending all the cattle of the village. He drives them abroad in the morning, accompanied by dogs, and returns with them at sunset. As they enter the village, the herds separate and go off to their respective homes, or their owners come out and drive them in. The shepherd receives a small stipend from each villager, and is also entitled to a present from the owner, for every new-born young one that he brings home. This mode of pastoral life is often alluded to in the Bible, and is, doubtless, as ancient as that holy book itself.

As we descended from the hills, the next morning, a wide and pleasant prospect lay before us. On every side, over the dry and parched plain, appeared clusters of trees, marking the sites of villages. Near one of them we passed a burying-ground, where several Persian women were seated on new-made graves, bewailing the loss of those who were reposing beneath. The sight would be a more affecting one if it were always the overflowing of natural grief. But it is often only the mock-

ery of sorrow, which custom requires to be exhibited over the graves of the deceased. As we approached Kazvin, we entered among vineyards, which extended, on both sides, beyond the reach of the eye, and, in front, to the very walls of the city. We rode four miles through them before we reached the gate. It was now the season of the vintage. Multitudes of asses were bearing panniers laden with the grapes towards the town, and others, that had been relieved of their burdens, were returning. A troop of boys, with baskets on their shoulders, were scrambling and fighting for the manure which the donkeys left on the road. The victorious ones gathered it up in their hands, and, filling their baskets, trudged off to the city. The vineyards were laid out in squares, separated by ridges of earth, and the vine, which was of a small species, was planted in rows.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### KAZVIN.

SITUATION — INTERIOR — THE PEOPLE — MEDRESSEHS — RUINED PALACE — LANGUAGE — STORY-TELLER — PERSIAN DERVISHES — THE YOUNG DERVISH — TRAVELLING TURKS — THEIR OPINIONS CONCERNING PERSIA — PREVALENCE OF LYING AMONG THE PERSIANS — TESTIMONY OF HERODOTUS — MY OWN IMPRESSIONS — ILLUSTRATIONS — DECEPTION PRACTISED ON A FOREIGNER — SOURCE OF THE VICE.

KAZVIN is situated on the plain over which we had been travelling, and not far from the mountains. Its position is low, and nothing, excepting one or two blue domes and a tall square tower rising above the Governor's palace, can be seen without. I was surprised to find, on entering it, that it was the best-looking town I had seen in Persia, and my first impressions were confirmed in walking through its streets. Although there are as many deserted and ruined houses as occupied ones, many of its buildings are of kiln-burnt bricks, which give the walls a more agreeable aspect than the muddy hue of bricks dried in the sun. The bazars, from their irregularity perhaps, appeared to me even larger than those of Tebriz, and on the whole better constructed, large portions of them being of brick with arched roofs. Many of them, however, are partly deserted, and, altogether, they do not offer so much to attract the eye as those of the northern city. There are forty-eight caravanserais, the best of which are connected with the



bazars by vaulted passages. The caravanserais in the cities of Persia, like those in Turkey, are not always intended for the accommodation of caravans. Nearly half of those in Kazvin are exclusively occupied by resident merchants, and such are always the most comfortable for travellers.

According to the best information which I could obtain, there are 8000 inhabited houses in Kazvin. The population, therefore, cannot be less than 40,000. Excepting a few families of Jews and Armenians, it is entirely Mohammedan. The city is distinguished for the bigotry of the people. I had some unpleasant demonstration of it in visiting the mosques and medressehs, but succeeded in seeing everything which I wished to see. There are, in all, twenty-four mosques, some of which are in the best style of Persian temples of worship. The *Mesjid-i Jumah* \* is a venerable relic of former days. It has two minarets which have hardly lost their blue glazing, and other portions of the building are falling to ruins. A new mosque was in the course of erection, and the strangeness of such a sight induced me to visit it. It was built by bequest of a Mushtehed of the city, who had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and had returned to erect this monument of devotion to his faith and to build his own mausoleum, which stood close by. The construction of the medresseh was peculiar. The central court, instead of being a level square, as in the other medressehs, consisted of several terraces descending to a reservoir in the middle. The mesjid, or

\* *Mesjid-i Jumah*—Mosque of the Assembly. There is generally one of this name in every Persian city, which is the principal temple of worship, and may be called the Cathedral. The great service of Friday is performed in it by the Imam-i Jumah, or Imam of the Assembly, who, in this particular, exercises, temporarily, the office of the lost Imam.

place of worship, occupied one entire side of the building above, and was a long, narrow apartment, finished with the most rigid simplicity. I have before remarked that this is the usual style of the chapels connected with the Persian medressehs.

Kazvin was formerly the seat of royalty, and the palace of the Sefi Kings still remains. It is now the residence of the Beyler Bey, who is a brother of the Shah. The entrance to it was through a court and a covered gallery. The palace itself stands on one side of an interior court, and presents, altogether, a most dilapidated appearance. The Governor is literally an inhabiter among ruins, for a part of the palace has fallen, and the reservoirs in the court are empty. A few plane-trees were the sole remaining decoration of the place, and a group of Russian soldiers, in the service of the prince, were lounging about the walks. The Governor, or some predecessor, has erected a high square tower, on the top of which is an apartment for taking the air. The coolness of those upper regions must be peculiarly refreshing after the toil of ascending to them in a hot summer-day. The approach to the great gate of the outer court is through a long and wide avenue, leading from the bazars and bordered by elms.

Kazvin suffers in prosperity from the want of a plentiful supply of water. Feth Ali Shah had the design of bringing it down to the city from the mountains, but died before the plan was executed.

The place produces nothing of importance, but is the thoroughfare of a great trade between Hamadan, Resht, Tehran, and Tebriz. Hamadan is six and Resht seven days distant.

I met here, for the first time, a native who could not

speak Turkish. Persian was evidently becoming more common, as we advanced towards the South. Its use seems to have increased in these Northern parts since Martyn went through the country in 1812, for he remarks that it was of very little utility to him North of Isfahan. I apprehend that, at the present day, one might hold pretty free communication with the people in that tongue as far North as the Koflan Koh. The Turkish, however, must be considered as the vernacular language of the population along the whole of the route between Tebriz and Tehran, as well as on the road to Bagdad, as far West as Hamadan.

At Kazvin we had an opportunity of listening to a story-teller, who was amusing the people in the bazars. He narrated with great fluency and animation, changing his voice, from time to time, to suit different characters, and expressing as much by his looks and gestures as by his words. Seats were provided for his hearers, and two or three boys were in attendance to serve them with kaliouns. He saw that we were strangers, and managed to introduce a compliment for us, without losing the thread of his story. He continued in this way for an hour together, his hearers coming and going at their pleasure, and seldom remaining longer than a few minutes.

We saw also large numbers of the Persian dervishes in the city. The character of these pretended devotees is admirably delineated in Morier's excellent work, *Haji Baba in Persia*, a book which contains, perhaps, the most accurate picture of Persian life and manners that has ever been drawn. These religious mendicants resemble more the santons and fakirs of India than the dervishes of Turkey. They are not, like the latter, gathered into communities, but roam over the

country, living upon charity, and practising villanies of every sort. They carry with them a horn, which they blow on approaching a town, and a little wooden vessel in which they receive their alms. They are not respected by the people, and are exceedingly insolent. They are clamorous in demanding charity, and sometimes sit down before a house with the determination not to quit it until money is given. There they remain, day after day, and week after week, execrating the inmates, until their demand is granted, or they are beaten away. One sat in this manner more than three months before the British Residency in Bagdad.

A story was told me at Tehran of another, who placed himself in a niche of the wall in front of the Ambassador's palace. His incessant importunities becoming troublesome, and it not being thought safe to oust him by force, a curious expedient was devised. The Ambassador gave orders that the niche should be bricked up. The dervish was warned of the intention, but persisted in maintaining his position until the wall had advanced as high as his chin, when he thought it prudent to ask a release. In another instance, at Shiraz, a dervish had taken his station at the foot of the flag-staff, where his clamour soon became annoying. The Agent quietly gave orders that the staff should be washed every morning, and a man was sent up for the purpose, who poured down pails full of water, until the intruder beneath was glad to decamp.

One of these dervishes, who came and sung before my door at Kazvin, was a boy. He said in answer to my inquiries, that his father, who was a dervish before him, had trained him for the profession. He had a very interesting, though rather girlish face, and seemed quite unacquainted with the vicious practices

of his craft. The keeper of the caravanserai, however, pronounced him a young rōgue, and drove him out of the court.

Two of our fellow lodgers at the caravanserai, were Turks of Bagdad, who had visited Mecca and returned by the Persian route, for the purpose of seeing the country of the Shiah. They were the first, and I believe, the last, Orientals whom I ever saw travelling for pleasure or observation, and, as they were making purchases for the Bagdad market, I suspect that, even in this instance, it was not the love of knowledge alone which induced them to perform the journey. They were heartily sick of the country, and execrated it in unmeasured terms. The Persians, they said, were a nation of liars, and did not deserve the name of Musulmans. John excited their wrath to the utmost, by relating a remark which he had heard from a Persian merchant in Tebriz, who had said, that he never failed to make a large pilau when a Turk came to trade with him, for he was always sure, in such a case, that no small gain was coming into his coffers.

Our Turkish friends were not entirely wrong in their estimation of Persian character. Philosophers say that one of the principles of association is contrast. It must have been upon this principle that I was so often reminded of the testimony of the Father of History, to the character of the ancient Persians: "Of wine they drink profusely." Here is association by resemblance, for the remark is as true now as it could have been in the days of Hérodotus. But he says again, "from the fifth to the twentieth year, their children are instructed in the use of the bow, horsemanship, and a strict regard to truth;" and again, "they hold falsehood in the greatest abhorrence." Nothing, I fear, could be farther

from the truth in these modern times. There does not, I am ready to believe, exist a country where society approaches more nearly to that, (which moralists have sometimes imagined,) of a community where truth is unknown, than in Persia; and the only reason why there does not exist a corresponding want of confidence, is, in good part, that inherent vanity of the Persians which makes them willing to be deceived. I learned for myself, long before leaving the country, that my only security was in acting upon the supposition that every man was unworthy of trust. My reader can readily imagine, that the shortest residence in such a land must be a source of incessant vexation, which would be doubly aggravated in the case of one whose object was investigation. It is felt, indeed, most deeply at first, for the old residents learn, at length, to accommodate themselves to the condition of society around them, so far, at least, as to become, in a tolerable measure, callous to the evil. My own stay was not sufficiently protracted to allow me to arrive at such a happy state of endurance, and my recollections still retain the freshness of the first impression. That impression, however, was confirmed by the opinions of those whose experience was more mature than mine. "I have never," said a pious and intelligent gentleman who had resided twelve successive years in the country, who had travelled over almost every part of it, and been conversant with all classes, "I have never," he said to me, one day, "seen a Persian whom I found, on good acquaintance, that I could safely trust."

It is wonderful, indeed, with what facility most Persians utter a falsehood. It has often seemed to me like an instinct with them. They are fully conscious of the vice, and acknowledge that it prevails everywhere among them. They perpetrate it with the utmost indifference,

and, on being betrayed, seem to have no shame nor any sense of having done wrong. They practise it with the most astonishing hardihood. I have heard a Persian lie and persist in it even against the immediate evidence of my senses.

They do it often most ungenerously, and even to their benefactors.

They do it with the utmost adroitness and ingenuity. A Mirza, of Tebriz, procured for me a book which I could not conveniently obtain myself. He demanded for it a high price, and, doubtless, made his own profit by it. Two or three days after, he came to me and recounted an adventure which he pretended had just occurred. He had gone, he said, to a medresseh on some business, and while there was accosted by a man, who demanded his book. "What book?" asked the Mirza. "That which you purchased of me the other day." The Mirza denied ever having seen him before. "Well," replied the man, "I committed the book to another to sell, and he let you have it for three and a half tomans, while my price was five tomans. I demand the book or the balance." "I have sold the book," said the Mirza. "To whom?" "To a Frank." This reply drew upon him the rage of the man, who was a Mollah, for selling the book to a Christian. At that moment the Mushtehed passed on his return from the mosque, and to him the Mollah made his complaint. "To whom did you sell the book?" asked the Mushtehed. "To a Frank," cried the Mollah. "To a servant of God," exclaimed the Mirza, "it matters little whether he is a Frank or not." In fine, he talked so boldly in defence of my rights, as to offend the Mushtehed, who adjudged the cause to the Mollah, but, upon the earnest remonstrance of the Mirza, finally decided that he should pay five

*sahib krans*. "This," concluded the Mirza, "I gladly paid to get rid of the affair." The whole of this ingenious story, as I had abundant reason afterwards to believe, was fabricated to gain my good-will, which the Mirza happened to have an interest in securing, and to extort from me the trifling sum of 5*s*.

Another instance was related to me by a gentleman who was a party in the case. He was attached to the English embassy, and was hastening towards Tehran, in order, if possible, to arrive before the ambassador, who was on his way thither from another quarter. While still several days distant, he made inquiries of a Persian coming from there, who assured him that the minister had arrived. The gentleman, wishing to be accurately informed concerning the matter, repeated the question. The Persian solemnly swore that he spoke the truth, went into a minute description of the minister's reception, and declared that he was himself among those who witnessed the ceremonies on the occasion. The gentleman went on his way, arrived in due time in the city, and found that the ambassador had not come, and eventually did not arrive for some days after.

Instances of a graver character and bearing more immediately upon the principal objects of my inquiries, might be narrated. One or two will suffice. Soon after my arrival in Tebriz, a young Persian called upon me and expressed a strong desire to study English. Knowing that I was a clergyman, he professed his great motive to be that he might be able to learn something of the Christian religion. To use his own words, which I recorded soon after the interview, "Men," he said, "must die. I also am human and cannot live for ever. I wish to learn something of religion, to compare what the Messiah has written with what Mohammed has



written. My prophet, I am convinced, has uttered many things that are false. He declared himself at liberty to have more wives than other men, whereas, being a prophet, he ought not to have been attached to the things of this world. This is only one instance. Now I wish to learn the truth, and to this end am desirous of studying English that I may read and understand the truth." Unfortunately for this specious profession, I ascertained soon after, that the Mirza cared nothing for religion, and was far from being a serious man, and, at length, I obtained from himself the confession that his sole motive was worldly ambition. He had hoped that the knowledge of English would récommend him to the notice of the Shah and gain for him riches and honour.

The source of this pernicious habit it is not difficult to trace. Some have attempted to explain it as a natural consequence of civil oppression. But this is not enough; for the same effect does not, in the same notable degree, flow from the same cause in Turkey. Its chief source is to be sought for in the native character of the Persians. Their imaginativeness of mind and their love of the marvellous may partly account for it in the instances of their wonderful relations. Their extreme affability and politeness, strange as it may seem, help to the same effect; for they will sometimes deceive for the mere sake of pleasing. Their vanity, also, and their love of self, are powerful auxiliaries, and their inordinate fondness for favour, gain, and emolument, leads them to make many false pretensions, and to resort to every species of trickery and fraud to secure the most trivial advantage. But that which lies beneath all these, and which is the root of all, is their want of conscientiousness, the singular weakness of their moral principle.

## CHAPTER VII.

### JOURNEY TO TEHRAN. THE CAPITAL.

LEAVE KAZVIN—GRAPES AND WINE—THE PLAIN—CAMELS AND HORSES—  
A VILLAGE—MODE OF IRRIGATION—FEVERS—THE PLAIN OF TEHRAN—  
ROYAL PROJECTS—ROUTE—PERSIAN PRESENTS—FIRST VIEW OF TEHRAN—  
RECEPTION AT THE CAPITAL—LANGUAGES—ORIGIN OF TEHRAN—  
DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY—AMBASSADORS' RESIDENCES—THE ROYAL  
PALACE—DESCRIPTION OF ITS PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS AND COURTS—  
POPULATION OF THE CITY—ENGLISH RESIDENTS—FEVER—THE POST—  
RUINS OF RHEY.

WE now proceed with our narrative. Issuing from the gate of Kazvin, opposite to that at which we had entered three days before, we found the vineyards on this side as extensive as those on the other. They appeared, indeed, to surround the city entirely to a distance of several miles from its walls. Both the grapes and wine of Kazvin have some celebrity. The latter, doubtless, is made by the few Jews and Christians in the city; a business that would not be winked at, if they were, also, the only consumers.

Beyond the vineyards, the plain assumed the most desolate and barren appearance. No cultivation appeared. The gravelly soil gave support only to a dry, thorny herb, which seemed incapable of affording nutriment to any living thing. Yet herds of camels were browsing upon it as eagerly as if they had never before tasted so great a luxury. I can bear testimony to the

truth of some ancient writer, which Gibbon somewhere calls in question, of the antipathy existing between the horse and the camel. Whenever we passed trains of these animals, our horses invariably showed signs of terror and sheered from the road. The common travelling horses in Turkey and Persia differ in no respect that I could discover from the same class in the United States. They have no superior qualities, and it is very rare to find one which the traveller can ride with even tolerable comfort. They have almost uniformly the habit of stumbling, and, from the badness of the roads or some other cause, their feet are seldom entirely sound. Mules are also employed for bearing burdens, especially in Persia, where there is, besides, a superior kind used for the saddle. Camels are to be found in almost every part, but, of all the countries which I traversed, they were most numerous in Asia Minor, and European Turkey. There is no reason for supposing this useful animal to be exclusively an inhabitant of the desert. Those in European Turkey are indigenous, and are said to be of an excellent stock.

We halted, the first night after leaving Kazvin, at Keushlak, a little walled village containing 100 families. Near by is a mound about twenty feet high, with a small summer-house upon it. Both the mound and the house were reared to afford lodgings to the late Shah, for a single night. Behind the village were extensive vineyards, which were now yielding their produce, and most of the villagers were engaged in making *pekmez*, a syrup resembling molasses, from them. For this purpose, the grapes were first put into coarse bags and the juice extracted by treading. It was then converted into the syrup by boiling it in large kettles.

The next day we advanced to Songourabad, still

upon the plain. The neighbouring mountains had been covered with a sheet of snow during the night, and the cool bracing air of the morning reminded me of the approach of a New-England winter. The plain was better watered and more cultivated as we approached the end of our day's stage, and we noticed, in every direction, the black tents of the *Æliauts* and the green clusters of the trees around the distant villages.

The mode of irrigating the Persian plains shows how essential irrigation is to their fertility. Sources are first found in the hills, and the water is conducted from them through the plain to any point desired. For this purpose wells are sunk at short intervals along the line which the stream is to follow, and subterranean passages are then dug from well to well, until the water is brought to the distant villages and fields. The earth, thrown up from the wells, forms little mounds around them, by which the eye can trace, at a glance, the direction and length of these subterranean aqueducts. We remarked some of them on the plain of Kazvin, which could not have been less than twenty miles in length.

I spent a Sunday in Sougourabad, and read the Services of the Church in a quiet retreat among the trees of the gardens. The place appears to have been once a considerable village, but now contained only forty families. In almost every house some were sick with the intermittent fever, which is extremely prevalent in Persia during the hot season and the time of fruit. We found it prevailing in almost every village through which we had passed. It arises, I suppose, from the variability of the temperature and the excess of the people in eating fruit. They may almost be said to live upon it while it is fresh, and they begin to eat it long before it is ripe. Foreigners, of course, are equally exposed, but

as they practise greater caution, they do not suffer in any remarkable degree from it. Some of them go so far as to abstain entirely from fruit—an abstinence which must require considerable self-denial in a country where so much delicious fruit abounds. Having learned from my medical friend at Tebriz what Calomel and Quinine were, and how and when they should be used, I spent a part of the day at Sougourabad, in administering from the little stock with which he had provided me.

Beyond Sougourabad, the great plain which we had entered soon after leaving Zenjan, and on which we had been travelling six days, opens into the still broader plain of Tehran, which stretches off, on the South East, to the Great Salt Desert, and expands, on the South West, into a wide level country, the same that we afterwards traversed in going to Hamadan. On leaving Sougourabad, our course turned more easterly, approaching the front range of the great Elburz Mountains, which bound the plain on that side.

Three hours from Sougourabad, we passed the village of Sulimanieh, another of the projected cities of the late Shah. The old King seems to have abandoned his caprices as suddenly as he formed them, but it is in the real spirit of a Persian to have magnificent schemes running wild in his imagination, which make but a poor show when they come to be executed.

A little beyond, we crossed the Karatch, a small stream which descends from the mountains, and, before it has proceeded far, is entirely lost in irrigation. When we had reached the hills, we kept along their base, the plain on our right appearing more rich and populous as we advanced. As we could not reach the city before night, we stopped at Soula Khenti, a large village situated in a labyrinth of gardens. Besides the common

fruit-trees and the vine, I noticed there the poplar, the elm, the walnut, and the fig-tree. The last I did not recollect to have seen before in Persia. This was, also, the first village in which the Persian appeared to be more common than the Turkish. Some of the villagers brought in dishes filled with the most delicious fruit, and, setting them before me, told me that they were *presents*. Such little civilities are, at first, very gratifying to the traveller, but he soon learns enough of the nature of a Persian present to be aware that it is never bestowed without the expectation of a return of double its value. The custom of presents is probably as universal now in the East as in the days of the Patriarchs, and the design of them is the same now as it was in olden times. The stories of Abraham's presents to the relations of Rebekah, Gen. xxiv., of Jacob's to his brother Esau, Gen. xxxii., and to his son Joseph, as Governor of Egypt, Gen. xliii., are perfect illustrations of modern usage among Eastern people.

Through the kindness of English friends, I was provided with comfortable lodgings in Tehran, even before I arrived in the city. One of them, whom I had met at Tebriz, had offered me the use of his house, then vacant, during my stay at the Capital. Accordingly, I sent forward my servant from the last village to prepare it, while John and myself, with the muleteer, advanced more slowly towards the city. We approached it over the sloping ground which declines from the base of the mountains into the plain. The city itself did not appear until we had advanced quite near to it. Its position was even lower than the level of the plain around it, and seemed, as it really is, the most ineligible site that could have been chosen for a city in all the region about. It stands in a depressed place, in an angle of the mountains,

where a spur from the main range runs off to the South, and looks out upon the plain towards the South, South-West, and West. The site appears as if it had been chosen for no other reason than because it is a favourable spot for concentrating the sun's rays and generating fevers. Still the scene was a pleasing one, when the city first opened upon the view. Before us, and a little below our level, appeared the walls, the uniformity of which was relieved by bastions at regular intervals. Nothing was to be seen above them, excepting a cluster of foliage, and the gilded summit of the Royal Mosque (*Mesjid-i Shah*) glittering in the sun. On the right was the plain, with its scattered villages, all lying in such deep repose that a train of camels, coming in on the Hamadan road, at once riveted our attention, from their being the only moving objects on the whole broad expanse. On the opposite side, in an elevated spot near the angle of the mountains, stood a summer palace of the Shah, with a mass of rich dark foliage in front. Beyond the mountains, and towering far above them, rose the pyramidal form of the Peak of Demavend, entirely covered with a mantle of virgin snow.

Immediately upon my arrival in the city I delivered my letters, and found myself very soon at home in the midst of some twenty English residents. It was a luxury which no one who has never been in similar circumstances can easily imagine, to fall among men speaking my own language. The sound of English after I had ceased to hear it for weeks, startled me with something of that pleasant surprise that one feels on hearing an old and almost forgotten song. The very pleasure of speaking it was, for a day or two, a positive enjoyment in itself. With John I had made it a rule, from the first, to converse only in Turkish, excepting when some pri-

vate communication was necessary in the presence of others. He stood in the place of an interpreter, and had engaged to serve me in that capacity whenever his aid was required. I remember, however, only two or three instances in which he was called upon to interpret, and these were in certain interviews with Turkish Governors or Pashas, where some little ceremony was necessary. On all other occasions, I conferred directly with the people, and put myself, as much as possible, on intimate terms with them. John, however, rendered me most essential service by explaining any new phrase that might arise in conversation, correcting my errors, and exercising me, as we rode along or sat together, in the idioms of the language. He was himself a good Turkish scholar, and, among all the desultory occupations of his life, had been, at one time, a teacher of the language in Constantinople.

TEHRAN, now the capital of the Persian Empire, appears to have been a place of very little importance until the middle of the last century, when Agha Mohammed Shah, the founder of the present dynasty, removed the seat of government thither, from Isfahan, in order to be nearer his own tribe, the Kujars of Mezanderan, on whom he chiefly depended for the support of his throne. Before this the town seems to have been little known. In the days of the old travellers it was a village, and the great route to the South did not pass through it. It had, from the first, no local advantages, aside from its proximity to Mezanderan, for which it could have been chosen as the seat of royalty, and now, after fifty years, it has hardly any other recommendation. The place presents, in outward appearance, none of the features of a royal city. Its bazars are extensive and are roofed with tile, so as to present a succession of small



domes. They are filthy, however, and less attractive in every respect than those of Tebriz. They are thronged with beasts as well as men, which makes a walk through them no easy nor pleasant matter. The streets are peculiarly bad, for the most part destitute of pavements, narrow, irregular, encumbered with filth, and full of dangerous holes. The houses are extraordinarily mean, even for an Eastern town, and unsightly ruins, covering, in some instances, extensive areas, frequently meet the eye. Near the gate at which we entered the city, we passed an open space, by the side of the street, on which were several apertures leading to subterranean apartments. Some travellers have conjectured that the occupants are a remnant of an ancient race of the country, (the Triglodites, I believe,) who used to live under ground. It may be so, but it affects one strangely, on entering the city of the Shah, with his imagination, perhaps, full of splendid palaces and Oriental luxury, to see (almost the first thing as he enters the gate,) a herd of human beings burrowing in the earth like moles. It was, perhaps, some disappointment of this kind which made my whole impression of Tehran more unfavourable than it would have been, deprived of the association of royalty. Besides, for the most of the few weeks spent there, I was suffering with the intermittent, which, in itself, is no generator of bright emotions, and which, as it prevailed all over the city, I was ready to put in the same account with the other disadvantages of the place.

All these things might, with equal truth, be objected to many European cities, but here, at Tehran, are no magnificent structures or outward marks of grandeur to affect the general meanness of its appearance. The palace of the Russian Minister, (to whom I took an early occasion to pay my respects), is an extensive range

of very plain buildings. The British Residency, though unfavourably situated in a low position near the Southern wall, is a neat edifice, with an open piazza and a range of columns in front. It has also pleasant gardens, with paved walks, both in front and rear, which make it altogether a delightful spot. But the chief attraction is the Ark, or Royal Residence. It consists of a great number of buildings, courts and gardens, covering a large area, and enclosed within a high wall, which separates it from the rest of the city. Just without the wall, on the side where I entered, is a public square, in the centre of which is a large cannon, said to have been used by Nadir Shah. It is now converted into the more pacific and sacred use of a sanctuary for criminals. Whoever takes refuge beneath it is safe. Places for this purpose are common in Persia. I have known a man, who had been guilty of the crime of highway robbery, take refuge in the house of a Mushtehed, and defy the officers of justice sent in pursuit of him. The stables of the Shah are a sanctuary of the same kind, and, in some instances, the tombs of holy men. The practice is, doubtless, an ancient one, but the choice of places for sanctuaries seems to be wholly accidental and arbitrary.

I found no difficulty in gaining admission to the Ark by proper application, and entered with several English friends. In the first court to which we were admitted, we were conducted to rooms in the basement of a mean brick building, two stories high. They were filled with presents received by former Shahs from the kings of Europe. Most of the articles were of glass. Chandeliers, mirrors, dishes, vases, and trinkets of every description, were mingled in the strangest confusion, and all covered with dust. That which most attracted my notice, was a beautiful gilt vase from Napoleon.

We then visited three halls of reception. The general plan of the Ark seemed to be that of a succession of courts separated from each other by high walls or ranges of buildings. The courts themselves were adorned with reservoirs, or rectangular tanks of water, paved walks bordered with plane-trees and flower-beds between.

The largest of the three halls of reception was thirty-five feet by twenty-five. It stood in a range between two courts, and, on the sides looking out upon them, was entirely open from ceiling to floor, the roof being supported, on those sides, by tall wooden columns, and the room protected by ample curtains hanging from the roof, and capable of being raised or lowered at pleasure. The two extremities of the room consisted of deep recesses covered with small mirrors placed at an infinite variety of angles, and presenting to the beholder a thousand images of himself at once.

Another of these rooms had its walls, on three sides, covered with mirrors, and was open on the fourth. The third room had a beautiful window of stained glass, (the most common and the most costly ornament of a Persian house,) on one side, and a large fountain, entirely of glass, in the centre. In one of these rooms was a royal chair with a canopy over it, and in the same apartments were clocks of curious workmanship that had been presented by foreign kings. They had automata attached to them. On one an elephant stood moving his trunk and ears and tail; on another was a peacock, alternately folding and displaying his plumage. Those who made these presents seem to have thought that the Shahs of Persia were, after all, very much like those savage kings whose favour is more easily gained by some showy trifle than by a present of substantial value—and perhaps they judged rightly. A Persian is

always more accessible through his fancy or his vanity than through his reason or his heart.

The principal hall of reception, where the Shah appears on great public occasions, opens on another court, and was the best arranged room that we saw. It contains a marble throne supported by human figures of the same material, while its open front, looking upon the court, is adorned with five marble columns. We saw no more of the interior of the Ark. The sacred precincts of the harem, which alone cover a wide extent of ground, we were not permitted to enter. All that we were allowed to see conveyed no very exalted idea of Persian magnificence. The exterior of the buildings was entirely destitute of all pretensions to architectural beauty. The apartments, excepting those which I have described, were of the most ordinary character. The walks and gardens wore an air of neglect, and little appeared anywhere to indicate an abode of royalty.

Just without the Ark is the royal foundry, which is under the superintendence of a Persian, who learned the art in England. He showed us the works where the various operations of smelting, casting, boring, and polishing were going on. The workmen were all men of Aderbeijan, and appeared familiar with their business.

The most correct Persian estimates of the population of Tehran which I could obtain, varied from 10,000 to 12,000 families, including 150 families of Jews, and 200 of Armenians. The English residents estimated it at 60,000 souls, among which, they believed, there were not more than fifty Jewish families and as many Armenian. Besides the native population, there are a few European artisans and upwards of thirty foreigners connected with the British and Russian embassies. Among them were fourteen English serjeants, who

were employed in drilling the Shah's soldiers. John, who had seen some of them in his former visit to Persia, was soon on intimate terms with them, and learning that they were in want of linen, he disposed of the greater part of his own stock among them to very good advantage. From the account which he gave of their private habits, I inferred that they had some higher wants than those of the body, and I could not but regret that the British Government had not extended to their Persian embassy the advantage of a chaplaincy. It could no where be more needed, and, even in a political point of view, it would be of the highest benefit. I have more than once heard the opinion expressed by Persians, that the English had no religion, for the very plausible reason that they never heard of their being engaged in divine worship. A religion without a worship seems, indeed, an incongruity next only to a contradiction in terms. The British minister in Persia had earnestly requested a chaplain for the embassy. The application having been unsuccessful, the minister undertook himself to sustain the services of the English Church. For this purpose all connected with the embassy assembled at the Residency. The Ambassador read the Morning Service, and one of the officers officiated as clerk. The state of my health prevented me from assuming the duty, but it was exceedingly refreshing to my spirit, after so long a privation of the worship of the church, to join once more in her Confession, her Thanksgivings, and her Supplications. How oft, in my solitary journeyings, had the exclamation of the Psalmist been in my thoughts! "My soul longeth, yea, *even fainteth*, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

My old friend, the Turkish envoy, with whom I left Constantinople, was at Tehran when I arrived, but as we were both suffering from the fever, we did not meet. I seldom went abroad the first two weeks, and, during that time, he was compelled to leave the city. The fever prevails through the latter part of summer and the beginning of fall, and a stranger arriving in that season seldom escapes. An English gentleman, who preceded me from Tebriz a few days, made a visit of three weeks at the capital and spent most of it in his chamber. The embassies retire from the town on the approach of the hot season, and pass the summer and half the fall in tents on the plain, or in the gardens without the city. On the 24th of October the weather became cooler. A few days of rain and snow succeeded, when the sky again cleared and the air remained fresh and bracing.

During my stay I received letters which had been post-marked less than three months previously, in Maine and Louisiana, the one the southernmost and the other the northernmost state of the American Union. A packet was despatched by the minister on the third of each month, which was conveyed in eleven days to Erzroum by a Persian courier, where it was met by the packet from Constantinople and forwarded thither by a Tatar, the Persian courier receiving at the same time the Tatar's letters, and returning with them to Tehran. The whole distance from Constantinople was performed, in good travelling, in twenty-one days, and, as my letters were often received in Constantinople in forty-five days from New York, they would, in the present instance, have reached Tehran in less than two, instead of three, months, if they had arrived in Constantinople just before the departure of the Tatar.

I found an opportunity before leaving the city to ride out to the ruins of Rhey, which lie in a southerly direction from the town about an hour's ride. Hardly anything more than incidental notices of this city are to be found in ancient history. It is the Rhages of the Apocrypha, (See Tobit,) and must, therefore, have existed 700 years before Christ. It was also visited by Alexander in his expedition into Parthia. Little is now to be seen on the spot where it stood, more than a wide space of broken ground covered with fragments of tile and pottery. It was at the extremity of the short range which I have before mentioned as running out from the main body of the mountains towards the South. Near the hills stands a solitary tower of brick, in a state of decay. The exterior surface consists of angles alternately projecting and retreating, and an ancient inscription, formed by the brick, appears around the summit. Remains of walls are still seen, and their line can be distinctly traced on the side towards the mountains, running across the plain and over the rocky hills which stand out from the range. On the face of one of these rocks is the figure of a horseman with a lance couched, the whole rudely carved upon a smooth surface hewn for the purpose. On the vertical side of another rock is a much larger representation in bas-relief, which represents a hall of state, with a monarch seated and his attendants standing near him. This, however, is a modern production, having been executed by the late Shah in honour of himself. The place is unfortunately chosen, for some future traveller will, doubtless, describe it, as I had well nigh done, as a part of the ruins of Rhey in an excellent state of preservation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SHAH.

EXPEDITION TO HERAT—ASSAULT UPON THE TURCOMANS—ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT DYNASTY—THE LATE SHAH—THE PRESENT SHAH'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE—HIS CHARACTER AND VIEWS—POLITICAL STATE OF PERSIA—THE ARMY—REFORMS.

DURING my visit, the town was less lively than usual, from the absence of the Shah, who had gone to recover the city of Herat, lost by his grandfather. His departure had drawn away about a fifth part of the population. He had started upon the expedition the 24th of July, with a force of 18,000 infantry and 200 cavalry, and three months after, was still some days distant from Herat.

This was the second expedition which he had made in that direction. The previous year he had marched from Tehran with the intention of attacking Herat, but turned aside to chastise the Turcomans. In approaching their country, he adopted a truly Persian expedient for sending the terror of his name before him. He slew all the cattle which he found and threw them into a river running through their land, intending that they should float down and carry dismay all along the borders. In the event, this proved to be the chief exploit of the campaign, for the Shah soon returned to Tehran satisfied, as his Grand Vezir expressed it, with "having well skinned the Turcomans."



The founder of the present dynasty of Persia was Agha Mohammed Khan, who dying without issue, left the throne to his nephew, Feth Ali Khan. The reign of this prince was long and quiet. He was more disposed to private enjoyment than to public enterprise, and had it not been for the ambitious spirit of his two sons, Abbas Mirza and Mohammed Ali Mirza, the first the Governor of Aderbeijan and the other of Kermanshah, his reign might have passed unmarked by any great event. He possessed most of the good and bad qualities of a Persian. He was vain and fond of flattery, imaginative and devoted to pleasure, yet shrewd, affable, and dignified; capable of the most arbitrary acts, yet not cruel; excessively proud of his personal appearance; fond of show and regal state, yet not an oppressive or tyrannical ruler. He professed to be a poet, and I remember to have seen a volume of his productions in the bazars at Tehran. A Persian related to me one day the following anecdote, as illustrative of the character of his efforts in this department of literature. He had just completed a new performance in metre, which he flattered himself possessed peculiar excellence. Calling, therefore, for the Court Poet, whom, after the manner of the East, he had constantly attached to his person, he read the poem before him, and demanded his opinion. The Poet, fearing lest his own emoluments should be endangered by this growing propensity of the Shah to rhyme for himself, and being also a man of uncommon honesty, expressed a very unfavourable criticism upon the piece. The Shah, enraged at the audacity with which he spoke the truth, ordered his servants to conduct him to the stable, and tie him up with the donkey. The poor Poet remained in this dolorous situation several days, when he was remanded into the royal presence,

and his opinion asked upon another performance which the Shah had perpetrated during his confinement. The Poet listened in silence, and when it was finished, venturing no more to express his opinion openly, he fell upon his knees before the King, and implored that he might be sent back to the stable.

The present Shah owes his elevation to the throne to the intervention of foreigners. The old King had appointed his son, Abbas Mirza, his successor, but the death of this prince occurring before his own, he declared in favour of his grandson, the reigning monarch, who was himself a son of Abbas Mirza. In so doing he set aside the claims of the numerous brothers of Abbas, the most eminent among them, Mohammed Ali Mirza, being now dead, and the Shah wishing that the power should descend in the line of his favourite son. On the decease of the King, Mohammed Mirza, the present Shah, was at Tebriz. Immediately upon the arrival of the news, the English Ambassador with his suite, appeared before him and saluted him as King. The British Minister, Sir John Campbell, had orders from his government to aid the accession of this prince to the throne. He, therefore, advanced funds to pay the troops of Aderbeijan, who were ready to desert, and marched down with them to Tehran, a British officer leading the van. One of his uncles had already seized the throne, but abdicated immediately upon hearing of the approach of the army. All opposition fell before the young Shah. He entered Tehran triumphant, and his rebellious uncle aided in the ceremony of his inauguration. Sir Henry Bethune, (late Col. Lindsay,) who had led the army to Tehran, soon afterwards marched to Shiraz, routed the malcontents who had gathered there, and finally established the Shah upon his throne.

Mohammed Shah is still a young man, being now (1840) about thirty-five years of age. It is reported, that neither his father nor his grandfather entertained very high hopes with regard to him. Abbas Mirza is said to have treated him with neglect, and to have made no effort for bringing him forward and engaging him in public service. When reminded of the imprudence of such a course, he used to reply, "What can I do? He is good for nothing." The Persians whom I have heard speak of him, use the same language, and lament the destiny which deprived them of Abbas Mirza.

Still the Shah is, in some respects, an extraordinary man. Though a reputed Souffee, he is strict in all the duties of his religion, and remarkably pure in his moral character and habits. His Souffeeism, it would seem, shows itself chiefly in his contempt for the ecclesiastics, and in his preference of Souffees for civil officers. He has few or none of the vices of his country. He has but two wives, and only one of them was resident at Tehran. His example, in this respect, is the more remarkable as following immediately upon that of Feth Ali Shah, the inmates of whose harem were sufficient in number to have composed the adult female population of a town of 6000 inhabitants. The present Shah drinks no wine, and does not even use the kalioun. Notwithstanding his contempt for the religious orders, he is himself a bigoted man. His prejudices are strong, and his mind is not of a sufficiently elevated character to rise above them. His most prominent trait is self-will and a dogged obstinacy in his opinions and plans. He is rather penurious in his own expenses, and has very little disposition for regal display; yet he has been imprudently lavish in granting favours, even where no service has been rendered. I had it on good authority that, in the single

province of Aderbeijan, he had bestowed pensions to the amount of 250,000 tomans, or about £125,000 sterling. He has some idea of the value of European institutions, and European learning, but he has not the character needed for a reformer. From the want of enlarged views he is satisfied with meagre results, and has not the capacity for framing a full system of reform. Still he would probably encourage any efforts for the general improvement of his people, especially if they were gratuitously rendered. He was so much pleased with the work on Geography laid before him by one of the German missionaries, that he invited the author to Tehran to establish a seminary in the capital.

In his private character the Shah is not reputed a cruel man, nor is he an oppressive ruler. Yet his punishments are sometimes terrible, and he makes no effort to relieve the people from the tyranny and extortion of petty governors. The last vice is too deeply ingrained in the civil polity of the country ever to be eradicated by any but a strong and bold hand; but the apparent severity of the Persian Shahs is, I believe, misjudged by our habit of looking upon the working of a despotic government with feelings grown out of and conformed to our democratic institutions. The Shah, who is in reality only the chief minister of justice, appears, to a republican or even to a moderate monarchist, like a great public executioner. We associate the acts with the character of the individual, when we should rather regard him as merely a personification of the Law. On one occasion the present Shah ordered several criminals, who had been guilty of the murder of an officer in the army, to be put to death in his presence. I have heard it adduced as a proof of his cruelty, when, if it had followed upon the judgment of a jury of twelve men, it would

have appeared simply as a just act of Law. Let me not be misunderstood. I am not discussing principles of government, but only suggesting a distinction which ought to be borne in mind in our judgments upon the characters of (as the stereotyped phrase goes) "Eastern despots."

The present Shah of Persia has manifested an unwonted generosity of character in entrusting the government of cities and provinces to his brothers and uncles, from whom he had most to fear. Yet he followed so far the common practice of his predecessors as to immure the uncle who had seized the throne, and several others of the sons of the old Shah with him, in the citadel of Erdebil, from which two or three of them effected their escape, while I was in Persia, and fled into the dominions of the Czar. The Shah has yet made no adequate return for the good service rendered him by his English friends in reaching the throne. The gallant officer who conducted the army from Tebriz to Tehran, and afterwards dispersed the rebels at Shiraz, and who is still in Persia, received from the Shah the most flattering promises, but they have proved empty words. When, however, we remember the delicate relations of the Shah with his northern neighbour, we may perhaps find a satisfactory explanation of his conduct without attributing to him any ungenerous motives, especially as in many instances he has shown great personal kindness to English gentlemen resident at his court.

Finally, I have heard Persians expatiate largely upon the literary accomplishments of the Shah, but their testimony was not confirmed by more disinterested witnesses. His knowledge of Geography is said to be unusually good for an Oriental, and he has, doubtless, a real predilection for the science.

The political state of the country is by no means encouraging. The Persians themselves confess that the internal affairs of the kingdom are daily becoming more embarrassed, without any prospect of improvement. There are those, not a few, who predict the fall of the present dynasty, and even of the Empire, with the death of the reigning Shah. There prevails among them the same forebodings of impending evil as possess the minds of the Turks. They regard themselves as at the mercy of foreign nations, and many even regard with complacency the prospect of their national dissolution. The empire is composed of heterogeneous and discordant materials. The native population comprises two distinct people, speaking different languages, dwelling in different parts of the country, and regarding each other with mutual aversion. The Shah is a Turk of the Kujar tribe, and his sway is therefore ungrateful to the Persians of the south. The Turkish race of the north, on the other hand, are proud of the superiority which this circumstance gives them, and regard their southern neighbours with contempt.

While these elements of discord exist among the people, the army is weak and inefficient. The Persians state the whole military force at 80,000 regulars and 2000 artillery. The actually efficient force, however, offers no more than 40,000 men, and there are probably no more than seventy serviceable guns. The Persians are good materials for soldiers. They are able-bodied, capable of enduring fatigue and long marches with little food, and they learn more readily than Europeans. But the military organization of the Empire, on which its strength so much depends, is defective to the last degree. No system of reform has ever been introduced into the army. Much labour has been bestowed by foreign

officers in re-organizing and disciplining the forces, but as no command has been given to them, their labours have been productive of little good. The British officers pronounce the irregularity of the service a great obstacle to its efficiency. Soldiers desert by regiments, or they buy a dismissal from the officers, or the officers send them away for the sake of securing their rations. Probably there is no man in the Empire who has any just idea of military science, as it is understood in Europe, yet the Shah takes great pride in his army, and is full of ambition for military glory. It was currently reported that after taking Herat, he intended to march to Bagdad and obtain possession of the city of the Caliphs, in right of its having once belonged to the Persians, and of its being the capital of the country which contains the tombs of the Saints most revered by the Shiah.

When the Shah left Tehran on his expedition to Herat, he was accompanied by several hundred military waggons which he had ordered to be made for the purpose, at a very cheap rate. Before they had proceeded half a mile from the city, one hundred of them had broken down. In the former expedition it was sometimes found necessary when the order for march was given, to send men through the camp to whip the soldiers out of their tents, and at other times they exhibited their activity in openly plundering the royal magazines to obtain provision.

I mention these facts as illustrative of the low state of the art of war, not because I suppose that a reform in this particular is the most desirable species of improvement, but because, in such a country as Persia, if the work of reform does not appear here, it is hardly to be expected elsewhere. Soon after the elevation of the present Shah to the throne, it was proposed to send

several young men to England for education. The proposal pleased the Shah, and an order was given for the purpose. They were chosen and brought before him. He approved the selection, and the plan seemed to be moving on successfully. Upon inquiry being made for what profession or service the young men were to be trained, it was replied that two of them were to be candle-makers, it being the opinion of the Shah that candles were a very useful article. An order was afterwards given for an estimate of the expenses, which, when presented to the Shah, so terrified him that the plan sunk at once out of notice and was never more heard of.

The only measure which seemed to indicate improvement was the establishment of a Gazette at Tehran, which commenced early in 1837 under the auspices of the Shah. It was printed in Persian, and, for want of types, was lithographed. Its principal object was to laud the Shah and his measures. Still its establishment must be regarded as a step in advance, and it may yet lead to important consequences. I could not learn that there was so much as a printing-press in the country, but two have since been introduced, and are in active operation at Tebriz.



## CHAPTER IX.

### JOURNEY FROM TEHRAN TO HAMADAN.

RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF EXPLORATION—FRIDAY—ITS OBSERVANCE BY MOHAMMEDANS—SERVICES OF THE DAY—HOW ESTEEMED BY PERSIANS—THE TRUE IDEA OF THE WORSHIP OF FRIDAY—SINGULAR CHANGE IN CONSTANTINOPLE — DEPARTURE FROM TEHRAN — PLAIN — VILLAGE—DESERT — SUNDAY—LODGINGS — MOUNTAINS — DEMAVEND — MOUNTAIN-PASSAGE—DOMESTIC LIFE IN A PERSIAN VILLAGE—SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF THE PERSIAN PEASANTRY—TAKING NOTES —WEARISOME JOURNEY—APPROACH TO HAMADAN.

THE original plan of my tour had embraced Isfahan and Shiraz, and if my object had been simply, or even partially, that of a traveller, I should not have left the country without visiting its ancient and most venerable capital, and the chief seat of its literature. But the rule which I had laid down for myself when leaving Constantinople was, to follow uniformly the route in which I could best accomplish the great objects of my mission, and never to depart from it for the sake of gratifying any curiosity of my own. Whatever objects of interest fell in my way I allowed myself to see, whenever sufficient time remained after the duties of my work were done, and before my departure from the place. This rule, from which I never deviated so much as in a single instance, proved in the end a source of no inconsiderable trial. Possessed from my earliest years with the most ardent love for travelling, and filled with enthusiastic desire to visit the scenes which were the originals of the first pictures that my imagination had

formed, it was a sore temptation to find myself within a few days' journey of the once proud capital of the Persian Shahs, and of the city where Sadi and Hafiz lived and Martyn laboured, while duty pointed in another direction. For the same reason I did not visit the ruins of Babylon, though, at Bagdad, I was within a few hours' travel of them. I saw those of Nineveh only, because my road lay through them; but I did not return to survey them, although I tarried ten days within a few miles of them on the opposite side of the Tigris. For the same reason again, I denied myself what as a traveller would have been my highest ambition, the pleasure of going over Egypt and the Holy Land, both which I was at liberty to visit. I saw, in a word, only what lay in my way, and if any thing communicated in these pages upon such topics possesses the common interest of a traveller's record, it can only be, I imagine, from the circumstance of my route having lain through countries unfrequented by foreigners. The reader will also bear in mind that everything of this nature has an important bearing upon the question of Christian Missions in such lands. It is important, both to the missionary and to the conductors of missions, to know the numbers and character of the population, their habits and manners, the relative situation and distances of places, the nature and condition of roads, the courses of trade and the means of transportation, the general features of the country, its climate and its prevalent diseases, the character of its government and its civil condition; in a word, whatever goes to make up a picture of the people as they are. I made these matters, therefore, subjects of inquiry as falling within the compass of my mission, and with the hope that they would impart a more general interest to the results of my investigations.