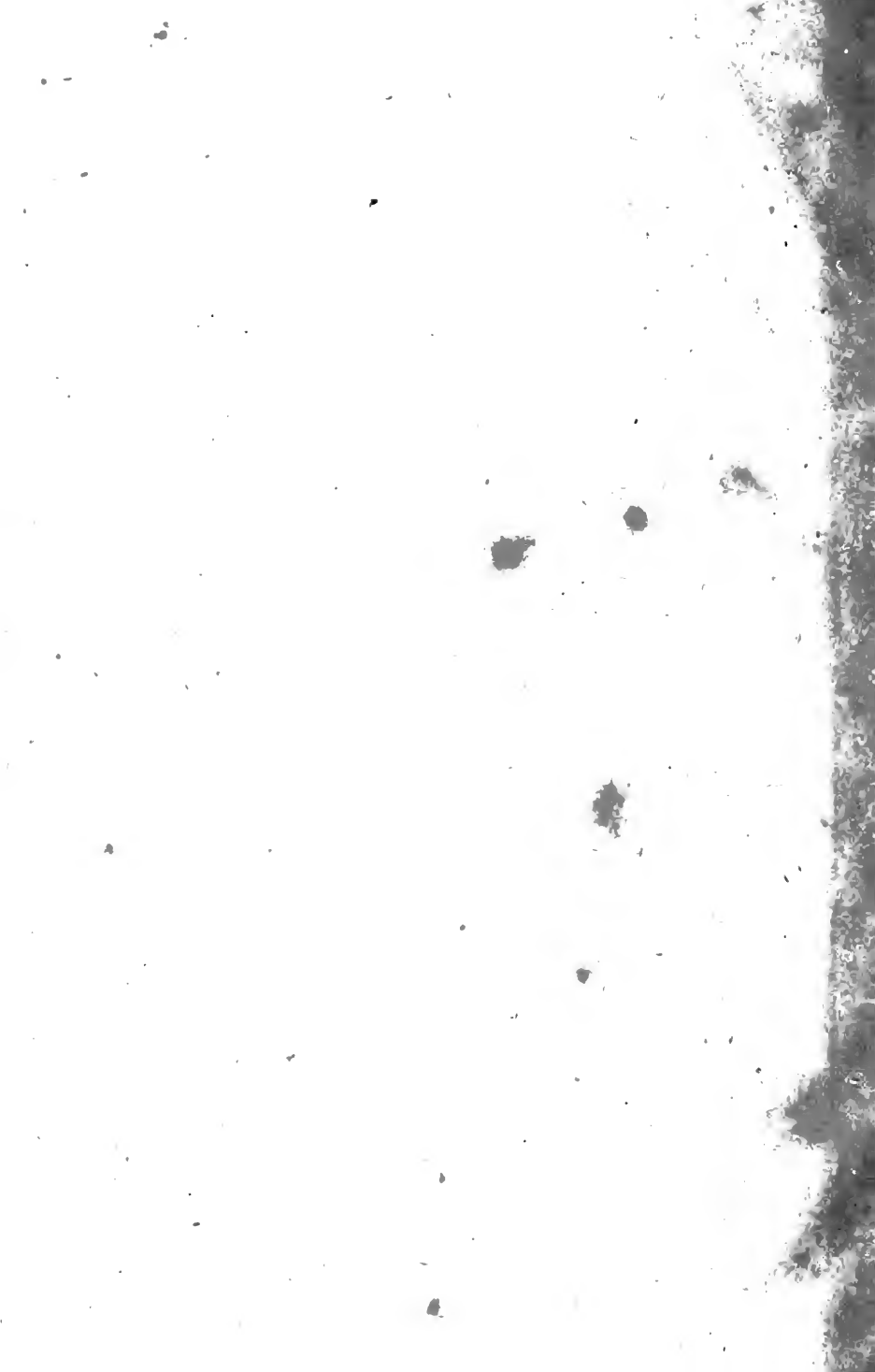




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TRANSACTIONS
OF
THE LITERARY SOCIETY
OF
BOMBAY.



TRANSACTIONS
OF
THE LITERARY SOCIETY
OF
BOMBAY.

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

VOL. II.

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It is with concern that the Bombay Literary Society have observed that much delay has occurred in the publication of the first volume of their Transactions; but in consequence of the printing taking place in England, it has not been in their power to prevent it: without waiting, however, to learn what success may have been obtained by their former pages, they have determined to lay before the public another volume, which they trust will be found not entirely undeserving of attention.

When this Society was established, it was intended that its researches should comprehend subjects of literature in general, and not be confined to such as are merely Oriental. But the studies and pursuits of its members must naturally, from their place of residence, induce them to direct their attention to the History, Literature, and Antiquities of Asia. The field is vast; and although not altogether unexplored, still much of it remains either inaccurately surveyed, or not yet described. It may be hoped that the societies which have been established in India will contribute to throw a new and brighter light on many subjects that are at present obscured by the darkness of antiquity; and to exhibit a correcter view than is to be found in any work hitherto published of the natural history of this extensive continent, and of the actual state of the manners and political economy of the various nations which inhabit it. In such labours the Bombay Literary Society are happy to participate; and they trust that future communications will enable them to render their Transactions the valuable repository of such short tracts or essays as may tend to the attainment of so desirable an object, but which their writers may think not adapted for a larger work.

Respecting the papers contained in this volume, with the exception of * the one comprising a description of Abyssinia, no remarks can be necessary. This paper was * iv written by Mr. Pearce, an English seaman, who was left in Abyssinia at the time of Lord Valentia's visit to Massowa in 1805. It was after being nine years in that country that he addressed this account to Sir Evan Nepean: and the Society, to whom it was presented, have thought proper to publish it with as few corrections as possible; as they conceive that this plain and unadorned description, although written by a man entirely unlettered, conveys an interesting and striking view of the real situation of that country.

The Society avail themselves of this opportunity of observing, that they do not hold themselves in any manner responsible for the opinions which may be contained in the papers that are inserted in their Transactions; and that they never will, in their collective capacity, pass any decision on any disputed point of literature.

Bombay, 18th May, 1819.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE ground-plan of the grand excavation of Elephanta not having reached the publishers when the former volume was printed, accompanies the present one; but ought to be bound opposite to page 199 of Vol. I.†

TRANSACTIONS

OF

THE LITERARY SOCIETY OF BOMBAY.

I.

NOTICE AND EXTRACTS OF THE MIRITOLME- MALIK (MIRROR OF COUNTRIES) OF SIDI ALI CAPOODAWN.

BY MR. HAMMER, OF VIENNA.

Read 31st October, 1815.

THE Author, captain of the Egyptian fleet of Solimaun the great Ottoman emperor, had received orders to carry fifteen Turkish ships from Bassora down the Persian Gulf and up the Arabian to Suez. But not being well acquainted, as it seems, either with the monsoons or with the coast of India, he lost his way and his fleet, and was obliged to make his way overland from Guzurat, by Hind, Sind, Zabulestaun, Bedakhsaun, Khottaun, Tooran, Khorasaun, Khowarezem, Kipjak, Pak, and Asia Minor, to Constantinople. The description of this journey is the subject of the *Mirror of Countries*, in the Introduction of which the author gives of himself the following account:—

“Your most humble servant the writer of this book, Sidi Ali Ben Hossein, had made from his youth nautics and seamanship the principal object of his studies and endeavours. He was a witness to the glorious * conquest of Rhodes, * 2 and afterwards accompanied in the western seas the late admirals Khairuddin (Barbarossa) and Sinaun Pashaw on all their expeditions, completed in that way the course of his naval acquirements, and composed many works on nautics and astronomy. My father and grandfather were both employed at the arsenal of Ghalata in the rank of Kiayas, and distinguished

themselves as exquisite skilful seamen. Under the supposition that the knowledge of my ancestors had descended to me by the way of inheritance, I was named captain of the Egyptian fleet, and received at the imperial head-quarters, then at Halep, in the year 961 (1553), the order to proceed to Bassora, and to take the fifteen ships left there round to Egypt."

He relates then his journey from Halep to Bassora; his sailing from thence; his misfortunes in the Persian and Indian seas; after which he relates his journey overland. The following extracts are taken from the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters.

FOURTH CHAPTER.

Events that happened in the Indian Seas.

Trusting in the Lord we put from the port of Cavador into the Indian Sea, and steered again for the coast of Yemen. When we were off Cape Rasolhadd, opposite to Dhofar and Shaher, there rose from the west a heavy storm known by the name of the Elephant's Storm, which not only prevented us from displaying our sails, but did not allow us even to set our mainsail. The storms in the great Western Ocean are nothing compared to this: we could not discern day from night; and, our ships wanting much to be lightened, we throw a great quantity of luggage overboard; which reminded us of Hafis's verse,

"Shebi turik u bimi moog u girdaubi chuun hacl."†

In short, during ten days we were tossed about by the most heavy storm, mingled with the most violent rain,
 * 3 during which I endeavoured * to comfort my companions, and to cheer their hopes that we should see soon the end of it. Fishes having then appeared on the surface of the sea, of the length of two galleys and more, the best-informed gave us the consolation that this was a good sign, and that, to judge by the great flood, we must have come near the gulf of Djeked. We saw sea-horses, water-serpents, and immense turtles; and the water of the sea began to change into a whitish

† "Dark was the night, and terrible the dread
 Of waves and whirlpools."

colour. The masters began now to cry, being afraid of the whirlpools of the Indian seas: they said that particularly there was no escape from two such whirlpools, the one of which was near the Abyssinian coast, and the other near Sind, in the gulf of Djeked.

We threw the log, and found five fathoms depth; set the mainsail, caught the wind, and ran before it till we made out the Pagoda on the frontier of Djamhur. Then we passed before Foomiaun, Mangaloor, and Soomenat, and came finally near Diu. As Diu is in the hands of the infidels, we showed no sails; and the wind beginning to gather force, we could not master the tiller,—four men were scarce able to hold it with strong ropes; nobody was able to stand on the deck, and the working sailors could only communicate by cries; in short, it was again a day that might have given a token of the day of judgment. At last we came to Guzurat; but we were entirely unacquainted with the landing-place. The masters cried out that there were breakers before us, and the greatest precaution necessary. We cast our anchors; but the ship yet driving, the sailors began all to strip themselves naked; some prepared casks, and some skins. I stripped myself also naked, and made a vow to set all my slaves at liberty, and to give a hundred ducats to the poor of Mecca, if I escaped shipwreck. At last the two anchors broke, one at the lower, and the other at the upper end. We cast two fresh ones, which having taken ground we got free from those breakers; where if we had been wrecked, no soul could have been saved. This place is called by the sailors *Kashti Kaidas*, and is situated between Diu and Daman.

Having made the necessary calculation of the ebb and flood, and * having verified that we were near the shore, * 4 I took a *fâl* † from the Koran, which spoke in favour of looking out for a quiet place. I looked to the leaks of the ships, and we baled out the water, which already covered the hold. The weather began now to clear, and we found ourselves opposite the port of Daman, in the province of Guzurat, at a dis-

† A divination taken by opening the Koran or any other work, in the same manner as the *Sortes Virgilianæ*.

tance of two miles off. Some galleys that had come too near the shore, and had been beaten against it, threw their boats and casks into the sea, which were then carried on shore by the flood. During five days and nights we rode here at anchor in a violent storm accompanied with rain, for it happened then to be the rainy season. What was to be done? We were obliged to act according to the maxim which says, "If it rains from heaven, how can the earth not accept of it?"

During this whole time we saw during the day no sun, and at night no stars; we had neither compass nor watch before us, and everybody was immersed in the ocean of perplexity. We consoled ourselves with the idea that God does not ruin his servants for ever. The men of three ships prayed to the Lord, and by his grace got safe on shore.

FIFTH CHAPTER.

What happened in Guzurat.

After five days the weather began to turn into calm; the guns and other effects of the wrecked ships were seized by Melek Esed, the commander of Daman, one of the emirs of Sultaun Ahmed, the prince of Guzurat. There were some *djoonks*, or ships of the monsoon, that had come from Calcutta, and were now on their departure. Their captains came on board us with protestations of obedience and homage from the Zamorin, or prince of Calicut, and assured us that he always was at war with the infidel Portuguese.

I wrote then to the Zamorin a letter by Ali, one of the masters of that country, in which I assured him that a fleet
 * 5 was to come soon from *the Red Sea to rescue those countries from the hands of the infidels, and exhorted him to manly resistance. For at the same time Melek Esed, the commander of Daman, had sent me word that a fleet of the infidels was coming, and that I should hasten to reach Surat.

As my men heard of this intelligence, some of them remained at Daman, attaching themselves to the service of Melek Esed; and some, preferring the land to the sea, sunk their boats, and went by land to Surat. I, with the few that remained attached

to me, took for every ship a good *dendjooi* or pilot, and proceeded to Surat by sea. We had scarce set sail when there came in a *ghorab* (a kind of boat) the cotwaul of Surat, Agha Hamza, with a letter from Amadolmulk, the great vizir of Sultaun Ahmed, to advise us that the infidels were collecting, and that Daman, being an open place, offered no security whatever. This supported my resolution, and we went along the coast during five days, going on at the time of the flood, and coming to anchor at the ebb. So we entered, thank God! after a voyage of three months from Bassora, the port of Surat, in the province of Guzurat. The faithful inhabitants of Surat rejoiced at our arrival, saying that, as there had been no storm like this since the time of Noah, so no *corsar* (by which they intended a skilful captain) had ever come from Room to India. They expressed their hopes that by Ottoman fleets Guzurat would soon be added to the Ottoman empire, and regretted only that our arrival had happened in a time of intestine discord and civil war.

One of the intimates of Sultaun Mahmood, the late prince of Guzurat, had killed him when asleep, and killed also seven of his vizirs and great khauns, whom he surprised under the pretext that they were called for by the king. Having the next day planted himself the ensigns of royalty, his pretension was not acknowledged by Amadolmulk Itimad Khaun and Sidi Móbarek, who cut his head off and proclaimed one of the relations of the deceased Sultaun Behadir, a boy twelve years of age, called Ahmed, in whose name the present on mounting the throne (*djooloos*) was distributed to the soldiers. But one of the great khauns, called Nassirolmulk, not acknowledging him, set up himself pre*ten- * 6 sions of royalty, rendered himself master of the castle of Baroach, wrote by a messenger to the governor of the infidels at Goa, promising him all the ports of the coast of Guzurat, viz. Daman, Surat, Baroach, Cambaya, Soomenat, Mangaloor, and Foomiaun, on condition that he should be acknowledged lord of the continent. Sultann Ahmed, who was then marching against the castle of Baroach, having heard of our arrival, sent

us a messenger, and took more than two hundred of our men, whom he sent against Baroach. The third day came the infidel captains of Diu, Goa, Shicool, and Bombay, and the Proveditor, altogether five captains, with seven great galleons and eighty *ghorabs*, who engaged with us. We entrenched ourselves on the coast, and were continually prepared during two months for battle. Nassirolmulk, allied to the infidels, sent at this time assassins to our tents to kill me ; who being driven away by the sentinels, they endeavoured to poison me. I got intelligence of it from Hoossein Agha, the cotwaul of Surat, who bade me to be on my guard ; so that I, by the grace of God, escaped safe from all their attempts on my life.

Sultaun Ahmed conquered at last the castle of Baroach, and sent Khodavend Khaun and Djehaunguir Khaun, with some elephants and troops, on to Surat ; and he himself turned towards Ahmedabad, where another Ahmed, also one of the relations of the late Sultaun Behadir, had planted the ensigns of royalty.

A battle having taking place between them, the rebel was beaten, and Sultaun Ahmed took possession of the place. Nassirolmulk having also died through grief, the infidels sent word to Khodavend Khaun, saying that they would desist from all quarrel if the Egyptian captain, viz. I, should be delivered to them. Khodavend Khaun refused to deliver me, and our men wanted to kill the messenger ; which I prevented, representing to them that we were in a foreign country. " Let us wait," said I, " and see the end, as the poet Nedjauti says, ' Let us bear grief that is past, and see what the Lord does at last.' "

One of our infidel sailors (a Greek) having deserted to the *ghorab* of the Portuguese envoy, and assured him that
 * 7 we were to go away after * the feast of Bairaun, our men entered the *ghorab*, and took away the deserter, who was executed before the castle, to the great terror of the infidel envoy.

In this country grows a tree called *tari*, about the size of a date-tree. To the end of every branch they hang a cau, into which (after the extremity of the branch is cut) flows a liquor

spans from one end of the wings to the other. The roots of those trees ascend again from the ground, and form then one large tree that is an aggregate of twenty and more trees.

The name of this tree in that country is *tooba* :† more than a thousand men may take shelter underneath it. On the way we found nothing but thistles (*zakoom*).‡ In the province of Guzurat is an infinite number of parrots and monkeys, many thousands of which, with their young ones, surround you everywhere with ridiculous gestures and postures.

We passed Mahmoodabad, and came after a toilsome journey of a fortnight to Ahmedabad, the capital of Guzurat, where we met with the king, with Amadolmulk (the great vizir), and the other khauns. Suldaun Ahmed behaved very kindly to us, made protestations of his obedience to the Emperor of the world, and presented me, in exchange for the trifling presents which I had offered him, with a horse, a set of camels, and money for the journey. We visited the Sheikh Ahmed Moghrobi at Tsherkesh, near Ahmedabad. One day I met at the great vizir's the Portuguese envoy, to whom the vizir said, "We stand in need of the Ottoman emperor, and we should be undone if our ships should not frequent his ports; he is the emperor of the Islaum, and it is therefore very improper for you to ask that his captain should be delivered to you." Having heard this I grew angry, and addressing the envoy I said, "Damned fellow! you found me with rotten ships; but if it please God the all-element, He will very soon rescue from your hands not only Ormus, but also Goa.

* 9

* "To sea we go,
And meet the foe,
In tempest and in darkest den:
For we are Barbarossa's men.

"For the present there is no necessity for our sailing home, as we can go overland." So I reduced the infidel to silence.

† *Tooba*, the tree of paradise in the Koran, is the *lotos* of the ancients.

‡ *Zakoom*, a kind a thistle, is also in the Koran the tree of hell, bearing no other fruit but the heads of the damned. So that there are here at once the trees of paradise and hell found together.

Some days after this, Sultaun Ahmed offered me the castle of Baroach with a large *jagheer* ; which I thanked him for, saying that if he would give me the whole province of Guzurat I could not accept of it.

One night I saw in a dream Ali, who showed me a written paper, which was the seal of the eternal truth, and exhorted me not to be afraid, as the seal of the eternal truth was with me. Having related this dream to my companions, they all rejoiced ; and we went together to ask from the king leave for our departure, which we got through regard to our emperor's majesty.

In this country is a tribe of Bamiauns, called Bhaut, who warrant the safe conveyance of merchants and travellers from one country to another for a stipulated sum of money. If the Raspoos meet the *carevauns* with the intention of robbing them, the Bhauts draw their daggers, and threaten to kill themselves if the least harm should happen to the carevaun. The Raspoos then let the carevaun pass unmolested : but if it suffers the least damage the Bhauts kill themselves ; and if they did not, they would lose their honour, and never be afterwards respected. If, on the contrary, they devote themselves for the sake of the carevaun, the Raspoos are judged guilty of death, and are executed by their Reys, together with their whole families. Two Bhauts were sent to attend us ; and we set out in the middle of Safer on our journey to Room. In five days we came to the town of Tatan, where we visited the tomb of the ancient Sheikh Nizaun. Here Shur Khaun and his brother Moossa Khaun were collecting troops, and preparing for war with Boloodj Khaun, the khaun of Radenpoor. They wanted to stop us in our journey, and claimed our assistance ; but we answered that we were come to the * 10 as*assistance of nobody, and that we were travelling with a *firmuun* of the king ; and so we got rid of them.

In five days after, we came to Radenpoor, where we met Mahmood Khaun, who tormented us also for assistance. At last we left three of our men behind, and got permission for the rest to proceed. We met Raspoos, who let us pass undis-

turbed, as their Reys came to our assistance. We took passports from them, hired camels to Sind, and then dismissed the Bhauts who had served us as guides from Ahmedabad, after having rewarded them for their trouble.

SIXTH CHAPTER.

Events that happened in Sind.

We proceeded on the first of Rebioolewel, and arrived the tenth day at Tarken, a town of the Raspoos, who assailed us, but let us pass as soon as we had exhibited the letters of their Reys, and given them some presents. They advised us to be on our guard, as there were more than a thousand Raspoos on the road. On one of the following mornings a cry announced the arrival of the Raspoos. The camels were let down on their knees, to serve as a wall to the riflemen while they took aim. As soon as they saw muskets, they sent word that they were not come for war, but only to ask for the transit duties. We answered that we had nothing for which we had not already paid the duties: so they retired, and we continued our way. We marched a fortnight through sand and deserts, and arrived at last at the town of Wangeh, on the frontiers of Sind, where we hired again camels, and came in five days to the town of Djooni and Baughifeth.

The king of Sind, Hassan Mirza, who had governed this country for forty years, had been unable for the last five years to go on horseback, and went only in boats when he wished to travel. Issater Khaun, the commander of Tatta, the capital of

Sind, had killed there some good servants of Shah Hassan
 * 11 Mirza, distributed amongst the soldiers the treasures* he found at Noosretabad, and proclaimed the Khotbe in the name of Hoomayoon (the emperor of Deli). Shah Hassan Mirza sent his foster-brother Sultaun Mahmood with troops by land, and with about four hundred ships, against Meer Issa-Sultaun Mahmood, having heard of our arrival, came to meet us, and lavished on us honours and presents. He gave me a *benderi lahoori*, that is to say, a *diwili sindi* (?), which I refused to take, and begged permission to set off.

He said that he would give us leave to go away after obtaining the victory ; and in short he obliged us to fight against Meer Issa. The Moslims entreated us to put no balls in our muskets, because their brethren and children were on the other side of the contest,—as was really the case. We visited here the Sheikh Abdol Wahaub, Sheikh Meerek, and Sheikh Djemauli, and fought more than a month against Meer Issa. Tatta is situated on an island where cannon has no effect. A negotiation was at last brought about, when Meer Issa desisted from the Khotbe in the name of Hoomayoon Shah, gave up the kettle-drums (the ensigns of royalty), and paid obeisance to Shah Hassan Mirza. He sent his son Meer Saleh with presents ; and Shah Hassan Mirza made him a present of the rest of the treasure distributed to the soldiers. The province was confirmed to Meer Issa, to whom tails and diplomas were sent by his vizir Monla Yari ; and eleven mirzas belonging to Meer Issa, who had been kept prisoners, were invested with robes of honour. There was also Hadji Begum, the wife of Hassan Mirza. Suldaun Mahmood advanced now with his troops by land, and Shah Hassan Mirza by sea. He died soon afterwards,—poisoned, as some believe, by his wife. Suldaun Mahmood divided the inheritance of the deceased into three parts, one of which he gave to his wife, one to his Khodja, and one he sent to Meer Issa. He sent the corpse to Tatta, and took for himself the horses, camels, and other things that suited him, marching himself by land to Bekr. We were in the ship together with the corpse and the wife of Hassan Mirza, when it being assailed by Tshagataians the sailors fled away, and our men were obliged to act as such. We got at last rid of them with a thousand pains ; and after having worked ten days against the stream we arrived at the town of * 12 Nassirpoor, which was laid waste by the Rajas, that is to say, by the Reys of the Raspoos. Here we understood that Meer Issa followed with ten thousand men the Suldaun Mahmood, and that his son Meer Saleh came with eighty ships.

We took now a *jál*, which advised us to return ; I read eleven thousand times the *Soora Ikhlass*, and then returned

towards Tatta; but the third day we met Meer Saleh, to whom I paid a visit on board, carrying him some presents. He asked where we were going; and I told him, to join his father Meer Issa. "Well," said he, "Meer Issa is astern; turn then your ships." I excused myself by saying that I had no boatmen; so he gave me fifteen sailors and obliged me to turn back. We made a voyage of ten days, and met at last with Meer Issa in a town of Sind. The beys of the late Mirza were with him, and attested that we were far from fomenting the war, and had, on the contrary, negotiated the peace. So he forgave us for having joined the late Mirza, and then said, "Remain here for some days, and then accompany my son, whom I intend to send to the emperor Hoomayoon, because Suldaun Mahmood will not allow you to leave Bekr." I could not agree to this offer, but begged permission to go with the captured ships, and to be attended by a Djoloodaur. As I insisted, he gave to me the seven ships he had, and a Djoloodaur to accompany me, with orders that nobody should stop my passage. On the way we met great crocodiles, and kept always along shore. We had every day a fight with the Semidje and Madji, and arrived after some days, with a thousand troubles, at Seyawaun, and at last, by the way of Tatri and Dirbele, at the castle of Bekr, where we met with Suldaun Mahmood and with Monla Yari, the vizir of the late Mirza. I offered some presents to the Suldaun, who had also proclaimed the Khotbe in the name of the emperor Hoomayoon, and made peace with Meer Issa. I made a chronograph on the death of Hassan Mirza, which the Suldaun was delighted with, as well as with two *ghazels* of my composition, which I took the liberty of presenting him.

I then asked leave to depart; when the Suldaun wrote a letter to the emperor, and told us that the son of Hyder Suldaun, one of the Oozbeg sul*tauns, Behadir Suldaun, infested
 * 13 with some thousand men the road of Khandahar, and let nobody pass; that it was, besides, the season of the *samoom*; that we should therefore wait for some days, after which he would give us some men to escort us, and would

send us by the way of Lahoor, which, however, was also infested. So we waited a month, till I saw one night my mother in a dream, who told me that Fatima the Prophet's daughter had appeared to her when asleep, and had given her the good news of my safe arrival.

The next day I communicated my dream to my companions and to Suldaun Mahmood, who told us to set out, presented me with a fine horse, a set of camels, a great tent, and the necessary expense for the road. He gave us a hundred and fifty men of cavalry to escort us; and so we departed in the middle of Shaabaun.

By the way of Suldaunpoor we came in five days to the castle of Maw, and chose then the road of the Desert, because we were told that on the common road Djidds were lurking. Next day we came to the Wells; but having found them dry, some of our men were near dying from thirst and from the effects of the *samoom*. I gave them *teriac*; and, seeing the impossibility of going on by this road, I left next day the Desert, and returned to the castle of Maw. *In this desert I saw ants of the size of a sparrow.*

I encouraged my companions and escort, who were afraid to go through the forest, and arrived with a thousand pains on the tenth day at Oolshie, where I met Sheikh Ibrahim, and visited the monuments of Sheikhs Djemauli and Djelauli. Having arrived at the river Matshware I dismissed the Sindians, and then passed it in boats, but found on the opposite side about five hundred Djidds (who, however, being afraid of muskets, were unable to attempt anything), and arrived the 15th day at the town of Multaun.

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12. Events that happened in Khorassaun.
13. Events that happened in Irakadjem.

14. The rest of the journey to Constantinople. He arrived at Cole in the month of Rejeb 964 (1556), after a journey of four years ; where, having presented himself with his companions to Solimaun and to the great vizir Rostern, he received a pension of eighty aspers a day, as *moottefarrika* of the Sublime Porte. Of his companions, the kiayas (lieutenants) and captains received an increase of pay of eight aspers a day as *gonel-ligeduk*, with the assignation of their pay, for the four years of their travels, on the treasury of Egypt. Our traveller was then made Deftadar of Diarbek, in which situation he wrote his travels. The year of his death is not mentioned by Hadji Calfa; who, however, makes most honourable mention of him in his History of the Ottoman Maritime Wars, printed at Constantinople. There are two other works on which is founded his literary renown : the *Mireti Kainat* (Mirror of Beings), a mathematical treatise on the use of the astrolabe, quadrant, &c., and the *Moohit*, † a description of the Indian Seas.

[*Note.*—I have not been able to find other notices of the progress of these Turkish travellers. The names of men, tribes, and places can generally be identified, although the spelling is altogether unsystematic.—Ed.]

† No doubt that the last must contain some materials interesting to the Literary Societies in India ; I have given, therefore, a commission at Constantinople to get it, if possible.

* 15

* II.

A SMALL BUT TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE WAYS
AND MANNERS OF THE ABYSSINIANS.

PREFACE.

The following account of the manners of the Abyssinians is written by Nathaniel Pearce, an English sailor, who was left in Abyssinia, at his own desire, by Lord Valentia (now Earl Mountnorris) during his visit to Massowa in 1805. He is a man of an active and vigorous mind, as will sufficiently appear from his own observations. His subsequent history down to 1810 is well known to the public, being given in detail by Mr. Salt in his valuable Voyage to Abyssinia (Lond. 1814), especially in the seventh chapter. It is continued down to 1814 in his own paper. Mr. Salt's first meeting with him after his return to Abyssinia is interesting. "I found Mr. Pearce," says he, "to my great surprise, very little altered in complexion, and he spoke English almost as perfectly as when I left him. It was truly gratifying to witness his raptures at finding himself once more among Englishmen, and in an English ship. In the fulness of his heart he seemed to consider every countryman on board as a brother; and it was interesting to observe with what respect and astonishment our sailors looked up to him in return, from the various accounts they had previously heard of the intrepidity with which he had surmounted so many dangers. He subsequently gave proofs of extraordinary activity; and his knowledge of a ship, considering how long he had been absent from every thing of * 16 the kind, was very remarkable; for though we had several excellent sailors on board, there was not a single person that could follow him aloft, owing to the rapidity with which he darted from one point of the ship to another. I was also glad to find that the cultivation of his mind had kept pace

with the improvement of his bodily powers. To a complete knowledge of the language of Tigre, reckoned by the natives extremely difficult to acquire, he had added a tolerable share of the Amharic, and possessed so perfect an insight into the manners and feelings of the Abyssinians that his assistance to me as an interpreter became invaluable." (Salt's Voyage, p. 203.)

By the latest accounts (10th of May 1818) he is still in Abyssinia, the Ras not allowing him to leave the country ; but for the last five years he has suffered much from disease and oppression. In a letter of the 20th October 1814 to Theodore Forbes, Esq., the British resident at Mocha, he complains that the Ras behaved in a very niggardly manner, in spite of all his services, scarce giving him and his family enough to live on ; " though," continues he, " the Ras, on account of his religion, sends at this present time ten thousand dollars, fifteen slaves (at twenty dollars each), twenty-four pieces of first quality of Abyssinian cloth (at ten dollars each), besides two fine horses and two mules, to Muhammed Ali, to bring the Copti Bishop or Aboona from Cairo." The arrival of the Aboona or Patriarch from Egypt was peculiarly unpropitious to poor Pearce, who was now worn down with sickness and suffering.

" As soon as he arrived at Massow," says Pearce (letter 20th March 1816), " the Ras sent me word to quit my house, and that the Aboona was to take it on his arrival at Chalicut : which I strictly denied, and swore that I would die in my own house, which I had been at the expense of building ; which at first enraged him very much ; but finding that I was determined to die sooner than quit my house by force, the wretched old savage, I can call him no better, coaxed me over with promises, even swore to give me the price of my house, * 17 garden, &c. : which after great *persuasion I agreed to.

But I soon saw him go far from his oath. As soon as the Aboona arrived, I went to pay him my compliments and endeavour to get into favour with him ; but before I could see him I found that the old wretch had ordered people to watch my motions, and not upon any account let me speak with the Aboona.

You would be surprised were I to mention the multitude of people that flock from all quarters of Ethiopia to this Egyptian monk; but I shall send you all particulars another time. The reason the old wretch does not wish me to see him is, that he is afraid I shall tell him what expense and industry I have been at with my house and garden. I leave you to guess how it would touch an Englishman's heart, after seven years endeavouring to teach those idle villains to be a little industrious, by showing them the produce of my garden—grapes, peaches, limes, English cabbage of all sorts, turnips, carrots, potatoes, pigeon-house, &c.—to have all taken from me without one farthing of payment, by an old miserly wretch that I have been serving in all his wars above ten years. I beg of him to let me go to Mocha; but he says he can never agree to that, as I know all the country, and shall of course be able to conduct an army through any part of it. He says that the Mussulmen tell him the English got into India by first sending people to live among them," &c. &c.

In a previous letter (June 24th, 1815), after thanking Mr. Forbes for some liberal supplies that were sent him, he continues: "The Ras is now ten times more miserly than ever he was, and every thing he sees he craves for; he is greatly afraid of dying, and frets himself very much. He is upwards of eighty years of age, but as nimble as a boy. A curious circumstance has happened since I wrote to you last, of which I give you some small account. You will perhaps think of the Abyssinian priests. Goga, governor or king of Igue Garter, turned Christian, and the king of Shoa gave him his daughter; but the Gasmartie Libban being at variance with Goga, would not allow the king of Shoa's daughter to pass through his country. There being no other road, they planned a scheme to get her through unknown to Libban, which was—they sent her disguised with the priests and poor that travel about the country *from Waldubber to Larlibeller, &c. * 18 After Libban heard that Goga had received his wife from Shoa, he was greatly enraged with the different chiefs of his country; but being informed of the manner the king of

Shoa had sent his daughter, he held his peace, being determined to be revenged on the Christian priests. Although he was very ill, he beat the drum in the different markets in his country, giving notice to all priests and poor travelling people that he was going to give an offering of a thousand bullocks and as many cloths, as a *fellart* or forgiveness for his father Coulassey, and appointed the day they were all to assemble. This news being spread, the poor sort of priests of Gogau, Daunt, Walder, Bagandre, &c., all assemble together on the day appointed. As soon as Libban heard that they were all assembled as he had given orders, he picked out twelve of the greater sort that came from Igue and Shoa as a reserve. He then ordered his horse, which were about ten thousand, to gallop in upon the priests and beggars and destroy every soul; which order being immediately obeyed, every soul soon fell. Not less than eleven hundred were killed in the course of four or five hours. The twelve he had picked out he ordered to be rolled up in cloths waxed all over, and, as they lay on the ground, set fire to them at both ends. Libban died ten days after, and his son has got his country."

During Pearce's long exile from home he has never lost his feelings of warm attachment to his country. He had asked for some English newspapers, which Mr. Forbes accordingly sent him. They happened to contain the defeats Bonaparte had suffered after his retreat from Moscow. "I really think," says Pearce, "that the glorious news the papers gave me in respect of Old England has done a great deal towards curing my complaint, which I have had above three years. I hope you will always oblige me with such news."

Nothing can be more uncomfortable, however, than the general condition of Mr. Pearce in Abyssinia. In his letter of the 27th May 1816, from Chalicut (which he says has become the capital of Abyssinia), he continues his own history, which cannot fail to be interesting to all who can appreciate untutored talents and native superiority of mind struggling * with

* 19 difficulties in the midst of barbarians.—(Mr. Forbes had now left Mocha and returned to Bombay.)—"I

have to lament the loss of you very much, without any hopes of ever having another friend placed in your situation. How happy I should be to hear of your return to Mocha! I give you some particulars of what has befallen me after the wretched old traitor of a Ras took away my house, &c. (which I have before mentioned to you), without paying, or even giving me another lodging. The cursed villain of an Egyptian monk, more like an English gipsy in his ways and manners than a patriarch, for which he was sent—(indeed, as mean a wretch as he is, the Abyssinians worship him equally as if he was Christ himself)—he, not being contented with my house, garden, and every comfort I had endeavoured to bestow upon myself by expense and labour, to be taken from me and given to him, also took a liking to a small piece of meadow ground at some distance from the house, which the Ras gave to me to feed my horse and mule, above nine years ago; after which I gave half to Mr. Coffin, on his staying in the country with me. One day the Aboona, as he is called, ordered his servant to turn his mules into the grass, which vexed Mr. Coffin very much: as for myself, I gave no concern about it; but Mr. Coffin went to the Ras and told him that he had nothing to keep his horse on, except the little grass he had formerly given me, and that the Aboona had ordered his servants' mules, &c., into it to graze. The Ras said it was not his orders that the Aboona should do so, and told Mr. Coffin to take care of it as usual. On hearing this, he immediately went and drove all the Aboona's cattle out; the people at the same time crying out to Mr. Coffin that they were the Aboona's cattle, and that none but a *Feringi* would hinder them from eating their corn, much more their grass!

“The Aboona, seeing all that happened from the house, was very much enraged; and, thinking he could destroy a *Feringi* with one order, immediately sent word to the Ras and the head priest that it was his particular order that no church should be opened, nor the sacrament administered, nor should the Ras give or take counsel, until Pearce and Coffin should be deprived of every thing in the world they had belonging * 20 to them; and to * strip them naked, excepting the

waist, and to flog them three times round the market, and then to be sent into the Garler or Shangarler's territories.

"When the Ras's servant came to warn me of the order, I was for some time struck senseless, being in such a weak condition; but after coming to myself I told the Ras's servant to tell his master that all was very well, as he could not disobey the orders of the Aboona. I also told the servant to tell him to persuade the Aboona to come himself with the people who were to take me. I immediately sat myself down between a well-loaded pair of pistols and a gun, in readiness to receive whoever should be sent for me; at the same time Mr. Coffin came to keep me company.

"We sat in this manner two days, without eating or drinking; during which time every order of the Aboona's had been fulfilled in respect to the church, &c.: until, the third day, the whole of the chiefs that were then at Challeut attending upon the Ras assembled together, and went to the Aboona and to the head priest, telling them that they could never be guilty of such cruelty to people that were far superior to their own countrymen in truth and manners, and had so long lived with them.

"Challicar Comfeya, the Ras's head field-general, a very great friend of mine and Mr. Coffin, told the Aboona to his face, in case he still insisted upon his orders being obeyed, that he might go back again to Egypt, and that they would send for another. This soon made the gentleman quite calm, and he immediately sent for me to make it up, owning that he himself had not done right; and we are at present on good terms."

The old Ras (who, he says, had never been in good health since he plundered him of his home) died a few days after this letter was written. His relations endeavoured to succeed him; but, in consequence of dissensions among themselves, they were defeated in many hard battles by other powerful chiefs: and in a letter to Mr. Forbes, dated 5th September 1817, Pearce mentions that there was still no prospect of the government being brought under the Ras's relations; and that a civil war extended throughout the whole country, which had become a

miserable scene of plunder and desolation, with the exception of the cities and holy places : * which, he ob- * 21
 serves in another letter, are never plundered by the
 Abyssinians, but enjoy safety and afford protection to those
 who take refuge in them. The towns and cities of Gondar,
 Addore, Axume, Saratter, Larlibeller, Antarto, &c., as well as
 all holy places, such as Waldubber, Tombain, Giddam, &c.,
 are perfectly safe ; and those who live in or fly to them are
 also perfectly safe, with their property. But the frequent
 plundering and burning of the country towns and villages every-
 where makes a most dismal scene. The Abyssinians have at
 present forsaken all their laws, both holy and police ; and there is
 no head to punish the most abominable and barbarous crimes,
 which are frequently committed in every part of the country.

In a letter of the 26th September of the same year, addressed
 to the Literary Society of Bombay (who, on learning his un-
 fortunate situation, had authorized Mr. Forbes to send him
 money and necessaries to a considerable amount, but most of
 which unfortunately fell into the hands of some plunderers at
 Dixan), he gives a more particular, but not very interesting
 account of the different contending parties. After which he
 thus describes a battle which was fought between Subbergar-
 dis, who he says is the bravest man in Abyssinia, and a chief
 named Walder Ralphel :—" Walder Ralphel marched two days
 to meet him (Subbergardis), but he was defeated and his army
 cut to pieces : for about fourteen miles there were so many
 killed in the retreat, that scarcely two hundred yards through-
 out the whole distance was clear of a dead body." After
 noticing the scene of tumult and disorder which ensued on the
 victorious army entering Challicut, he tells us that some of the
 troops approached his house, " cutting down the cane doors,
 and entering like a pack of tired hounds," many of them
 having suspended from their arms those barbarous and in-
 decent trophies to which he alludes in the body of his paper.
 " Nineteen hundred and seventy of these trophies," he says,
 " were thrown down before the conqueror Subbergardis."
 Pearce, Coffin, and the inmates of the house were saved by the

interposition of some Christian soldiers with whom he had been acquainted ; but fifty-six of their neighbours were killed before their faces. Soon afterwards another hard battle * 22 was fought ; “ and Sub*bergardis, through some treacherous chiefs, was defeated and taken prisoner ; Gabru Michael gave him over to Walder Ralphel, who sent him in chains to the mountain Arraner.”

On the 18th of November 1817 Pearce thus writes to Mr. Forbes :—“ The Aboona is still here, and at present very great friends with me ; it appears that he has received a severe reprimand, and been threatened by Mahomed Ali, Pasha of Cairo, for his former unjust treatment of me, which was reported to him by Mr. Salt.” He then mentions a circumstance which will be considered interesting by those who seek to diffuse the pure principles of Christianity in that barbarous, superstitious, and ill-fated country:—“ I have distributed a great number of the books of Psalms in Ethiopic, sent here by Mr. Salt from the Bible Society, to the different churches in the Ammerrer and Tegri provinces : but those people find many faults in them ; not in the exactness of the explanation, but in the smallness of the print, the thin strokes, the pale ink, the letters crowded too much together, and no red ink at the name of God, &c. ; but in exactness they allow them to be superior to their own writings.”

In a letter of the 6th January 1818, addressed to Mr. Forbes, he states a fact which shows the powerful influence possessed by the Abyssinian priests, even in political matters. “ The continent of Christian Abyssinia east of the Tecassey has been divided between four Gasmarties, viz. Subbergardis, Isicias, Gabru Michael, and Walder Ralphel. This is not expected to last many weeks, or indeed many days, being a forced agreement made by the priests of Waldubber, Axume, and other holy places. I have already mentioned to you the power those priests have.” The civil dissensions, however, seem to have weakened the Christian government, and to have produced a great dereliction of principles and morals among the people. “ The continual wars have given the Mahometans great power

among them; and at present there are frequently known Christians to turn Mahometans, and nothing thought of it; there being no king, no head, no laws, to punish the most abominable crimes."

The last letter received from him is dated 10th May 1818, at which period the civil war still continued. After mentioning the safe arrival of a * supply of money which had been forwarded to him by the Literary Society, he again * 23 alludes to the distribution of Ethiopic Bibles:—"I am sorry to say that the population find many faults in them, and many refuse them as a present: however, I give them to the lower sort of churches and to the monks; they are more expensive to get them from Marsaw than they get me credit. I declare that I distributed forty-nine books of the Psalms to the different churches near here, without any individual giving me a grain of corn for my support in return; indeed, the arrival of those books created great jealousy in the mind of the Egyptian patriarch, who tells the population the Feringas are working cunningness among them."

This suspiciousness of the designs of Europeans will probably render it very difficult for poor Pearce to escape from his place of exile; as they pretend that his intimate and extensive knowledge of the country would easily enable him to conduct an invading army. His protracted, or perhaps perpetual, banishment will, however, it is hoped, put it in his power to make large additions, in his own artless but faithful and striking manner, to our present imperfect stock of information concerning the history, manners, and religion of Abyssinia.

* 24 * A SMALL BUT TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE
WAYS AND MANNERS OF THE ABYSSINIANS.

FOR THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR EVAN NEPEAN,
GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY.

Read 30th April, 1816.

Abyssinia, Oct. 1814.

THE inhabitants of Abyssinia are of many tribes and religions; they are also of all colours of people excepting white; though there are some (but not common) very near white in the Ammerrer and Tegri and other Christian provinces; there are some very black, some fair, and some of a copper colour: they differ very little in their manners, which are presumptuous. Their Christian names are in general as undermentioned:—Walder Serlassey, Walder Isgare, Walder Munfuskudus, Walder Cristos, Walder Marian, &c., The son of the Trinity, The son of God, The son of the Holy Ghost, The son of Christ, The son of the Virgin Mary, &c. Some are Gabru instead of Walder; as Gabru Serlassey, Slave to the Trinity, &c. Although they are Christians, they are in some ways like Jews, and some ways like savages. For why they are like Jews is, they keep holy the Saturday, as well as the Sunday, both equal alike: they also keep the three days' fast of Nineveh, which they call the fast of Annernoi, or Jonah the prophet, and have a holiday yearly for Abraham and Sarah. And for why they are like savages, they eat the flesh of an animal before it is dead; although they do not drink the blood, like the Garler, they eat the flesh while the blood is still warm in the veins; and although they detest any one who drinks blood, like the Garler, or makes use of it in any way, they do not consider their eating it in the veins with the flesh * to be any

* 25 sin; but they say that those who drink blood, or make any kind of food with it, can never be forgiven by God.

They keep very strict their fasts; the fast of our Saviour, or Lent, is fifty-six days, which begins in March and ends in May; the fast of Nineveh, or Jonah the prophet, is four days before it; the fast of Apostles, which is in one year fifteen days and in every other year thirty, begins in June and ends in July; the fast for the death of the Virgin Mary, fifteen days in August; all Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, excepting Christmas-day, when they fast the day^s before. The priests and deacons only fast on the undermentioned days:—the fast called Consquan, which is for the Virgin Mary, when she fled with Joseph and her son to Egypt; this lasts thirty days, begins in September and ends in October; the fast for the birth of Christ, which they call the fast of Ledet, by order of the prophets is forty days, which begins in November and ends the day before Christmas-day.

The priests of their separate parishes have a great feast at the end of every fast; they all meet in the forenoon, after taking and administering the body and blood of Christ to those who come to the church for that purpose: they afterwards go to the house of the head priest, where they sit down according to their rank in the church: they then kill one or two cows, according to their number, close to the door, and before the animal has done kicking, and the blood still running from its throat, the skin is nearly off on one side, and the prime flesh cut off and with all haste held before the elders or heads of the church, who cut about two or three pounds each, and eat it with such greediness, that those who did not know them would think they were starved; but they at all times prefer the raw meat to any cooked victuals. After they have finished their *brindo*, as they call it, they take a little of the fattest parts of the cow just warmed on the fire, to settle their stomachs, and then one or two large horns full of *swoir*, or beer, which is very strong, and made of several sorts of corn. They then have the table brought in and covered with bread and cooked victuals, where those that are not satisfied with the raw meat eat until they are of the cooked.

* Afterwards the lower class of priests and deacons * 26

are called in, and the raw meat or *brindo* is laid upon the bread, of which they cut and eat with as much eagerness (although it is as cold as clay) as their betters did when it was quite hot. After they are satisfied, the third class are called in, and so on in turns, until they devour all the bread and victuals; more like a pack of hounds than people of any description. When all is cleared away, the greater and middling rank begin to drink maize until they begin to sing psalms or hymns, and at last get so intoxicated that they at times quarrel and entirely lose their senses.

They at all times, drunk or sober, never go out of doors to make water, but do that necessary either in the horn they drink out of, or have one brought to them by their servant, who afterwards takes it under his cloth to the door and empties it. The owner of the house, or head man, has in general a copper vessel for that use, which he very often calls for; I myself oftentimes have seen, when in company with those holy or unholy people, one to make water upon the back of the one who sits before him, and he so drunk as not to feel it. They have a great many feasts,—indeed I may say almost always feasting excepting in their fasts.

The oftener people die, especially those who have a good quantity of property, is the better for them; the whole property, excepting land and houses, is divided; half is given to the priests of the parish he is buried in, who divide it according to their rank in the church. This property, or money, is called the *tstart* money, or the money of forgiveness; the other half is given to the wife, children, or any other relation that may be left; with which they are obliged to give a general feast to those priests on the seventh day after his death, another on the 40th, and on the 80th: and if a very great person the relations are obliged to give a feast yearly, for several years after his death: these feasts are called the *tascar*, or the feasts of charity; though when the deceased was alive he would not have given a mouthful of bread to a poor soul if he were dying for want: as no Abyssinian is charitable until he is dead. If any land, houses, &c., be left, they are divided as the king,

ras, or governor of the province he belongs to, thinks lawful, among the relations of the deceased.

* They have great crying and yowling for the dead for
* 27 many days, and appoint a particular day for a general cry, which ends their crying. Afterwards on this day all relations and acquaintances, far and near, assemble together upon a plain spot of ground, as near the house of the deceased as possible, where a cradle is placed covered with silk, and two large pillows on each side of the cradle : something in the representation of a corpse covered with a cloth is placed in the middle of the cradle. If a very great person, or relation to the king, they in general make his effigy, which they place upon a mule, with a saddle, bridle, and saddle-cloth ornamented with gold and silver ; all his household servants run round the cradle, some before and some behind the mule, according to their stations when he was alive, crying, yowling, and firing their matchlocks, and tearing the skin off their temples and forehead, until the blood runs down their neck. In the front of the cradle the carpets of the deceased are spread and covered with the riches of his house, gold and silver, ornamented dresses, silver-mounted swords, bottles, glasses, &c., to show the public what a wealthy person he or she was. All who come to cry sit down in front in two parties, the men on the right and the women on the left : their heads are all shaved, and their temples and foreheads torn in such a manner as would frighten any one who was not acquainted with them. The relations then stand up one by one, in their turns, with a servant on each side of them to keep them from falling,—as they pretend to be so weak with sorrow,—and begin, while all the others are silent and listening to him or her, to praise the beauty and riches of the deceased, and what acts he had done when alive ; that when on horseback he was like St. George, and on foot like the angel Michael, and a great deal of other nonsense : after ending their speech in a very sorrowful tone, they all at once make a loud bellow and tear their temples. After the cry is over, they all go into a large house like a barn, where they eat and drink until they turn their sorrow into merriment and quarrelling.

The Abyssinians have so many children and relations, on account of their having so many women, that it is sometimes hard to tell which has * most right to the property left ; * 28 so in order to make the king or chief, who has to settle the affair, favourable on their side, they tear their face all over, and sometimes one of them chains a servant on each side of himself, hand to hand, to make people believe that he wanted to stab himself through despair, at the same time he has some of the chief's household servants bribed : so when the whole of the relations come before the chief on the day appointed, he who has chained himself will stand among the rest without saying a word for himself, and pretend to be quite melancholy, while the others are disputing. Those who are bribed find an opportunity of pointing out to their master the melancholy aspect of the one in chains, and tell him at the same time that they were certainly present at the time that he would have stabbed himself if he had not been hindered by some people who knew of his grief, and, to prevent him from killing himself, had chained a man to each of his arms : the chief, upon hearing the story, in general takes pity and gives him the greater share, although he is perhaps the most distant relation among them. I know many great men in Abyssinia to have from forty to fifty children, and all by different mothers, and in general most of them from different provinces ; so they oftentimes do not know which son or daughter was born first, as they keep no time ; nor does even the king or priest of Abyssinia know his own age.

There are twelve *Lickcounts* in Gondar, who officiate in the office of the Copti Aboona, or the Egyptian bishop ; these lickcounts are twelve learned men who go by that name ; they are not priests, and although the heads of all capital churches are authorized by them, in time of an Aboona they are under him. They keep the time, and indeed everything is regulated by them. Their year begins from the day St. John was beheaded, which is the 1st of September with them, with us the 29th of August. Their year is divided into four quarters ; the first quarter is called Matthew, the second

Mark, the third Inke, the fourth John. They have also other names for those four seasons, which are *Zerry, Currumpt, Cowie, Aggie*;—as Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. Every month has thirty days, which at the end of every year leaves five spare days, which they call Pogemy: these * spare days are from the last day of August to the 1st of September; and as they name their years the same * 29 as their quarters, after the last day of the year of Luke begins Leap-year, which gives six days Pogemy; and although the spare days are after Luke, and before John, John is called the Leap-year.

The Abyssinians never keep a corpse in the house a moment after they perceive it is dead; they in general dig the grave beforehand, when the person is thought past recovery; so if ever so dear a relation has died, they only take time to wash the corpse and roll it up in a piece of cloth, and with all haste take it to the churchyard and bury it. None excepting the kings or very great men have coffins.

All the Abyssinians have a father-confessor; and I myself am obliged to have, or pretend to have, one of those holy fathers, or else it would not be allowed that I were a Christian; and perhaps create many enemies that would disturb my dwelling. It is a very unprofitable thing to fall out with those priests, as everything is in their hands; the whole country of Abyssinia is overrun with them; the very smallest church, that is not larger than a small sheep-pen (that would not hold more than fifty sheep), built with mud and stone, and thatched over with canes and dry grass, has from fifteen to twenty of those impostors, who devour all the fruits of the poor labouring country people. The larger sort of churches have from fifty to one hundred: Axume, Larlibeller, &c., have some thousands. Waldubber is the most famous for them, where the wretches pretend that, being holy men, they ride upon lions, which God has provided for them, as horses! The whole of the Abyssinians are foolish enough to believe these Waldubber priests, who often come from the Desert to the towns, where they tell millions of lies, not only for the sake of

gain, but to make the poor ignorant inhabitants believe that they serve God in the holy desert of Waldubber, where he visits them, and gives them the power of living many days without food, and the power to forgive the sins of the wicked. The inhabitants of both the towns and country look upon those impostors as saints, and kiss their hands and feet when

* 30 they meet *them. Very few people can either read or write, excepting those priests and deacons who serve in the churches; and scarce half of them know any more than the Psalms of David, which is their principal book. Their books are all wrote in Geez; so that none, excepting the first learned men among them, know the translation, and the poor do not understand a word when read to them. They all, from the highest to the lowest, kiss and bow down to any religious pictures. Those priests or deacons, when they hear of any person being taken sick, with all haste pay him a visit; and he who first visits him claims him as his patient; when he persuades the poor fellow that he is inflicted with a devil, and that he will cast him out; so he writes upon parchment as much nonsense as he pleases, and makes some ugly and frightful pictures; this is rolled up and sewed in a piece of leather, and tied about the patient's neck, or where he may feel the most pain; for which he receives five or six pieces of cloth: if the poor fellow has not that much, his friends and neighbours subscribe what may be wanting: and if, by the will of God, the patient gets so weak that there is little hope of his recovery, the priest or deacon brings the sacrament to his house, which he also receives payment for, whether the patient gets well or dies! Any person who wishes to receive the sacrament has only to go to the church and wait until the proper time for administering it (if on fast days, in the afternoon, and if on other days, in the morning): when they begin they stand in ranks, by turns, the greater sort of people first: he who is first to be served comes near to the two priests who stand before the altar in the middle of the church, and who are dressed in their holy clothes; the one holds a large cross in his right hand, and a book in his left; the other holds a large bowl or dish with a spoon: he who

comes near first, bows to the ground, and then arises and kisses the cross and puts it three times to his forehead and mouth, while the priest who holds it reads the book; he then opens his mouth, and the other priest puts a spoonful in twice; he then bows and runs out of the church, holding his hand to his mouth, and will neither spit nor speak until sunset. They so go on in turns until they are all served; and there is no respect to persons, as any one may come, and no one asks him who he is, or where he comes from. The sacrament * 31 is a mixture of dried grapes and wheat flour, pounded and mixed with water to the consistence of paste.

All women who choose to swear not to have any further connection with men are allowed to turn priests, and wear a skull-cap like the men; though they are not allowed to go into the back part of the church, where the sacrament is prepared, and which is called Bethlem. No woman whatever is allowed to go into the back part of the church; and at the undermentioned churches no females whatever are allowed to go within the very outermost bounds of the churchyard:—Ledetter, or The Nativity church, Gondar, Deverarbar, Sharey, Larlibeller, Laster, Axume, and Devererdammo Tegri.

Although the Abyssinians have the greatest veneration for the Virgin Mary, they show very little partiality to her sex. The Virgin Mary is indeed more worshipped than the Supreme God! and indeed the greater part of the Abyssinian Christians put their whole confidence in the Blessed Virgin. They have monthly holidays on the undermentioned days:—the 5th of the month is the Abbargarver, the 7th is the Holy Trinity, the 12th is the Angel Michael, the 16th is Kedan-er-merrit, which signifies pardon given to all by the Blessed Virgin; the 21st is the Virgin Mary, the 23rd is Saint George, the 24th is Ownner-takely-hi-ma-nute, the 28th is Merdananlem, the Saviour of the world; the 29th is Ledet, or the birth of Christ, which is kept monthly.* Christmas is on the 29th, and not on the 25th as it is kept with us. Abbargarver and Ownner-takely-hi-ma-nute are two of their own saints, and those holy days are kept very strict, and no kind of work is then done; as is also the case on

Saturdays and Sundays. Besides these they have other holy days which are only kept by the priests.

If it were not for so many holy days, it would be better not only for the peasantry, but for all workmen: a man dare not touch his crop of corn in the field if he sees it going to be devoured by the locusts! nor dare he offer to reap, sow, or carry, on those holy days, if the bad weather ever so much urges him to it. It is their laziness that makes them so strict to those holy days. But they are not so holy in other cases, as they are

* the greatest and most notorious liars in the world,
* 32 and the kings and priests are greater liars than the lower class; though there is no truth whatever in any Abyssinian, whatever his rank may be.

I will mention an instance of this in the king Itsa Takely Gorges, son of the king Yoannis. When any one of his subjects may have rebelled or disobeyed his orders, so that he is afraid to remain in his country, he will run either to the Garler, or some other tribe not subject to the king, where he will remain until his friends or acquaintances petition for pardon; for which they take a present of gold, cattle, &c., which they deliver to the king; and after he has received it they in general fall with their faces to the ground, begging pardon for their friend, whom the king promises to forgive. After returning thanks they go home, and in a few days after they go to the king with another present, begging for him to swear that he will not break the promise he has made, as the offender is afraid otherwise to come before him. It being a common thing to swear upon such occasions, the king readily agrees to it, and a priest is sent for on purpose, who brings a cross, on which he swears the king to forgive the offender, and to allow him to come before him as at other times. The petitioners, after hearing the oath, return many thanks, and return home, appointing a day when they will bring the offender. After they are gone, the king, Takely Gorges, will say to the heads of his household, "Servants, you see the oath I have taken; I scrape it clean away from my tongue that made it:" he then puts his tongue out of his mouth and scrapes the oath

off with his teeth, and spitting says, "When the rebel comes, you will do your duty as I shall order you."

On the day appointed the offender is brought before him by the friends who had obtained the pardon: he carries a large stone on his neck, as is customary, and bows with his face to the ground: but at the first sight of the offender, Takely Gorges orders the captain of the household servants to put him in chains, pull his eyes out, cut his tongue out, or kill him, as he thinks proper, which is immediately obeyed. At the same time the poor sorrowful petitioners will say, "Your majesty has perhaps forgot the oath you made before us!" to which he will reply, "No, I *have not; but after you were gone, it came strongly into my mind that the crimes he had committed * 33 were unpardonable; and before ever I had eaten or drunk, I scraped the oath off my tongue that made it, before all the people of my household!" Those oaths of Itsa Takely Gorges at last made all his subjects rebel against him, and obliged him to fly to Waldubber, and quit his throne.

Since the first time he fled, he has been twice restored to the throne; but, not being able to forget his old ways of wickedness, he could find no subjects to maintain him as king. He fled the third time to Waldubber, which he has since left, and is now in Axume, and gets his maintenance under the authority of Ras Walder Serlassey.

There are several who have been put on the throne since the fall of Takely Gorges; but the right to it being disputed by the lickcounts and the different chiefs, and those of the original descent of kings being so numerous that it could not be ascertained which had the proper right to the throne, they have been changing ever since Takely Gorges. After him was Itsa Yoas, Itsa Yonas, Itsa Bedemarian, Itsa Isicias, and Itsa Guarlu: Guarlu is now king in Gondar, and as great a liar as Takely Gorges; but, being kept under by Guxar, he has little or no sway at all. None of those kings are dead excepting Isicias.

All the chiefs and rulers in Abyssinia are subject to making false oaths, as well as the lower class. If any one wants to defraud or cheat a person he may have dealings with, by false wit-

nesses, he may for a very small trifle purchase a witness that will swear any oath put to him. All capital oaths are taken in the church on Sundays and other holidays, where three priests stand in the middle of the church, before the altar; the middle one holds a large cross in his right hand, and a lighted candle in the left; and the person who is to swear stands before him; and on being told by the other two in what manner he is to swear, he takes hold of the priest's right hand, which holds the cross, with his right hand, and by the left he takes hold of the lighted candle, and with a loud voice says, "If what I now swear to, be not true, may God blow away my soul from me, as I blow away the fire from this candle," which he immediately blows out. I have * known many of my own neighbours and * 34 acquaintances to have taken this oath to the greatest lie! which I have privately accused them of, and asked them how they could expect God would save them from hell-fire; when the ignorant fools have told me that their Nufs Abbart (which is the father of their soul, or father-confessor) would forgive them for half the value they got by the oath.

Some of the priests in Abyssinia have one wife (which is allowed), but the greater part have none, and pretend to have an aversion to all the female sex; at the same time I know and can witness them to be the most sly, artful whoremongers in the world. Their dress is a skull-cap, over which they wear a large turband, and a very wide-sleeved shirt, and some wear a pair of wide trowsers, and some none at all; over all they wear a largo cloth, either white or yellow. The priests of Waldubber all wear nothing but what is yellow: they use a great quantity of frankincense in their churches, with which most of them scent their clothes.

The christening of children, or Mussulmen that change their religion, is done by three or four priests, who receive payment and a feast for the same. Some have a godfather and some have none; and those who have none are named as the priests choose; those who have a godfather have no promise made for them in their baptism, but the godfather only holds the child in his arms, and says,—“I, being acquainted with the parents of this

child, and knowing them to be real good Christians, hold it before you to make it the same ;” and while he holds it in his arms, the priests pray over a large vessel of water with a blue twisted thread in it. After the prayer is over, one of them takes hold of the child, pronouncing its name, sets it in the middle of the water, and with a small cross begins at the forehead and goes on touching every joint down to the toes: he then ties the blue thread about its neck, and afterwards delivers it to the mother, who takes it to the church and sits down until the hour of taking the sacrament ; and after her child has received it she goes home. She may return again every day for the same purpose if she likes. No one is christened inside of the church: a boy is christened at forty days old, and a girl at eighty. Any one who stands godfather for a Mussulman who * may be converted, holds him in his arms, and if too heavy, he sits down and bears him upon his knees, and * 35 says, “I have been a long time acquainted with this Mussulman, and I know it has been a long time in his heart to be of my religion ; I therefore now hold him before you to make him the same.”

It is a common thing in Abyssinia to change from Mussulmen to Christians, and from Christians to Mussulmen, as there is no punishment for it on either side. Although the Christians and Mussulmen pretend to have such an aversion to each other on account of their religion, they still have sly connexions. In all large towns, such as Gondar, Addore, Antarlo, &c., the Mussulman town is always at the lower end of the Christian town ; all towns, and indeed almost all villages, in Abyssinia being either on the top or the side of a hill ; which situation is chosen not only for the sake of defence, but partly on account of the disagreeableness of the plains in the rainy season, where they could not find places dry and hard enough underfoot to keep their cattle, all kinds of which are penned up at night, or they would be devoured by wild animals, which overrun the country. In all small towns or villages where there are Mussulmen, they live intermixed with the Christians ; but at the same time the Christians will not eat any meat killed by Mussulmen, nor

Mussulmen what is killed by the Christians; nor will they cook in the same vessel either have cooked in beforehand. They pretend to be on the same terms with their women, but, as I before said, they have sly connexions with them; and when found out and complained of to the chief, they are punished publicly in the market-place; but they are oftener found out than complained of.

The Christians of Abyssinia have a great aversion to hares, geese, and ducks, which are plentifully wild all through the country, and they will not so much as touch the hare with their hands when dead. None of the priests, and very few of the others, will eat the flesh of the wild hog; and those who do, eat it under a pretence of physic for the venereal and rheumatism. The Mussulmen eat hares, geese, and ducks; and when the locusts come they stock their houses with them, after having

pulled off their heads and dried them in the sun; so if
* 36 they lose their crops, they * live upon the destroyers:

at the same time a Christian would starve to death before he would touch one. The Abyssinians are the most ignorant people in the world in some cases, and altogether as sly and deceitful in others. If a horn bowl or any other vessel has a rat drowned in it, it is broken and thrown out of doors; or if the article may be thought to be too good to throw away, it is taken to a priest, who says a prayer over it and touches it with his cross, after which it is fit for use. Although rats are very numerous, they would not touch them when dead for the world; the frog is also very much disliked, but not so much as the rat. They do not mind handling a dead snake, but make use of its skin and liver for physic. They are very plentiful all over the country, and of many different kinds. There are snakes of so large a size in some parts of Ammerrer, that if I were to mention what I have measured, it would perhaps be thought to be false.

There are various kinds of complaints in Abyssinia, which they say are caused by the devil, one of which I shall give a true account of. One called *buder* in Tegri, and *tubbih* in Ammerrer, I think myself is only convulsions, similar to people I

have seen troubled with fits in my own country; but they say to the contrary, and will have it that the complaint is caught from the people who work in iron, such as make knives, spears, ploughshares, &c., and those who work in making earthenware. Those people all go by the name of *buler* and *tubbih*, and are hated worse than Mussulmen, and though they profess the Christian religion they are not allowed to receive the sacrament. Another complaint called the *tegreter*, both in Tegni and Ammerrer, which is not so frequent among men as women, is for a certainty very surprising, and I think the devil must have some hand in it. It is very common among them; and when I have been told in what manner they acted I would never believe it, until it came to my own wife's chance, who had lived with me five years. At the first appearance of this complaint she was five or six days very ill, and her speech so much altered that I could scarcely understand her. Her friends and relations who came to visit her, told me that her complaint was the *tegreter*, which from what I had heard, frightened me, and I would at the *instant have turned her away, only for fear they might think me a brute for turning away my wife when afflicted with sickness. Her parents, however, persuaded me to bear it with patience and say nothing, for if I were to be angry it would cause her death, and that they would cure her, as all others were cured in their country. After the first five or six days' sickness she began to be continually hungry, and would eat five or six times in the night, never sleep; and in the day time she would go about, followed by some of her parents, to all her neighbours, borrowing rings and other ornaments for her neck, arms, and legs. I did not like the thing at all; but, for the sake of seeing the curiosity, I endeavoured to hold my tongue and be patient. Her speech I could scarcely understand at all; and she, like all others troubled with this complaint, called a man she, and a woman he. One day she called unto me in the presence of her friends after the manner of calling a woman, which vexed me so much that I swore she should not stop in the house. But the moment she saw me in

a passion she fell as if in a fit, and I can assure you that I saw the blood run from her eyes as if they had been pricked with a lance. This quite made me fearful she would die; and as her friends had told me previously that if I were to be out of temper it would be the cause of her death, I thought perhaps they might bring me in for murder. But they, however, brought her to by bringing her ornamented dresses, which the great people willingly lend upon such occasions, and indeed the greater sort of people are mostly troubled with this complaint. Her countenance had been changed, as well as her speech, being from the beginning quite frightful. I determined to keep myself at a distance, and say nothing until the day appointed for her cure, or the devil to be drove out of her. Her friends had hired as many trumpeters and drummers, who go about the country for that purpose, as they thought sufficient; and early in the morning of the day appointed, they loaded her neck, arms and legs with silver ornaments, and dressed her with a dress which the great men wear at reviews after battle, which the owners readily lend on such an occasion. After she was sufficiently dressed, she was taken to a plain appointed by herself about a mile from the town, where hundreds of boys, girls, and men and women of low class * follow. Her friends and relations take a great * 38 many large jars of maize and swoir for them to drink.

I had often seen people go out of the town for the same purpose, but would not for shame follow to see them. However, for the sake of curiosity I was determined to see the last of this, and I therefore went to the place appointed before daylight, and waited until they came: a cradle was placed in the middle of the spot, covered with a carpet, and a great many jars of maize were placed round it. As soon as she came near she began to dance, and the trumpeters all began to play in two parties; when one party were tired the other relieved them, so that the noise constantly might be heard: the drink, being continually served out by her friends to all, kept them singing and shouting; she still dancing and jumping, sometimes four or five feet from the ground, and every now and then she would take off an ornament and throw it down.

Some one being appointed to take care they might not be lost, picked them up and put them into a basket. She kept on jumping and dancing in this manner, without the least appearance of being tired, until nearly sunset, when she dropped the last ornament, and as soon as the sun disappeared she started; and I am perfectly sure that for as good as four hundred yards, when she dropped as if dead, the fastest running man in the world could not have come up with her. The fastest running young man that can be found is employed by her friends to run after her with a matchlock well loaded, so as to make a good report; the moment she starts, he starts with her; but before she has run the distance where she drops as if she were dead, he is left half-way behind: as soon as he comes up to her he fires right over her body and asks her name, which she then pronounces, although during the time of her complaint she denies her Christian name, and detests all priests or churches. Her friends afterwards take her to the church, where she is washed with holy water, and is thus cured.

There are several complaints as bad and worse than this, both in men and women; the *zakerry* is reckoned the worst, but I never had the curiosity to look into it, as they are very apt in their mad hours to affront any one who approaches them. All other sicknesses are occasioned more by their own laziness and slothfulness than by the visitation of God. The

* itch is common, from the king to the very lowest
*39 subject, as well as the venereal and rheumatism; violent colds and sore eyes are also common; the fever and other bad diseases are not common.

The country is wholesome, excepting low countries, where the dew in the night and the sun during the day have great effect. When the small-pox or measles come among them they make great havoc. These disorders are in general brought among them by the Shangarler slaves, and when they find this disease coming very near them, every parish appoints a certain day to assemble their children, and those who have not had the disorder. They take them all together to the nearest town or village that may first have caught it, to be inoculated,

every one carrying a piece of salt. They then search for the person that has got the rankest small-pox, which they employ. They have a man or woman appointed who understands the business, who first cuts with a razor, in the lower joint of the right arm, a little above the wrist, a cross nearly half an inch; they then take a little of the matter from the person they have employed and put it into the cut, which they tie up with a piece of rag. They all go in turns until they are all served, and they then give the pieces of salt they have brought to the person employed, as payment; after which they all return home together, singing and praying to God that he may protect them. As soon as they begin to be sickly, which is in general five or six days after the inoculation, they are put into a dark close place, where not the least air can come to them. They then tie up all cocks, male cats, dogs, and all other male animals belonging to the house, that they may not have connexion with the females, as they say that if any connexion of that kind should be committed, whether they did or did not see it, the shadow would be upon the patients and increase their illness. No person whatever is allowed to visit them during the time they are very sick, or the small-pox breaking out upon them, let him be ever so near a relation, for fear that he may have been previously acquainted with a woman. I have often asked them what they meant by the shadow, and how the shadow could come into a house or hut where everything was closed, and not a hole or crevice but what was stopped up. They said that all connexions of that kind * 40 done while the Almighty was angry * with them would increase their illness, and vex God so much as not to show mercy upon them at all; and if no one saw the connexion it was all the same, as Satan brought the shadow upon the sick persons that they might die and he might take them for his own. I have often told them that they were superstitious fools, and asked them why they did not tie the bats, sparrows, and other birds up, hundreds of which were continually in the roof of the house. They said that they were in the hands of God, and not theirs.

No persons are allowed to go into a church until three days after having intercourse with man or woman; and if they do so, when they come to their confessor, and confess it, he makes them fast or pay dear for the crime. If any one can prove it at the time, they pay a fine to the person who complains of them; nor is any person that has got the venereal allowed to go into a church, until they are cured, and washed with holy water. No marriages are done in churches, nor have the priests anything to do with marriages whatever.

Every one has as many wives as he likes, and turns away and takes as he likes. The only marriage done before witnesses is when the son of a chief or any great person takes the daughter of a person of the same rank. This marriage is made up between the parents of both, and a certain quantity of property is given by both. In Tegri the girl's parents give two to one of cattle, that is, if they give a hundred cows or any other cattle, the boy's friends only give fifty, but all other kind of property is equally given. In the Ammerrer and Indester the gift of cattle is equal, as well as of other property, such as dollars, cloths, matchlocks, swords, &c. They, in general three or four months beforehand, appoint a day to settle the marriage, so as to give plenty of time to all friends who choose to make presents, which is common on both sides to give them. On the day appointed, they all meet at the house of the girl's parents, where they in general build a large *das*, as it is called, for the purpose. This *das* is as large as a very large barn, staked and hedged on all sides, in a long square form, about eight foot high; the top is covered with bushes. Within this the girl and her friends are all seated, the girl upon a cradle at the head of the tables covered with * heaps of bread and cooked victuals, and each side of the *das* is lined with large jars of maize and swoir. The * 41 girl has a great many servants standing round her, holding their cloths, so that no one may see her. When all is ready, the young man who is to take her away comes with all his companions on horseback, galloping into the *das*, where he gets off and begins to cut his capers, jumping over his spear

and showing his activity with his shield, and boasting of what feats he had done or would do. They afterwards all sit down to eat and drink, and after the bread, &c. is cleared away by the poor and those who come to see the wedding, the property of both sides is brought in, and the girl's father begins first to count and throw down before all the company, who are appointed witnesses, the property agreed upon,—so many dollars, cloths, matchlocks, &c.—which is afterwards followed in an equal quantity by the young man's father. When all is settled and sworn to before all the witnesses, the young man mounts his horse, and at the same time his companions take the girl, as if by force, and place her upon the saddle of one of their mules, the owner of which jumps up behind her, holding her in his arms, with the rein of the bridle in his hand, when they all ride off together. If the bridegroom is far from his own home, he will take up lodgings upon the road, where he first tries the virginity of his new wife; and if he is satisfied, he sends back to the girl's father or friends, by one of his companions, a piece of white cloth dipped in the blood of a fowl which they kill for that purpose, a fat she-goat, and a hornful of honey, for which he who takes the present receives something in return of more value from the girl's parents. But if he is not satisfied with the trial, he sends back a poor lean goat, of which he cuts one ear close off, and a horn not half full of honey. This is the custom throughout the country.

The poor or lower class have no such marriages. If any man wishes to marry a girl he may take a liking to, he gives a *drube* and a *firgy*. The *drube* is a large cloth of that name, purchased from four to five dollars; the *firgy* is a small common cloth, which goes at a dollar; this is to make her a shirt, and the *drube* a dress over it. Those cloths are * 42 given* into the hands of the father or mother, who deliver up their child as if purchased like a slave; nor should the man who marries her be sixty or seventy years of age, and the child only eight, is anything thought of the unequalness of the match. I have known several to be given to men of that age that have been born since I have been in

the country, which is not yet ten years. Some girls have children at thirteen and fourteen years of age. You may by chance find a girl who is still a virgin at eleven and twelve years of age in the provinces of Tegri and Inderter, but I can venture to say that there is not one in the Ammerrer country above nine or ten. The king will give their daughters to any of his chiefs he thinks proper at the age of seven and eight. I when a stranger among them used to think it impossible that a child of that age could be fit for marriage, but I since find that it is their natural custom. *In Ammersain et Tombain femine congressui venereo tam maturè assuetæ sunt, ut timeant ne filice earum connubio non adhuc junctæ sese stuprari dedit; et hoc modo pretium virginitatis, i. e. mercedes supradictæ, perditum esset. Parentes igitur, ut verum esse ego ipse bene scio, pudenda filice consuunt, quæ consuuta manent donec puellam viro eam in matrimonium expetenti tradant; quo tempore suturam novaculâ secant. Si autem in concubitu primo sanguis, indicium et testimonium virginitatis, non fluat, filie parentibus et dos viro, secundum leges Abyssiniorum, redditæ sunt.*

The dress of the ladies, or women of the highest rank, is a shirt made in general of fine white India cloth, which comes from Marsaw by the Mussulmen *cojler*. The shirt is neatly sewed with silk, and ornamented with silk twist of different colours from the neck down to the bosom, as far as the navel; the sleeves are made tight, and ornamented with the same as far as the elbow from the wrist; they have also ornaments of silver for their necks, legs, and wrists. Their dress over all is a large cloth, called a *murrerguf drube*, with a wide silk border to it: this cloth is in general purchased for ten and twelve dollars. Their legs, arms, and breasts are sometimes pricked with charcoal, in the same manner as the sailors in Europe mark themselves with Indian ink; this custom is only among the fairer-coloured women. Some of them who can afford it wear red Egypt lea-
 * ther shoes, and others wear black that are manufac- * 43
 tured in the country. The middling class dress in the

same manner, though the articles are inferior. The lower class, when they can afford it, wear a shirt with a small cloth over it; and when they cannot they wear a small piece of cloth round their waist, or a tanned goat's hide just enough to cover their nakedness, and also a sheep-skin upon their shoulders. They work like slaves, grind corn, carry water in large jars upon their loins, enough to load a strong ass; they also carry great loads of wood in the same manner. The load is placed upon their back a little below their loins, when they stoop with their head down, and a strap goes from the load or jar round their shoulders, to keep it from falling down behind; and they will carry these heavy loads, with their body bent in that manner, for three and four hours without resting; indeed, some are so much crippled with carrying, that when they walk without a load they are half bent forwards.

A Christian woman never milks a cow, as it is thought a great scandal, but their reason for this it is not worth while mentioning. If, by the will of God, a woman has two children at a birth, she is hated by every one; even her own relations will reproach her, and tell her that it is not natural to breed like a dog. I know for a certainty that some have put their children to death on this account, and thrown them into some place where they might not be seen, the moment they were born, sooner than bear the scandal. If a woman finds herself on the point of confinement, she will allow no one to come near her excepting a very great acquaintance or friend, that she can trust will not let the secret be known in case such a thing should happen to her. They have no midwives established, but the neighbours assist one another, according to their friendship. The priests are the instigators, who say that when Rebecca brought forth Jacob and Esau, God made Esau hairy all over like an animal to show it was not natural. No man will go into a house or hut until seven days after a child has been born in it.

The great people of Abyssinia use a great deal of
* 44 sweet-scented oils, which they buy from the Mus-
sulmen traders. They also use a great quan*tity of

butter mixed with pounded cloves in their hair, and they blacken their eyelids with a mineral called *cole*, which comes from Egypt. The ladies are all w——; there is not a woman in Abyssinia but what is a w——, from the queen to the very lowest; if they have a husband or not it is all the same, for when he is absent they enjoy the opportunity. The men are as bad. The women have no regard to beauty or love, but only the price. They are for a certainty very deceitful, and will turn from one to another twenty times in the course of a month.

When a stranger gets first acquainted with an Abyssinian, especially the Ammerrer, he is so attentive to his new companion that he would make any person believe by his smooth talk, &c., that he would certainly for ever be his constant friend; but this is soon found out to be a mistake, for when he has got so well acquainted with him as to know his mind, and every particular respecting him from his childhood, he either robs him or cheats him in some manner, so as to pick a quarrel and get rid of him; and after he has left him a few days he is not easy until he makes it up again with him. If the stranger is silly enough to comply, he will take a second advantage of him; but when once he learns to be as knowing as themselves, there is not much fear of falling out. They are, however, very polite in their manners, especially when they invite any one to their house to eat or drink; and when by chance they meet with one another, they pay a great many compliments, and always kiss one another in the open way.

No one ever passes his equals or betters without uncovering his breast, and bowing with his head, which they return in the same manner.

They have monthly clubs, or friendly meetings, in which they seldom have more than twelve persons. A man that can afford it may belong to as many of those clubs as he chooses, only they must be on different days, that he may attend all. They always meet at the house of the person whose turn it is to find the drink, &c. The greater sort of people have a dinner and drinking or maize club. The poorer sort have only a swoir or

beer club; if they are exactly twelve in number, it only comes to their turn once a year. These people in their separate clubs are sworn to be as brothers, and in case of necessity to assist one another, and * when any one of them may die, the * 45 rest to give the priests of his parish a feast, for forgiveness. They always maintain one priest in those clubs, to keep them in order. If a man be absent upon his own business, his wife attends in his place. The women have also clubs separate from the men, which are in general on the holidays for the Virgin Mary. The men have theirs on different days, but always on holidays. They in general begin to drink about four o'clock in the afternoon, and break up when the drink is finished, of which there is an exact proportion found by every one in his turn. One dollar's worth of honey, and two pieces of salt worth of a root called *suddu*, are sufficient to make maize enough to intoxicate fifty men. They seldom finish until a late hour at night, when some are so intoxicated that they fall in the way, and there sleep until morning if they have no one to look after them and carry them home. I have been in some of those clubs a long time, and know that, although they are sworn to be brothers, they are continually quarrelling and cheating one another for the least trifle.

They have no shame whatever; and if any one has done you ever so much harm, or if he has even attempted to murder you, he will come, when he happens to meet with you in company, and sit close by your side, ask you how you do, &c., and pretend the greatest friendship. If you should challenge him before the company for having wronged you, he will swear by all the oaths in the world that he never knew nor heard of what you accused him; and if you had a thousand witnesses he will get himself clear by taking the capital oath in a church; for when the offender chooses to swear, witnesses are not allowed: but if he does not choose to take the capital oath, the witnesses are sworn, and he is condemned to whatever punishment the heads of the place you are in think fit to adjudge. But if it is a very capital crime, such as murder, he is taken to the chief of the province, who passes sentence: though through bribery he

he in general lets him off easy, so it is impossible to get true justice any way. If murder or theft is committed, there is no one to search for the offenders, so that there is no kind of government whatsoever: for if you complain to the king, ras, or any other chief of the place you belong to, that you have been
* robbed, or have a brother or relation murdered, and
* 46 tell him every particular, the only answer he returns is, Bring the offender to me, and I will give you satisfaction. So those who commit crimes, in general escape through their having no justices, no settled laws, and no constables. I know one or two who committed murder in Tegri, and came to Inderter, where they are safe, and at the same time all under one chief, and all servants under one master. All murderers who are caught before they have time to escape to another province are brought before the chief, who sentences them death for death. The friends of the person murdered take the offender chained to the market-place, where all the relations of the deceased stab him in their turns with their knives or spears, and leave his corpse for his own relations to bury. If he has no one to bury him, the hyænas do not leave his corpse undevoured half an hour after sunset. There are several murders forgiven by the parents or the relations of the deceased, in consequence of receiving money or cattle from the friends of the murderer; and two hundred cows will in general save the life of a murderer, excepting the friends of the deceased be very rich, and seek revenge sooner than property. Murders are in general committed in disputes about land, as no fields of corn, &c. are hedged in, and their ground is so irregularly ploughed that they are almost always disputing. If they place stones as landmarks, they are often shifted by the one or the other. At the same time nothing is paid for ground that has not been cultivated, so any one may take a piece of ground and clear it for himself. But they are so lazy, that they would sooner cheat their neighbour for what he had industriously cleared and ploughed, than attempt to labour for themselves. Murders are seldom committed through jealousy occasioned by their women, as in other countries, for there is no such thing

as jealousy among them. A man will allow his wife to go into all manner of company she likes; excepting the king, ras, or gasmartie, who have in general a young favourite wife that no one is allowed to see excepting her own female servants. She is kept close confined, and never allowed to be visited by any person excepting her father confessor, and she is continually watched

* by Shangarler or Garler slaves, who have for that purpose been made eunuchs by the Mussulmen, who sell them. Those ladies that are so strictly kept are in general the daughters of kings, rases, or gasmarties. The king's and other chiefs' head-wife—that is, I mean, the wife given to them by her friends, who are upon an equality, as one ras may give his daughter to the ras of another province—has the tenth of all property, cattle, &c., brought in yearly by the chiefs commanding the different districts under her husband.

All taxes, tithes, &c., are brought in to the king or ras in September. Vocates of gold are the proper or standing income to the king, though he takes dollars, cloths, matchlocks, carpets, velvets, silks, and other articles that come from the sea-coast by the cofler: those are valued at so many vocates, and taken as such. Every chief also brings a certain number of cows and sheep, corn, honey, &c., which he takes as taxes from his subjects. If he gets five times the fixed number to be received by the king or ras, all above is his own. But in case of scarcity in his districts, occasioned by the locusts or what not, he is obliged to produce the standing quantity himself, even if he cannot get that much from the inhabitants.

In September is their greatest holiday, Holy Cross, when the king or ras reviews all his chiefs with their troops. Those chiefs are all dressed in splendid dresses; some have ornaments for their heads; and some, who are allowed by the king, wear a silver horn on their forehead, a mark of honour. No one is allowed to wear what they call a *betor*, which is a gold and silver ornament on the right arm, excepting he has killed an enemy in the presence of the king or his commander; but all other ornaments are worn by those who choose, or can afford them. The king or ras has an elevated place built up with mud and

stone like a stage, in the front of the *ashwar* or court where the review is. This stage is covered with Persian carpets, silk pillows, and other valuable articles: in the middle is a cradle neatly covered, upon which the king or ras sits, with all his household servants standing round him. The troops then come in, galloping helter-skelter round the *ashwar*, and riding for some time in a mad way, hallooing and making a great noise. They after*wards come one by one in their turns, at full gal-
 * 48 lop, to the foot of the raised place where the king is seated, and turn their horses round and round, shaking their heads and spears as if they were mad; boasting of themselves in such a manner as to make any stranger believe they were mad. I write the following only to show in what nonsensical manner the greatest noblemen in Abyssinia boast of themselves before their king: *Ané wond allicar*; *ané ambesser*; *ané sart*; *ber igre ané nebre*; *ané negodar*; *coulou ferregly*; *ané ferrey mer dar net*; *Shangarler guddi*; *Garler guddi*, &c., I am man's master; I am a lion; I am fire; on foot I am a leopard; I am thunder; all fear me; I am the physic for fear; I have killed Shangarlers; killed Garlers,—and a deal of other nonsense. All who have killed an enemy throughout the year have his pudenda hung to their right arm, which after ending their speech they throw down at the king's feet. This review lasts three days; after which every one knows his destiny, whether he is to remain governor of his districts, or whether another is to take his office. All preferment, breaking, making, and changing in the government is done at this time; and although they pretend to give preferment to the bravest and to the higher rank of persons, I know for truth that most preferment is given to tattlers, who are always making mischief by sly conversations with their masters, and through false reports and false witnesses many are innocently dismissed from their stations.

In all battles they have no kind of order or regulations, but all go helter-skelter as they like, shouting and making their boasting noise, and if they were not continually to make use of their chief's name as a watchword they would often mistake

the party they belonged to. The foot always stick close to the sides of the mountains, where they appear more like monkeys than soldiers: and the horse keep the valleys and plains, sometimes gaining and sometimes losing their ground: they have no notion of looking out where they ought to hold the strongest posts, but every one gallops to where he thinks he can easiest kill an enemy; and as soon as they kill, they immediately cut off the pudenda, with which they take a great part of the upper skin, in which they cut a hole just enough to put * their hand through, and then hang them to their right * 49 arm; this is all their glory, and all they look for in battle. They always leave their chief in the rear, and never, if possible to help it, bring him into close battle. There are always a great number killed on both sides, through having no management. When one army is obliged to retreat or run altogether, it is cutting work; as they take no prisoners excepting very great men, whom they afterwards ransom; but they kill all others who will not consent to have their pudenda cut off while alive! Some consent to this, who after get well and live! I know a great many of the Ammerrer, Tegri, and Garter that were so treated in the battle with Ras Walder Serlassy and the Gasmartie Goga of Igue. In 1817 I saw and counted 1865 pudenda brought before the ras, after not more than seven hours' fight: I myself killed some in the presence of the ras at the same time, but would not be so inhuman as to mangle a dead body; for which the ras was much displeased. They do not at the time throw them down, only show them, and then take the flesh out of the skin and stuff them with horse-dung, and make them as large as the skin can possibly allow, then sew them up, and dry them in the sun, and keep them until the holiday before mentioned. It would be thought an extraordinary sight, by those who were not acquainted with them, to see the women on their march carrying these trophies in their hands! and a load of their husbands' or masters' provisions on their backs. All women of the lower class go to all campaigns; they carry provisions and water, make bread, and cook for their masters or husbands. In

marching to war, or returning, they have a rear-guard to take care of the baggage and women, which is formed by turns of every chief of the king's or ras's household. They have a standing regular general, called the *titorrory*, who always marches a few miles in front of the main army, and in all battles is first engaged by the titorrory of the enemy's army. There is more than one titorrory that make the front army, though the name is given to the eldest, or the one first made by the king: if he is killed, the next to him takes his place. They have a great many other titles, which I shall afterwards mention separately. The Abyssinians would for a certainty make brave * soldiers if they were brought under a more civilized nation to discipline them.

They study nothing about trade, but leave that business totally to the Mussulmen who inhabit their country; there are some Christian weavers, but not so many as the Mussulmen. All ladies of the first and middling class spin; but those of the first class only spin their own wearing apparel, which is wove by Mussulmen. In all great families they in general keep one or two Mussulmen weavers, whom they maintain for the purpose of weaving for them only. They make very fine cloths of cotton (the only manufacture in the country): the cotton is fine and white, and I think cheap; though I am not acquainted with the price in other countries. In Gondar, Addore, Antarlo, &c., the cotton that comes from Walkite and the Tecassey Argou sells in the markets at the rate of eighteen and twenty pounds for a dollar. It is in general sold for salt and exchanged for corn, in very small quantities.

No people of distinction ever visit the markets, but do all their business through their servants. The markets contain raw cotton, cotton cloths, tanned hides, cattle of all kinds, honey, wax, butter, corn, fowls, knives, spears, ploughshares, baskets, beads, &c.; gold is also sold in the markets, but not common, and in very small pieces. Good corn, wheat, and barley is in general so cheap as to sell for six and eight bushels the dollar: though some seasons the ravages done by the locusts make it so dear that hundreds of poor die for want;

and there are none but the greater sort of people but what feel the loss in those times, as the greater sort of people in general lay in a stock in case of scarcity. One-third of their crop is wasted through neglect and laziness; as birds are in millions all over the country, and yet no one offers to destroy them; not even children offer to divert themselves with that employment, as in other countries. The chiefs of the different provinces do not only live upon the income of their country, but keep farm-servants or ploughmen of their own. Ras Walder Serlassey, the greatest prince in Abyssinia, has one thousand three hundred and odd ploughmen, which I have seen upon his list of accounts. All the corn produced by those farmers is for his own table, and for the * allowance of strangers. The

* 51 silversmiths and coppersmiths are the first traders in the country; they have plenty of employment and live well. Saddlers also find plenty of employment. Ironsmiths (as I before mentioned) are Budars.

To add to the wickedness of the Abyssinians, they delight in killing without a cause! and when any young man wants to begin, he goes to the markets on the borders or frontiers of the Christians, where the Garler frequently trade, where he is sure to meet with a young Garler that wants the same prey: when the two get acquainted with each other's ideas, they make their bargain either by giving property, or by way of exchange. If the Garler does not want to kill, he will agree for one or two cows, or other property, to take him where he may kill with safety, and afterwards return with him. This agreement is made before people who encourage this wickedness, and who are an intermixture of Christians and Garlers, who live exactly on the frontiers of both. The Garler is sworn before those people, who keep the property in hand, to return the Abyssinian safe. He then takes him two or three days' journey into his own country, to some place where he knows it is most convenient for killing some poor innocent Garler that is keeping his cattle in the deserts. After the Abyssinian has killed him and got the pudenda (the only thing he went for), he returns to the people who have the property in hand, which is given to the

Garler: those who make the agreement receive a present from the Christian. But if the bargain is made by way of exchange, instead of giving property, the Christian takes the Garler to his home, where he keeps him until he finds an opportunity for him to kill some one of his own countrymen who are a great way from home, cutting wood for building, or feeding their cattle, in a desert place, where there is little fear of being discovered: he afterwards returns him to the people before mentioned, in the same manner as himself. When he returns home again, he has his hair tied right up on end with a piece of red cloth or rag, and the bloody rag of the poor fellow he has killed tied round his forehead, to make himself as frightful as possible. His friends, and all the young men of the town or village he belongs to, join him and go dancing about

* 52 * among their neighbours, eating and drinking for two or three days at the houses of their friends, at free expense. Afterwards he goes to the chief of the country he belongs to, with the pudenda hanging to his right arm; and with his spear and shield he cuts the usual capers, and throws them down before his chief, who calls him a man, and in general gives him a fat cow to kill and eat with his companions. No young Abyssinian is scarcely ever easy until he has killed some one; for which purpose he will go naked to save up his wages, until he has sufficient to procure a guide; and the priests, instead of endeavouring to put a stop to such wickedness, encourage it! And I know and am perfectly well acquainted with a priest of Waggerat that has killed twenty-two Garler boys in the same manner; of which he often brags, and calls himself *Abbar Christian*,—the Father of Christians!

The Garler are brave, and in general true people; that is, I mean the Pagan Garler of Aszovo, Carrar, and High-Yer: but the Garler that are converted to Mussulmen are as false as the Christians. The Pagan Garler never breaks his oath, nor even his word: and when he has occasion to swear, he swears in this manner: "If I turn from what I say, or break the agreement I now make, may my children, cattle, and all dear to me, die immediately;" or sometimes in this manner (holding his

own spear in his hand), "May this my own spear be the death of me!" &c. The Pagan Garler have no kind of religion, nor place of worship; but they say that there is a *Wark* or *Robe*, which is a God! and for all great trees and waters they have great veneration, and always say when they pass them, "Yer *Wark guddar*," "Our great God." I have often heard them use this expression at the report of a musket.

They only make their king for seven years, who is never chosen except out of the original family of kings. Shavo was king when I first came into the country; after him Walder Shavo, his son (whose proper name is Abbarbouner Cumbola): Shavo's brother is now king.

They eat very little bread, as they have no cultivation in their country; and they bring their cattle to the Christian markets, to exchange for corn, cloths, &c. The lower class are always itinerant, feeding their cattle in * the deserts, * 53 scarce ever tasting a bit of bread, and living entirely upon milk and flesh. If by the will of God their cattle die, they eat the flesh, but not without boiling it. The great people, when feasting together, in general sit down under a large tree, when they kill a fat bullock. The Garler will never kill a cow, excepting she will not breed, as they mostly live upon milk; and the Christians never kill a bullock, because they plough all their land with them. Before they cut the animal's throat, they have their drinking-horns placed close at hand: and immediately the blood begins to run, the first hornful is given to the king or head-man in company, which he drinks as heartily as if it was milk. They are then all served according to their rank, as fast as possible, until the hot blood has done running, when they broil and eat the flesh; they do not eat the meat raw, though they drink the blood. The greater sort of Garler people drink maize like Christians.

They use a deal of butter in their hair and skin, which makes their company disagreeable; and they are fairer than the Christians in general. The women are handsome, but as great w—s as the Christians. The Garler also have as many women as they choose. If a Garler takes a wife or woman to cohabit

with, and she is previously pregnant by another man, after the child is born, he keeps it until it is old enough to do without the mother, and then sells it. If the same or any other woman should afterwards be pregnant by him, and a quarrel or whatever necessity may occasion them to part, the man she goes to cohabit with sells the child in the same manner. The Garler women do all the labouring work, build their huts, clean the cattle-pens, carry water, saddle the horses, and lead them when the man chooses to go on foot: and the man does nothing whatever but carry his spear and shield.

When a Garler dies, they have no crying like the Christians, but only say "*Wark fudetta*," God has taken him, and bury him behind their hut.

The Arshengy and Dower Garler are Mussulmen: they make very handsome brass chains, which all Garlers wear about their necks; they also bring them to the Christian markets for sale: the Christians buy them for their horses' and mules' neck-ornaments. They also bring a great many zebras' manes, which the Christians put about their horses' necks when saddled.

* The Abbo-how-churl and Igue Garler are for the
* 54 greatest part converted to Mussulmen; although a great many Ammerrer Christians live among them. They have great cultivation throughout both those provinces, and produce a great quantity of corn and cattle of all sorts: they also make very good cloths, and in great quantities. Their manners are the same as those of other Christians and Mussulmen in Abyssinia.

The Argou are a very bad-tempered kind of people, although they are in the very middle of the Christians; excepting those of Argou-muder, which lies between Gogam and the Abbi Shangarler.

Those on the borders of the Tecassey begin in Laster and extend as far as Overgalley, their capital. They have the same religion and customs as other Christians, but are very bad-tempered, quarrelsome, and covetous. It appears that in former days they had a great veneration for springs and foun-

tains of water, which I hear they worshipped. They at this present time, after drinking at any spring or pond, make it muddy all over by stirring it about with their hand or a stick, to prevent any one from drinking immediately after them. I once on our march to Igue was served this trick when I was very thirsty, by one of my companions, which brought on a very serious quarrel, that would not have been easily settled, unless a very respectable Ammer, who came to pacify us, had told me that the Argou all did so, and would serve the king the same way if he wanted to drink after them. Being assured it was their custom, I gave way to the ways of the country, and made it up with the Argou soldier.

The Telfain, that live between the Garler and Teltal, speak both tongues; indeed, by what I can see or learn from them, and by their having no tongue of their own, it would seem that their language has sprung from an intermixture of both. Their manners resemble those of both people, though they are Pagans.

The Teltal are Mussulmen; and although they do not pray in the public manner other Mussulmen do, nor have any places of worship, yet they still put their whole trust in the prophet Mahomet. They live upon their cattle after the same manner as the Garler: all salt that passes as small money in Abyssinia comes from their country. The Christians go down into their country, and cut and bring the salt

* themselves, the Teltal having no hand in cutting or
 * 55 carrying the salt themselves. The whole of the salt business is in the hands of Ras Walder Serlassey, and has been ever since the death of the Gasmartie Walder Gabriel, son of Ras Michael Suel, which is twenty-eight years; and it was in Ras Michael's hands forty years.

The way this business is carried on is by the ras giving to the Teltal a certain number of cloths yearly, and making them such other presents as he thinks proper; so that they have only to protect the *Arro*, as it is called, which is a Christian caravan, never less than from ten to twenty thousand mules, camels, and asses, which start from Inderter, and return laden

in ten days. Half of this salt is the ras's. If the caravan be attacked by the Garlers or Telfain when cutting the salt, without the Teltal offering to assist, and any of the caravan people be killed, the ras makes the Teltal accountable for them by giving him man for man, or cattle, and if they refuse to do so, he sends an army down into their country sufficient to destroy their towns and villages and plunder their cattle. I have been once in this expedition with the ras's army; at which time, before they were aware of our approach, we came into the middle of the desert, where all their cattle were feeding; and in three days took, and afterwards brought into Inderter, fourteen hundred camels, three thousand two hundred bullocks and cows, and above ten thousand sheep and goats, besides killing a great number of Teltal. Every time the arro goes afterwards to cut salt, the ras returns them a quantity of their cattle in place of the standing quantity of cloths. This salt is all cut into pieces of an equal size, about ten inches long and three wide, of a long square form: it passes in Inderter from thirty to thirty-five pieces the dollar, or the piece of cloth called firgy. The further it is carried into the country, it passes for more; in Laster twenty pieces is a dollar; Seamon, ditto; in Gondar it passes from ten to twenty pieces the dollar; Walkito, ditto; Argou-muder and Upper Gogam, fifty-five pieces fetch a vocate of gold. The gold there is eight dollars the vocate, and is first brought by the Shangarler to Argou-muder in very small pieces, from the size of a small pin's head to a pea, where they exchange it for salt, knives, spears, cloth, &c. The gold when first brought is clear *good gold; but the Gogamers and Argous adulterate it by melting it with one-eighth *50 part of silver; and breaking it when red-hot with a hammer into larger pieces, they weigh it into vocates, which pass through the country for ten dollars: when taken to Marsaw it fetches from twelve to thirteen ditto. In all capital towns there is a silversmith, who has the office of weighing all gold that passes in the markets, in buying or selling slaves, horses, &c.; which office is given by the king or chief of the district he may live in. No one dares offer to weigh his own

gold or any one's else, in consequence of a fine of double the quantity he may be proved to have weighed, which the silver-smith receives.

A List of the Weights in Abyssinia.

Quarry, dream, vocate, nattle.

Ten quarrys	one dream.
Ten dreams	one vocate.
Twelve vocates	one nattle or pound.

They have no larger weights.

They have no measures but the *gudge*, which is from their elbow to the end of the middle finger, for measuring length.

A List of the Corn Measure in Abyssinia.

Durgo, half-pint—*cuffarlo*, pint—*incar*, quart—*marro*, half-peck—*carvo*, peck—*nufkey*, half-bushel—*mussales*, three-quarters of a bushel—*gebbiter*, bushel—*interlam*, churn.

	Tegri.	Ammerrer.
Two durgo.....	one cuffarlo one cuffarlo.
Two cuffarlo	one incar conner.
Two incar	one marro one marro.
Two marro	one carvo.....	one carvo.
Two carvo	one nufkey	nufkey.
Three carvo	one mussales	one mussales.
Two nufkey	one gebbiter	madigar.
Eight gebbiter ...	one interlam	churn.

* *The price in general of the different articles in the markets of Abyssinia.* * 57

Though everything is sold in very small quantities, I put all upon an average with the dollar, or piece of cloth.

Corn from six to eight bushels	the dollar.
Honey, one peck.....	the dollar.
Butter, ditto	ditto.
Fowls, from ninety to a hundred and ten...	ditto.
Wax, about fifteen pounds	ditto.
Fat cows, from two and a half to four.....	ditto.
Ploughing bullocks, from four to six	ditto.

Sheep, five and six.....	the dollar.
Goats, small, ditto	ditto.
Large cut he-goats, two and three	ditto.
Mules, from fifteen to fifty and sixty	ditto.
Horses, from thirty to one hundred and thirty	ditto.
Plough-shares, about 7lb. weight, two for ...	ditto.

The slaves sell in general, boys and girls, from twenty to forty dollars, according to their make and look. Horses, mules, and slaves sell for a quarter the price mentioned in Gogam, Argou-muder, Metchar, Abbo-how-churl, Dount, Wadler, &c., the other articles differ but little in their prices. Everything such as honey, butter, oil, &c. is sold by measure; nothing is weighed excepting gold and cotton. Meat killed and sold in the market, as well as wax and tobacco, is sold by guess or the piece. Tobacco is very cheap; it is in general, upon an average with the dollar, about thirty pounds, though badly manufactured.

Prices of articles come by the coffer from Marsaw, used by the silversmiths.

Quicksilver, three vocates	one dollar.
Lead, four pounds	ditto.
Pewter, two and a half ditto.....	ditto.
Borax, one-quarter ditto	ditto.
Alum, one-quarter ditto	ditto.

* The oil of cloves, and other sweet scents that are brought into the country by the Mussulman coffer, sell * 58 very quick. The oil of cloves is one vocate for the dollar; they use cloves in all their cooked victuals, as well as in their hair, &c.

Names of the different Grains.

Wheat is called *sindy*.
 Barley *gufs*, or *segum*.
 Peas are called *incarter*.
 Beans *arterbarrey*.

Agger makes good bread.

Marshaller ditto.

Taff ditto.

Shimberrer, used as peas.

Onyer, ditto.

Intarty makes an oily mess to eat with bread.

Dargusar makes good swoir, or beer.

Dummy, bread.

Nuke makes oil, used in the place of butter in the fast-days.

Eursin, used like peas.

Oats grow wild in most parts of the country; no use is made of them.

Titles of the Noblemen, &c.—Abyssinia.

Negus, or *Itsa*, is king.

Ras, or *Gasmartie*, is prince.

Canniaskmask is next to ditto.

Cannaquos is next to *Canniashmask*.

Parramberras is next to ditto.

Titorry is the front general.

Belighting gatar is the secretary for the king.

Barlermall Itsa is the king's favourite.

Basher, the first captain of the musket-men.

Allikar Terasiniger, the captain of the horsemen.

Chellicar Segar, captain of the meat.

* *Chellicar Zuffan Bait*, captain of the king's house.

* 59

Budge-ger Runde, the king's linen and clothes keeper.

Ditto, of the carpets and other household goods.

Aszassey, the steward of the bread.

Priests' Titles.

Cackermat Sarfey, keeper of the king's cash and accounts.

Case Itsa, the king's priest.

Those noblemen near the sea-coast are titled *Barnigassey*, *Cuntivar*, &c.

Those greater sort of people are very proud in general. They are the greatest misers in the world; as their children cannot be distinguished from the children of the very lowest

class, as they show them very little partiality, and let them go quite naked until they grow up, and then clothe them but poorly. They keep the lower class very much under, and do with their servants as they like. A common servant's pay is one firgy, or dollar, for four months, one cake of bread morning and evening; which cake is made like a pancake, and is exactly one durgo of corn before it is ground. A woman servant's wages is the same. A grasscutter's wages is the same; though his allowance is three cakes a day. There are some serviceable servants who get four and five cloths a year. A musket-man's or soldier's pay is ten cloths a year; but he finds himself, and makes his own powder. The shields-men have the same. These soldiers cultivate as much ground as they like for themselves, and pay no tithes. A horseman's pay is twenty cloths, who also finds himself and horse.

Saltpetre and sulphur, or brimstone, although I have not before mentioned them, are sold in the markets. Saltpetre is about twenty-two or twenty-three pounds the dollar. Sulphur is about twelve and thirteen ditto. The musket-men make far better powder than is made in Arabia. Their mixture is seven measures of nitre and one of sulphur, to which they add the willow charcoal by degrees; drying it every now and then with fire upon a clean stone, until they perceive it goes clean off. They sometimes grind it, and sometimes beat it in a wooden mortar, and make *it into very large and irregular grains.

* 60 They use no other shot but iron. Ras Walder Serlassey is the strongest prince in Abyssinia, and has of his own eight thousand five hundred matchlocks, besides a great quantity belonging to his chiefs, about two thousand horses, and above twenty thousand shields-men; still he is as mean as a common Jew, and a great liar: though one thing is to his credit, he is very merciful to prisoners, &c., and he is a brave hard fighter. Ras Gabru is free, but barbarous to those he dislikes: he has about seven hundred muskets and but few horse, though his country is the hardest in Abyssinia to conquer, through the strong mountains it contains, that are cultivated on the tops and have water. It also commands all passes

from the Ammerrer to Tegri. Guxar is not barbarous, though he is of a Garler descent. He has eight thousand horse, but few muskets. Ras Ilow is not very strong, though his country produces brave soldiers : he is an ally constant to Walder Serlassey. Libban is barbarous and revengeful ; he has about ten thousand horse, though Guxar beat him in two battles. Goga is uncommonly barbarous, and friendly with no one, but always at war ; and indeed all except Ras Walder Serlassey fear him. Those are the great princes of Abyssinia, who have the whole country in their hands. The king, Itsa Guarlu, now in Gondar, has no sway at all, is very poor, and has nothing more than the name of a king.

The Residences of the Kings now alive.

Itsa Takely Gorges	Axume.
Itsa Yoas	Begandre.
Itsa Yoñas	Gogam.
Itsa Bedemarian	Seamon.
Itsa Guarlu.....	Gondar.

Your Honour may depend upon this to be a real true account, and no hearsay whatever.

I am your Honour's most obedient and humble servant,

(Signed) NATHANIEL PEARCE.

Challicut Inderter, Abyssinia,

October, 1814.

[*Note.*—This account is very interesting, but our present knowledge of Abyssinia is much wider, and quite different from that of the honest far who is the narrator here. Those acquainted with the descriptions of Krapf, Blanc, Rassam, &c. &c., will easily rectify the curious orthography of the sailor, who invariably calls the Gallas *Garlers*, writes *Shoar* for Shoa ; but none of his spellings are so distorted as to be unidentifiable with the true ones. For old accounts of that country, I would refer to *A Voyage to Abyssinia*, by Henry Salt, Esq., London, 1814 ; *Views in Abyssinia*, by the same author, 1809 ; and *Voyage to Abyssinia*, by Father Jerome Lobo, 1735. Besides the modern writers above mentioned, I would refer to Markham, Blanford, and Stanley.—ED.]

AN ESSAY ON PERSIAN LITERATURE.

By Captain VANS KENNEDY.

Read 30th September, 1817.

FEW subjects have occasioned a greater variety of opinions than the real merits of Persian literature. By some it has been praised in the highest degree ; by others it is said to contain a few excellencies amidst a multiplicity of defects ; and by others it is not allowed to possess a single beauty. But the vagueness of such opinions affords a strong presumption that they may be all equally incorrect. An attempt, therefore, to ascertain, by adverting to the principal productions in this language, how far censure or praise be most deserved, may perhaps prove not uninteresting.

If, however, the government and manners of the Persians be attentively considered, the result of such a review may be easily anticipated : for whenever the lives and properties of men are held merely at the pleasure and caprice of an individual whose will is not restrained either by custom, or by laws human or divine, the higher feelings of the soul can have no existence. That *amor patriæ*, therefore, and that desire of fame, which lead to every noble exertion, are unknown in Persia. There freedom of thought and independency of action are held in complete subjection ; and the only means of rising to wealth and dignity is by the most servile submission. That their religion inculcates ignorance and slavery may be deemed fortunate for the inhabitants of this country : bigoted to it, they believe, according to its tenets, that the prince reigns by divine right, and that he is accountable for his actions to God alone. Every event also, however trifling, they believe to be predestinated ; and as, consequently, whatever happens has been decreed, not by man but by God, they bend *under every misfor- * 62
 tune, and under death itself, with perfect resignation to

his will. The highest minister, or the greatest general, appears upon a simple summons before the imperial throne, and while humbly bowing and repeating to himself, "From God we came, and to God we shall return," his head falls by the hand of the executioner at the feet of his sovereign. But for malversation death or dismissal from office without personal disgrace occurs in every country. It is in Moslem kingdoms only, and particularly in Persia, that the highest functionaries of the state are chained, whipped, or bastinadoed, and then allowed to resume their respective duties ; yet the real or supposed delinquent receives not such a punishment with more humility than it is beheld with indifference by the rest of his countrymen. Hence every noble quality that ought to distinguish a public character has long become extinct in Persia ; and its ministers, possessing not a single virtue, may be feared, but they are never respected.

In private life the baneful influence of bigotry and despotism equally prevails. The knowledge of other countries is therefore contemned ; and the education of the Persian children embraces at this day no wider a field than it did in the first ages of Islamism. They are merely taught to read and write their own language, the simplest rules of Arabic grammar, and to peruse the Koran : and should they acquire beyond this a knowledge of logic, jurisprudence, the traditions of their prophet, and the commentaries on the Koran, they are considered to be accomplished scholars. The perusal of their native poets is prevented, if possible ; and it is even a question debated amongst their doctors whether poetry itself be consistent with the tenets of their religion. Thus, nurtured in almost complete ignorance, the Persians are at the same time deprived of the advantages which flow from an equal and unreserved intercourse with the fair sex. That indescribable power which the society of woman possesses to ameliorate the sterner passions of man has never been experienced by them ; and never has the violence of their passions been subdued by gallantry, or those sentiments of respect to woman which have in Europe survived the days of chivalry. The nature of their

government also prevents their reposing in each other that confidence which can alone * produce and maintain the social affections. The pleasures, therefore, of a * 63 Persian are selfish, and are enjoyed by him either alone, or in the seclusion of his haram, or in the company of a few select acquaintances ; and, as there is no public opinion, no established moral rule which in the absence of laws might prove a restraint to vice and passion, a Persian freely indulges himself, as far as his means will admit, in the gratification of every criminal desire. In a country, then, where virtue has been banished from public and private life, where even its semblance is not required, and where the softer feelings are unknown, few can be the noble actions which deserve to be recorded in the pages of the historian, and few the themes which can inspire the strains of the poet.

But, degraded as is the spirit of man in Persia, every author describes the climate as being delightful, and the country as boasting many beauties. Its inhabitants are also admitted to possess great natural abilities ; and there seems no doubt that they are capable, were they once released from the torpifying influence of bigotry and despotism, of attaining to excellence in every pursuit. But while these energies have remained thus repressed, in what manner, it may be asked, would the impulse of genius direct the thoughts of an author ? His mind cramped by education, the literature of no country but his own accessible (and that scarcely deserving the name), it might be easily conjectured that the author, if an historian, would compose only annals ; the didactic writer would discourse on the received classification of virtues and vices, and where the topic might be dangerous he would convey his sentiments by tales and apologues ; and that the poet would sing the charms of nature and the pleasures of love and wine, nor would his strains refuse to celebrate the praise of kings and princes. Yet, although in a literature composed of such materials much might be deficient, still this would be no reason for supposing that what had been executed might not be excellent. How far this praise may with justness be bestowed on the literature of the Persians remains now to be considered.

The works in prose in the Persian language may be divided into historical, theological including jurisprudence, philosophical, and didactic. * With regard to the first, the preceding observations will have shown that there are many causes which must have prevented the composition in Persia of any work which could in every respect deserve the name of History. To these it may be added that from the battle of Nehavend, in A.D. 641, to the conquest of Khorasan by Shah Ismail Sefi in A.D. 1510, the whole of Persia was never united under the government of one sovereign. Dynasty succeeded to dynasty; and during this period of nearly nine centuries twenty-four different families obtained a supreme and independent power over different portions of this country. In attempting, then, to describe these rapid revolutions, no abilities could enable an author to give his subject that unity which is the greatest beauty of history; nor would the events which he might record afford either interest or entertainment to the generality of readers: for his page would merely present the same unvarying picture of a successful noble usurping the power of his feeble prince, and establishing a state to which himself and one or two of his immediate descendants gave power and lustre, but which soon falls into decay and in like manner becomes the conquest of some ambitious chief. Equally transient was the duration of all these states; and not one of them preserved for sixty years either the same extent of territory or the same authority. The history, therefore, of Persia is not a history of a powerful kingdom, the sceptre of which was swayed by a succession of hereditary princes, and the resources of which were solely employed in maintaining the happiness and prosperity of the people;—on the contrary, its annals only record a rapid succession of different and contemporary dynasties, a series of intestine wars, a continued devastation of the country, and all the calamities and misfortunes which have almost uninterruptedly afflicted this once powerful kingdom.

To these various circumstances may be justly ascribed the defects of the Persian historians: for, being thus confined by the nature of the subject, they have contented themselves with

relating according to chronological order the principal events which have occurred during the reign of each dynasty ; and as they very seldom enliven this narration by their reflections, or by any interruption to the main subject, their histories certainly labour * under the disadvantage of being monotonous. Nor is this sameness ever diversified by any general or ex- * 65 tended views, any disquisitions concerning the political economy or the literature of the country, or any description of the manners and customs of the people. But, notwithstanding these various defects, it is impossible to read the Persian historians without their exciting very considerable interest. Their style, which has been much censured, although it errs in some degree both against taste and simplicity, is neither inflated nor bombastic ; and their works alone contain correct accounts of all that has happened for ages amongst a people who are scarcely known in Europe. The principal events, indeed, which are narrated, wars and crimes of princes, are the common topics of all histories ; and they differ, therefore, as described in Asiatic annals, but little from what has been already recorded in European history. But it is the incidental mention, which occurs in Persian historians, of facts and circumstances that add to the means of studying human nature, which must always render their works both curious and entertaining. To trace the progress and political effects of a religion founded by a mere man, to observe the changes that luxury caused in the poor and independent tribes of Arabia and Tartary, and to mark the powers of mind which can flourish under even the worst governments, are subjects not unworthy of the labours of a philosopher. But without a knowledge of the Persian and Arabic historians these various revolutions, which have altered the face of Asia, and which had nearly produced the same effect in Europe, must ever remain but partially understood.

To the Moslems the recording of these revolutions became so early an object of attention, that before the expiration of the first century of the Hijreh an historian had arisen to commemorate the conquests of the new religion. Other historians followed in rapid succession ; and in the *Bibliothèque Orientale*

will be found the names of nearly two hundred authors of general or particular histories in the Arabian and Persian languages. Many of these writers relate transactions which took place during their own lives; and so short a period in general intervenes between the composition of each history, that * 66 it may be justly said that the principal * events of Persian history have been preserved from oblivion by persons who had the means of ascertaining the authenticity of the facts which they recorded. Each succeeding historian also adheres with scrupulous exactness to the materials collected by his predecessors: and, as he rarely enters into reflections, or passes any opinion on the motives and actions which he describes, he is not liable to be induced either by religious or political prejudices to deviate from the truth: the very arrangement, too, which he adopts of relating each occurrence according to the years in which it happened, although tedious to the reader, must greatly contribute to the preventing of inaccuracy. The Persian historians, therefore, while they confine their narrative to such events as occurred in their own country subsequent to the birth of Muhammad, may be considered as perfectly authentic: but their accounts of foreign transactions are in general incorrect, and the truth of all circumstances recorded by them previous to that period is extremely doubtful.

The first historian who flourished in Persia was Abu'l Jaffur Muhammad ben Jurair ul Tabari, who was born A.H. 224 (A.D. 838), and died A.H. 311 (A.D. 923). The original of his work was composed in Arabic, and is believed to be no longer extant: but it was fortunately translated into Persian by Abu'l Fazl Ahmed, the vizier of Nuh ben Nasr, one of the Samanich princes, almost immediately after it was composed, as Abu'l Fuzl was put to death in a mutiny in A.D. 946. This History is not only particularly valuable on account of its antiquity, but also on account of its being the earliest work written in the present language of Persia which is now extant. From the death of Muhammad ben Jurair to the commencement of the composition of the *Habib us Seir*, in A.D. 1527, many historians have flourished in Persia, the exact dates of whose

works and of whose deaths it is difficult to ascertain. Subsequent to that period, the only histories which have obtained any distinction are the *Tarikh Alum Arai Abbassi*, written in A.D. 1606, and the *Tarikh Nadiri*, so ably translated by Sir W. Jones. It may therefore be sufficient to observe that the historical works most esteemed in Persia are the *Tarikh Tabari* of Muhammad ben Jurair; the *Tarikh Guzideh* of Hamdalla *Mustufi, composed in A.D. 1329; the *Rouzet us Safa* of Muhammad ben Hemam ud Din Amir Khawend Shah, * 67 the date of which is uncertain, but the author died in A.D. 1497; and the above-mentioned *Habib us Seir* of Ghaias ud Deen ben Muhammad Amir Khawend. As the arrangement of all these works is in general the same, a description of the contents of the *Rouzet us Safa* will convey the best information respecting the subjects discussed by the Persian historians.

This History commences with the creation of the world, and was intended to have been brought down to A.D. 1505. It is divided into a Preface, seven Parts, and a Conclusion.

The Preface describes the advantages to be derived from the study of history, and gives a list of the most esteemed historians; the names of sixteen of whom in Arabic, and eighteen in Persian, are mentioned.

The 1st Part contains An Account of the Creation, the Prophets, and the Kings of Persia.

The 2nd ———— The History of Muhammad and his four first Successors.

The 3rd ———— The History of the Twelve Imams and the Khalifs.

The 4th ———— The History of the various Dynasties which were contemporary with the Abbassieh.

The 5th ———— The History of Jengis Khan and his Successors.

The 6th ———— The History of Teimur and his Successors.

The 7th ———— The History of Sultan Hosein, who began his reign A.D. 1468, and died A.D. 1515.

The Conclusion contains a description of what is most remarkable in the world.

Such is the variety of topics which form the subject of all general Persian histories, and which have extended the size of the *Rouzet us Safa* to seven large volumes. On their importance no further remarks can be necessary; and it therefore only remains to endeavour to remove the impression which generally prevails, that the style of the Persian historians errs against every principle of good taste, by subjoining a few extracts, which may perhaps show that it is neither deficient in simplicity, perspicuity, nor conciseness. It need only be added that these extracts have not been selected on account of their greater freedom from the defects ascribed to the Eastern style, but merely as containing fair specimens of the style of the Persian historians.

From the Tarikh Tabari.

“Hejaj having stationed his troops before the gates of Mecca, battles daily took place in the holy city, and many men were slain. Hejaj then constructed an engine and threw stones into the town and at the Kaba; but when one stone fell on the Kaba the sun became dark, and his troops feared and wished to withdraw the engine and to retreat. Hejaj said, ‘Fear not: such is the nature of the climate of Hejaz whenever a thunder-storm occurs: and if the lightning seek you to-day, to-morrow it will seek them.’ His men put no faith in these words, and were retreating, when Hejaj advanced and began to work the engine with his own hand, and exhorted his men to continue the battle with firmness. But the defence was for a long time maintained; till at last the two sons of Abdallah ben Zobeir, Habib and Hamza, gave themselves up to Hejaj. Hejaj then knew that no troops remained with Abdallah, and despatched a messenger to him to say, ‘Why dost thou thus vainly expose thyself to death, as all the people have left thee, and thy sons have turned their faces from thee? Come forth, therefore, and demand mercy, and whatever thou mayest desire I will do unto thee.’ But Abdallah consented not. When Hejaj learnt that

the son of Zobeir had fixed his heart on death, he ordered that he should be closely invested, and that guards should be placed over the five gates of Mecca. Abdallah, being then deserted by all except five followers, entered his house and proceeded to his mother, the daughter of Abu Becr, and the sister of Aisha, a woman of sense and judgment, whom he consulted in every affair; to her he went clothed in his armour, and said, 'O my mother! all the world has turned from me, and has done me greater injury than the men of Irak did to Hosein; for his sons remained faithful to him, but mine have sought the protection of my enemies; and Hejaj offers to grant whatever I may demand. My mother, * shall I go to him or not?' She replied, 'Thou knowest best, my son. If thou believe that thou hast * 69 maintained the right, and called men to support the just cause, still adhere to it, and yield not thy right to any one, but die in its defence, in the same manner that thy friends have died; and give not thy enemies power over thee, nor trust thyself in the hands of the sons of O Meyah. Recollect how short a space of life remains to thee; and wouldst thou for a few short days of life disgrace thyself, when thou must die at last? But fix not a stigma upon thyself, nor yield to thy enemies.' Abdallah kissed the head of his mother, and said, 'Such was my intention, and I came therefore to bid thee farewell. God knows that I have maintained the right, and that I never acted contrary to it, and that I have never injured nor betrayed my neighbour, and that I have in every thing sought to please the Almighty. O Lord! thou knowest that I do not exalt myself; but still, my mother, I mourn for thee.' She replied, 'My son, mourn not for me, for I ought to have departed before thee; and, since I remain, God will grant me patience.' Then raising up her head, she said, 'O God! thou knowest that this son of mine has performed every prayer and kept every fast which was required; let not, then, their efficacy be lost: and thou knowest that his father and his mother were always pleased with him; be thou also pleased with him; and give me patience to support me when he

is gone, and grant me the reward of the patient.' Abdallah, having bade his mother farewell, went and passed the night in the mosque, in company with the few friends who remained with him. The next morning, having finished his prayers, he armed himself; and as each door of the mosque was guarded, he rushed from one of them, and made many attacks on the troops stationed before it, in all of which he slew many men. Thus he continued fighting until the prayers of noon; when, the day being very sultry, he became wearied, and was obliged to stand on one spot, when he was overpowered and fell: and his enemies gathered round him and cut him to pieces."

From the Rouzet us Safa.

"In A.H. 421 was received into the mercy of that king who
 *is the remitter of sins Yeminud Douleh O Aminul Millet
 * 70 Sultan Mahmud ben Subactagin. For two years before
 his death he was afflicted with a paralytic affection; but
 he continued, notwithstanding the injunctions of his physicians,
 to ride and move about in his usual manner. It is related that
 the sultan two days before his death ordered all the bags of silver
 and gold, the precious gems and valuable rarities which had
 been collected during his reign, to be brought before him, and
 to be spread out on rich carpets on the floor of the hall; and
 that floor appeared to the eyes of the beholder like a garden
 adorned with flowers of red and yellow and purple, and other
 various hues. The sultan viewed them with the eye of grief,
 and wept aloud; and after much weeping he directed them all
 to be carried back to the treasury, without bestowing on those
 entitled to charity a single dirhem from all that quantity of gold
 and jewels, although he knew that he must yield up in a few
 days his cherished soul in an hundred agonies. When Mah-
 mud had contemplated his various treasures, he proceeded to a
 balcony, where he beheld, as they passed in review before him,
 the imperial collection of valuable animals, such as Arabian
 horses, Burdaa camels, and the like: after having cast his eyes
 over them, he uttered groans and lamentations like a woman,
 and, pierced with grief and affliction, returned to his palace.

“ Abu'l Hosain ben Ali relates that Sultan Mahmud one day inquired from Abu Taher Samani what quantity of precious gems had been collected by the Samanich princes : he replied that Amir Nuh had possessed in his treasury the weight of seven rats. Mahmud immediately, bending his face on the ground, said, ‘ Praise be to God that the Almighty has bestowed on me more than one hundred rats of jewels!’ (The rat is about one pound avoirdupois.)

“ It is related that Mahmud in the commencement of his last illness asked his son Muhammad, ‘ If this unavoidable event should now take place, in what manner wouldst thou employ thyself after my death?’ He replied, ‘ In prayer and fasting, and almsgiving, and visiting the grave of my father, and in reading the Koran, in order that I might bestow the reward of these acts on his purified spirit.’ Mahmud then asked his other * son, Masud, the same question ; who replied, ‘ I would do that which thou didst to thy brother Ismail.’ Mah- * 71 mud was incensed and enraged at this answer ; for the circumstances of the contest between the sultan and Ismail were these :—When Mahmud had by means of oaths and treaties obtained possession of the person of Ismail, he asked him at an entertainment, ‘ If I had become thy captive, what were thy intentions respecting me?’ Ismail, from candour and sincerity, replied, ‘ My intention was, had I obtained the victory over thee, to have sent thee to a fort, and to have supplied thee with male and female slaves and animals, and all the means of enjoying thyself that thou mightest have desired ; and to have ordered every thing to have been furnished to thee which might have pleased thee.’ Shortly after this conversation, Mahmud, for some reasons which are mentioned in the *Tarikh Yemini*, delivered Ismail to the prince of Jurjan, and gave orders, according to what he had himself mentioned, that he should be confined in one of the forts of that country, and that the governor of it should be instructed to supply him with all that he might wish.

“ It is related that the cause of the last journey of Mahmud to Rei was that he might establish Masud in the government

of that country, and settle the countries of Khorasan, Ghaznin, and Hindostan on Muhammad. It is said that after Mahmud had conquered Irak he exacted immense contributions from the inhabitants, and that when he proposed to transfer the government of it to Masud, Masud said to him, 'Now that you have by torture and extortion impoverished this province, you would make me governor of it; but I am wearied of this country, and shall therefore proceed with thee to Khorasan.' But Mahmud reconciled and satisfied him, and placed under his command seventeen thousand men of the troops of Khorasan and Ghaznin, in order that he might be perfectly content to fix his principal residence at Rei. Mahmud then said to him, 'Thou must now swear that after my death thou wilt not oppose thy brother Muhammad.' Masud replied, 'When I take this oath thou wilt then withdraw thyself from me.' Mahmud said, 'My son, why dost thou speak such words?'

Masud replied, 'If I am thy son, I am entitled to part * 72 *of thy kingdom and thy treasures.' Mahmud answered, 'Thy rights shall be delivered to thee by thy brother; but do thou swear that thou wilt not wage war against him, and that thou wilt not show to him either enmity or hatred.' Masud replied, 'Let him come and swear that he will deliver me my right, and I will swear also. But he is now at Ghaznin, and I am at Rei; how can we take an oath?' In thus conversing with his father, Masud was both headstrong and rebellious, and in his questions and answers displayed insolence and audacity.

"Abu Beer Ali observes that Mahmud was a man most zealous in his sect and religion, and that his principal fault consisted in the extreme avarice with which he seized the property of other people. It once came to his knowledge that there was in Shapoor a man possessed of great wealth. He sent for that man to Ghaznin, and said to him, 'It appears that thou art a heretic.' The rich man replied, 'I am not a heretic: but the Almighty has enriched me with the wealth of this world: take all that I possess, but do not stigmatize me with the name of heretic.' The sultan accordingly took all

his property, and gave him a certificate of his being a true believer.”

From the Habib us Scir.

After describing the movements and order of battle of the armies of Amir Teimur and Ilderim Baized, which terminated in the battle of Angorah, and giving a rather poetic account of the commencement of the battle, the historian continues:—

“At this time the Amir’s son, Rüstüm, observed the standard of Muhammad Sultan, who, with six kushuns of the Moslems of Aleppo, had taken post on the summit of a rising ground, and hastened to attack them. But Ilderim, rushing upon him with a body of his troops, drove the prince to the bottom, and then re-occupied the summit; and the army of Râm, disordered and weakened, sought a junction with him there; so that Ilderim had again collected around him a large body of horse and foot. When Teimur beheld Ilderim on that height, he hastened to it in company with Shah Rokh, Miran Shah, Sultan Hosein, and Suliman Shah, and surrounded it with a strong reinforcement. But Ilderim maintained this position with firmness and valour until * 73 the close of the day; and at sunset, which was also the setting of the sun of his prosperity, fatigued with fighting and slaughter, he ordered the battle to cease, and his troops to retreat. But as soon as that rushing torrent had reached the plain, the victorious troops rushed forward, and seizing their bows and arrows changed its stream into blood; and Ilderim, escaping with the swiftness of a storm from this sea of blood, fled with the utmost speed. Sultan Muhammad Khan, with a body of warriors, was ordered to pursue him, who having overtaken him brought him at the time of supper to the imperial camp.

“In the *Zafar Nameh* and the *Matlaa us Saadin* it is written that when the victorious Teimur heard that Ilderim was about to be brought into his presence with his hands bound, he ordered that he should be introduced with every honour and ceremony, and that a dignified place should be assigned to him. But my respected father has related in the *Rouzet us Safa*, on

the authority of his father, Said Khawend Shah, who received the account from Secdi Ahmed Turkhan, who was on that night one of the persons present at the banquet of Amir Teimur, that they brought Ilderim with his hands bound into the august presence, and that his majesty first addressed some harsh expressions to him, and then ordered his hands to be unbound, and a place to be given him to sit down; that then, as all historians agree, he thus with kindness reproached him: 'Every event, whether good or bad, which occurs, depends upon the will of him who is omnipotent, and by whom man was created: but in this world of vicissitudes the immediate cause of all the misfortunes which have befallen thee was thyself; for hadst thou not refused the tribute which I demanded, the customs of amity would have been preserved between us; and the dust of distress, in consequence of the power of this victorious army, would not have dimmed the fortunes of the troops and inhabitants of this country: besides, it is not unknown that had the event happened otherwise, and the victory been thine, what harsh and severe acts towards me would have taken place from thy rigour and anger. But now thanks be to God for this conquest and victory! as I shall consider only what * 74 may be *most advantageous to thyself and children.

Fear not, therefore, nor let thy mind be disturbed with apprehension.' Ilderim then acknowledged his faults, and opened his mouth in prayers and praises; and Teimur conferred on him such princely favours as were consistent with his situation, and invested him with an imperial robe, and with the kindest promises consoled his anguished heart. When Ilderim was encouraged by these favours and kindnesses, he represented that his sons Musa and Mustafa had been in the battle with him, and requested that a search might be made for them, and that if either had survived he might be restored to him. On the instant messengers were detached by order of Teimur on all sides; and after a few days Musa was taken and brought into his presence, when Teimur received him with kindness, and having invested him with a rich robe sent him to his father. At that time tents were erected near the imperial pavilion for

the accommodation of Ilderim, and his custody was entrusted to Hosain Borlas and Baized Hasemia.”

The only biographical works which there appear to be in the Persian language are the Life of Teimur, written in A.D. 1424 with the greatest elegance by Sharafud Din Ali Yezdi; the Lives of the Poets, by Doulut Shah Samarkandi, the date of which is not mentioned, but it is dedicated to Amir Ali Shir, who died A.D. 1500; and the *Atish Kedad*, which is also an Account of the Poets, but a modern work, as it is brought down to A.D. 1780. The name of the author of it was Lutf Ali Ben Aka Khan, a native of Ispahan. The work of Doulut Shah is curious and entertaining, as it is interspersed with biographical sketches and anecdotes of the different princes under whom the poets whose lives he describes flourished. The style when the author praises is ornate; but when he narrates, simple and perspicuous. The following anecdote related by him is so applicable to the present subject that it merits being extracted:—

“From the following circumstance it will also be known that poetry was composed in Persia before Islamism. One day when Amir Abdullah Taher, the governor of Khorasan under the Abbassieh Kaliphs, was * giving audience, a person laid before him a book, as a rare and valuable present. * 75 He asked, ‘What book is this?’ The man replied, ‘It is the Story of Wamek and Ozara, a singular and wonderful tale, which was composed by learned men on account of Anushirwan, who was renowned and celebrated in every country for his equity and justice.’ The Amir observed, ‘We are the readers of the holy Koran, and we read nothing except that sacred volume and the traditions of the prophet, and such accounts as relate to him, and we have therefore no use for this kind of books. They are, besides, the composition of infidels and the productions of worshippers of fire, and are therefore to be rejected and contemned by us.’ He then ordered the book to be thrown into the water, and issued his command that whatever books could be found in the kingdom which were the composition of the infidels of Persia should be immediately burnt.”

In his preface Doulut Shah observes, "Poets have at all times been honoured by kings and nobles, and admitted into their society; and, amongst the poets of Persia, Rudeki received from Amir Ahmed Samani a present of eighty thousand *dirhems* for his translation of the *Kalileh va Damneh*, and Onsari was raised to the rank of nobility by Mahmud of Ghaznin, and Amir Mazzi was dignified by being selected as one of the confidential courtiers of Malick Shah. But now-a-days no respect is paid to this class of men, and they are degraded from all the honours which they formerly enjoyed." This complaint was well founded, as Doulut Shah lived at a time when the divided and distracted state of Persia prevented the further encouragement of either poetry or learning. Nor was that country ever after adorned by the same genius or abilities that had once distinguished it. The *Atish Kedah* was composed after this period, and is in consequence written in rather a flowery and rhetorical style; but it is valuable on account of the copious extracts from different poets which it contains. But neither Lutf Ali nor Doulut Shah excels in criticism; and their opinions respecting the merits of authors do not always appear to be just; and it is to be regretted that they have not exerted more industry and research in procuring the requisite materials for their respective works.

* In the second class of prose compositions, Persia, * 76 like other countries, can boast innumerable volumes of theology and jurisprudence. But the subject is too uninteresting to deserve any remarks in an essay of this kind; and as much information respecting it as can be wished will be found in the Dissertation and Notes of Sale's Koran, and in the *Bibliothèque Orientale*.

On the philosophical works of Persia no correct opinion can be formed, until a careful examination has been made to ascertain how far they may agree with, or how far they may differ from the original Greek authors from whom they have been undoubtedly either translated or compiled. But it is most probable that the judgment of M. Langle's is just, and that he has accurately observed in a note to his edition of Chardin's

Voyages : “ *Qu’il me soit permis de proposer quelques modifications aux assertions beaucoup trop positives de notre voyageur. Il s’en faut bien que les Persans possèdent des traductions de presque tous les fameux auteurs Grecs que nous suivons. Leurs richesses se bornent à de fragmens d’Aristote, de Gallien, d’Euclide, de Ptolemée, et de quelques autres médecins et mathématiciens, traduits principalement d’après des versions Arabes faites sur des versions Syriaques dans les septième, huitième, et neuvième siècles de l’ère Chrétienne. Il seroit difficile de se former une idée des étranges altérations qu’ont éprouvées ces ouvrages Grecs sous la plume des différens traducteurs. Ces altérations sont telles que souvent on ne peut parvenir à reconnoître les passages les plus importans. Je ne crains point de l’affirmer, jamais les Persans, et les Arabes, et les Turcs ne nous rendront un seul de ces anciens ouvrages dont nous regrettons la perte.*” (Voyages de Chardin, tome 4, page 199.)

To Aristotle, however, are the Persians most indebted ; as they have adopted his ethics, metaphysics, natural history, and dialectics. But a description of the most esteemed philosophical work, the *Akhlaki Nasiri*, has been already laid before the Society by the late Lieutenant Frissell ; and it need therefore be only observed that the Persians in all their argumentative writings display great clearness and acuteness of judgment, and express themselves with the greatest conciseness and perspicuity. *

* The class of authors mentioned under the term Didactic have been hitherto denominated moral writers. But, *77 as morality has never been either practised or understood in Persia, this appellation is misapplied. It is at the same time true that no authors have better classified and described the different virtues and vices, and none have descanted with greater energy on the beauty of the one, and the deformity of the other ; but their precepts and admonitions have never had the slightest influence upon their own conduct, or that of their neighbours. Their works, however, on this subject breathe, in general, the noblest and purest sentiments ; and their application is illustrated and enforced by the most pleasing and appo-

site tales. This style of composition has been principally cultivated by the Persian poets; but in prose the *Gulistan* of Sadi and the *Anvar Soheili* of Kashifi have also obtained the greatest celebrity. The *Beharistan* is, however, unworthy of the great poet Jami; but the *Nigaristan* of Muin ad Din Juini is considered by some to excel the *Gulistan*. In these and similar works the tales and reflections abound in variety, ingenuity, and interest, and are described with simplicity, grace, and elegance; sometimes the author displays the richness of the Persian language in finely modulated prose, and at others, yielding to the impulse of his genius, enlivens his subject by the sweetest poetry. But although it is in these compositions that Persian prose appears in its greatest beauty, they still cannot escape the severity of criticism; for it must be admitted that the love of metaphor and of figured diction sometimes leads the writer to deviate from his usual purity and simplicity, and that the subject of many a tale is both improper and indelicate. As the *Gulistan* has been already translated, and the *Anvar Soheili* been frequently described, it may be sufficient to subjoin the following tale, extracted from the *Nigaristan* of Juini by Doulut Shah, in order to convey a slight idea of the style and manner of the Persian didactic writers. The effects of love mentioned in this tale may appear singular to such as agree in opinion with Shakespear that "men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love:" but the fact seems to be too well established in the East to admit a doubt of love having been often the cause of death, not by sui*cide or by duels, but by the lover's

* 78 gradually pining away, and at length sinking into his grave, worn out by the sole and unintermitted contemplation of the object of his love.

From the Nigaristan of Juini.

"One day," says Shebli, "as I was passing through the bazar of Bagdad with the intention of proceeding on a pilgrimage to Mecca, I beheld a youth of an engaging appearance

and a lovely countenance. He wore on his head a rich turban, on his breast a robe of finest cotton, and on his feet pearl-embroidered slippers; and delicately and gracefully moving he walked with the utmost elegance. In his hand he held an apple, to which he was smelling; and he was repeating these verses:—‘Wherever she moves, or wherever she stands, the earth becomes like a ruby from the reflection of her countenance; the drops which flow from the leaf of her rosy cheek become on the ground like drops of ruby-coloured wine.’ The next day as the caravan was setting out, I observed him among the pilgrims with sandals fastened with gems and a turban of Egyptian muslin; and over him were sprinkled musk and rose-water, as if he had been proceeding to a rose-bower. I thought to myself that he could be only adorned in this manner either because he was a beloved object who was hastening to his beloved, or a lover who had not yet obtained the desire of his soul. I was thus considering when the leader of the caravan gave the signal for departure. I then said, ‘O youth, where art thou going?’ He replied, ‘To a house full of deception, which renders men wanderers. I am also going there in order to learn for what purpose and on what account men go there; and to discover what is to be seen there, and to glean a few ears from that harvest field.’ I answered him, ‘What kind of preparation is this? Canst thou be unacquainted with the difficulties of the Desert?’ He replied, ‘I wander after my beloved; the pilgrimage is only a pretence.’ I said to him, ‘O youth! thou art too delicate and too tender to attain thy object.’ He replied, ‘I go not with my own will, but I am drawn after her by those two amber ringlets. Forgive me, Shebli, for thus am I captivated.’ I asked him, ‘What apple is * 79 *this to which thou smellst?’ He replied, ‘It is my preservative from the depths of despair; for it has acquired the perfume of the leaf of that rose; it has reposed in the secret chambers of the ravisher of hearts; and it has been matured by the breath of my beloved.’ I said to him, ‘Come let us join in society and friendship.’ He replied, ‘No, by God! thou art the wearer of a patched garment,

and a drinker of water ; but I am a wearer of silk and a drinker of wine : thou art an old man of the mosque ; but I am a young man of the tavern : last night I was inebriated, and the pleasing effect still remains.' I therefore parted from him, and it was some time before I saw him again. But one very sultry day I observed him lying under the porch of a mosque, pale and emaciated, weak and afflicted, grieving and distressed, without a turban on his head or slippers on his feet ; but he still held the same apple in his hand, to which he smelled. I wished to turn aside from him, but he seized my garment and said, 'Dost thou not know me, O Shebli?' I said to him, 'Tell me how thy situation has thus changed.' He replied, 'It is the justice and redress which a captivated lover receives from his beloved.' I asked him, 'Is this the same apple?' He replied, 'Ah, that I might receive redress for the evils which this apple has caused me! O Shebli! dost thou know what has been done to me, and with what cruelty I have been treated? At first it was said, Thou art beloved ; but when in agony I wished to receive proofs of it, the reply was, Thou art but a lover. I pressed my suit, but I was told that I was a child ; and when I sought the house, a voice said, Thou art not one to be admitted into this house. I exclaimed, O thou whom my soul seeks after ! I heard this reply, Thou art excluded from my presence. Since that moment I have been lost in thought, pondering to discern what veil had been interposed, and why I had been denied admission : and now I am pale and devoid of beauty ; nor do I know whether I love or am beloved ; or whether I seek or am sought ; whether I desire or am desired : in this doubt am I consumed, and from this grief do I waste away : but I am not ill ; my only illness is this doubt.'" Shebli says, "My heart was pierced with the youth's lamentation ; and I said to him, 'Come, and I will conduct thee to thy friends, and deliver thee from * this distraction.' He replied, 'Leave me, O Shebli ! for I find pleasure in these thoughts, and experience delight in this distraction.' I accordingly left him, and the next morning I saw him stretched on his bier, as they were conveying him to his grave. I asked a friend the cause ;

he replied, 'The slayers of lovers are their mistresses, but no complaints proceed from the slain.'"

In this class of writers may be included the professed relaters of stories, as in their works the latter, besides the principal subjects, introduce other stories whenever they wish to illustrate or exemplify any particular position. But still the number of didactic writers in Persia is very few, and the only ones who have acquired any celebrity are those above mentioned.

From the preceding remarks, then, it will appear that in prose the literature of Persia deserves neither particular praise nor unlimited censure. Its stores are scanty, and can neither contribute to the advancement of science nor to the improvement of taste. But its defects have been hitherto misunderstood, as they do not consist in a vitiated style or a poverty of genius, but have originated from an imperfect and degraded state of society. To a general reader, therefore, these works will afford neither amusement nor instruction: to a philosopher they will perhaps appear puerile; yet they are far from being deficient either in talent or ability, and they possess at least novelty to recommend them.

If quantity were excellence, the Persians would be the best poets in the universe; for they are all naturally addicted to poetry: and in the *Atishkedah* are enumerated upwards of seven hundred poets, commencing from Rudeki, who died A.D. 1013, and whose verses alone are said to amount to six hundred thousand couplets. But it is to be regretted that, as the rules of criticism and the delicacy of correct taste have never been studied in Persia, the improvement has not equalled the cultivation of its poetry. Each succeeding poet has therefore endeavoured to obtain distinction, not by avoiding the faults of his predecessor or by inventing any new mode of composition, but by attempting to excel him in the very subject and the very style which he had himself previously chosen. To this cause must be ascribed the frequent misapplication of genius, talent, and that same*ness which, amidst all the charms of the sweetest versification, is perceptible in Persian poetry, and * 81 which in some degree detracts from its other undeniable

beauties. It has also been observed that the state of society in Persia deprives the poet of many an interesting subject; for deeds of heroism or private virtue, the delights of refined love, and the affections which spring from social intercourse, are ideas and feelings of which he can form no conception; and the crimes and vices of human nature are topics on which he dares not descant. But although the poet has thus been prevented from making man the subject of his strains, nature and things inanimate are inexhaustible themes; and to these may be added the whole class of metaphysical or moral sentiments. The Persian poetry, therefore, consists in description, and not in action. Still it possesses innumerable beauties; and if a copious flow of the sweetest verse, delightful descriptions of nature, exalted sentiments of morality, and a concise and animated style, can form a pleasing poem, it must be admitted that the poetry of Persia, so far from deserving censure, is entitled to the highest praise.

The Persians divide poetry into three kinds, the *Ghazel*, the *Kasideh*, and the *Masnavi*. The ghazel is a species of composition peculiar to the Persians; it ought not to consist of less than five nor of more than twelve couplets: the two verses of the first couplet rhyme together, but the verses of the other couplets do not, and then each couplet only ends in the same rhyme as the first. But the following translations of two of Hafiz's ghazels will convey the best idea of this singular kind of ode:

GHAZEL.

1.

Hence every care! boy, bid the flagon
flow;
Bring that which charms alike the
young and old;
Bright wine's the only sun, the cup's
the moon;
Wisdom rebellious here exerts his
power;
Oh! quickly bring that pure and
sparkling stream,

2.

A cup or two of rosy wine bestow;
That ruby wine, the cure of lovers'
woe.
Then pour into the moon this sun
below.
But quick the chains of wine around
him throw.
And quench the flames that in my
bosom glow.

<p>The rose now flies, but did it gladly fly ; And tho' the dove's soft cooings now are gone, Nor mourn the nightingale's depart- ed note ; But in a dream can that bright form be seen, Tho' o'er my senses steals its influ- ence sweet. And yet another cup to Hafiz bring ;</p>	<p>For hues like ruby wine no flow'rets show ; Still from the flask is heard the gug- gling slow : From harp and lute still shall we rap- ture know. Then bring the draught that lulls to sleep each woe : Still fill the bowl till lost in bliss I grow ; And, be it right or wrong, still bid the goblet glow.</p>
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* GHAZEL.

* 82

1.

2.

<p>Whci here reclined, the cheek's bright rose to me's enough : Far be from me the men who feign devotion's zeal ; For virtuous deeds be paradise the blest reward ; Beside the streamlet seated, mark how life glides on : Behold this world's delights, and view its various pains ; Why seek another joy when here my love reclines ? Not e'en to paradise I'd fly, did God permit : Why, Hafiz, then, condemn the lot to each assign'd ?</p>	<p>The shade that cypress here bestows to me's enough. The joy that from the goblet flows to me's enough. The cell where Pagans wine expose to me's enough. That sign how swift each moment goes to me's enough. If not to you, the joy it shows to me's enough. The bliss her converse fond bestows to me's enough ; Love sweeter far than angel knows to me's enough : A guileless heart with verse that glows to me's enough.</p>
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From the preceding translations it will be observed that the rhyme of the Persian poets is of two kinds ; one simple, which corresponds in every respect with that which is known in Europe, and the other an addition to this regular rhyme of one, two, or sometimes three words, which are repeated at the end of the two verses of the first couplet, and at the close of each subsequent couplet. In the last ghazel translated above, for instance, the close of each couplet in the original is "*marabas*," "to me enough"; but these words are always preceded by

the regular rhyme. In this singular measure are the greatest number of ghazels composed; and it must therefore be concluded that this constant repetition of the same words is considered a beauty by the Persians. It is also required that the poet should introduce his name into the last couplet of each ghazel, and for this purpose almost every Persian poet assumes a particular appellation when his name is too unpoetic to submit to the rules of verse: thus the real name of Hafiz was Shamsud Din Muhammad.

The topics peculiar to the ghazel are descriptions of the charms, the cruelty or kindness of a beloved object, and of the pains and raptures of a lover; the praises of nature, wine, and love; and moral reflections on the transitoriness of this world and all that it contains. Confined to such subjects and to such severe rules of versification, the poet displays his genius in composing a number of ghazels the rhymes of which end in each letter of the alphabet; and this collection when * 83 happily finished is * honoured with the name of *Diwan*.

These odes are in general distinguished by a sweet and varied versification, a richness of fancy and expression, and a grace and elegance not to be transfused into any other language. But it must also be admitted that these beauties are considerably diminished by the sameness of the subject, and by a want of connexion in the sense of each ghazel; for in it the poet is not obliged to confine himself to one particular train of thought, but is allowed to introduce into every couplet a new and distinct topic. Yet, notwithstanding this deficiency in unity and variety, such are the charms of the Persian language, and so agreeable the association of ideas occasioned by the subjects of these odes, that it is impossible to peruse them without their affording the greatest pleasure. In this mode of composition the Persians principally delight; and there is scarcely a single one of their poets who has not completed a diwan. But, amongst so great a number, all cannot be expected to have attained the same excellence; and the palm of pre-eminence has therefore been universally assigned to Hafiz, who

died A.D. 1392. The poets whose diwans are held next in estimation to the diwan of Hafiz are Jami, who died A.D. 1492; Sadi, who died A.D. 1291; and Amir Khosrou, who died A.D. 1324.

The same rules of versification according to which the ghazel is composed are also applicable to the kasidch. But the kasidch must consist of more than twelve couplets, and ought not to exceed one hundred and twenty: its principal and almost sole topic is panegyric; but it may be also employed in satire and elegy, and in it may be introduced all subjects of a more elevated nature than those which are peculiar to the ghazel. It is fortunate that this mode of composition has not been much cultivated by the Persians, as in it they display so very bad a taste that not the greatest admirers of their poetry can here attempt to defend them: for their kasidchs, although highly poetical, abound in hyperbole and far-fetched metaphor, and in the most servile and exaggerated adulation; their style is inflated and verging on bombast, and it is rendered so obscure by the multiplicity of extravagant similes and allusions that it is scarcely intelligible. In them tropes and
 * 84 figures are heaped one on another; the sun, * moon, and planets are the humblest slaves of the prince who is panegyricized; in one hand he holds fortune, in the other destiny; his heart is a sea of munificence, and his hand a mine of bounty. No comparison, in short, however extravagant, is rejected if it can magnify and exalt the power and dignity of the prince: and for these kasidchs the kings of the East showered on the highly-honoured poet their richest favours. The vanity and pride of kings may excite a smile, but the degradation and debasement of genius must demand a tear. The poets who have rendered themselves most distinguished by this servile adulation are Khakani, who died A.D. 1187; Anwari, who died 1189; and Zehir Fariabi, who died A.D. 1201. Nor can this misapplication of their talents be too much regretted, as they show even in their kasidchs the greatest poetical powers.

The *masnavi* is a poem written in simply rhymed couplets, the verses of which may consist of either nine, ten, or eleven syllables. In this measure the poet not being restrained by any fantastic rules of versification, nor confined to any particular topics, nor obliged to present the incense of flattery, is at liberty to exert all the powers of his genius ; and in it, therefore, is composed the most pleasing portion of Persian poetry. The poems which are included under this single denomination are numerous, as it embraces equally a work of sixty thousand couplets and one of six hundred ; but they naturally divide themselves into five kinds : for they are either warlike, amatory, moral, religious, or mystic. It is on the last and the two first that the Moslem doctors pass the censures of the church ; for the poets who have sung the loves of Leila and Majnun are not more anathematized than is the author of that celebrated mystic poem which has acquired from its excellence the peculiar name of *Masnavi*. The two others are not judged with the same severity ; but a rigid Moslem considers the composition of all poetry a waste of time, and a deviation from the precepts of his religion. In these different kinds of *masnavi* the beauties of the Persian poetry are displayed with very little intermixture of its defects. Their style is chaste, poetical, and suited to the subject ; their versification varied, copious, and of an indescribable sweetness ; and, although a topic may sometimes be dwelt upon too long, the thoughts and sentiments

* possess great beauty and interest, and the expression

* 85 is always animated and concise. It cannot, however, be denied that particular passages may occur which err both against simplicity and taste. But such defects may be in general ascribed to the difference of taste which must exist in all countries ; and the very figure which may appear to the European critic extravagant or misplaced may be esteemed by the Persians to be both elegant and correct. In judging, therefore, of the poetry of another country, the climate, the productions of nature, the manners, customs, and modes of thinking of the people ought first to be considered ; and if then the poetic diction which appeared objectionable should be

found to be perfectly correspondent, it cannot certainly be just to condemn such diction merely because it does not agree with preconceived rules of criticism or principles of taste which are totally inapplicable. It is undoubtedly difficult to forget opinions formed by works which have been so long and so universally allowed to be the best models of composition, and still more so to understand correctly modes of thinking and acting, and descriptions of nature and manners which were previously unknown: but unless these difficulties be overcome the Persian poetry cannot be properly appreciated; and it must therefore remain exposed to censure, not because it possesses no beauties, but because its excellencies are prevented from being perceived by long established prejudices.

The first poet who appears to have composed a masnavi on love or war was Abu'l Kasim Mansur, become so celebrated under the name of Firdausi, who was born A.D. 946, and died A.D. 1025. His principal poem, the *Shah Namah*, is well known, but the one on the loves of Yusuf and Zuleikha is of very rare occurrence. As, however, the style and manner of Firdausi have never been even imitated by any other Persian poet, any remarks in this Essay must be unnecessary. The next in eminence to Firdausi was Nizami, who was born A.D. 1147, and died A.D. 1211, and who composed five poems, which have obtained such celebrity that they are distinguished by the name of *Khamsah*, or The five. Their names are *The Treasury of Secrets*, which was written A.D. 1162, *Leila and Majnun*, *Khosru and Shirin*, *The Seven Portraits*, and *The *Life of Sikandar*. * 86 The first is a moral poem, in which the author descants on justice and the regard which kings ought to show to their subjects; on the excellence of man, and the necessity of his despising the vanities of this world; on the inconstancy of fortune, and the contempt of death; and the reflections on these and a few other similar topics are illustrated by pleasing and apposite tales. The third contains an account of such events in the life of Khosru Parviz, king of Persia, as are related by historians; but the principal part of the poem is occupied with the loves of Khosru and Shirin; and a beautiful

episode is introduced which describes the violent love that Ferhad, a sculptor, conceived for Shirin, and which finally occasioned his killing himself on being treacherously informed that she had died. The fourth poem describes the birth and principal incidents of the life of Bahram Gor, king of Persia; but particularly his becoming enamoured with seven portraits representing the daughters of seven kings, whom he obtains in marriage, and with whom he passes his time in pleasure and amusement. The loves of Leila and Majnun have been often described: but it may be curious to notice the manner in which the Persian poet has related the life of Alexander the Great.

It is to be observed that the *Masnavi* is not divided into cantos or books, but into chapters, the contents of which are placed at the head of each chapter. The contents of the *Sikandar Namah*—after the usual prayers and invocation to God, the praises of the prophet and the prince to whom it is addressed, and a preface, all in verse—are as follow:

The birth of Sikandar, son of Filckus.

His education by Lakunajis, the father of Aristotle.

His accession to the throne of Makedunieh.

His marching with an army to the assistance of the Egyptians, at their request.

His battle with the Abyssinians, and victory over them.

His return from Abyssinia, and building Iskandrich.

His consulting omens respecting the payment of tribute to Dara.

The refusal of the tribute, and commencement of the war with Dara.

Sikandar assembles his army.

His battle with Dara.

* 87 * Dara's assassination by two of his officers, and Sikandar's victory.

The swearing of allegiance by the Persians to Sikandar.

Destruction of the fire-temples in Persia.

Sikandar's marriage with Roshanak, daughter of Dara.

Sikandar's coronation at Istakhar.

The sending of Aristotle and Roshanak to Greece.

Sikandar's pilgrimage to Mecca, and conquest of Arabia.

Invasion of Bardaa (part of the present Armenia, and then governed by a queen named Nushábáh).

Sikandar's going disguised as ambassador to Nushábáh.

Nushábáh's coming to the pavilion of Sikandar.

Description of a banquet.

Sikandar's going to Babul Abuab, and there burying his treasures.

Sikandar takes a fort belonging to banditti through the prayers of a hermit.

Sikandar visits the mausoleum of Kai-Khosru.

Sikandar marches to Rei and Khorasan.

Sikandar's conquests in Hindostan.

Invasion of China by way of Thibet ; letters and embassies between Sikandar and the Emperor of China ; peace concluded, and Sikandar's stay for some time in China.

Sikandar receives accounts of Bardaa having been invaded and laid waste by the Russians.

Sikandar's arrival in the desert of Kipchak.

Sikandar marches to attack the Russians, who collect their army.

Battles with the Russians, and Sikandar's victory over them.

Sikandar enjoys himself with the slave girl presented him by the Emperor of China.

Sikandar receives an account of the water of immortality ; proceeds in search of it ; returns unsuccessfully.

Sikandar's return to Greece.

Here ends the first part of the *Sikandar Namah*, which was brought to a conclusion by Nizami in A.D. 1200. The second part of the poem, * which was just finished as * 88 Nizami died, does not appear to have received the last corrections of the author, and is therefore much inferior to the first part. It commences thus :—" After long and toilsome marches, Sikandar returned to Greece, and gave splendour to his native country. Having conquered every kingdom, he now sought after wisdom ; and he therefore ordered that all the information which might be contained in the annals of the kings of Persia, or in the Latin, Deri, Pehlavi or other lan-

guages should be collected ; and he directed that this collection should be translated by philosophers." The poem continues to describe the assembling in Alexander's court of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Hermes, Thales, and sages from India, and their disputations on various topics, but particularly respecting the nature of the heaven and the earth. It also briefly relates a second expedition made by Alexander over all the habitable parts of the world ; and finally his death at a city called Zour, as he was returning from having erected the mound which restrains the incursions of Gog and Magog.

These five poems of Nizami are held in the highest estimation by the Persians ; and the variety, strength, and beauty both of the thoughts and versification fully entitle them to this distinction. In the *Sikandar Namah*, however, not unfrequently, and in his other poems more rarely, the diction is rendered obscure by redundancy of ornament, and the abstruseness of the metaphors and other figures ; and this circumstance, whenever it occurs, necessarily communicates some degree of harshness to a style at all other times sweet and flowing. The celebrity thus obtained by Nizami, and perhaps religious prejudices preventing the introduction of any new subject into subsequent poems, have induced the composers of masnavies to restrict themselves to those themes which had been previously rendered popular by him whom they all acknowledge to be their master. Hence it is that they have continued to sing the loves of Khosru and Shirin, or of Leila and Majnun, or Bahram Gor and his seven beauties : and although the incidents and circumstances sometimes vary, the groundwork of the poem is still the same. But the principal object of the ambition of the most distinguished poets has been to compose a khamsah

*which might equal or surpass that of Nizami. From
* 89 this emulation has been produced the khamsah of Amir

Khosru, which alone adheres both to the subjects and the measures of his model ; that of Jami, which only agrees in the poem of *Leila and Majnun* ; and the *Khosru Namah*, or Life of Alexander the Great ; two of the other poems being on moral subjects, and the fifth describing the loves of Yusuf and

Zuleikha. The *khamsah* of Katibi, who died A.D. 1435, only one poem of which corresponds, as the subject of it is *Bahram Gor*; and that of Hatifi, who died 1520, and who composed three corresponding *masnavies*, the *Khosru and Shirin*, the *Leila and Majnun*, and *The Seven Portraits*. His fourth poem was the *Life of Teimur*, in imitation of the *Sikandar Namah*; and the completion of the fifth was interrupted by death. Besides these *khamsahs* many detached poems have been composed on the same themes; but it will be found that in this instance the Persian poets have not exerted their genius on more than eight or nine distinct subjects; still the interest which is excited by the story of any poem can be experienced on the first perusal only; and this want of variety, therefore, in Persian poetry may be considered to be fully compensated by its other beauties. Nor can there be any hesitation in remarking that in no other language have there been produced so many poems of such a length, and at the same time of such excellence, as are combined in the Persian *masnavies*. In the opinion, indeed, of an European reader, the deficiency of action may be thought to detract from their interest; but does not almost all the poetry of every nation consist in description? The names of the principal poets who have written *masnavies* on love and war have been mentioned above; and their respective degrees of excellence may be thus classed:—Firdausi, Nizami, Amir Khosru, Hatifi, Katibi, and Jami; and their poems amount to considerably more than one hundred thousand couplets.

Although a literal prose translation can never convey a correct idea of original poetry, and particularly when many of the charms of that poetry consist in the grace and elegance of its style and versification, still the following extracts from the works of these poets may be, perhaps, deemed not uninteresting.

From the Leila and Majnun of Nizami. * 90

[Zeid acquaints Majnun with the death of Leila.]

The relater of this far-famed tale thus on his page these characters impressed:—"When Zeid, with heart afflicted, heard that in the silent tomb that moon had set, he wept and mourned,

and sadly flowed his tears. Who in this world is free from grief and tears? Then clothed in sable garments, like one oppressed who seeks redress, he, agitated and weeping like a vernal cloud, hastened to the grave of Leila; but as he o'er it hung, ask not how swelled his soul with grief; while from his eyes the tears of blood incessant flowed, and from his sighs and groans the people fled. Sometime he mourned with grief so deep and sad that from his woe the sky became obscure. Then from the tomb of that once fair flower he to the desert took his way: there sought the wanderer from the paths of man, him whose night was now in darkness veiled, as that bright lamp was gone; and seated near him, weeping and sighing, he beat his breast and struck upon the earth his head. When Majnun saw him thus afflicted, he said, 'What has befallen thee, my brother, that thy soul is thus overpowered? and why so pale that cheek? and why these sable robes?' He thus replied, 'Because that fortune now has changed; a sable stream has issued from the earth, and death has burst its iron gates; a storm of hail has on the garden poured, and not a leaf of all our rose bower now remains. The moon has fallen from the firmament, and prostrate on the mead that waving cypress lies! Leila was, but from this world is now departed; and from the wound thy love had caused she died.' Scarce had these accents reached his listening ear, ere, senseless, Majnun fell as one by lightning struck. A short time fainting thus he lay; recovered, then he raised his head to heaven, and thus exclaimed: 'O merciless! what fate severe is this on one so helpless? Why such wrath? Why blast a blade of grass with lightning, and on an ant thy power exert? one ant and a thousand pains of hell, when one single spark would be enough? Why thus with blood the goblet crown, and all my hopes deceive? I burned with flames that by that lamp were
 * fed; and by the breath that quenched its light I too
 * 91 expire.' Thus like Ozara did he complain, and then like Wamak traversed on every side the desert, his heart broken, and his garments rent; while as the beasts gazed on him, his tears so constant flowed, that in their eyes the tear-

drop stood; and like a shadow Zeid his footsteps still pursued. When, weeping and mourning, Majnun thus o'er many a hill and many a vale had passed, as grief his path directed, he wished to view the tomb of all he loved; and then inquired from Zeid where was the spot that held her grave, and where the turf that o'er it grew. But soon as to the tomb he came, struck with its view his senses fled. Recovering, then he thus exclaimed: 'O heaven! what shall I do? or what resource attempt? as like a lamp I waste away. Alas! that heartenslaver was all that in this world I prized: and now, alas! in wrath, dire fate with ruthless blow has snatched her from me. In my hand I held a lovely flower: the wind came and scattered all its leaves. I chose a cypress that in the garden graceful grew: but soon the hand of fate destroyed it. Spring bade a blossom bloom: but fortune would not guard the flower. A group of lilies I preserved, pure as the thoughts that in my bosom rose: but one unjust purloined them. I sowed, but he the harvest reaped.' Then resting within the tomb his head, he mourning wept, and said, 'O lovely flow'ret, struck by autumn's blast, and from this world departed ere thou knew'st it! A garden once in bloom, but now laid waste! O fruit matured, but not enjoyed! To earth's mortality can such as thou be subject? and such as thou within the darkness of the tomb repose? And where is now that mole that seemed a grain of musk? and where those eyes soft as the gazelle's? where those ruby lips? and where those curling ringlets? In what bright hues is now thy form adorned? and through the love of whom does now thy lamp consume? To whose fond eyes are now thy charms displayed? and whom to captivate do now thy tresses wave? Beside the margin of what stream is now that cypress seen? and in what bower is now the banquet spread? Ah! can such as thou have felt the pangs of death, and be reclined within this narrow cave? But o'er thy cell I mourn, as thou wert all I loved; and ere my grief shall cease, the *grave shall be my friend. Thou wert agitat- * 92 ed like the sand of the desert; but now thou reposest ast he water of the lake. Thou like the moon hast disappeared:

but though unseen, the moon is still the same; and now, although thy form from me is hid, still in my breast remains the loved remembrance. Though far removed beyond my aching sight, still is thy image in my heart beheld. Thy form is now departed, but grief eternal fills its place. On thee my soul was fixed, and never will thy memory be forgot. Thou art gone, and from this wilderness escaped, and now reposest in the bowers of paradise. I too after some little time will shake off these bonds, and there rejoin thee. Till then, faithful to the love I vowed, around thy tomb my steps I will bend. Until I come to thee within this narrow cell, pure be thy shroud! May paradise eternal be thy mansion blest! and be thy soul received into the mercy of thy God! and may thy spirit by his grace be vivified to all eternity!"

From the Mirah-i-Iskandar of Amir Khosru.

"One day in spring, when all the world a pleasing picture seemed, the sun at early dawn with happy auspices from sleep arose; from vernal gales the air a musky fragrance breathed; the earth was bathed in balmy dew; the beauties of the garden their charms displayed, the face of each with brilliancy adorned; the flowers in freshness bloomed; the lamp of the rose acquired lustre from the breeze, the tulip brought a cup from paradise; the rose bower shed the sweets of Eden; beneath its folds the musky bud remained like a musky amulet on the arm of beauty; the violet bent its head; the fold of the bud was closer pressed; the opened rose in splendour glowed, and attracted every eye; the lovely flowers oppressed with dew in tremulous motion waved. The air o'er all the garden a silvery radiance threw; and o'er the flowers the breezes played; on every branch the birds attuned their notes, and every bower with warblings filled so sweet they stole the senses. The early nightingale poured forth its song, that gives a zest to those who quaff the morning goblet. From the turtle's soft cooings, love seized each bird that skimmed the air.

* 93 * On such a pleasing day, that every joy increased, Sikandar to the garden bent his way; no courtiers on

him waiting, but a few selected slaves : and there he bade be placed beside the stream a rich pavilion, comfits and flowers, and wine he bade be brought, and there he spread a royal banquet : but access there to friend and stranger was denied ; and from the garden all excluded save some lovely damsels. Round the rose no thorn remained ; the jessamine and hyacinth alone remained. With beauties was the garden graced, and in the rose bower many a cypress waved. Straight was each stature, and each cheek with the blood of the rose was stained ; on each ear were pearls and emeralds hung ; and rubies and pearls each mouth displayed, all moving gracefully, and all skilled to please. Their roses concealed by amber [that is, their cheeks concealed by their fragrant tresses] repelled the eye malignant ; and a thousand angels would each glance have pierced which beamed from their soft rolling eyes. Sweet were their voices, and with skill they touched the harp and lute. Lovely and graceful they approached the king, as if the Pleiades should on the moon attend. But 'midst these fairy forms the maid from Chin was dearest to the king ; she whom he gained in battle with the emperor, and whose bright eyes had raised disturbance in his breast : for brighter than the moon they shone, and greater than the sun's their dazzling splendour beamed. She, with a thousand graces moving, drew near the king and kissed the ground before him ; then, as he commanded, took her place beside him : and every rosy-checked damsel also drew her feet within the garment of respect. One cypress then amidst fair plants of jasmine remained, and one lion amidst a herd of antelopes. Soon by the houris was a feast celestial decked. The harp's soft notes to heaven ascended, and from the flagon flowed the ruby wave ; the lute's sweet tones angels from heaven attracted. The organ and the dulcimer with gentle notes a soothing charm diffused. Such were the sounds which from the instruments they drew that sighs from Venus and the moon arose. Cupbearers with graceful air and winning glances crowned the bowls. The flask with head inverted laughed, till from his bosom sprang the sanguine stream. On every side roses and rosebuds gently smiled, but though full many a

* lovely maid the banquet graced, the king his heart
 * 94 attached to her alone who came from Chin, and by his
 side that idol still he kept: and every time the goblet
 circling passed, she gave him from her hand the wine, and
 comfits from her lips. Sometimes into her lap he roses shed,
 and sometimes pressed her hand. When the desire of lovers
 had been by wine increased, and restraint was yielding to its
 power, so much the maid its influence owned, that shame no
 longer could his sway exert. The passion of her heart destroy-
 ed the bonds of modesty, and boldness snatched the reins.
 With such fascination then the harp she touched that deeces
 and peris would have been enchanted; and with that art and
 grace which beauty knows to use, she thus to charm her lover's
 soul began to sing: ' Fresh be the face of that musk-breathing
 rose! the fragrance of which o'er all the world delight diffuses.
 From its bright hues be love excited! and from its perfume
 be gladdened every heart! When blooms the rose, sweet is
 the garden; but not without the company of those we love.
 Without the converse of the object loved, the fairest mead a
 dungeon seems. But why should he who holds me in his snare
 the cypress tall desire? Do I but move, with such a grace no
 cypress waves, and food and sleep each youth forsakes. On
 hermits did I cast a single glance, zeal and devotion both
 would be forgot. The juggler who would wish to set the world
 in flames must learn the art from me. Without the goblet I
 the world inebriate; and when the cup I quaff, destruction
 follows. When to the wine my lip gives zest, sweeter than
 sugar then becomes the draught. When on my cheek the
 ringlet lies, emotion swells the coldest breast; but when these
 tresses wave dishevelled, they to rapture wake each slumbering
 passion. To the garden should I my form display, blood, not
 rain, the vernal clouds would shower. The face of every idol
 disappears when I approach, and to the idol's temple I am the
 only key. A word, a smile from me delights, and every kiss
 a brighter life inspires. When wanton thus the harp I touch,
 even rocks the notes would melt: and when I bid the goblet
 circle, in its ruby stream the virtuous and the grave I bathe;

nor would the man to whom I have taught the joys of wine e'er wish from its delightful trance * to wake. If thou be wise, thus quaff the bowl and, sunk in pleasure, bid to * 95 care farewell. No joys to-morrow brings; too late will then repentance be. What does this world contain but labour, and grief, and hopes delusive? Then thy soul enliven with the cup of pleasure: for in this world of sorrow man has need of wine. Bring then, O cupbearer, that treasury of bliss, which every anxious thought dispels; and, minstrel, bring the harp, and with its notes the soul attune to joy!"

From the Leila and Majnun of Hatifi.

“When the messenger brought to the prince this answer from the tribe of Leila, no sooner had Naufal perused it than like a lion he raged for battle. He moved with a mighty army, and hastened to engage. A scout the tribe informed that to attack them the valiant Naufal had advanced, and they in wrath their loins for action girded. When the lord of day had drawn his sword, and the gloomy night in anger slain, the clangor of trumpets arose, and the centre and wings of both armies were ranged in battle. On each side the blazing falchions kindled the flames of vengeance. The carulean heavens were deafened with the noise of kettle-drums and trumpets. The valiant warriors like iron mountains met: their guardian angels from compassion of the chiefs their bosoms smote. To seize their souls death lay in ambush on the point of each bow. Revengeful swords and arrows rained; these pierced, and those the breast divided. The heads of chiefs fell humbled in the dust; the sides of warriors were rent. The heaven, the good and brave lamenting, wrung its hands in grief; and, mourning o'er the slain, the golden clarions softer breathed. Like a young plant, the deadly shaft was in the garden of the body fixed. The spoiler fate deceitful came, and, by the spear point, of the soul the form deprived. In the forest of battle the warriors like raging lions were unsated with devouring maces, arrows, and falchions. Amidst the dust swords flashed like lightning from a cloud. Amongst the warriors, Naufal like a ravenous

tiger his falchion brandished ; and on whatever head it fell down cleaving to the waist it *sheared. Fortune's lofty standard waved a signal of the shroud. Mercy fled, and resurrection seemed begun. Majnun, grieved and afflicted, was ashamed of that conflict and battle. Defeated was the tribe of Leila ; their troops fled on every side. The bride was taken, and none there was to guard her. From the vicissitudes of ever-changing fate, Leila became the captive of Majnun. When Naufal Leila's face beheld, ' This is my dearest idol,' he exclaimed. By her charms was he captivated ; and with a hundred hearts did he love her : and thus he thought : If to Majnun I should now resign her, how shall I bear my heart's consuming pangs ? and if I should myself espouse her, men will all reproach me. 'Twere better, then, that poison should this obstacle remove. Naufal then bade a deadly draught for the thoughtless man be mixed ; but when the confidant the poisoned cup to the prince's banquet brought, forgetful of the trust reposed, that cup he to the prince presented. Thus by mistake the prince the poisoned goblet drank, and no advantage from that draught he gained. That prince wise and provident thus fell into the pit he dug himself. He planned another's evil, and it recoiled upon himself. He sought a cure, and found his death."

It has been remarked above that one or more poems of four of the poets who have composed khamsahs are dedicated to moral subjects ; but, without entering into too long a discussion, the distinction between the masnavics which are purely religious, and those which are either moral or mystic, cannot be properly explained in this Essay. Nor is it necessary, as such of these masnavics as are clearly devoid of mysticism, may be considered as moral, although they may at the same time contain topics entirely religious. A doubt may however arise, and perhaps well founded, whether all masnavics, excepting such as celebrate the deeds of lovers and warriors, ought not to be included under the single denomination of mystic. A satisfactory answer to this question is difficult ; but it may at present be sufficient to observe that the poems which are here classed under the term moral, although a latent meaning may be cou-

cealed in them, are strictly entitled to that name. The subjects * which are discussed in them are,—besides explanations of particular passages of the Koran, and the tradi- * 97 tions,—the duties and proprieties of life; the virtues and vices, the vanity and instability of the world, and the necessity of living in such a manner as may ensure a reception into that world of bliss which knows no change. The style is simple and perspicuous, and in general destitute of all ornament except the sweetness of the versification. The thoughts and sentiments are pure and irreproachable, and the religious reflections are exalted and worthy of the Deity. Some tales, however, which are introduced as illustrations, deviate from the delicacy of European taste. This mode of composition has been much cultivated; but it is needless to add to the names of Jami, Nizami, Amir Khosru, and Katibi any other than the name of Sadi, who is considered by the Persians to excel all other poets in this style.

As an example of the manner of these masnavics, the following extract from an unknown author is subjoined, as the subject may perhaps appear curious.

On Marriage.

“ O slave to woman ! if to love thy heart be still inclined, take unto thyself a wife, and remain no longer single. But when thou marriest, choose one who is of virtuous parents and endowed with modesty, nor seek for wealth or beauty ; for rare it is to find a single one in whom combine fortune, beauty, and modesty. A chastened modesty is better, then, than riches ; these are earthly, but that is heavenly. Beauty and wealth are transient ; the slightest grief impairs the one, and accidents disperse the other : but modesty is permanent, and subject to no reverse. When thou art married, seek to please thy wife, but listen not to all she says. From man’s right side a rib was taken to form the woman ; and never was there seen a rib entirely straight ; and wouldst thou straighten it ? It breaks, but bends not. Since then, ’tis plain that crooked is woman’s temper, forgive her faults, and blame her not. Nor let them

anger thee, nor coercion use, as all is vain to straighten what is curved. But trust not to thy wife thy secrets or thy wealth; acquaint her with them and thou wilt know no peace. Who conceals not his secrets from his wife soon finds them known

* to every one. Tell her thy fortune, and as it must
 * 98 either be that thou art rich or poor, it will happen then, my friend, if rich, thy wife will blame continually thy avarice; if poor, she will complain of hardship and accuse thy meanness. But difficult it is to choose a wife; and marriage always is attended with cares and troubles. As a proof of what has now been said, listen to this tale:—

“In Chin are many painters of skill and genius; and one of these painted the portraits of three men, all differing in their expression. One was represented as melancholy and afflicted, and his hand, through grief, fixed in his beard, and, like a diver, immersed in the sea of thought. The second had seized in his hand a stone, with which he was beating his breast; and his portrait resembled the mourners who weep over the dead. The third appeared gay and happy, and seemed free from every worldly care; his countenance was blooming, and his lips full of smiles. Above each of these portraits was written a description of their meaning. Above the one who seemed melancholy and sunk in thought was written, ‘This was an Arab, compelled by the hardship of his fate to demand a maid in marriage; and from the bitterness of thinking on the subject is he so afflicted.’ Above the one who smote his breast was written, ‘This was a man who married, captivated by the charms of his wife: but misery ensued; and, now repenting, agony so overpowers his soul that he tears his hair and beats his breast.’ Above the third, who seemed rejoiced and happy, was written, ‘This is a man relieved from every care, as his wife is dead and has ceased to trouble him; and thus, released from secret sorrow, he now enjoys his liberty.’”

From the Dostan of Sadi.

“O youth! to-day religion’s path pursue; to-morrow age will check thy course: now strong is thy frame and ardent is thy

mind; then every moment to improve thyself employ. I did not know the value of my younger days; but now too late I learn to prize them, as fate has spoiled me of those precious hours. What efforts can an aged ass beneath his load exert? But thou, an agile courser, urge thy speed: a broken vase, though joined *again with skill, its price regains not. When opportunity once has slipped from thy neglectful hand, never * 99 can it be recalled. Thou, careless, threw away the purest water, and now with sand must thou ablution make. When with the fleet in the course thou borest not away the ball, fatigued and trembling must thou now proceed; and now scarce tottering must thy steed, decayed and fainting, onward move.

“In the Desert one night by travel wearied, I sunk in slumber. The camel-driver came and, clamorous and angry, struck me with the reins, saying, ‘Arise: if thou have not fixed thy heart on death, why not arise at the sound of the bells of the camels? Sweet would be repose to me as well as to thee, but the Desert extends before us: if thou to gentle slumber yield when the sound of departure is heard, how wilt thou the path regain?’

“Oh! happy those of auspicious fortune who bind their loads before the signal for moving is given! But those who on their journey sleep will never see again the track of the traveller. Though starting up in haste, what use is it to awake after the caravan has departed? Who barley sows in spring that he may wheat in autumn reap? But now, thou slumberer, awake! When death prolongs thy sleep, what will be then thy benefit? When greyness covers the locks of youth, and day is changed to night, then fill thy eyes with sleep. Now that the black is mingled with the white, no longer in my days I place my hopes. Alas! passed away is the sweetest part of life; and soon these few remaining hours will also pass away. But now for thee it is the time to sow, if thou wouldst wish to reap a harvest. The man at resurrection’s hour who unprepared appears shall sink into the regions of despair. If thou possess the eyes of wisdom, arrange thy journey to the grave before these eyes are dimmed. Now that the water rises but to thy waist, exert thyself, nor wait until the torrent rushes o’er thy

head. While still thy eyes remain, tears repenting shed; and while thy tongue retains its power, pardon for thy sins implore. Not always will the eyes with lustre shine, nor always will the tongue in accents move. To-day listen to the voice of wisdom, lest to-morrow thou shouldst be with dread interrogated. Cherish, then, thy soul as invaluable, and pass not thy life in vanity; for time is precious, and transient are thy days."

* 100

* *Story.*

"A friend that Jemshid loved descended to the grave enshrouded in the finest silk that worm had ever spun. A few days after, Jemshid sought the tomb to mourn and weep his loss; and when he saw the silk decayed, thus to himself he thought:—Of firmest texture was this shroud composed; but soon has the worm of the grave destroyed it. Ah! true these words that grieved my soul, one day as to his harp the minstrel sung: 'Alas! short are our days! and, like the blooming rose or verdant spring, they fade away: but when within the silent tomb we sleep, full many another spring shall glad the world, and many a rose shall bloom.'"

To appreciate correctly the merits of the masnavies which have been composed on mysticism, it would be necessary to enter into a very extended inquiry respecting the origin and opinions of the different sects of mystics which have prevailed in Persia. But such an inquiry is foreign to the design of this Essay; and Sir W. Jones has already most correctly and most eloquently given every information on this subject which can be exhibited in a compendious form. It will therefore be sufficient to remark that the person who is acknowledged to have written the first poem on mysticism was Abu'l Mujed ud Din Mahdud ben Adam, better known by the name of Hakim Sinai, a native of Ghaznin, the date of whose death is not ascertained, as it is stated by different authors to have happened in either A.D. 1105, or 1131, or 1150. The next in time, and who is esteemed to be superior to Hakim Sinai, was Shaik Farid ad Din Attar, who died A.D. 1228. To him succeeded Maulana Jelal ud Din Rumi, who is considered to excel all other

poets in this style of composition, and who died A.D. 1273. Beside the celebrated and voluminous works of these authors, there are many other poems on this subject, and many ghazels of every diwan are supposed to contain a mystic meaning.

If the attention be now turned from the Persian to the European divisions of poetry, it will be observed that neither epic nor dramatic poetry has been yet mentioned. With respect to the latter, it must be admitted * that according to the most received rules of criticism, no epic poem has *101 ever been produced in Persia; but if the observation of Lord Kaimes be correct, that, "as to the general taste, there is little reason to doubt that a work where heroic actions are related in an elevated style will, without further requisite, be deemed an epic poem," the first two volumes of the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi must be considered as strictly epic.

But with all theatrical representation not only are the Persians, but the Moslems of every country, perfectly unacquainted. That several poets have possessed genius adequate to the composition of dramatic poetry, their works fully evince; and this singular circumstance must therefore be ascribed to the state of society, and particularly to the religion of Persia. To the Moslem the hymns and processions of idolatry have been always unknown; nor has either public or private life in Persia ever presented a scene from which the genius of even the greatest poet could have been enabled to form the conception of a dramatic work.

The preceding remarks will also have shown that the poetry of Persia differs not more from that of Europe in its style and composition than in its form and arrangement. If, however, it be the principal purpose of poetry to afford pleasure, whenever that object has been attained the arbitrary rules of critics may at once be disregarded. From the writings of any poet instruction can seldom be derived; and if therefore it be not found in the poems of Persia, it cannot reasonably occasion disappointment. But although these poems may not tend to improvement by positive precept, they at least contain no descriptions drawn from an impure and degraded mythology; nor

are they contaminated by representations of the vices and crimes of mankind. In every respect, then, it may be remarked that the Persian literature possesses a poetry which, excepting in dramatic works, is not inferior to that of any other country. The instrument, indeed, is different, and the chords are not so numerous; but the notes and the tones are equally harmonious.

The different authors in prose and verse whose names have been mentioned above are those who are most esteemed in Persia; and it is proper to observe that they flourished between A.D. 923 and 1520. * For no sooner was the * 102 whole of Persia united under the government of Shah Ismail Sifi than literature became neglected; and since that period a most marked alteration has taken place in the style of Persian writers. Since then, to the richness and the chasteness of original genius have succeeded the sterility of imitation and a profusion of misplaced ornament: in judging therefore of any Persian work, the period when it was composed ought always to be considered; and the beauties of the ancient authors ought not to be included in a general censure of faults which are only attributable to modern writers.

The writer of these pages has thus attempted, imperfectly he fears, to present a correcter estimate of Persian literature than has yet been laid before the public. He is at the same time aware that the opinions which he has expressed differ materially from those of former writers. But it must be recollected that both the praise and censure which have hitherto been bestowed on this subject have been equally general, and never reduced to any specific points, and that no distinction has yet been made in the very different kinds of composition which prevail among the Persians. If, then, the preceding remarks have been successful in dispelling this confusion, and in showing that censure or praise cannot be indiscriminately applied to Persian literature *in toto*; and if the causes to which its defects have been ascribed be just, it would follow that the opinions now advanced must approach the nearest to the truth. That the Persians possess no compositions in prose which are valu-

able in themselves has been admitted; but it has been contended that the interest which is excited by their historical, and the elegant ingenuity which is displayed in their didactic writings render these works both curious and entertaining. That their poetry is deficient in unity, variety, and action has been admitted; but it is contended that such defects are fully compensated by the richness of the thoughts and imagery; by the beauty of the sentiments and descriptions; by the grace and animation of the style; and by the sweetness of the versification. Of the preceding opinions, therefore, the grounds are explained, and their correctness can at once be ascertained by an examination of the original authors. If it be then * found that their beauties and defects have neither been exaggerated nor diminished, it becomes a simple * 103 question of taste to determine how far the one may compensate for the other. Of the justness of his own taste the writer of these pages is too diffident to propose it as a standard to others; but he is convinced that on the decision of this question alone depends the exact degree of censure or praise which ought to be attributed to the literature of Persia.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF AUTHORS MENTIONED IN THIS ESSAY.

Died A.D.			Died A.D.
Muhammad ben Jurair		Amir Khosru.....	1324
ul Tabari	923	Hamdalla Mustufi.....	1349
Abu'l Fazel Ahmed ...	946	Hafiz	1392
Rudeki (the first poet) .	1013	Katibi.....	1435
Firdausi	1025	Muin ud Din Juini.†	
Hakim Sinai	1131	Jami	1492
Khakani	1187	Muhammad Amir Kha-	
Anwari	1189	wand	1497
Zahir Fariabi	1201	Moulana Hussain ul	
Nizami	1211	Waz Kashifi	1504
Shaik Farid ud Din		Doulut Shah Samarcandi†	
Attar.....	1228	Hatifi	1520
Moulana Rumi.....	1273	Ghais ud Din Amir	
Sadi	1294	Khawand†	
		Lutf Ali Ispahani	1780

† The date of the death of these authors has not been ascertained; but from certain circumstances they appear to have lived about the time where they are placed in this list.

[NOTE.—Considering the time at which this essay was written, it must be pronounced to be pretty exhaustive of the departments of which it speaks. Even now persons desirous of obtaining a general view of Persian Literature may peruse it with profit. The writer appears, however, to have been totally unacquainted with the scientific literature of the Persians, as he confines his remarks only to a few historical and poetical works, and says nothing about astronomy, geometry, medicine, chemistry, &c. Since his time poetry has not been totally neglected, but the practical genius of the age has forced the Persians to pay more attention to science, as appears from the many translations from foreign languages, but especially from the English, French, and German, which have been lithographed during the last thirty years at Tehran. This city now boasts of a polytechnic institute, a medical college, a cannon foundry, a glass manufactory, &c., all directed by European science and skill. The statement made that the religion of the Persians “ inculcates ignorance ” is probably a slip of the pen. It cannot, however, be denied that the influence of the priesthood is even now very considerable, and that it is terribly conservative, doing its best to shut out the light which science throws on every human pursuit.—Ed.]

DESCRIPTION OF A VOLCANIC ERUPTION IN THE
ISLAND OF SUMBAWA.

By Mr. G. A. STEWART.

Read 27th January, 1818.

In the month of April, 1815, there occurred on the island of Sumbawa a volcanic eruption as tremendous perhaps in its nature, and as destructive in its effects, as any on record.

The mountain from which this took place is called Tanbora. Its summit is calculated to be in latitude $8^{\circ} 20'$ S. and in longitude 118° E. The calculations for this were made from solar and lunar observations taken near the mountain by Captain Eatwell, then commanding the Honourable Company's cruizer Benares. Its base is of great extent ; but its summit did not to me appear higher than from 5,000 to 7,000 feet above the sea, which washes the base of the hill for three-fourths of its extent. From ships passing near it, it has been often observed to throw out smoke and dust with some noise. In the month of December, 1814, the Honourable Company's cruizer Ternate passed near it, and we had an opportunity of observing the hill, though at a very considerable distance. It was then emitting smoke in a dense column of immense circumference. So very great was the diameter of the column of smoke, and so dense was it, that we at first took it for part of the mountain ; for, at the distance we were off, the mountain and the smoke had nearly the same colour.

From the 5th to the 11th of April, 1815, the mountain emitted dust and frequent loud sounds every day. The dust caused a haziness of the atmosphere at places many degrees distant from Tanbora ; and the noises, which were heard equally far off, sounded at Beema (a town about sixty miles

east of the hill) generally like the firing of the largest cannon close to the ear ; at other times the noises were of a rumbling kind.

* On the night of the 10th and morning of the 11th * 105 of April the loudness and frequency of the reports increased. The showers of greyish black dust which had been falling at Beema increased so much by 7 A.M. on the 11th, as to produce there a total darkness. This complete darkness continued until 7 A.M. on the 12th, after which the dust fell in less and less quantity, and at noon it entirely ceased.

Pumice-stone of a brown colour was thrown out in immense quantity at the crater of the mountain. Great fields of it, with scorched trunks and branches of trees, were afterwards found floating in the neighbouring sea ; and much of these were thrown up on the shores of Bally, Java, Madura, Celebes, &c. These shoals were troublesome, and even somewhat dangerous, to ships passing near them. The country ship Dispatch fell in with many fields of this pumice-stone and wood, and was obliged to steer clear of them ; some of the pieces of wood were noted in its log-book as being about " six feet in diameter, and of very great length."

Trees of great size (many from sixty to eighty feet long) were thrown into the sea, some of which I saw in the bay of Beema ; they seemed to have been scorched, and to have had their small branches and roots torn off. Some of those trees I saw sticking in the mud near the shores of the bay, with one end uppermost.

Some of the houses of the town of Beema were materially injured by the eruption ; and I understand from our resident there, Mr. Pilott, that this had been occasioned by the discharges from the mountain.

In the bay of Beema the nature of the bottom was for some little depth changed from a soft mud to a firm mud, resembling a greyish-black clay, which did not allow our ship's lead to sink in it. This change, I presume, was occasioned by the depth of volcanic dust which fell in the bay of Beema ; for on mixing

any quantity of the same dust with water, it soon sank to the bottom of the vessel containing the water, and formed there a firm substance, much the same in colour and consistence as the clay-like matter which our lead and anchor brought up from the bottom of the bay of Beema. It is necessary, however, to mention, that although our lead could not penetrate through the layers of clay-like matter then on the * bottom of the bay of Beema, our anchor did, and, on being heaved * 106 up when we left Beema, showed us both the soft mud which we had before the great eruption found all over the bay, and above that the layers of firm mud which seem to have been made by the falling dust.

It was reported by Captain Eatwell, of the Honourable Company's cruizer Benares, that the earthquake attending the eruption had raised a bank, on which that ship struck, in a place where the Honourable Company's cruizer Ternate some months before it had floated in safety.

The people living on the peninsula formed by the mountain had traded much in horses, of which their country produced a very good small breed. Thousands of them and their horses were, according to all accounts, destroyed by the eruption: the vegetation was ruined, and multitudes of the people obliged to emigrate in order to obtain subsistence.

I understand that at the town of Tanbora, situated at the bottom of the west side of the mountain, the sea has made a permanent encroachment, burying that town to the depth of three fathoms.

Three distinct streams of a dark-coloured lava, according to the report of the people on the island, issued from the hill; of these I could observe something as I passed going to Beema in July following. One stream on the east side of Tanbora seemed to be emitting smoke and vapour even at that time.

During the darkness the sounds before described were particularly loud and frequent. At times, indeed, they were so loud as to produce momentary earthquakes of no inconsiderable violence.

All this while there was no wind in any direction in the

neighbourhood of the mountain, or at some distance from it; yet the sea was so violently agitated as to wash away some houses near it on Sumbawa, and to throw on the beach near the town of Beema several large trading boats that had been at anchor in the bay.

One of the most remarkable circumstances of the eruption is the experience of its effects at immense distances. At Samanap, on the island of Madura, in lat. $70^{\circ} 5' S.$ and in long. $113^{\circ} 57' E.$, there was—according to the information I received from Mr. Liddel, Master Attendant there, * and who was at Samanap at the time—total darkness, in * 107 consequence of the falling dust, from 5 P.M. of the 11th of April until 11 A.M. of the 12th. The explosions were very loud at that place, and were heard for several days.

At Soorabaya the darkness was complete from about 6 P.M. on the 11th until 4 P.M. on the 12th. The sounds were described to me as being exceedingly loud. They had been heard at Soorabaya, and dust had been observed to fall for several days before the 11th, during which time the wind was eastwardly and light: on the afternoon of the 11th a very thick haze resembling a cloud was observed coming from the eastward. It proved to be the cloud of dust from Mount Tanbora. The anchorage in Soorabaya roads is in lat. $7^{\circ} 14' S.$ and in long. $112^{\circ} 58' E.$, *i.e.* about five degrees distant from Tanbora.

Similar but slighter effects of the eruption were felt at Batavia, in lat. $6^{\circ} 10' S.$ and in long. $106^{\circ} 51' E.$; at Java Head, still further off, being in lat. $6^{\circ} 48' S.$ and in long. $105^{\circ} 11' E.$; at Minto, on the island of Banca, in lat. $2^{\circ} 2'$ and in long. $105^{\circ} 14'$; and at Bencoolen, or Sumatra, in lat. $3^{\circ} 48' S.$ and in long. $102^{\circ} 28' E.$ †

At Macassar,‡ in lat. $5^{\circ} 10' S.$ and in long. $119^{\circ} 38' E.$, the

† Distant about 970 miles.

‡ Distant about 215 miles.

effects of the eruption were felt nearly at the same time as at Soorabaya, but in a degree more violent.

The explosions from the volcano were so violent there as to astonish every one; they shook the earth and broke panes of glass in the windows of several houses. The cloud of dust was seen coming from the south. There was no wind.

With a view to ascertain the quantity of dust falling in a certain time, Mr. Paterson, surgeon of the residency there, put a table into the open air for an hour, between 6 and 7 P.M., at which time the dust was falling in great quantity, and the darkness total. The dimensions of the surface of the table were five feet two inches by four feet eight inches; the quantity of dust which fell upon it by 7 P.M. was 15,074 grains. At Beema the quantity of dust found lying on the ground after the eruption * was guessed to be at a medium of three inches and a half in depth: at Soorabaya the depth of it * 108 was something less.

At the island of Ternate, in lat. $0^{\circ} 49'$ N. and in long. $127^{\circ} 29'$ E., the explosions were distinctly heard about noon on the 11th of April; dust was not perceived to fall there, nor did any person notice that that day, or any one of those immediately following, was at all darker than ordinary.

On the island of Amboyna, on the 11th or 12th day of April in the same year, a violent earthquake was felt. In the ground of a gentleman near the Government house, the earth was observed to open, to throw out a gush of water, and immediately after to close. The sea in the neighbourhood of Amboyna was violently agitated during that month, rising to high-water mark and sinking to low-water mark in the course of ten minutes. For several days, at the same time, the sun appeared (according to a letter from the late Lieutenant White, of the Bombay Marine, then at Amboyna) of a green colour, encircled with a haze. Fort Victoria, on Amboyna, lies in lat. $3^{\circ} 40'$ S. and in long. $128^{\circ} 14'$ E.

The inhabitants of the island of Banda, one of the Moluccas, experienced shocks of an earthquake at the time of the eruption of Mount Tanbora.

N.B.—Some of the facts here mentioned are from my own personal knowledge; some from the information of individuals and from written documents on which I can rely; and some of them, more especially those concerning Sumatra, Banca, Amboyna, and Banda, are taken from the Java Government Gazette.

[NOTE.—Professor Bickmore's *Travels*, pp. 108 to 110, give an account of this eruption; and a great deal of information about volcanoes in this and the neighbouring islands will be found in columns 608-622 of Vol. V. of Balfour's *Cyclopaedia of India* (2nd Ed., Madras, 1873).—Ed.]

REMARKS ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF PERSIAN
HISTORY PREVIOUS TO THE CONQUEST OF
PERSIA BY ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

By Captain VANS KENNEDY.

Read 31st March, 1818.

WHILE the difficulty of ascertaining and reconciling the dates and events of ancient history is the too well founded complaint of every writer on chronology, it seems remarkable that the native accounts of Persia before the conquest of Alexander have not only been disregarded, but even deemed fabulous. The extravagant length of the reigns ascribed to Persian kings, and tales not greatly dissimilar to those which are related of the Knights of the Round Table, or the twelve peers of Charlemagne, appear to be the principal causes which have occasioned this neglect and prejudice. Yet, if these stories be rejected, and the kings be supposed to have reigned only a natural number of years, nothing improbable will be found in any other circumstance which is mentioned in Persian history. But it is the disagreement that exists between Grecian and Persian writers which is held to be the most conclusive argument against the credibility of the latter. An examination, therefore, into the reasons by which so generally a received opinion is supported, and an attempt to show that it rests on no sufficient grounds, may perhaps be considered not undeserving of attention.

In all inquiries of this nature, it is particularly requisite that the authenticity of the authors from whose writings any argument is deduced, and the means which they possessed of obtaining information, should be first clearly ascertained. To a want of this precaution may in a great measure be ascribed the prejudice which prevails against the remaining frag-

*ments of Persian history.¹ But that these may have been
 * 110 preserved with every correctness, from the first foundation of the Persian monarchy until its final subversion by the Arabs, will, I think, be admitted. For it is almost certain that the conquest of Persia by Alexander, and the slight dominion exercised over it by the Greeks after his death, did not produce any change either in the manners or religion of that country. It has indeed been conjectured that the Parthians were not Persians, and that they attempted to extirpate the religion of Zoroaster. But these suppositions rest not on any sufficient grounds, and are entirely repugnant to the whole tenor of Persian history. Were they, however, even admitted, as the Parthians did not possess the whole of Persia, there seems to be no reason for supposing that during the long period that elapsed from the establishment of their monarchy until Persia was re-united into one kingdom under the Sassanian dynasty, the knowledge of the ancient history of Persia was ever entirely lost. After the accession of this family, the preservation of the records of their kingdom is known to have been an object of royal attention; and the truth of the generally received account, that the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi was composed from a history of Persia which Yezdigird, its last king, had ordered to be compiled, has never been questioned. It may then be justly concluded that when Persia was conquered by the Arabs, there must have existed sufficient materials from which a knowledge of its history might have been derived. Nor can it be supposed that, in a country of so great an extent, all the endeavours of the Moslems could have immediately destroyed its writings. That these have long disappeared, may be more justly ascribed to the lapse of time, and to the inhabitants having so universally adopted the religion of Muhammad.

But the strongest suspicion respecting the correctness of such fragments of Persian history as now remain, certainly arises from their having been preserved by Muhammadan writers. Yet this very circumstance, when duly considered, is

¹ The Notes will be found at the conclusion of these Remarks.

one of the most convincing presumptions in favour of their authenticity. For the incidents and events related in them could not have been invented by any Muhammadan, as they are in almost every *instance directly contrary to any thing which he could have possibly conceived, from *111 their entire dissimilarity to the manners, customs, modes of thinking, and religion, with which he was acquainted. Nor could the despised and persecuted worshippers of fire have had any motive for composing a fictitious history of their country, even if time and opportunity had been afforded them. There seems, therefore, no just reason for supposing that these fragments do not contain an epitome of Persian history, corresponding, as far as it goes, with the annals or chronicles which were extant when that country was conquered by the Arabs. It is however probable that, in forming this epitome, Muhammadan authors may have omitted circumstances which they did not think important, or which militated against their religious prejudices; and that they did not prosecute their inquiries respecting the former state of Persia either with diligence or judgment. But the mere perusal of their works will at once show that they have scrupulously related circumstances as they received them; and that in no instance have they been induced by the spirit of system (a fault unknown to Eastern writers), or even by Moslem bigotry, to falsify the facts which they have collected. That they are aware of the absurdity of supposing a king reigned seven hundred or a thousand years, is evident, as they generally conclude such a reign with this or a similar observation, "The Moghs (ancient Persians) say that Jemshid reigned seven hundred years, but God only knows,"—*i. e.* whether this be true or not: and yet they have faithfully related the duration of each reign of the Persian kings, according to the accounts which they no doubt received, and which are still believed by the modern Parsees.

But before entering further into the subject, it will be proper to subjoin a list of the ancient kings who reigned in Persia previous to its conquest by Alexander the Great.

	<i>Pishdadian.</i>	<i>Kaianian.</i>
	Kaiumars.	Kaikobad.
	Hushang.	Kaikaus.
	Tahmuras.	Kaikhosrou.
* 112	*Jemshid.	Lohrasp.
	Zohac.	Gushtasp.
	Feridun.	Bahman.
	Manucheher.	Homai.
	Nouder.	Darab.
	Zav.	
	Gershasp.	Dara.

The sum total of the reigns of the above nineteen princes, according to the received opinion, amounts to 3161 years: giving an average of more than 160 years to the reign of each prince, and carrying the duration of the Persian monarchy 1100 years beyond the Deluge, according to the common computation.

^a The first Persian historian was Muhammad ben Jurair ul Tabari, who composed his work about 250 years after the conquest of his country by the Arabs. This history contains not only the earliest, but almost the sole account of the ancient kings of Persia; for succeeding authors, as appears from the *Rouzet us Safa*, which was written nearly 700 years afterwards, have not been able to add to it a single circumstance of any importance. The first part of this work is written with the evident intention of adapting the histories of Judæa and Arabia to the few historical texts which occur in the Koran; and the history of Persia is therefore but slightly touched upon. But that Tabari has derived his epitome of the latter from authentic sources, and that he has related it with fidelity, is evident. For although he introduces after Jemshid a king whom he names Biurasp, and to whom he assigns a reign of 950 years, at the conclusion of which he places the Flood, and further states that "no king reigned in the world for 1000 years after the Flood, when Zohac at length obtained the empire," yet he immediately adds that "the Moghs affirm that Zohac and Biurasp was only one and the same person, and that the latter

name was merely an epithet given to Zohac on account of his possessing ten thousand horses." "This, however, is impossible," observes Tabari; "as, according to the Koran, 2200 years elapsed between the birth of * Adam and the Flood.⁵ But," he continues, "although all other people, Jews, Christians, idolaters, and Hindoos, and all learned men, believe in the Deluge, the Moghs alone acknowledge not the Deluge, nor are they acquainted with Noah." This is also one of the tenets of the modern Parsees*: and the preceding list of kings is founded on the same principle, as Kaiumars is supposed by them not indeed to be the first man, but the first man of whom any particular account remains. It is also singular that Tabari is, I believe, the only Moslem writer who assigns in this list a particular date for the Deluge. Subsequent historians, although they suppose Kaiumars to be the same as Adam, attempt not to interrupt this series of kings by interposing an universal deluge: and Tabari himself can only unite the four first kings with Feridun by supposing that a son of Jemshid was one of the persons who were saved in the ark with Noah. This tenet, therefore, of the ancient Persians must be considered a sufficient reason for placing the foundation of the Persian monarchy at a period considerably later than the Flood.

But besides Tabari and the other general historians, there is also a poem written professedly as a history of the kings of Persia. It was composed by Firdausi nearly a hundred years after the work of Tabari; and although the principal events related by both authors are the same, it contains a variety of other circumstances which fully show that it must have been composed from original materials. It is also free from all intermixture of other matter: and it is therefore a much more agreeable task to select the incidents of each reign from amidst all the charms of poetry, than from the strange confusion of various history which prevails in Tabari. But as the latter was the earliest author, I have preferred him as my guide in these Remarks, and any quotation from Firdausi is distinctly mentioned.

Such, then, are the grounds on which I conceive that the remaining fragments of Persian history have been preserved with authenticity sufficient to render them deserving of attention; and I shall now proceed to point out such coincidences as appear to me to exist between them and the works of other nations.

The first most striking coincidence is contained in the following table; * where it will appear that the number * 114 of their kings, according to the Persians, is exactly the same as that which is given by Grecian writers:—

<i>Pishdadian.</i>	<i>Kings of the Medes.</i>	<i>Authorities.</i>
Kaiumars.	Arbakes. ⁵	} Ctesias.
Hushang.	Mandaukes.	
Fahmuras.	Sosarmus.	
Jemshid.	Artikas.	
Zohac.	Arbakines.	
Feridun.	Deiokes.	} Herodotus.
Manucheher.	Phraortes.	
Nouder.	Kuaxares.	
Tartars.	Scythians.	
Zav.	Astuaghes.	
Gershasp.	Kuaxares.	Xenophon.
<i>Kaianian.</i>	<i>Kings of Persia.</i>	} Ptolemy's canon, omitting Arses, who reigned only two years.
Kaikobad.	Kuros.	
Kaikaus.	Kambuses.	
Kaikhosrou.	Dareios Hustaspes.	
Lohrasp.	Xerxes.	
Gushtasp.	Artaxerxes.	
Bahman.	Dareios Nothos.	
Homai.	Artaxerxes Mnemon.	
Dorab.	Artaxerxes Ochus.	
Dara.	Dareios.	

But the first important event which is related in Persian history and which admits of a comparison with the accounts of other nations, is that revolt of the Medes against the Assyrians, which is received as an historical fact. By a similar insurrec-

tion was Feridun placed on the throne of Persia; and several circumstances will be mentioned which seem to render it probable that he was that king of the Medes who restored his country *to freedom. It is impossible, in reading the account of this event in Herodotus, not to be sensible that *115 although the fact be true, yet that the detail which he has annexed to it is of a very improbable nature. He represents the Medes as revolting against their masters, establishing their liberty, and then being permitted, without any interruption from neighbouring and powerful nations, to remain in anarchy without a chief, until Deiokes, by his own artifice and their necessities, was at last elected king.

The Persian account is not subject to such difficulties. It relates that Persia had groaned for a long time under the cruel and tyrannical government of an impious king, named Zohac. At length Gaveh, a blacksmith of Ispahan, irritated at being informed that two of his sons had been put to death, rushes into the market-place, relates to the people his own complaints, and then expatiates on the grievances of the whole nation. Finding that he is willingly listened to, he immediately fixes his leathern apron on the point of a spear, displays it as a standard, and, having collected a numerous mob, assaults the governor, and puts him and his guards to death. Animated by this success and by the numbers who join him, he marches to Reï^s, the capital of the kingdom; and meeting with no opposition, in consequence of the revolt being so sudden and unexpected, he makes himself master of that city. He then assembles the people, and points out the necessity of their electing a king. They reply that they know none more deserving of that dignity than himself. But he declines it, and represents to them that he is only a common artizan, the son of a peasant, and that it is requisite that some one descended from their former kings should be chosen. In consequence of this, Feridun, a descendant of Jemshid, is unanimously elected and crowned their king, immediately after which Feridun assembles his army, appoints Gaveh his chief general, and marches against Zohac, whom he defeats, pursues to his palace, and there kills. He then returns

triumphant to Rei, where he applies himself to the arrangement of the government; while Gavch with his victorious army makes many conquests to the west of the Tigris and to the east of the Jihoon.

Who Zohac actually was, is not agreed amongst Muhammadan historians. That he was not a native of Persia, * 116 and that he also possessed a capital not situated in Persia, named Gungdezhhukht, seem to be the only circumstances relative to his identification which have been preserved. The opinions, therefore, respecting the situation of his capital, are various: some place it at Jerusalem, and others at Babel, the city of Nimrod⁷. But the memory of this revolt was perpetuated by the blacksmith's leathern apron being covered with silk, enriched with jewels, and becoming the standard of the empire. That no event of this nature took place under the Parthian dynasty there is every reason to believe; and that no such occurred under the Sassanian princes is almost certain. Yet many Muhammadan writers mention that at the battle of Kadessia this very standard was taken, and that it was considered to be the palladium of the Persian nation. It is therefore impossible to deny the existence of this standard, and of the general belief of the story which was attached to it; and unless it can be shown that the story applies to some other period of Persian history, this singular fact, a fact which no imagination could have invented, must be considered, even at this distant period, as a strong proof of the reality of the revolt which placed Feridun on the throne of Persia.

Nothing memorable is related by Herodotus respecting Deiokes after his becoming king; nor is there by Persian writers respecting Feridun, excepting as it is connected with his successor. It is related that Feridun bestowed the country to the east of the Jihoon on his eldest son Tur, from whom it was named Turan; and on his second son Salm, the capital and territories, exclusive of Persia, which Zohac had formerly possessed. But he had a younger and more darling son, named Iraj, whom he afterwards appointed to succeed him in the kingdom of Persia. His elder brothers, irritated at this declara-

tion, levied armies, and, having joined their forces, marched against their father. When they drew near, Iraj, contrary to the wishes of Feridun, prevailed in obtaining his permission to proceed to his brothers in order to allay their resentment. But on his arrival in their camp, they put him to death; and having thus removed the cause of their jealousy, they returned to their respective governments.

*Nothing further is said to have occurred until the son of Iraj, Manucheher, attained to manhood; when he * 117 immediately levied an army, marched against Tur, and defeated and slew him, but bestowed his kingdom on his son. He then turned his arms against Salm, whom he also defeated and killed in battle. In the accounts of Iraj and Manucheher there appears to be a strong resemblance between them and the Phraortes and Kuaxares of Herodotus. Admit Phraortes to be Iraj, and to have been slain in his youth by the Assyrians of Nineveh, the first part of the life of Kuaxares will then entirely coincide with what is related of Manucheher. They both waged war against Nineveh; they both avenged the death of their fathers; and they both made conquests in Asia. "Kuaxares," says Herodotus, "was the first who arranged his army in distinct divisions, and assigned a separate position to the spearmen, cavalry, and archers, who had been hitherto drawn up promiscuously." "Manucheher," says Tabari, "collected a great army, and assigned to the troops distinct places according to the arms which they bore. Those who bore swords were placed in one body, the mace-bearers in another, the spearmen in another, and the archers in another." The latter part of Kuaxares's life, as far as it is connected with the invasion of the Scythians, appears to correspond with that of Nouder. The Persians relate that on the death of Manucheher, Nouder succeeded to the throne, who addicted himself to pleasure, and neglected the affairs of government. When Pusheng, the grandson of Tur the eldest son of Feridun, understood the state of Persia, he thought it the best opportunity for avenging the death of his grandfather, and obtaining possession of that kingdom. He therefore sent his son Afrasiab at the head

of a numerous army of Tartars, who defeated and took prisoner Nouder, whom he put to death, and having subdued the whole of the country, assumed the government.⁸

It is this particular event which, in my opinion, so completely establishes that the last five princes of the Pishdadian race are the very same with those whom the Greeks name kings of the Medes. No subject appears to have given rise to a greater variety of opinions than the history of the Scythians; and none still remains in greater uncertainty. In the present * 118 instance * Herodotus clearly expresses his ignorance respecting whence these Scythians came; and he does not even attempt to explain in what manner they were afterwards expelled from Asia. But if it be admitted that they came from the east of the Jihoon, or Turan, and that after maintaining possession of Persia for some years they were obliged by the Persians to return to their own country, every difficulty vanishes. The continual wars between Iran and Turan are woven into the Persian history; and they are not even terminated at this day. It seems, therefore, much more credible to suppose that when the Scythians are mentioned by Grecian writers as connected with Persia, whether invading or invaded, they are those Scythians who, according to Herodotus, dwelt to the east of the Caspian Sea: consequently, the inhabitants of that country which has been at all times named by the Persians Turan or Turkistan.

Of the two last kings of the Medes, Astuaghes and Kuaxares, nothing memorable is related by Herodotus and Xenophon excepting what regards their successor, Cyrus, and which will be immediately noticed. There is nothing also related by Persian writers respecting Zav and Gershasp, except that the first expelled Afrasiab; and that both were good princes who contributed to the prosperity of their country. It is, however, remarkable that as there is a difference amongst Grecian writers respecting Kuaxares, so is there among Persian writers respecting Gershasp. Tabari omits him amongst the kings, and says that he was a celebrated minister of Zav; but he is included in the list of kings by Firdausi.

The next event related by Grecian writers is the transfer of

sovereignty from the Medes to the Persians—by conquest, according to Herodotus; by marriage, according to Xenophon. This circumstance appears to me to be no other than the termination of the Pishdadian dynasty, and the accession of the Kaianian, the first prince of which, although stated to be descended from Feridun, was no relation to Gershasp, and therefore obtained the throne by the election of the nobles and the people. The name of Media has been at all times unknown to the Persians, who maintain that from the days of Feridun until the Arabian conquest their country never had any other boundary to the west than the Euphrates, and that their * kingdom has never from that period formed but one sole and united empire. That this was the case may * 119 be almost inferred from Herodotus himself, as he gives no account of the manners and religion of the Medes, and in more than one place seems to intimate that hardly any difference existed between them and the Persians. The same may be observed of Xenophon, who points out only one difference in particular, namely, the management of horses: "Amongst the Persians," says he, "it is difficult either to breed horses or to ride, as the country is mountainous: so that a horse is seldom seen there." This passage shows how little Persia could have been known to the Greek writers, as the country which they describe under the name of Media is the only mountainous part of Persia. It is also remarkable that, according to every account which remains of the ancient state of that country, its armies were composed almost entirely of cavalry, and that infantry was very little used. This practice has continued to the present day. As Grecian writers have, therefore, merely transmitted a name unknown to the inhabitants, without adding any description by which its application can possibly be determined, the received opinion of the Persians themselves may, I think, in this case be admitted; and Media may no longer be considered as an independent kingdom, but as the western provinces of Persia, which before the commencement of its monarchy under Kaiumars may possibly have been denominated after Medai, the son of Japhet.

I have thus briefly compared the accounts which Herodotus has given of the kings of the Medes with those preserved in the fragments of Persian history; and that some similarity exists between them will, I think, be admitted. But the period at which I would propose to place the commencement of Feridun's reign receives confirmation from several corroborating circumstances. According to the astronomical canon of Ptolemy, the Persian monarchy was founded 538 years before the Christian era: but, as he only dates this event from the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, the length of this prince's reign may be taken from Herodotus; and the commencement therefore of this monarchy placed twenty years earlier, or in the year B.C. 558. Herodotus states that the empire of the Medes

continued for * one hundred and fifty years. To this * 120 number there can be no hesitation in adding the twenty-two years' reign of the Kuaxares, son of Astuaghes, mentioned by Xenophon: and I would only further propose to add to the total of Herodotus, instead of deducting from it, the period ascribed to the Scythians, but by taking the number of years only which are mentioned by the Persians, and deducting from them the reign of Nouder, making altogether an addition of only nineteen years. That a place should be given to this king seems probable, on account of the coincidences which I have before pointed out in the accounts of Kuaxares and Manuchcher, and because the Persians universally ascribe to the reign of the latter the greatest prosperity. If this be admitted, the Scythian period must be also separated from the reign of Kuaxares, as Afrasiab did not obtain possession of Persia until he had defeated and slain Nouder. The origin, then, of the monarchy named by the Greeks the Median, I would propose to place in the year 749 before the Christian era.

That about this period some singular change took place amongst the nations bordering on the Tigris is the universal voice of history. But of what nature these changes were, and in what particular year they took place, considerable difference of opinion prevails. It seems, however, to be generally admitted that a king of the Medes was the principal cause of this revolu-

tion; and he accordingly has obtained, under the name of Arbaces, a place in chronology, although the period when he flourished is differently dated, some placing it B.C. 821, some 770, and some 748. It is also remarkable that although to this prince is ascribed the freedom of his country, yet every writer by whom he is mentioned admits that a considerable interval elapsed between him and the election of Deiokes. But the extreme improbability of any nation's being able to throw off the yoke of its bondage, and, after effecting so difficult an enterprize, immediately sinking into anarchy and confusion, and being allowed to remain in that state although surrounded by powerful nations, must alone, I think, be a conclusive argument for denying assent to the received opinion. In this instance, therefore, credit may be at least given to the Persians, as their account is most consistent in itself, and most consonant * to the experience of ages; and, consequently, the destruction of the Assyrian empire may with justice be * 121 ascribed to Feridun. This supposition is rendered next to a certainty both by the canon of Ptolemy and by the date of the appearance of Tiglath Pilasur, which may be deduced from the Scriptures, as this took place in the days of Pekah, king of Israel, who reigned from B.C. 755 until B.C. 735. "The difficulties which occur," observe the writers of the Universal Ancient History, "in explaining the rise of the kingdoms of Babylon and Nineveh, and their subsisting for several years without any encroachment on each other, can, in our opinion, be no other wise solved but by adopting the system of a late chronologer, and by supposing, according to that system, that Pul, the first Assyrian conqueror, left two sons, Tiglath Pilasur and Nabonassar. To the former he bequeathed the kingdom of Assyria, and that of Babylon to the latter." But, if I be not mistaken, these circumstances will be more fully and more satisfactorily explained by supposing that these now chiefs of Babylon and Nineveh were no others than governors appointed by Feridun, king of Persia. It is impossible to peruse the list of the kings of Babylon, preserved in Ptolemy's canon, without being sensible that this conjecture is well founded; for, ac-

ording to that canon, in sixty-seven years there were two inter-reigns, amounting to ten years, and ten princes. No such rapid succession of kings ever took place in any nation of which a record remains; and it seems perfectly improbable that any monarchy could have subsisted under such frequent fluctuations. It may therefore be justly concluded that the ten first persons mentioned by Ptolemy must have been governors appointed by some powerful sovereign, a character which can at that time be only applied to Feridun. Nineveh, I think, was differently situated; as it seems not unlikely that it was the capital of Zohac, and consequently bestowed by Feridun on his son Salm, whose name, with the addition of Assur or Assyrian, seems to be still preserved in the name of Salmanassar⁹. But the loss of Herodotus's account of the capture of Nineveh, if he ever composed it, and the silence of other historians respecting this kingdom or government, must render all conjectures respecting it very uncertain.

* From no king of Assyria until Pul being mentioned * 122 in the Scriptures, and from other circumstances, it has been contended that no kingdom of Assyria existed before it was established by him. This event is placed by Sir Isaac Newton in the year B.C. 790; and his reign continued until B.C. 747, when he was succeeded at Nineveh by his son Tiglath Pilsur. It is hence concluded that Herodotus is mistaken in stating that the Assyrians held possession of Upper Asia for a period of 520 years. But it is not necessary that I should enter into this argument, as the conjecture that the revolt under Feridun was actually the revolt of the Medes against the Assyrians seems to be supported by many corroborating circumstances. Whether, then, Zohac is to be considered as only one prince, or the duration of his reign be considered as the period of the Persians' subjection to the Assyrians, can be of little consequence. It must be only remarked that this period cannot be supposed to have been of any great length, as the memory of the four first kings of the Pishdadian race appears to have been completely preserved: two generations, therefore, or about sixty years, may perhaps be a rea-

sonable computation; and supposing that the four first kings reigned one hundred years, the foundation of the Persian monarchy under Kaiumars would then be placed about the 909th year before the Christian era, a date by no means improbable.

If it should be admitted that I have not been entirely unsuccessful in showing that Persian accounts are not altogether inconsistent with those of other nations in these earlier times, it may be justly expected that the coincidences will become more numerous the nearer they approach to that period which is considered as historical. But the contrary is remarkably the case; and in the very circumstance, the life of Cyrus, which is now to be examined, the accounts of three Grecian writers so materially differ from each other that it is impossible to decide which is most correct. Yet there being no prince in the Persian list of kings who resembles this triform hero is held to be one of the most incontestable arguments that the Persian history is merely a tissue of fables. Of these accounts that of Herodotus is certainly the most improbable; and as he himself mentions that he knew that the story was related in three other ways, *it may be admitted that in * 123 the one which he has selected, he has shown a greater predilection for what was marvellous, than a correct judgment. But on a narrative so contradicted, and so very questionable in itself, has Sir W. Jones ventured to observe, "For I shall then only doubt that the Khosrou of Ferdusi was the Cyrus of the first Greek historian, and the hero of the oldest political and moral romance, when I doubt that Louis Quatorze and Lewis the Fourteenth were one and the same French king." A late writer has also adopted the same opinion; and, in order to support it, has gone so far as to remark "that (in the *Shah Namah*) we find events which occurred on the banks of the Euphrates often transferred to those of the Oxus." And further, "Taking this view of the life of Kaikhosrou, we may pronounce that the transfer of a scene from the court of Ecbatana to that of the capital of Afrasiab, and the substitution of the latter king for the sovereign of Media, are liberties which it was natural for the poet to take:" positions perfectly untenable. But the

most conclusive reply to such conjectures will be the production of the actual account given of Kaikhosrou ; and, as this is a point of some importance, the following literal translation from Tabari may not be unacceptable :

“Kaikaus had a son named Siavush, who excelled every son on the face of the earth. He was delivered to Rustum, in order to be brought up by him in Seistan, who, after instructing him in every accomplishment, restored him, when he attained his twentieth year, to his father, and Kaikaus was delighted in beholding the perfections of his son. Kaikaus had married a daughter of Afrasiab, who on beholding Siavush became enamoured with him ; and having sent for him she disclosed her passion. But he replied that he would not be guilty of disloyalty to his father, and quitted her. Sudabeh, enraged, took every means of prejudicing his father against him ; and Siavush, being apprehensive of the consequences, requested Rustum to exert his influence that they might be jointly appointed to the command of an army which Kaikaus was about to send against Afrasiab, in consequence of his not having paid the stipulated dowry of his daughter. Kaikaus complied, and appointed Siavush the commander of his army ;

informing him at the same time that if Afrasiab *per-
 *124 formed his engagements it was well ; if not, to commence war against him. When the two armies drew near each other, Afrasiab’s chief general, named Peeran, interposed, and effected a treaty with Siavush, who wrote to his father, and informed him that he had concluded a peace. But Kaikaus, not approving of the peace, directed him to break it, and to commence war. Siavush disdained to be guilty of a breach of faith, but, being afraid to return to his father, requested the protection of Afrasiab, who assented, and kindly received him, and gave him one of his daughters in marriage, who was named Faringis. After the lapse of some years, Afrasiab, considering the bravery and accomplishments of Siavush, became alarmed, and apprehensive lest he might attempt any thing against the kingdom, and therefore ordered him to be put to death. At this time Faringis was pregnant, and Afrasiab

was considering in what manner he might destroy the fruit of her womb; when Peeran arrived, and reproached him for having first granted his protection to a prince, and then having put him to death; and observed that Kaikaus and Rustum would certainly demand vengeance for his death: that it was therefore better to intrust Faringis to his care; and in case she should bring forth a child, that it should be sent to Kaikaus, in order to disarm his resentment. Afrasiab consented on this condition, that if a daughter was born, it should be sent to Kaikaus; but if a son, that it should be put to death. Peeran accordingly conducted Faringis to his house; but when she was delivered of a boy, it was so lovely that Peeran's heart would not allow him to kill it. He therefore preserved it, brought it up in secret, and named it Kaikhosrou. When Kaikhosrou arrived at the age of manhood, Guderz, one of the principal Persian nobles, having become acquainted with the circumstance, sent his son Geeve privately into Turan, who having discovered Kaikhosrou and his mother, conducted them to Kaikaus, to whose throne Kaikhosrou soon after succeeded, and immediatly commenced war against Afrasiab in order to avenge the death of his father, Siavush. The war continued for a long time; until at last Afrasiab was taken prisoner and slain, and his country completely subdued."

* On perusing this account, the first remark that naturally occurs, is the extreme improbability that Herodotus * 125 could have heard any Persian relation of Kaikhosrou's birth without his being at the same time made acquainted with the equally remarkable story of his father, Siavush. For had he been aware of the latter, he never would have represented Astuaghès as holding the father of Cyrus in lower estimation than the most common of the Medes. The very prominent character of Harpagus also finds in the Persian account no parallel whatever; for Peeran is celebrated for his fidelity to Afrasiab; and he fell at last in battle, fighting bravely for his prince, although he had always disapproved of the cause of the war. The punishment of Harpagus by Astuaghès appears so much like the banquet prepared by Atreus for his brother

Thyestes, that it may at once be referred to a Greek instead of a Persian original. In no one circumstance, indeed, do the Grecian and Persian stories agree, unless perhaps some faint resemblance be discovered between what Firdausi has added to the above account: namely, Kaikhosrou's having been brought up by Peeran's orders amongst shepherds until he was ten years old, and Cyrus's having been preserved and brought up by the herdsman. But in every other respect they are entirely dissimilar, and in no instance more particularly so than when the young Khosrou is introduced to Afrasiab, and the young Cyrus to Astuaghes. Cyrus then, according to Herodotus, immediately betrays his royal birth by his answers; but Khosrou, according to Firdausi, preserves his life by the stupidity of the replies which he gives to the questions of Afrasiab.

I have entered into this subject much further than may perhaps appear requisite: but Cyrus is so very important a personage in chronology, and every system so depends upon him, that it is absolutely necessary to ascertain how far any Persian prince can lay claim to his celebrity. Were writers, indeed, agreed among themselves respecting the particular facts on which this celebrity is founded, the inquiry would be greatly simplified. The utmost, however, which is generally admitted, is, that Cyrus personally made some conquests in Asia, and that while his generals were still further extending them he himself took Babylon. But these circumstances *126 are not in themselves of such importance as to render it a just conclusion that because they are omitted to be mentioned in the remaining fragments of Persian history, these fragments must in consequence be deemed entitled to no credit. The grandeur and magnificence of Babylon are described by so many authors, that to call this received fact into question may appear ridiculous. But it seems inconsistent with the general progress in arts, sciences, and civilization which could have been then made by the nations of Asia. Yet admitting it to have been really as splendid as it is described, if Babylon itself, as will perhaps appear probable from the

preceding remarks, had been formerly a dependency of Persia, and had only risen into a kingdom in consequence of the troubles which occurred after the death of Manucheher, its re-annexation to the Persian empire would be a circumstance that the vanity of a native historian would naturally omit, as it must have recalled to memory his country's misfortunes and disgrace.

But the character of Cyrus¹⁰ has derived its chief importance from its supposed connexion with sacred history. For it seems to be the received opinion that the Cyrus of the Greeks was also that king of Persia in the first year of whose reign the Jews, after suffering captivity for seventy years, were restored to their native country. That the records of Jewish history which have been preserved in the Old Testament, notwithstanding the various disasters to which they have been exposed, are entitled to every credit, on account of the Jews having invariably lived distinct in their manners, customs, and religion from all other people, will, I think, be admitted. But if a simple reference be made to these records, it will be apparent that the Cyrus of the Greeks cannot be the Persian king by whom the Jews were restored. For in the 36th chapter of the second book of Chronicles it is stated that in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar laid Jerusalem waste, and carried away all that escaped from the sword to Babylon, "to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as they lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." These words are so explicit, that all systems which place the date *from which the captivity of the Jews is to be computed before the eleventh year of Zedekiah must evidently * 127 contradict this text, as till then Jerusalem had not become desolate; but the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign is placed by most chronologists in the 587th year before the Christian era, and consequently the captivity could not have terminated until the year 517 B.C. and in the fourth year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, according to Ptolemy's canon. According to the book of Daniel also and to Josephus, Babylon was not taken by Cyrus, but by Darius the Mede; and it is in this

instance most particularly that the received systems of chronology labour under the greatest difficulty, in attempting to reconcile the Darius of Daniel to some Persian king mentioned by the Greeks. The most general opinion, however, seems to be that of Josephus, which supposes that Darius was the Kuaxares of Xenophon, and that Cyrus merely acted in co-operation with him. But this conjecture cannot be admitted; for if Kuaxares be received into history, it must be on the authority of Xenophon, who at the same time expressly states that Kuaxares was not present at the siege of Babylon, as he had been left in Media with a third part of the Medes, in order that the country might not remain without protection: nor was Kuaxares present, according to Xenophon, when Cyrus made various arrangements after the capture of Babylon. It is equally impossible to reconcile the first year of Darius's reign according to Daniel, if it be connected with this event, with any Grecian account: for that of Herodotus, corrected by Ptolemy's canon, would place the capture of Babylon in the 20th year of Cyrus, and that of Xenophon in the 20th year of Kuaxares. It may be said that Daniel dates from the capture of Babylon: but although this supposition might be admitted had he been a private individual and a native of Babylon, it must be rejected when he is considered as a foreigner, and one of the principal governors of Darius; as it is highly improbable that the powerful king of Persia would alter the usual mode of dating his edicts, merely on account of a conquest of comparatively little importance.

It hence appears that in the account of this simple circumstance, which is the most distinguished action in the life * 128 of Cyrus, according to Herodotus * and Xenophon, the Grecian writers are not only contradicted by Daniel, but that in their relation of the other circumstances of Cyrus's life they equally contradict each other. The capture of Babylon, therefore, and the actions of Cyrus, cannot be considered as historical facts so incontrovertibly established as to render them criterions by which the authenticity of any history whatever can be justly decided.¹¹

The conjectures of former authors have rendered these remarks requisite, in order to show that there are no sufficient grounds for supposing that the first king of the Persians according to the Greeks was the same as Kaikhosrou the third prince of the Kaianian dynasty. The coincidences, therefore, pointed out in the preceding observations remain unaffected; and it may be still considered as probable that the five last kings of the Pishdadian race were no other than the kings of the Medes of Grecian writers. It will also, perhaps, be admitted that the discovery in Persian accounts of an exact parallel to Cyrus, or his differently related exploits, is not absolutely necessary. It may, however, be reasonably expected that some resemblance should be traced between the events that occurred in the reigns of his eight successors, and the same precise number of Persian kings. But no such resemblance which is at the same time consistent with chronology¹² exists: it therefore only remains to ascertain how far this dissimilarity can affect the credibility of Persian history.

Herodotus, it must be particularly observed, has in his description of the Medes confined himself to a mere abstract of the principal events; and this abstract is distinctly marked by two very prominent circumstances, a revolt, and an invasion of the Scythians. But in his account of the Persian kings he enters into a much more minute detail, and not only introduces us into the council, but even into the haram of the prince. He also not only introduces us into the secret meetings of conspirators, but even relates the very speeches which they made. Yet he pretends not that he derived his knowledge of these circumstances from any written records, or from any other source than verbal communications. Nor does Herodotus appear to have been acquainted with the Persian language, or to have extended his travels beyond Babylon. The means, therefore, which he could have possessed of acquiring any correct information respecting Persian history must *129 have been very limited. The nature of the country, the common habits and manners of any people, and their most obvious religious ceremonies, are circumstances which are open

to the observation and inquiries of every intelligent traveller. But the history and political institutions of any nation are subjects which are but little if at all known to the people themselves, and are therefore almost impenetrable to the researches of a stranger ; and were the stranger ignorant of the language of the country, and incapable of profiting by its records, even if he had obtained access to them, it must be evident that he could only collect such stories and traditions as have existed amongst all nations : but were he afterwards to give connexion to these detached and popular tales, and to form them into a regular history, by not only describing the most striking events, which might easily be remembered, but by explaining the causes and motives which led to them, by laying open the counsels of princes, the intrigues of courts, and the machinations of conspirators, what credit could possibly be attached to such a history ? Yet such are the works of Herodotus, Xenophon, and Ctesias, the only Grecian historians now extant who wrote before Alexander the Great ; and that the conquest of Persia did not render the Greeks more conversant with Persian history is evident from the works of every subsequent author.

Of all the Grecian writers Herodotus is certainly most entitled to attention, as he displays a spirit of research which could not have been entirely disappointed ; and he has consequently, in several instances, evinced a considerable knowledge of the Persian customs and religion. In his description of the Medes also, with the exception of the particulars relative to the birth of Cyrus, he has related nothing but what is probable, and what might have been generally known. But the same praise cannot be extended to his account of the kings of the Persians. In his Life of Cyrus, as has been already observed, he is at variance both with Xenophon and Ctesias ; and in the reigns of Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius, and Xerxes, scarcely a circumstance is related which it can be supposed

* 130 *could ever have become a subject of popular knowledge.

The only events indeed which are described, and which can be considered of importance sufficient to have rendered them generally remembered, are the invasions of Egypt by

Cambyzes; of Scythia by Darius; and of Greece by Xerxes; for it must be always recollected that such transactions as occurred in Asia Minor, and which are so minutely dwelt upon by Grecian writers, could never have been subjects of the slightest interest to the Persian people. The proper kingdom of Persia was situated to the east of the Euphrates, and appears from every account to have most materially differed in customs, manners, and religion, from all the petty nations that were situated to the west of that river. In process of time, these nations, as well as Egypt, were conquered, and became dependencies of the Persian empire; but they still remained entirely distinct in population, manners, and religion. No intermixture seems ever to have taken place between them and the Persians, and even the intercourse between the two peoples seems not at any time to have been frequent. These dependencies might, therefore, form honourable and desirable governments for the Persian nobles and for their immediate officers; but the transactions which occurred in them were not likely to attract the general attention of the Persian nation, and thus to become the theme of history, or the subject of a popular tale.

To these obvious reasons I think it must be attributed that no particulars of the Persian victories to the west of the Euphrates have been preserved in the remaining fragments of Persian history; but that the Persian empire extended over Asia Minor, Egypt, and even part of Africa and Europe, is affirmed in general terms by many a native writer. It is therefore evident, that as the Grecian historians are almost entirely occupied in detailing events which did not affect or interest the whole of the Persian people, and which were consequently omitted or overlooked by their historians, no similarity can be expected to exist in accounts that proceed on such different principles. The mere omission, however, by one author of what is related by another, cannot possibly affect the credibility of either. Although, therefore, entire credit be given to the Greeks in their relation of all transactions which took place to * 131 the west of the * Euphrates, this can be no just reason

for supposing that the accounts which the Persians have preserved of all that occurred to the east of that river should not be equally true.

The omission, then, of the three invasions mentioned by Herodotus can alone be considered as rendering doubtful the authenticity of this part of Persian history; but these circumstances rest merely on the authority of Herodotus, and all mention made of them by subsequent authors may be ascribed to the general knowledge of his history; it therefore becomes a question of some importance to ascertain to what particular parts of his work credit is to be given; for I suppose much of it will be admitted to be both puerile and fabulous. Are the causes, then, which occasioned the Egyptian war, and Cambyses's mad conduct in Egypt, to be received as facts? They certainly will not stand the test of historical criticism; and, as Herodotus received them from the priests of Egypt, they may at once be rejected. The invasion of the Scythians by Darius seems, however, to rest on much better grounds, and such a circumstance must have been well known to the people of Asia Minor: but it still seems highly improbable that any king of Persia should lead a numerous army across the Danube to attack a nation with which he had not the slightest intercourse, merely because they had invaded Persia seventy or eighty years before. If, however, the conjecture before proposed be admitted, and the Scythians who defeated Kuaxares be identified with the Turanians under Afrasiab, who defeated Noudar, the motive for this expedition which is ascribed by Herodotus must be rejected. Had he indeed represented Darius as attacking the Massagetæ in order to revenge the death of Cyrus (according to his own account), he would have rendered his history the more probable, and might have then been supported by supposing this to have been one of the frequent invasions of Turan by the Persians. In its present state the narrative is altogether so singular, that the circumstance itself may be considered as deficient in that requisite probability which should, without further authority, cause it to be received as an established historical fact.

Respecting the invasion of Xerxes a variety of opinions prevail ; but * as Herodotus is the earliest historian extant who has related this event, and in the most circumstan- * 132 tial manner, its reality must depend entirely on his authority. Is it then to be believed that upwards of five millions of human beings were led in one body by Xerxes into Greece, and that there was not a nation in Asia which did not accompany him ? Had Asia been thus precipitated on Greece, surely some remembrance of so remarkable an expedition must have been preserved in a country where tradition and poetry have immemorially flourished. But neither in Arabia, Persia, nor India does there remain the slightest trace of an event which must have depopulated whole regions, and have left the most melancholy and indelible impressions. The impossibility of carrying, or of procuring, provisions for such a multitude of beasts for several months, and in a march over countries which certainly grew no more corn than was necessary for their own consumption, must be too apparent ; and yet there are authors who support the probability of this account of Herodotus in all its details. But if the whole of this account be not admitted, which are the particular incidents in it that may be deemed credible ? The simple fact of a powerful invasion of Greece having taken place in the year 480 B.C. seems to be fully established ; but the numbers of the invaders, and even the chief who led them, are the very circumstances which national vanity would be most likely to magnify. It may therefore be as justly doubted that this expedition was led by the king of Persia in person, as that it consisted of upwards of five millions of men. Both these circumstances depend upon the same authority, and both would equally gratify the pride of the Greeks. It seems also improbable that, had the Persian king suffered so inglorious a defeat in person, he would not have availed himself of the many opportunities which the dissensions of Greece afterwards afforded to have revenged the disgrace : yet from the Peloponnesian war until the invasion of Persia by Alexander, although Greece was distracted by intestine wars, and the friendship and assistance of the ' great king' were courted by

every means by the Greeks, he never once formed the design of attacking that country. Such a line of conduct cannot be ascribed to the enfeebled state of Persia, as that kingdom,
 * by all that can be collected from Greek writers,
 * 133 during the whole of that period flourished in undiminished power and prosperity.

In this instance, therefore, as well as the invasion of Egypt, and perhaps some Persian expedition to the north-west of the Hellespont, the simple facts themselves may be admitted, as they must have been events of public notoriety: but the whole of the concomitant circumstances may at once be rejected, as many of them are at least singular, if not improbable; and as the authority on which they are related is not derived from written records, but from such information as has always been found the most liable to error. Neither the fable of an Egyptian priest, the wonderful tale of some soldier employed in the expedition beyond the Hellespont, if it ever took place, nor even all the beauties of history and oratory when designed to flatter and gratify the pride and vanity of Greeks, can be considered as sufficient proofs by which the authenticity of any history ought to be established. It may, then, be conjectured that these invasions were never led by a Persian king in person; and that even the invading armies were merely composed of troops levied in the dependent states; and that but a very small part of them on any occasion ever consisted of Persian soldiers. That the latter was the case in Asia Minor, and in later expeditions to Egypt, may be gathered from Grecian writers, as no mention is made in them of armies being sent into those countries from Persia Proper. The celebrated invasion of Xerxes may therefore have been only an expedition similar to that of Dares and Artaphernes, but in much greater numbers, and not improbably reinforced by troops detached from Persia Proper, and the whole commanded by some chief of such rank and importance as to induce the Greeks to honour him with the name of king; but unless every particular of these invasions which is related by Herodotus be admitted, or it be otherwise incontrovertibly demonstrated that not only the

Persian king, but the Persian people were engaged in them, their not being mentioned in Persian history cannot be considered as sufficient grounds for questioning its credibility.

But the credit which is due to any author must be determined not by * detached parts, but by the whole of his work. In what light, then, are the singular stories of *134 Smerdis and the election of Darius Hystaspes to be viewed? Are these to be considered as instances where Herodotus has written for children, and not for men? or are they to be received as historical facts? They are indeed related most circumstantially: the discovery of the imposture, by Smerdis having formerly lost his ears; the two different manners in which it was said the neighing of Darius's horse was occasioned; the speeches of three Persian nobles displaying the benefits of a democracy, an oligarchy, or a monarchy; and the manner in which the Magi were finally killed in the palace. But these very particulars must render the whole account in the highest degree doubtful; for, even allowing it to be probable, they have much more the appearance of having been invented by the historian, than the result of any verbal communication which he could have received nearly a hundred years after these circumstances occurred. It were needless to dwell on the improbability of a person who had suffered an ignominious punishment being afterwards able to ascend the throne of Persia by imposture; or on the speeches of the Persian nobles, dissimilar to every mode of thinking which has at any time prevailed in Asia; but this event is characterized by an action which it may be affirmed never could have taken place in any nation whatever. Herodotus describes the Magi to be the Persian priests, without the attendance of one of whom no sacrifice could be performed; and yet he relates that these priests were after the murder of Smerdis not only so generally massacred that had not the night interposed not one would have escaped, but that a solemn festival was instituted in memory of this massacre, at which the priests were not allowed to be present. To a circumstance of this nature, so diametrically contrary to the influence which religion has exercised over the minds of all men, and nowhere

more particularly so than in Persia, no belief can be attached, unless on the most incontrovertible evidence ; and, consequently, the credibility of the historian who relates it, becomes in the highest degree doubtful.

From the conclusion of Herodotus's history, and during one hundred * and fifty years that elapsed from the battle of * 135 Salamis to the conquest of Persia, only one circumstance, the battle of Cunaxa, is recorded, in which the king of Persia was personally engaged. It may be indeed said that the Greeks have left no history of this period, as the incidental mention of the 'great king' both in Thucydides and Xenophon is entirely confined to such affairs as solely interested the Greeks. The work of Ctesias, and its continuation to the conquest of Persia by Diodorus Siculus, deserve not the name of history ; and as they do not contain any striking and important events, but merely details of the intrigues of the court of Persia, and other circumstances of which it is highly improbable that any correct information could have been obtained by even an intelligent native, their authority cannot with justice be received. It must, however, be admitted that it is singular that the remembrance of such an event as the battle of Cunaxa has not been preserved, unless it should appear by no means unlikely that the royal chronicles suppressed a circumstance which was deemed disgraceful to the royal family.

But great as the disagreement must hence appear to be between the Grecian and Persian accounts of historical events, a still greater dissimilarity exists between their descriptions of Persian manners, or rather the manners of the Persian kings : for it is singular that the very subject which it might be supposed could be the least known is the one on which the Grecian writers principally dwell ; and it is almost impossible to collect from their works any general character of the nation at large. The people, however, seem to be described, previous to the conquest of the Medes, as poor, temperate, brave, faithful, generous, and virtuous ; but after that event to have become dissolute, treacherous, and imbued with every vice. Their kings are represented as capricious, cruel, sunk in vice and

debauchery, and entirely governed by eunuchs; their queens, monsters of barbarity, and exercising a greater authority than the kings themselves. These characters being drawn by an enemy will be admitted to be exaggerated; yet it will scarcely be supposed that they can be entirely without foundation; but on what authority do they rest? Ctesias is the only Grecian writer who is said to have resided * in Persia; and his * 136 works so invalidate his credibility that he cannot be received as a competent witness. The short time which Xenophon passed in the camp of the younger Cyrus, amidst the hurry of a campaign, could not have afforded him much opportunity of acquiring accurate information; nor will the stories of merchants, travellers, or even ambassadors, who may have visited the court of Persia, be considered as entitled to any great credit. The Grecian description, therefore, of the manners of the kings and people of Persia seems not to have been derived from any authentic source; and it is at the same time contrary to every account which has been preserved by the natives. They represent their kings as enjoying indeed absolute power, but restrained in the exercise of it by the councils of the priests and the principal nobles, and at all times ruling with justice and with patriarchal kindness towards their people; and their subjects as brave, virtuous, and loyal, living in security, and contributing but moderately to the revenues of the state. The queens, with all other females, as seems to have been the invariable custom in Asia, are described as living secluded from the men, and occupying distinct apartments; nor were they ever permitted to interfere in the affairs of government. Rebellions and murders of their kings are unknown to the Persians, for unlimited obedience to the will of the prince appears to have been a religious tenet to which they always invariably adhered.¹³ Eunuchs, whom the Grecian writers represent as possessing such influence, are said never to have been made in Persia, nor allowed to be imported; and, what is very remarkable, there is no word in the Persian language which signifies an eunuch, either primitively or by a figure of speech. The usual phrase for one at the present day is a com-

plimentary one, and means master of the house, *i.e.* haram. Language is a stubborn evidence; and had eunuchs been known in Persia before the Arabian conquest, it seems difficult to conceive how they should have remained without a name, either original, or borrowed from the country whence they were brought, in so copious a language as the Persian.

I have thus briefly considered the accounts of the Persian monarchy, from its first establishment by Cyrus until its conquest by Alexander, *which have been collected from Grecian * 137 writers, and received into all systems of ancient history.

It will hence, I think, appear that their credibility is very questionable, and that every principle of criticism would authorize the rejection of all that either Ctesias or Diodorus Siculus, and the greatest part of what Herodotus and Xenophon have related respecting the kings of the Persians. If this be admitted, it will also be evident that the production of parallel relations of the same events cannot be requisite in order to establish the credibility of either the Grecian or Persian writers. The accounts of both can only now be decided by their respective probability, their consistency in themselves, and their consonancy with experience. Every circumstance, therefore, related by the Greeks, which will stand these tests, ought, I think, to be received as a fact; but every circumstance which cannot, and is unsupported by sufficient authority, ought at once to be rejected. On this principle, the number of Persian kings given by the Greeks, and their succession to each other, may be admitted; but the length of their reigns must be considered as doubtful. At the same time it appears to me extremely singular that if this series of kings was actually formed from information obtained from the Persians, not a single Greek name should in the slightest degree correspond with the Persian. In the whole nineteen names there are only five which could not have been pronounced or spelt by the Greeks; and in three of these, to enable them to do so it was only necessary to change the *sh* into a simple *s*. In Jemshid and Manucheher the *j* and *ch* might have been easily changed into *g*. hard, a change common to several people

in Asia. That these were actually the names of ancient kings cannot be doubted, as several that do not occur in the dynasties that reigned after Alexander are common names of the Parsees at this day, such as Jemshid, Feridun, Manucheher, Kaus, Bahman, Darab, and Dara. It has been attempted to explain this striking dissimilarity, by supposing that the Greek names may have been taken from some titles applied to the Persian kings. But, besides there being no words in the present language of Persia to which these names bear the slightest resemblance, no instance can be produced of any such title having been assumed by Persian kings before the * 138 Arabian conquest. This custom is peculiar to the Arabs, and is evidently derived from the appellations which have been in use amongst all classes of that people from time immemorial. But it is not in the names of the kings only that this difference exists, but in every name which occurs in Grecian authors: and I only recollect one word which can without distortion be traced to a Persian original, as it may not seem unlikely that the Greek Magos with the *a* broad may have been formed from the Persian Mogh with the *o* short.¹⁴

The more that I have considered this simple circumstance, connected with what has been noticed in the preceding remarks, the more have I been inclined to suspect that no Greek author ever derived his information from any native of Persia Proper, that is, of the country to the east of the Euphrates. Had this been the case, it can scarcely be supposed that some trace should not be found in their writings of the popular tales of the Persians, which are of the very kind that would be most universally known. The frequent wars between Iran and Turan; the affecting stories of Siavush and Sohrab; the glory of Kaikhosrou; the matchless deeds of Rustum; the equally celebrated exploits of Isfandiar; and the fame of the other heroes of Persian story, fabulous as they may be, still are the very themes on which poetry and tradition would love to dwell. They are also the very circumstances which would be the most probable subjects of a verbal communication. It is in vain to object that they are not deserving of notice in any

historical work ; for, were the writings of the Greeks examined by the critical rules of the present day, what portion of Herodotus, Xenophon, or Ctesias would deserve the name of history? And it is surely not contending for too much in asserting that there is not, in any of the questionable passages of these writers, a single description which can in the slightest degree equal, either in beauty or interest, many an episode in the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi, even when divested of the charms of poetry. I am therefore induced to think that the Grecian accounts of Persia have been collected in Asia Minor, and consequently from persons who could afford no correct information, as they were themselves but slightly, if at all, acquainted with the language, manners, history, or *religion of Persia. To this cause it may also be

* 139 ascribed that Herodotus has given a much more authentic account of the Medes than of Cyrus and his three successors. For it is not improbable that the connexion which existed between the five last kings of the Pishdadian race and the nations that bordered on the Euphrates, may have occasioned their memory to have been better preserved in Asia Minor than that of the succeeding kings, under whom these nations lost their independency, and were reduced to a state of subjection.

But were it even admitted that the preceding remarks evince that the exclusive credibility which has been so long attached to Grecian writers rests not on sufficient grounds, as far as it regards their accounts of Persia Proper, it may be expected that some similarity should be pointed out between the fragments of Persian history and the records of the Jewish nation. The captivity of the Jews, and their restoration to their country by a Persian king, are facts which need not be controverted: but the exact dates when these events occurred have been the subject of many a learned dispute ; and were any coincidence, therefore, discovered in Persian and Jewish history according to one system of chronology, it would most probably militate against other systems supported by equally plausible arguments. In the Scriptures five Persian kings only are mentioned,—Darius the

Mede, Cyrus, Artaxerxes, Ahasuerus, and Darius the Persian ; but neither their relative succession to each other, nor the exact period when they flourished, is specified. Josephus enumerates Darius the Mede, Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes, Artaxerxes son of Xerxes, Artaxerxes, Darius Codomannus, and seemingly as if they succeeded each other. In Nehemiah this is mentioned as the succession of high-priests from the first year of the reign of Cyrus until Darius the Persian :—Jeshua, Joiakim, Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan, and Jada ; and it appears from Josephus that this Darius the Persian must be Darius Codomannus. From such data, and particularly when no incident in Persian history is specified, it must be evident that no just conclusion can be formed : but if the succession of high-priests be supposed to be the circumstance with which the Jews were best acquainted, Darius would be *the fifth *140 in succession to Cyrus, admitting it to be probable that the duration of the priesthood and of a king's reign were equal ; and consequently the Persian king who restored the Jews to their country would be the same as Lohrasp. But this conjecture will not agree with the received opinion that the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign answers to the year B.C. 587, and to what has been before observed, that the captivity must therefore have terminated B.C. 517 ; for, if this date be admitted, the restoration of the Jews must have taken place under Kaikaus.

But any remembrance of these circumstances seems not,—as appears probable from their being entirely omitted in the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi,—to have been preserved in the remaining fragments of Persian history. Nor can such an omission be deemed singular, as it is difficult to conceive of what importance or of what interest the mere restoration to their country of a conquered and captive people, dissimilar in manners and religion, could possibly have been to the Persian nation. It might have been of consequence to such persons as lost their slaves, but it certainly cannot be considered as one of those striking events which ought absolutely to find a place in history. The conquest of Jerusalem took place while, as it

seems probable, Babylon remained an independent state ; and is therefore unconnected with Persian history. The interruption given to the building of the temple after the return of the Jews from captivity, and the subsequent edicts of the Persian kings in their favour, might probably have been found in the records of the Persian chancery had it remained to this day ; but it cannot be expected that such circumstances should have been noticed in the annals of Persia. Several Muhammadan writers, however, have attempted to ascertain in what Persian kings' reigns the captivity and restoration of the Jews took place ; and as they probably derived their information respecting Jewish history from the Jews themselves, their conjectures on this subject might seem deserving of attention. But the want of some fixed era, by which they could have precisely ascertained the relation that the events mentioned in Jewish and Persian history bore to each other, has occasioned the greatest anachronisms ; so that Tabari makes Manucheher contemporary with

* Moses, Kaikaus with Solomon, and Lohrasp with * 141 Hezekiah and Sennacherib. Tabari at the same time states that the captivity took place under Lohrasp, and the restoration under his successor, Gushtasp ; but, as one hundred and twenty years are assigned as the reign of Lohrasp, no reasonable conjecture can be formed on such an authority. Rakhtnassur also, about whom so much has been written, is said by Tabari to have died in the reign of Bahman at the age of six hundred years ; so that his actions may be equally adapted to every system of chronology. It is in vain, therefore, to attempt, by adopting the improbable suppositions of Muhammadan writers, to ascertain to what Persian kings the names mentioned in the Scriptures and Josephus actually belong ; but it is evident that if the fifth high-priest in succession to the one who returned to Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of Cyrus was contemporary with Alexander the Great,—a circumstance which seems to be disputed by Sir Isaac Newton only,—not more than one hundred and fifty years can have elapsed from the accession of Cyrus until the death of Darius. The succession in the high-priesthood appears to have been

rapid ; and more than thirty years, therefore, cannot well be allowed to the four priests who completed that office ; and half that number to Jeshua, who must have been advanced in age when he was selected to preside over the Jews on their return to their country ; and the same to Jadaa, who was still alive when Alexander visited Jerusalem. The return of the Jews from captivity must then have taken place in the year B.C. 480, the very year when Xerxes is said to have invaded Greece, and, as before observed, under the Persian king Lohrasp. If, however, an average be taken of the duration of the priesthood of the eighteen predecessors of Jeshua, it will give scarcely nineteen years to each ; and consequently the period from Jeshua to Jadaa (both included) would be only one hundred and fourteen years ; and the termination of the captivity would then take place in the year B.C. 444, and in the reign of Gushtasp (although not in the first year of it), according to the general opinion of Muhammadan writers. But both these suppositions are repugnant to the Scriptures, according to the generally received computation of Jewish chronology, which identifies Nebuchadnezzar with the Nabocolassar of * Ptolemy's canon. Nor is it possible to admit the conjecture of * 142 Sir Isaac Newton, that Darius the Persian, mentioned by Nehemiah, was the Darius Nothus of the Greeks, as it is directly contrary to the express testimony of Josephus. So much uncertainty, therefore, and so great a difference of opinion prevail, not only in the computations of Jewish chronology, but in adapting the Jewish history to Grecian accounts, that the attempt to force any coincidence between them must always prove entirely useless. It cannot, then, be considered as extraordinary, nor in the least affecting the credibility of the still fewer remaining fragments of Persian history, that they also do not admit of being forced into any coincidence with the records of the Jews.

From the preceding remarks, therefore, it will perhaps appear that neither Grecian nor Jewish writers can in the least contribute to the illustration of Persian history from the occasion of Kaikobad until the death of Dara. It will also per-

haps be admitted that, when the Grecian accounts are strictly examined, the means which either Herodotus or Xenophon possessed of obtaining any information respecting Persia must have been very limited, and that this circumstance alone must detract most considerably from the authenticity of their works; nor will their internal evidence, nor that of the history of Ctesias, if considered without prejudice, establish that their credibility is such that all other accounts which do not agree with them ought to be immediately deemed fabulous and undeserving of attention. Were the strict rules, indeed, of evidence common to courts of law applied to historical criticism, but a very small portion of either Herodotus's or Xenophon's accounts of Persia would be entitled to the slightest credit. But even had the Greek writers been misled in the relation of events, it might certainly be expected that their works, were they founded on truth, should display some trace of Oriental manners and customs, some descriptions of Oriental imagery, and some faint delineations of Oriental sentiments and modes of thinking. In all these circumstances Asia has remained unchanged from the earliest times; and by them has it been invariably and immemorably distinguished from Europe. Yet no person who has become acquainted with the people, language,

* and compositions of Asia, but must be fully sensible,
 * 143 in perusing Herodotus, Xenophon, and Ctesias, that these authors must have been almost entirely unacquainted with those essential differences which have always so peculiarly characterized the nations of the East. The testimony, then, by which the Grecian accounts of Persia are supported is strongly invalidated by its either being contradictory, or its depending on the evidence of a single witness, who not only derived his knowledge from the verbal information of others, but whose own narrative betrays an ignorance of the subject, and is in many instances both incredible and improbable.

At the same time it is to be regretted that the native accounts of Persia can neither convey any satisfactory knowledge of its own history, nor in the slightest degree tend to illustrate that of any other nation. For they contain nothing but the

names of the kings; the notice of a very few events; and a general character of each king, of which it is difficult to decide whether it has been collected from original materials, or is merely the composition of the Muhammadan historian. To erect systems, therefore, on such a foundation, or to deduce any conclusion from such premises, must be considered as inconsistent with every principle of sound reasoning. But it may be justly contended that the native accounts of Persia Proper, as they are more probable, more consistent in themselves, and more consonant to experience, than those of the Greeks, are therefore entitled to greater credit: nor ought the popular tales which have been preserved to be inconsiderately condemned; for they display faithful delineations of Oriental imagery, manners, and sentiments; and not unlikely a faint but correct outline of the actual character and state of society of the ancient people of Persia. That these accounts do not contain a greater number of events may be ascribed to the situation of that country, which, precluding wars and revolutions, afforded but scanty materials for history. Defended from all hostile attacks on the north and south by natural barriers; bounded on the west by petty nations, who were reduced under subjection at an early period; preserved from all danger on the side of India by the dependent states of Seistan and Cabul: on the north-east only was Persia accessible to the enterprise of an * enemy. Hence arose those frequent wars with Turan, * 144 which alone disturbed for ages the otherwise uninterrupted tranquillity of Persia Proper. No memorial of the conquests to the west of the Euphrates has been preserved; and the calm tenor of peace produces no incident which an annalist deems worthy of being recorded. The extreme barrenness, therefore, of the remaining fragments of its history must be considered as the necessary consequence of the state in which Persia long remained, secluded from other nations, and enjoying, unharmed by war and unchanged by conquest, its own customs under a beneficent religion, and a mild though absolute government.

But as the events and incidents which are related in these

fragments are merely referred to such a king's reign, and their dates not determined by any fixed era, it is evident that, even if they bore any connexion with the history of other nations, they can contribute but slightly to the illustration of ancient chronology, as the duration of each king's reign must now principally depend on conjecture. The preceding remarks, however, will have perhaps rendered it probable that Feridun commenced his reign in the 749th year, and Kaikobad in the 558th year before the Christian era; and the termination of the Kaianian dynasty by the death of Dara is known to have taken place B.C. 330. Such alone are the dates, in my opinion, applicable to Persian history; and as the last is clearly ascertained, I conceive that the two former are supported by many concurring circumstances: but if this be admitted, it will follow that all attempts which have been hitherto made to reconcile the Persian, according to the native accounts of the Kaianian dynasty, either to Jewish or Grecian history, must be considered as resting on no sufficient grounds. To reconcile these histories by any reasonable supposition appears to me to be impracticable, and at the same time perfectly unnecessary. Had they indeed directly contradicted each other, it might then have been a requisite subject of consideration to determine which of them was entitled to the greatest credit; but when their difference proceeds merely from certain circumstances being mentioned in one which are omitted in the others, as such an omission cannot affect their credi-

*lity, to form systems on weak conjectures in order to
 * 145 account for this dissimilarity becomes entirely superfluous. One simple principle may, I think, be admitted as the justest criterion by which all historical doubts may be solved, namely, that the credibility should depend on the means of obtaining information which each historian possessed. According to this principle, whatever is related in the Jewish records that directly affects the Jews, although omitted by the others, may be received as a fact. In the same manner, whatever the Greek historians have written respecting the Persians, although not mentioned by the latter, may be admitted, pro-

vided that it is in itself probable, and the means of information apparent. Nor can a similar justice be reasonably denied to the Persians; nor any sufficient cause assigned why credit should not be given to their accounts of their own history, the very subject on which it may be supposed that they possessed much more complete information than either the Jews or the Greeks.

Reflection on the errors into which writers of the first ability have been led by misrepresentations of Persian history has induced me to enter into the preceding remarks. From them it will perhaps appear that the remaining fragments of Persian history are sufficiently authentic to deserve attention; and that the coincidences now pointed out may render it probable that the kings of the Medes of Grecian writers are no other than the five last kings of the Pishdadian race. It may also appear remarkable that from Kaiumars to Dara the number of kings given by the Greeks exactly corresponds with that of the Persians: but it will at the same time be evident that it is entirely fruitless to search for any further coincidences in the works of either Jews, Greeks, or Persians. The latter at once acknowledge, and their writings fully support the admission, that they are entirely ignorant of all transactions which took place to the west of the Euphrates, from the first foundation of their empire till its conquest by Alexander. Although, therefore, it may be regretted that no memorial of these transactions has been preserved, it is now in vain to attempt to supply this deficiency by suppositions as idle as they are unfounded. To the history of the proper kingdom of Persia alone are the *native accounts confined, and to elucidate this sub- * 146
 ject neither the writings of the Jews nor the Greeks can in the slightest degree contribute; nor can the native accounts in any manner tend to illustrate or to support a single doubtful passage in ancient history. A careful and unprejudiced examination of a question which has been much agitated emboldens me to express so decided an opinion; and having in the preceding observations endeavoured to confine my conjectures to the strictest principles of probability, and to guide

my remarks on ancient authors by the strictest rules of human testimony, it is not impossible but that I may be correct in the conclusion which I have consequently formed.

NOTES.

¹ Between the opinions and tenets of the ancient Persians, which are still held by the modern Parsees, and those of the Muhammadans, the greatest dissimilarity exists : but to this very marked distinction writers on the religion or history of ancient Persia appear not to have paid the slightest attention. Hence have arisen the various conjectures respecting the former state of that country, which, being derived from the vague and unsupported suppositions of Muhammadan authors, are consequently inconsistent and contradictory. Hence also has Dr. Hyde, in his work *De Religione Veterum Persarum*, in direct opposition to the universal opinion of the modern Parsees, and to all that can be collected from the remaining fragments of Persian history, attempted to deduce the worship of Fire from Abraham ; and to elucidate the discussion by a mass of Arabic and Hebrew literature perfectly foreign to the subject ; for it may be safely affirmed that the various traditions, historical and religious, which have been collected by the Muhammadans, have been at all times unknown to the ancient Persians ; and that to attempt to illustrate either the history or religion of the latter by such traditions is not only a fruitless labour, but also must produce the greatest inconsistency and the most erroneous opinions.

² Muhammad ben Jurair was born in Tabaristan, a district of the modern Mazenderan, which province was not converted to Islamism until about a hundred and thirty years after the conquest of the rest of Persia ; but he spent the greatest part of his life at Bagdad.

³ This computation agrees in round numbers with that of the Septuagint, which is 2256 years, and may therefore give a favourable opinion of the accuracy of the information respecting the Jews which * 147 has been collected by the Muhammadans. Of this several instances occur in Tabari, which might have been very useful in chronology, had he only possessed the means of referring to some fixed era the dates of the events which he relates.

* Sir W. Jones has said, " Cayumers, whom the Parsis, from respect to his memory, consider as the first of men, although they believe in an *universal deluge* before his reign." But as he in the same Essay gives it as his opinion that the evidence of the author of the *Dabistan* appears to him unexceptionable, he must have been aware that not the slightest mention is made by that author, in his description of the ancient Per-

sians and of the modern Parsees, of an universal deluge. Dr. Hyde also states that the ancient Persians believed in the Deluge, and supports this assertion by this singular passage, p. 169: "*In libro Pharhang surgere memoratur mons illustris, ubi tunc habitavit Noah, cum ex eo erumperet aqua Diluvii. Et ibidem Zala Cupha dicitur fuisse nomen vetulæ ex cujus furno aqua Diluvii primo erupit. Sed iste furnus est ex Persarum nugis, quæ viâ recensione dignæ.*" On this passage it is disagreeable to make any comment, as Dr. Hyde must have been aware that he was producing in support of his opinion a Muhammadan tradition, which was perfectly unknown to the ancient Persians. All the authorities indeed, it may be observed, which are quoted on this subject by Dr. Hyde are drawn from Muhammadan writers who flourished at a very late period, and whose works can in a very slight degree tend to elucidate the ancient religion of Persia; but on this point the authority of Tabari, as it is consistent with the belief of the modern Parsees, must be considered as conclusive. The Parsees also believe that the world has always existed; but they are at the same time of opinion that many changes and revolutions have occurred in it, and that it will be finally destroyed by the Supreme Being.

⁵ In discussing a subject where the proper pronunciation of a name may be of consequence, I have, of course, preferred the orthography of the Greeks to that of the Romans.

⁶ I have nowhere met with any express authority for stating that Rei was at this time the capital of Persia; but it is mentioned as the city in which the election of Feridun was effected by Gaveh. The names also given by Muhammadan writers to Rei, the Ancient of Cities, and the Mother of Cities, seem to have been derived from some ancient tradition, and render it probable that it was at a very early period the capital of Persia.

⁷ Muhammadan writers are not acquainted with Nineveh, and they therefore consider the city of Nimrod to have been Babylon; but as they have scarcely any knowledge of geography, it is not improbable that the capital of Zohac was Nineveh, and not Babylon. The only objection to this supposition is the received opinion that Persia Proper at all times extended to the Euphrates: but that chain of mountains which is situated to the east of the Tigris, and stretches from the confines of Armenia to near the Persian *Gulf, is so natural a boundary, that it may be reasonably conjectured that it formed at this early period, and * 148 before the defeat of Zohac, the western limits of Persia.

⁸ I here follow Firdausi, and I believe all other Persian historians, except Tabari, who omits Nouder in his list of kings, and mentions that Manucheher was succeeded by his grandson Zav. He thus places the invasion of Persia by Afrasiab in the latter part of Manucheher's reign,

in the same manner as Herodotus has placed the Scythian invasion in the latter part of Kuaxares's. To Zav, Tabari, as he omits both Nouder and Gershasp, assigns a reign of thirty years; and his number of the last kings of the Pishdadian race consequently corresponds, if Iraj be admitted to be the same as Phraortes, exactly with that of the kings of the Medes as given by Herodotus, viz. :—

Deiokes.....	Feridun.
Phraortes.....	Iraj.
Kuaxares	Manucheber.
Scythians	Turanians.
Astuaghes.....	Zav.

⁹ The similarity of the names of Salm and Salmanassur has been already noticed by Sir W. Jones. But the generally received date of his death, in the year B.C. 714, does not correspond with that of Feridun's accession to the throne of Persia (which I have now proposed), as Salmanassur's death must then have taken place in the 35th instead of the 53rd year of Feridun's reign: this difficulty may, however, be at once removed by reducing the number of years assigned to the reign of Deiokes by Herodotus. But it may be equally suspected that a mistake may have taken place in the received systems of chronology, which are all adapted to correspond with the events which are mentioned in Sacred History. In the present instance, were it admitted that Sennacherib has been placed eighteen years too early, and that Salmanassur's death occurred not in the year B.C. 714, but in the year B.C. 696, the Persian account would then conform to chronology, and the long reign of Esar Haddon, which has induced some chronologists to suppose that there were two Esar Haddons, would be avoided. The great difficulty there is in computing Jewish chronology, and the variety of opinions on the subject, must render a difference of so small a number of years of no particular consequence. If Salm be then admitted to be identified with Salmanassur, the conjecture that Nineveh was the capital of Zohac will amount almost to a certainty.

¹⁰ The great importance attached to the Cyrus of the Greeks proceeds from his supposed connexion with the prophecies of Isaiah. On such a subject I should wish to refrain from all remarks; but I may be permitted to observe, that in no passage of the Old Testament is it said that the Koresh of the 44th and 45th chapters of Isaiah was a king of Persia, and that he should capture Babylon; and Daniel expressly ascribes this capture to another prince, whom he names Darius the Mede. The

* 149 prophecies of Isaiah *were fulfilled in the conquest of Babylon, and in the restoration of the Jews from captivity; and to search for a further confirmation of their truth by vain conjectures respecting the particular kings under whom these circumstances took place, or in

what particular manner they were effected, must be considered at least as injudicious. The minute and figurative language of prophecy cannot possibly be explained or illustrated by the very imperfect knowledge of ancient geography and history which has been preserved to this day. To this cause may be justly ascribed the numerous passages in the prophetic books of the Old Testament which do not admit of elucidation; nor can it be expected that these should be explained, unless the knowledge of the language, manners, and customs of the ancient people of Palestine, Assyria, and Persia had been completely rescued from oblivion. I have been led into these remarks from its being generally supposed that Elam was the ancient Hebrew name of Persia; for, if it were, in what manner is the following prophecy of Jeremiah to be understood (chapter xlix. verse 35)? "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come." "But it shall come to pass in the latter days that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord." I am at least certain that neither the fragments of Persian history, nor the traditions collected by Muhammadan superstition, will ever contribute to the illustration of the Old Testament; and that the writings of the Greeks will be equally ineffectual, may, perhaps, from these remarks appear too probable.

¹¹ Whoever controverts a received opinion is liable to be accused of presumption, and to be overwhelmed by authorities collected from the most celebrated authors; but if the weight of a name were to prevent further inquiry, truth must be often abandoned, and error alone embraced. I am at the same time sensible that in this country diffidence is particularly required, as access to many books is impossible. But, in the present instance, I conceive that former writers must have drawn the materials on which they have erected their systems from Herodotus, Xenophon, Ctesias, Diodorus Siculus, the Old Testament, and Josephus, and on the same works are these remarks founded. If, therefore, the conclusions which I have formed are consonant to the premises furnished by these authors, and at the same time probable and consistent in themselves, I may at least be excused in questioning opinions which although generally received, appear to me to be completely erroneous.

¹² I have said "consistent with chronology," because there are two circumstances in which a coincidence might otherwise be supposed,—the change in the royal family of Persia which led to the election of Darius Hystaspes and Lohrasp, and the epithet of "long-armed" applied equally to Artaxerxes and Bahman. But as the nine reigns from Kaiköbad to Dara (admitting that the latter reigned only fourteen

years, according to the Persian accounts) give an average of nearly twenty-seven years to each, the election of *Lohrasp must have
 * 150 taken place about the year B.C. 477, and consequently but a few years before Herodotus was born, and forty-four years after the election of Darius, according to Ptolemy's canon. Still the extinction of one dynasty, and the transfer of the crown to a person remotely if at all connected with the former family, are events which might be generally known; and as they occurred only once from Cyrus, or Kaikobad, to Dara, both according to the Grecian and Persian accounts, the election of Darius might almost be identified with that of Lohrasp. Were this admitted, Bahman and Artaxerxes would then find the same place in the series of kings, and it would only be necessary to suppose that Herodotus may have made some mistake in thus antedating the election of Darius. The chasm also of forty-four years might be filled up by extending the reign of Cambyses, or Kaikaus, and introducing Kaikhosrou, of whose existence there can be no reasonable doubt, although his fondly remembered name and glory appear to have been perfectly unknown to the Greeks. There would then, however, be one king more in the Grecian than the Persian list; but it is to be observed that Artaxerxes Ochus has found a place in the former on no early or contemporary authority.

¹³ To this general sketch the revolt of the younger Cyrus, according to Xenophon, and the reign of Homai, must be considered as solitary exceptions.

¹⁴ To assert that the present language of Persia, when divested of all exotic words, is radically the same as that which was spoken in the time of Feridun, 2567 years ago, may appear a very extravagant position. But it will be much easier to maintain even this position, than to demonstrate in what manner, or by what means, any change could possibly have been introduced into this language. That it should become more artificial and more refined, and that it should be divided into several dialects, are circumstances which would naturally occur. But from Feridun until the final conquest of the country by the Arabs, a period of 1381 years, Persia Proper appears to have preserved unaltered its own manners, customs, and religion. Nor does a single trace remain of any revolution effected by a foreign nation, or any introduction of a foreign people, having taken place during that time; and these causes alone could possibly produce any change in its language. The first work now extant which was written in Persian is the translation of Tabari's History, which was composed about 300 years after the conquest of Persia by the Arabs; and about a century afterwards was composed the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi, a work written in the purest Persian, and which displays every charm and every beauty

both of language and of poetry. That the language employed by Tabari's translator and Firdausi was the language of Persia, must be admitted ; but in this case it must either have been the same which was spoken under the Sassanian princes, or it must have been newly formed after the Arabian conquest. To the latter supposition a most insuperable objection occurs ; for, were a conquered people to change their language, the alteration would be strongly and distinctly marked by the adoption and naturalization of many words from the language of their conquerors. But the poem of Firdausi, and the whole * structure of the Persian language, are convincing proofs that although Arabic and other foreign words are admitted, they * 151 never assimilate with it, and they always remain distinct both in their formation and inflections. To the time of the Sassanian princes, at least, must then be referred this language, which is as copious and as beautiful as was ever spoken by any people ; and if so, it becomes impossible to assign, on any reasonable grounds, any other period to its origin than the one when Persia was united into one great empire under Feridun : for subsequent to that event, as the conquest of Alexander was but a passing storm, which destroyed not the fabric of the Persian customs or religion, Persia appears to have remained secluded from other nations, and, free from wars and revolutions, to have been placed in such a situation, that all changes in its language must have originated within itself, and consequently it must at all times have continued radically the same. I am at the same time aware that there is another language, the Pehlavi, radically distinct from the Persian, which appears to have once prevailed in some parts of Persia, but to have been principally employed in books and inscriptions ; but as only detached words, or a few phrases, in this language now remain, and as even the purity of these is very questionable, it must be extremely difficult to determine whether or not it was really the ancient language of the whole of Persia. Were, however, such an opinion admitted, it would become requisite to demonstrate in what manner and by what means the Pehlavi became extinct, and was replaced by the present Persian. The decay of one language and the growth of another, when not produced by external causes, is a phenomenon which I believe has never happened in any country ; and as no trace of such causes having operated in Persia now remains, it may appear most probable that the Pehlavi never was the general language of ancient Persia.

I cannot conclude these remarks without adverting to the following singular note in the Ancient Universal History : "The reader must have by this time perceived that the Oriental history of the kings of Persia (which by the by is in several instances related most erroneously by these authors) is no other than a romance filled with anachronisms and absurdities. Besides the unconscionable lengths of the different reigns,

and of the age of Rustan and his father, the author has not even mentioned Cyrus the Great, nor the other famous prince of that name; nor said a syllable of Xerxes and his expedition into Greece; nor touched upon the other events and revolutions in the court of Persia which have been recorded by the Greeks upon the *concurring testimony of many unquestionable authors who were eye-witnesses of what they relate.*" Misstatement cannot be carried further than it has been in the concluding part of this note; for, with the exception of the battle of Cunaxa, related by Xenophon, at which he was present, Ctesias is the only author who pretends to have been an eye-witness to the events which he has narrated. Nor must it be forgot that Ctesias and the Greeks are thus characterized by the authors of the Universal History: "No polite nation has ever been more egregiously faulty in mixing truth with fiction; and yet they seem to have thought no nation fit to treat of history but * 152 them*selves." "Diodorus Siculus with regard to Assyria takes Ctesias for his guide, a most fabulous writer; but, being a Greek, he was preferred by the vain partiality of his countrymen." "Aristotle, who was almost his contemporary, declares him (Ctesias) a writer unworthy of credit; and Aristotle was not the only writer of the ancients that has declared against him: nor are his *Indica* the only proof that he was a fabulous writer." "Might we not as justly suspect him (Ctesias) of falsehood when he pretends to have compiled his history from original records, as when he gravely avers that he was an eye-witness of what no mortal can believe?" As I concur entirely in the justness of this criticism, I should be glad if any person could reconcile the note to the text of the Universal History; or if he would at least point out what unquestionable authors were eye-witnesses to the events and revolutions in the Court of Persia which they have related.

ADDITIONAL NOTE (TO THE REMARKS ON PERSIAN CHRONOLOGY).

SINCE writing the preceding Remarks, I have met with the *Historiæ Armeniacæ* of Moses Choronensis; and, as this work was composed about a hundred years before the birth of Muhammad, it might be expected that, from the constant intercourse which always subsisted between Armenia and Persia, it ought to contain many particulars relating to the ancient history of the latter kingdom. But, unfortunately, this author has preferred the accounts of Grecian writers to those which he might have collected from native authorities, and has consequently shed no additional light on this very obscure subject. For he himself observes in the second chapter of the first book, "*Ne quis autem id miretur, cum inter multas gentes fuerint historicarum scriptores, uti omnibus notum est, ac præsertim inter Persas et Chaldaeos, apud quos plura nationis*

nostræ extant rerum gestarum monimenta, de Græcis nos tantum meminisse, atque inde pollicitos esse origines nostras deducere declarareque." One passage, however, has been admitted into the work, which renders it more than probable that Moses Choronensis was acquainted with what he designates the fables of Persia, and that these were the very same fables from which Firdausi composed the *Shah Namah* more than five hundred years afterwards. This passage occurs at the end of the first book, and is as follows: "What pleasure can the trifling and ridiculous fables of Biurasp Azhdahak afford you? or why impose on me the task of explaining such absurd and senseless tales? how he was led into error and wickedness by the benefits and ministry of demons; how serpents sprang from the kisses imprinted on his shoulders; how with the utmost flagitiousness he destroyed many men; how his people rebelled against him; and how Hrodan at last bound him in brazen chains, and, in obedience to an admonition which he had received in a dream, carried him to the mountain Demawand, and there bound him in such a manner that he could not escape." Firdausi relates that towards the conclusion of the reign of Jemshid a son was born to a rich and powerful prince of the Arabs, who named him Zohac, but that afterwards this child was known by the name of Biurasp; and other writers *add that he was also called Azhdahak.† When he grew up, the devil appeared to him and persuaded him to murder his father, * 153 promising him, if he acted according to his advice, he would enable him to acquire the dominion of the world. Zohac yielded to the temptation. Shortly after, the devil again appeared to him disguised as a cook, and first introduced the custom of slaying animals and eating their flesh. Zohac was so much pleased with his new viands, that he offered to confer on his cook any reward which he might request; but the latter merely solicited that he might be permitted to kiss his shoulders. Zohac, although surprised at so moderate a request, complied with it; and no sooner had the cook imprinted the kisses than two serpents sprang from the spot, and he immediately vanished. Various were the remedies which were applied by the most skilful physicians to remove or cure this misfortune, but in vain; until at last it was discovered that nothing would appease the cravings of the serpents, and prevent their preying on the flesh of Zohac, except the brains of men: for this purpose, therefore, two men were every day put to death. But, notwithstanding this cruelty, Zohac, by the assistance of the devil, conquered Persia and other countries, and reigned in uninterrupted prosperity until the insurrection of Gaveh and the election of Feridun. Firdausi further adds that after Zohac was defeated and taken prisoner, Feridun, when he was about to put him to death, was

† He is so named by Tabari.

warned by a voice from heaven to bear him alive to the mountain Demawand, and to bind him there with chains to a rock. The exact coincidence in these two accounts must, I conceive, add considerable weight to the preceding remarks, as it renders it still more probable that the fragments of Persian history which have been preserved by Muhammadan writers were collected from the chronicles, or popular tales, which were extant in Persia previous to that country being conquered by the Arabs.

It must be observed that the Whistons, in their translation of Moses Choronenensis, have written the proper names which occur in the passage just cited Byraspe, Astyages, and Rhodanes. But on referring to the Armenian Alphabet prefixed to the work, it will be found that these names, according to the letters of which they are composed, ought to be written Biuraspay, Azhdahakay, and Hrodonay.

[NOTE.—To the time of Cyrus the Great, relations of a feudal character bound Persia to Media: hence it is perhaps not very astonishing that our information is not reliable, as the historical records preceding that period which have come down to us only in the shape of a romance in the *Sháh-Namah*, and in the accounts of some real historians, the oldest and most trustworthy of whom is Tabari, who has, moreover, in his efforts to accommodate chronological dates to Biblical events (p. 140 *infra* and p. 141), withdrawn those from our knowledge which he may perhaps have had at his disposal. The only other records yet remaining are likewise not only scanty, but unreliable, because not even the few names of the Persian kings mentioned by the Greeks agree with those of the *Sháh-Namah*. Hence it is no wonder that this part of Persian history is now just as uncertain as in Col. Vans Kennedy's time, and will probably remain so for ever.

The case is quite different after Cyrus the Great, who, with all the successive sovereigns down to the fall of the Persian empire by the invasion of Alexander the Great, can now be identified in most cases with sufficient precision. Late researches have, however, considerably changed Col. Vans Kennedy's dates. He appears to have been aware of their uncertainty, and is therefore not very positive about anything, not even of the period of the duration of the Persian empire beginning with Cyrus, which is now well known to have lasted 228 years, *i.e.* from B. C. 558 till 330 (see p. 141), and for which, as well as for the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, he gives only conjectures. One of the *Five Great Monarchies* of G. Rawlinson is Persia, where the most recent and reliable information on the subject can be found, but where the kings of the *Sháh-Namah*, and any details before the time of Cyrus, are, for the reasons already above stated, completely ignored.

The subject is also exhaustively reviewed in the learned introduction by Mr. Jamshedji Palanji Kápadia to his translation into Gujarathi of Malcolm's *History of Persia*, published in 1868.—ED.]

ON THE RUINS OF BORO BUDOR, IN JAVA.†

By JOHN CRAWFORD, Esq., Resident at Djocjocarta, in Java.

Read on the 26th August, 1817.

I PROPOSE in this Essay to furnish the Society with a short account of the Temple of Boro Budor, one of the most remarkable relics of Hinduism in Java.

This temple is situated in the district of Cadu, one of the most fertile and most beautiful of that fine island. Its site is not far removed from the centre of the island, whether with relation to breadth or length: it is computed to be about twenty miles from Yugyacarta ‡, the capital of the sultan, and about fifty-eight by the common route from Samarang on the northern coast. From the latter place the highroad runs in a direction nearly south, over that extensive table-land which reaches from the alluvial lands on the coast to those of the great valley in which the two native capitals are situated.

At the village of Bawen, twenty-one miles from Samarang, the road takes a westerly course, skirting along the northern borders of an extensive tract of marsh and rice lands, and of a lake, from which this portion of the country appropriately takes its names of Barawa, which implies the Country of the Lake. Near the village of Jambi, about five miles from Bawen, the traveller, still proceeding westward, ascends another low range of hills, and, passing over the ridge of these about thirteen miles, enters at Madona the valley of Cadu. The distance from this place to Maglan, the residence of the European chief of the district, is about eight miles, over a country eminently fertile and highly cultivated. The Temple * of Boro Budor is about twelve miles distant from this place, in a direction south-west. The ground which * 155 we pass over in this latter part of the route is elevated,

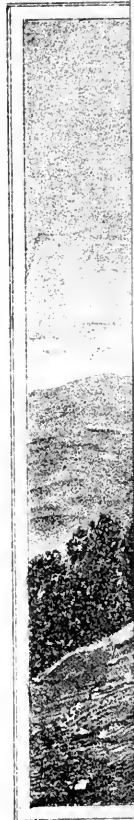
† With seven plates.

‡ Vulgarly Djocjocarta.

but not so hilly as to prove any obstacle to the operations of husbandry; and it is cultivated throughout, even to the interstices between the walls of the temple. The elevation of the land in this tract, and indeed in almost every other part of Cadu, occasions a considerable diminution of temperature, Fahrenheit's thermometer commonly falling to 5° below its level on the hot plain of the coast. The products of agriculture naturally follow the character of the land and climate; and in the tract in question the eye is no longer fatigued with the uniformity of the flat rice fields, which are so constantly presented on the north coast and other alluvial lands of the island. The principal object of culture is the mountain rice; which, growing like the grains of temperate climates, presents to the European traveller, from association of ideas, a scene peculiarly pleasing. This prospect is bounded to the west by the hills of Minoreh, craggy and covered with wood; near the foot of which, on a detached hill, is discovered the Temple of Boro Budor. The rivers Progo† and Elo, two of the most considerable streams on the island, and even here so near their source giving passage to a considerable body of water, pass the first within about a mile and a quarter, and the last within one mile of the temple, which is situated in the angle formed by their junction. The situation of the temple is upon the whole such as to impress us with a very favourable opinion of the taste and choice of the founders. The prospect to the north of the mountains of Săndoro and Sumbing, and to the east of Răbabu and Mărapı, none of which are much under 10,000 feet high, adds some share of grandeur to a scene confessedly beautiful. Whether from the ideas naturally associated with the ruins themselves, or from the character of the scenery, or from both, I have never visited this part of the country without feeling a strong impression of the tendency of the situation to encourage meditation.

† In crossing the Progo we pass over a flying bridge of bamboo and rattan, suspended from two banian trees on the opposite banks. Such are common in all the hilly parts of Java and other mountainous countries in India.





R. L. H. Orcau

* The Temple of Boro Budor occupies nearly the whole of the little hill on which it is situated, leaving on its * 156 edge a terrace not exceeding 30 feet broad. The hill rises almost perpendicularly from the plain which surrounds it, and to the base of the temple is about 60 feet in height.

The temple itself is a structure of a pyramidal shape, consisting of tiers of walls and other materials, terminated by a dome. Except this latter portion the whole building may be represented as consisting of mere exterior; and in fact the nucleus of the temple is nothing else than the original hill fashioned and adapted to the shape of the temple. From the base of the temple to the top of the dome is a height of 116 English feet.

The lower part of the fabric, perhaps two-thirds of the whole, is of a square form, and consists of six walls, decreasing as they ascend. Outside of all may be traced the remains of a walled inclosure, from which, if the base of the temple be calculated, each angle will be found to measure 526 English feet. Boro Budor is, among the Hindu remains in the central districts, a solitary example of a building of the pyramidal form now described, which the natives call Chungkup. In the eastern end of the island, however, there are several, though of inferior size to this magnificent one.

After this general account of the temple, and referring to the drawing, *plate 1*, which accompanies this Essay, for a more lively representation of it than can be conveyed by writing, I shall attempt a rapid sketch of its several parts, beginning with the base and proceeding upwards. The first tier is a plain wall, devoid of sculptures or images. The general outlines of this convey a description of all the other walls, allowance being made for their decreasing size as they ascend. Each front, which, as in all the Hindu relics of the island, faces one of the cardinal points of the compass, consists of five distinct portions, or faces; the centre one of which is also the largest, and projects; whilst the four remaining ones successively recede from it and diminish in size.

In the centre of each front is a doorway, precisely parallel to similar ones in the remaining tiers, throughout all of which

there is a direct ascent to the upper part of the building by a flight of stone steps.

The ornamental portion of the temple commences with the second wall, * which recedes about eight paces from the * 157 first, leaving between them a terrace of this breadth.

The foundation is parallel with the top of the first wall, which in this particular point may be considered as a general description of all the successive tiers.

This foundation consists of a layer of hewn stones, the faces of which are cut into nearly a semicircular form, with two smaller layers of square-faced stones receding from it. Immediately on this follows the perpendicular portion of the wall, which contains sculptured figures, the various groups of which are divided from each other by a kind of bas-relief pilasters; over this portion is a cornice, which is followed by the upper and most remarkable portion of the wall,—that which gives place to the niches which contain the figures of Buddha. Between each of these niches, as they are represented in the drawing, the wall is decorated with a variety of sculptures handsomely executed. Such is its outer side. The inner, which, like that of all the rest, is greatly lower than the outer side of the wall, necessarily diminishing in height as the hill is ascended, and as it is scooped out for the accommodation of the building, is covered with groups of sculptured figures smaller than those of the external side. The sculptures on this second wall are on a larger scale than on any other portion of the building.

The third tier recedes from the second three paces. The external face contains a double row of sculptures one above the other, but the inner face only one. In other respects it differs little from the second wall, and therefore does not require a particular description.

The distance between the third and fourth tier is about two paces and a half. The outer and inner face of this wall are each ornamented by a single row of sculptures, independent of those sculptures interspersed with the niches of Buddha.

The fifth and sixth tiers are at the same distance from each





other and from the fourth that the latter is from the third wall. Like the fourth, they contain on the outer and inner side a single row of sculptures. The fifth tier properly contains, independent of the projecting ornamental doorway, only three portions or faces, instead of five, like those before it; * and the sixth is even destitute of the ornamental doorway. The internal surface of the last contains no * 158 sculptures.

With the sixth tier ends the square portion of the building, and the remainder now to be described assumes a circular form. This commences within four paces of the sixth tier, and consists of three rows of a sort of latticed cages of hewn stone with diamond-shaped apertures, each of which contains a sitting figure of Buddha. Each row is raised on a foundation of hewn stone, which runs along the whole circumference of this portion of the building. The circular rows of cages diminish in size as they ascend, and are distant from each other, and from the dome which crowns the temple, about two paces. The latticed cages are of a conical form, of entire stone, crowned by a small square solid fabric, having over all the usual apex, such as represented in the drawing of one of the niches, *plate 2*. Each contains, as already mentioned, a statue of Buddha, to which in those that are perfect there is no means of access, and which are visible only through the apertures of the latticework.

The dome, which is two paces distant from the last tier of the latticed cages, measures round the base fifty-two paces, and after an ascent of twenty feet is crowned by an oblong square fabric, over which it is probable there was placed a pyramidal pillar, similar to that over the niches and latticed cages, and which is prevalent in parallel situations throughout the whole of the building. From the ruined state of the upper part of the dome, the actual height of this portion of the temple cannot be determined. It may be observed that the dome, saving the absence of the latticed work and its greatly superior size, bears in shape a close resemblance to the conical latticed cages.

The dome appears originally to have had no entrance; but through curiosity, or more probably avarice, an artificial one has been made on the southern side, which discovers the interior of a shape corresponding with the exterior, but, from the extraordinary thickness of the walls, of inconsiderable dimensions. The bottom of the dome forms a well, which sinks about five feet below the level of the external base. The dome contains no image, or vestige of its ever having contained any.

* It remains to offer some account of the various decorations, ornaments, and sculptures of the temple; * 159 which may be described as consisting of the niches for the reception of the statues of Buddha; the statues themselves; figures of lions which are placed as guards at the grand entrance of the temple; certain figures of a monstrous shape, which discharge from their mouths the water which would otherwise lodge in the building; and the profusion of sculptured figures and groups on the walls.

The niches which contain the images of Buddha are of unequal size, varying with the dimensions of the walls to which they respectively belong, being largest in the lower tiers, and smallest in the higher ones.

Taking those of the second wall as an example, these will be found to measure four feet in height, three in breadth, and two in depth. The faithful drawing of one of these, *plate 2*, which accompanies the Essay, will supersede any detailed description.

Wherever in any part of the building a statue of Buddha is found, the place which contains it will be invariably discovered surmounted by such a cone and pyramid as that represented in the drawing now referred to. The apex may represent the Linga, though it must at the same time be observed that neither in this particular situation, nor in any other part of the building, is there to be discovered an unequivocal representation of the Linga and Yoni, such as are common at Brambanan and other situations.

The statues of Buddha throughout the building are invariably in a sitting posture. Taking those of the second wall (and





the rest are not much smaller) as an example, the statue measures sitting three feet high. They are all without pedestals.

Wherever Buddha occurs in the building, the posture of the legs is that of being uniformly crossed, with the soles turned upwards. The position of the hands, on the contrary, varies according to the particular situation of the images in the building. In the western tiers of walls the hands are lying on each other with the palms uppermost: in the eastern tiers the left hand reclines on the soles of the feet, whilst the right, with the palm down, rests on the point of the right knee: in the northern tiers the left hand, with the palm uppermost, rests on the soles of the feet, and the right, raised *half- * 160 breast high, has the palm open and parallel to the body: and in the south tiers the left hand rests on the soles of the feet, and the right, with the palm uppermost, on the point of the right knee. The disposition of the hands in the reticulated cages is the same in all; they are raised half-breast high, two fingers of the right hand being placed on the ring finger of the left, as if to assist the memory. Of the general characters of the figures of this god or saint, as they appear at Boro Budor, it will be superfluous to offer any description, as they are no other than the common form of Buddha wherever his worship prevails.

A notion of the magnitude of this splendid temple may be formed from the number of the statues of Buddha, which are in all not many fewer than 400.

The entrances into the temple are four in number, facing the cardinal points of the compass, and exactly in the centre of each front, as already mentioned. In the traces of the outer wall, or paling, and marking the situation of the gates, there are at each entrance a pair of small statues of lions; opposite to which again, on the very brink of the hill, and where the traces of a stone staircase descending to the valley, or plain, may still be discovered, are two of much larger size. These animals are not properly couchant, but rather sitting on their hinder parts, more in the posture of a dog than of an animal of the feline tribe (*plate 3*). When the awkwardness with which

these are represented is contrasted with the truth and accuracy of the rest of the sculptures, it is fair to conclude that the artist was a stranger to the animal he attempted to delineate.

Towards the angles of many parts of the temple are seen monstrous figures, the mouths of which serve as conduits to discharge the water collected in the upper portions of the building. A representation of one of these shows they are the same that prevail in other temples of the island, and are probably unconnected with any mythological purpose, and, as far as relates to their shape and elaborate sculpture, purely ornamental.†

* I come now to speak of the most interesting ornaments * 161 of the Temple of Boro Budor, the sculptured figures and groups on the walls. These, as already mentioned, cover all the walls out and inside, and exist in such profusion, and represent such a variety of subjects, that a detailed account of them would be impracticable; nor is a selection very easy from the multitude that offer.

The whole of the sculptures are in relief, well raised from the wall, and the style and execution are upon the whole really wonderful, when we advert to the barbarism which surrounds them at present, or even when we revert to the condition of the arts in that country itself from whence the founders of Boro Budor must have drawn their models.

On the outer face of the second wall, where the sculptures are on a larger scale than in any other part of the building, single figures are frequent; but elsewhere groups are more prevalent, representing a great variety of subjects such as audiences, the performance of religious worship in temples, processions, battles, hunting scenes, and some maritime subjects.

The most interesting of these are delineated on the third and fourth walls; and from them I shall select for description a few of the most striking, and such as, appearing connected

† A representation of these, though not of the most laboured kind, will be seen in *plate 6*, at the upper angles of the back of the sculptured figure, which I suppose to be that of Dawi.





with the purpose of the temple, will enable those who are better acquainted than I am with the subject to determine the nature and character of the building.

On the external face of the third wall and to the eastern point, Buddha is represented in a great many instances; close to the gateway in particular is one group where he is the principal figure, and which seems to me to be particularly worthy of attention: of this *plate 4* is a representation. The sage, or deity, is surrounded by a crowd of votaries, some sitting and some standing. Most of them are in the act of offering gifts; which, in agreement with the mild spirit which his religion professes, are found to consist only of fruits and flowers. The votaries to the right hand are females; those to the left, males. Buddha is in the usual attitude; having, as he is represented on the southern front of the temple, his hand raised with the palm outwards, as if he were addressing the multitude.

In several situations on the same wall Buddha appears demonstrating * to certain persons who (contrary to the usual appearance of the human figures on the temple) * 162 wear beards; and in one instance in particular, which occurs on the northern front, he appears pressing a subject with more than usual earnestness, while his hearer, an aged person, seems by his air and manner both convinced and astonished. Is it probable that the bearded seniors thus addressed by Buddha are the priests of the bloody worship of Siwa and Durga?

On the fourth wall the worship of Buddha still continues to be delineated. In one place his votaries are listening to him from the clouds, and in another a battle is fought in his presence, in which I conclude the party nearest to him to be victorious. These are represented in *plates 5* and *6*.

In many parts of the walls are portrayed the interior of temples, in which a particular male and female divinity are the objects of worship, sometimes separately and sometimes conjointly. The *5th plate* is a representation of one of this description. Except Buddha, it must be observed that these individuals, whoever they be, are the only ones who appear as

objects of worship. They are invariably found with crowns, and decked with the distinguishing thread of the higher Hindu orders : but I can nowhere discover them clothed in any of the more distinctive attributes of the Hindu gods. From the similarity, however, of their appearance and situation with images of Siwa and Durga, elsewhere better marked, I can have no doubt but it is those personages that are intended.

Siwa is, I suspect, more distinctly marked in the group represented in *plate 7*, where I consider him to be carried in procession in his car, and to be the individual distinguished by the crescent.

These examples will, I hope, be sufficient to convey some notion of these interesting sculptures. On a retrospect of the whole, some general remarks present themselves. The first which occurs is, that the scenery, the figures, and the costumes are foreign, and not those of the country where the building stands ; the second, that throughout the temple there is not a single obscene representation ; and the third, that though the building be past doubt dedicated to a form of the worship of the Hin*dus, any allusion to the more prominent and characteristic features of that religion seems studiously avoided.

Of the human figures, the countenances are marked by the strongest features of the Hindu face ; some of them are even seen with bushy beards, an ornament of the face denied by nature to all the Indian islanders. The loins are girt after the manner now practised in India, a custom unknown to the Javanese. The armour worn is not less characteristic : the spear and *cris*, the weapons of the Indian islanders, are nowhere to be seen ; but in their stead we have the straight sword, the shield, the bow and arrow, and the club. The combatants when mounted are carried on cars and elephants, both of them modes of conveyance of foreign custom ; for the elephant is not a native of Java, and wheel-carriages seem in all ages to have been unknown to the Javanese.†

† Among the animals represented in the sculptures are the elephant, the horse, the lion, the monkey, the deer, the dog, &c. : but it is somewhat singular

Judging from the nature of the temple itself, but still more from the analogy of the other Hindu relics in Java, I conclude Boro Budor to be a temple dedicated to the Buddhist reformation of the worship of Siwa and his consort, of the Linga and Yoni. The allusions in the temple to the more prominent features of the Hindu religion, except its connexion with Buddha, are everywhere obscurely remote: it cannot be expected, therefore, that the referonces to one of the most mystical subjects of it, the worship of the Linga and Yoni, should be very clear and decided. Without, however, giving such a loose to the imagination as the subject, it must be confessed, is too apt to encourage, traces of that worship may still be discovered. One of the most constant representations throughout the sculptures is that of a censer with the flame of incense rising in a pyramidal form; and this, I am informed, is an acknowledged symbol of the Linga. The pyramidal stones which surmount the niches of Buddha; the conical reticulated cages with pyramidal stones, the great dome and the stone which crowned the whole, possibly served the * same purpose; nay, the pyramidal * 164 shape of the whole temple itself may not be unconnected with some allusion to this mystical subject.

It will naturally be expected that I should make some remarks on the etymology of the word Boros Budor; but on this subject I must confess that I have nothing very satisfactory to offer, though I have not been wanting in diligent inquiry. *Boro*, the Javanese enunciation of the same word which according to a more universal system would be *Bara*, is the name of the little district which surrounds the temple: but whether the temple takes its name from the district, or the district from the temple, it is difficult to determine; though I incline to the latter opinion, from the analogy of the language in similar cases. The word has no determinate meaning that I have been able to discover.

The etymology of the word *Budor*, for this is the manner in that the cow, so dear to the prejudices of all descriptions of Hindus, is nowhere delineated on Boro Budor, nor indeed, that I can remember, on any other Hindu relics in Java.

which it is both written and pronounced, is not less obscure. If it be a corruption of the word *Buddha*, which I much doubt, I can only say that it affords a solitary example in the Javanese language of a Sanscrit word so grossly corrupted. Even the same word in all other cases is pronounced with all the accuracy of which the comparative imperfection of the Javanese alphabet is capable. The truth is that the Javanese language, in adopting Indian words, transmutes one or two vowels and two or three consonants, and sometimes suppresses aspirates; but the whole series of such words will hardly afford a single instance of the wanton annexation of a supplemental consonant.

Upon the style and execution of the architecture, and the nature of the materials, it would be superfluous to dwell, for they are the same as those described in my account of the temples of Branbanan in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society*. The materials are, in a word, the same dark basaltic rock of which the latter are constructed. Every individual stone is nicely hewn and polished, and they are put together in such a manner as leaves no imperfection.

The whole temple is upon a designed plan strictly kept in view throughout; and no evidence of the slovenly carelessness which we are apt to find in Asiatic workmanship is discoverable in the execution. The *whole structure is in better pre-
 *165 servation than any other ancient monument on the island with which I am acquainted,—a circumstance which is in a great degree attributable to the solidity of the fabric, and the inconsiderable height of all its parts considered separately. In a country where the vigour of vegetation was less powerful, and in one less liable to violent convulsions of nature, than Java, the excellence of the workmanship and materials of Boro Budor would have ensured a duration of a great many ages. The dilapidation which it has now suffered, and which has laid many of the superior portions of the structure in ruins, and thrown from their niches many of the statues of Buddha, is, if my means of information can be relied on, the work of four hundred and eighty-one years, the Javanese memorial verses laying the era of the foundation of the temple in the year of

Saca or Salivana 1260, that is, forty-two years later than the most modern of the temples of Branbanan, and a hundred and forty years before the permanent establishment of Mahomedanism in the island.

Before concluding this account of the ruins of Boro Budor, I shall briefly advert to some other relics of Hinduism in the district of Cadu, a situation from its beauty and fertility naturally a favourite seat of that worship.

About a mile from the great Temple of Boro Budor is the ruin of the small temple called Brojo-nolo, or Braja-nala†, a pyramidal-shaped building of hewn stone, resembling those of Branbanan. It had contained two niches for figures, which have been removed; and on the exterior wall are carved figures of Indian Brahmins, of the natural size, with representations of Gandarwas drawings of the lotus and other vegetable decorations.

About a quarter of a mile from this temple, in a direction north of it, on the opposite bank of the Progo, there exist the ruins of another temple similar to this last; but the mere foundations are all that remain of * it. About three years ago I discovered in the ruins of this temple, * 166 nearly covered over with rubbish, a large mutilated male statue with four heads and four arms, which I take to be an image of Siwa.

Two miles distant from the Temple of Braja-nala, in a south-east direction, is that of Kali-mundut, which is larger, but not otherwise different from it. It is robbed, like it, of the statues it once contained,

I should not think the many scattered images found in the district of Cadu worthy of notice in this place, did they not afford illustrations of the ancient worship of the country, and at least grounds for probable inferences relating to the character and appropriation of the Temple of Boro Budor. In a col-

† I believe a compound Sanserit word, which the Javanese explain "weapon of the heart." It is in ordinary language the name of a particular apartment of the royal palace; and hence, from some imaginary resemblance I suspect, its application in the present instance.

fragments of those made by the European gentlemen of the Residency are found many statues of "Durga punishing Mahesura," one of "Siva mounted on his bull," images of Ganesa and Buddha, with a variety of unequivocal representations of the Linga and Yoni in the mysterious forms which these emblems assume in India. What I would imply from all this, from the existence of the smaller temples in the neighbourhood of Boro Budor, and from our knowledge that temples like the latter exist in other parts of the island, surrounded by others unequivocally Brahminical, is, that Boro Budor, whatever first appearances might lead us to conclude, was not dedicated to any peculiar religion differing from that which was the object of worship in the smaller and more ordinary temples.

Bombay, March 10th, 1817.

[NOTE.—See the *History of Java*, by Thomas Stamford Raffles, Esq. (2 vols.), vol. III., pp. 29-30; *An Account of the Island of Java*, by R. Friederich, translated for the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, p. 2, May 1876: the subject is also noticed in vol. II., chap. vi., of *Life in Java*, by W. R. W. Almeida (1864), particularly on pages 183 to 186. Opinions seem to be divided: but I cannot say for certain that the temple in question is entirely Buddhist. I would also refer to the *History of the Indian Archipelago*, by John Crawford in 3 volumes (1820), vol. III., chap. 2, particularly pp. 214 to 215: and the *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, by James Fergusson, D.C.L., 1876, pp. 442 to 450.—Ed.]

ACCOUNT OF A CURIOUS CASE IN SURGERY.

By CHARLES LINTON, Esq.

Read 30th June, 1831.

The drawing and technical description of a wounded arm presented to the Society at the present meeting were taken from the person of an Arab of some notoriety in the Gulf of Persia by the surgeon of the Challenger, His Majesty's ship of war.

The name of this individual is Kabwah bin Jaber, and he bears the title of Shaikh from being at the head of a large tribe of his countrymen. The wound above alluded to was received at an age between the fortieth and fiftieth years, and has been healed for some years. He is a tall strong man, with large bone and of great muscular power, though generally thin; as indeed are most Arabs. The loss of bone from the wound is supplied by the aid of a silver tube, which opens with a hinge, and is made sufficiently large to inclose his upper arm. On wielding the sword the right arm is aided by the left, which grasps the wounded limb in the fleshy upper part of the lower arm.

The account the Shaikh gives of the cause and treatment of his wound is brief. He received them while engaged in action at sea; the first in his upper arm by a spike-nail thrown from a swivel, and the second in the lower arm by a musket-shot. The limb bled very much, but was as soon as possible inclosed in a firm plaster of sheep's fat, turmeric, bitumen, and wax: and during the renewal of these applications portions of bone constantly passed through the wound.

The cure lasted for eighteen months; six of which only were passed on shore, as during the remainder he retained the command of his fleet.

* During the earlier part of his illness he ate only a
* 168 small daily portion of dates, and drank water.

Nature and a favourable state of body appear in this case to have had wonderful influence. Other instances, however, nearly as extraordinary are not wanting among the Arab tribes, who are all naturally abstemious, and persevering in the use of exercise and in occupation in the open air.

(Signed) R. TAYLOR.

Bombay, 30th June, 1818.

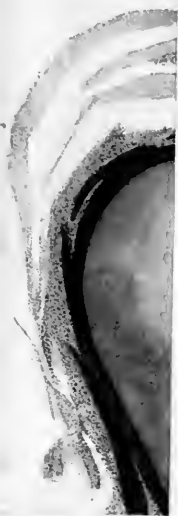
The spike-nail appears to have penetrated the arm anteriorly near the insertion of the deltoid muscle, and to have fractured the bone in two places, viz., immediately below the nick of the os humeri, and externally to the capsular ligament: the other has been evidently a transverse fracture about four inches from the head of the bone: a considerable sloughing, which took place antecedently to the portion of the fractured bone being extracted, sufficiently accounts for the present aspect and condition of the arm.

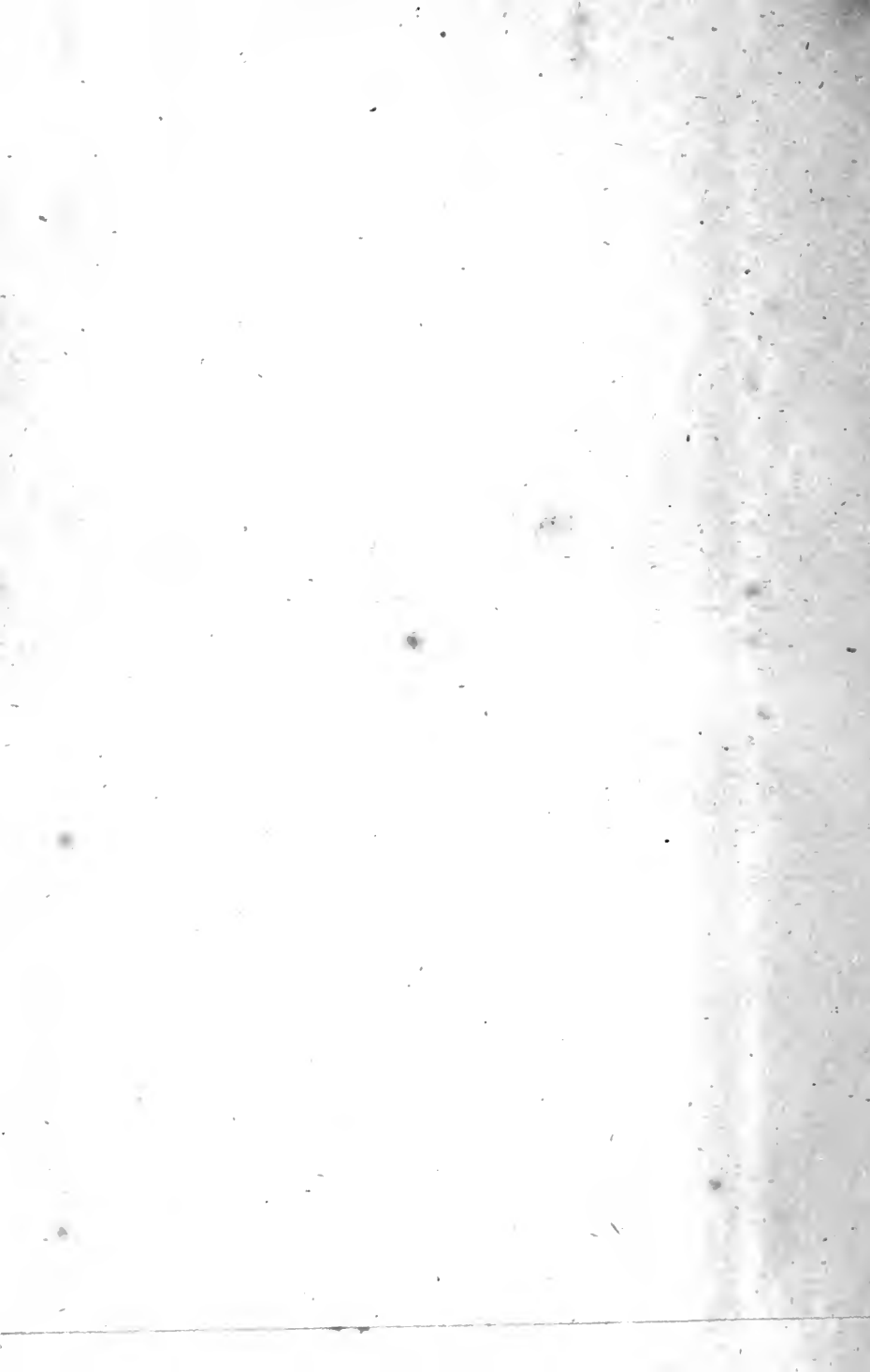
Allowing the humerus to hang down naturally by the side, about four inches of the superior part of the bone (except that portion contained within the capsular ligament) is wanting. The upper end of the bone which remains is perfectly smooth to the feel, as if tipped with cartilage; which is most probably the case, from the formation of callus, and admits of being handled, and of perfect freedom of motion in every position, without pain or any apparent inconvenience.

Those muscles which are inserted round the head and superior part of the os humeri, whose use is to raise and to sustain the arm when raised, are rendered perfectly useless from the permanent loss of continuity in the bone. Their natural contour is therefore lost, and from consequent want of exercise they are completely shrunk.

The triceps, short head of the biceps, the coraco brachialis, and head of the brachialis internus, feel superiorly like tendinous or ligamentous cords covered with tegument.

The gangrenous sloughing must have also contributed great-





ly to produce this effect. The biceps and brachialis internus, over that portion of the os humeri which remains, retain a considerable portion of their natural fulness and vigour, as was very perceptible on placing my fingers upon them when in the act of bending the fore-arm.

The act, however, of bending the fore-arm is now chiefly performed by the supinator radii longus and the extensor carpi radialis. The humeral artery appears to have had a narrow escape, as it may be felt pulsating strongly close to the inner edge of the cicatrix of the wound.

From the sloughing, however, and general shrinking of the superior portion of the arm, the relative position and natural connexions of the artery must have consequently undergone some change.

When the right hand is to be made use of, and any considerable exertion or force to be employed, the fore-arm is bent; the remaining part of the os humeri is pushed up in close contact with the head of the same bone, and is materially supported in this position by the mechanical aid of a circular silver plate of about $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, which completely incloses that portion of the humerus deprived of bone, the lower edge of the plate reaching so far down as to be sustained by the bend of the elbow and condylus; the superior edge firmly embracing the acromion, acting somewhat similar to the tube of an umbrella or parasol in keeping the stick straight by pushing it up upon the joint.

I have little hesitation in asserting that had this case of gunshot wound occurred to a British naval or military surgeon, this arm would have been condemned as a decided case for amputation.

As the use of the muscles for sustaining the arm when raised is entirely lost, he substitutes for this the mechanical aid of his left hand, with which he firmly grasps the right elbow, and with this fulcrum thus sustains his right arm when he uses his sword in the act of boarding.

CHARLES LINTON.

* 170

* VIII.

ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN DECIPHERING CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS.†

By Mr. C. BELLINO.

Read 30th June, 1818.

SEVERAL men of learning have at different times applied themselves particularly to the deciphering of cuneiform inscriptions, and have communicated their attempts to the public. The most remarkable of these essays are, Prof. Olaus Gerhard Tychsen's *De cuneatis Inscriptionibus Persepolitianis Lucubratio*; Rostock, 1798: Dr. Frederic Münter's (archbishop of Zealand) *Essay on the Cuneiform Inscriptions at Persepolis*, Copenhagen, 1800 in Danish, and 1802 in German: Prof. Anthony Augustus Henry Lichtenstein's *Tentamen Palaeographiae Assyrio-Persicæ*, Helmstadt, 1803: to which may be added two works of Dr. Joseph Hager, *Dissertation on the newly discovered Babylonian Inscriptions*, London, 1801: and *Illustrazione d'un Zodiaco Orientale*, Milan, 1811. None of those authors, however, came to a generally satisfactory result; though the works of the two first were of use to Dr. G. F. Grotefend in his researches on the same subject, which he laid before the Academy of Sciences at Gottingen in 1802 and 1803. A very favourable account of Dr. Grotefend's method was given by Mr. Silvestre de Sacy in his *Lettre à M. Millin sur les Inscriptions de Monuments Persépolitains*, published in the *Magasin Encyclopédique*, an 8, vol. v. It deserves, perhaps, also to be noticed that Prof. O. G. Tychsen and Dr. Münter, two persons well competent to judge of Dr. Grotefend's labours, were among the first to approve of them.

In 1805 Dr. Grotefend furnished Prof. Heeren, at his * 171 request, with a paper **On Cuneiform Writing in general, and the Inscriptions of Persepolis in particular*; which he

† With three drawings.

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last inserted as an appendix to the second edition of his *Idcen über die Politik, den Verkehr und den Handel dervornehmsten Völker der alten Welt*, and re-published in 1815 in the third edition of that work, together with a second paper of Dr. Grotefend on *Pasargadæ and the Tomb of Cyrus*. It is of the first paper, and of the second only as far as it relates to the same subject, that I here intend to give an abstract; in which I shall also notice what Dr. Grotefend has since published on cuneiform writing in the fourth and fifth volumes of the *Mines de l'Orient*, a periodical work which appears at Vienna.

Dr. Grotefend sets out by defining the kind and character of the writing he proposes to treat of. *Cuneiform* writing he states to be that kind which is used in several inscriptions discovered in different provinces of the ancient Persian empire, and which is distinguished from any other kind of writing once in use in the East by the total absence of curves. From this last characteristic Dr. Grotefend infers that it was only destined to be cut on stone or other solid materials, in inscriptions for monuments, talismans, amulets, &c., as a sacred lapidary writing, and therefore never in common use: so that besides it there may have been, as well as there was in Egypt besides the hieroglyphics, another more convenient kind of writing in use among the people.

The fundamental strokes of cuneiform writing are what have been called *wedges* and *angles*. The connecting lines which are seen in the Babylonian inscriptions cannot be reckoned among the fundamental strokes of cuneiform writing, since they are often omitted, apparently as being not essential, and are not to be met with in the Persepolitan inscriptions.

Wedges, whether principal or accessory, smaller or larger ones, present themselves chiefly in four different directions; their principal one being, however, always either from top to bottom, or from the left to the right. They are either perpendicular or horizontal, sloping downwards or upwards; but their points are never turned straight upwards, or diagonally upwards to the left.

Angles, however large or small they may be, have always

one direction, * their opening being constantly turned
 *172 towards the right. The angle is a real sign, and not a combination of two wedges united by their heads; for, whenever such a combination occurs, its form differs from the angle, as may be observed in the character at the right end of the second and seventh line of No. 7. It follows of course that the appellation of angle is also inapplicable to the sign formed by the points of two-wedges uniting, as, for instance, in the second character at the left end of the third line of No. 7.

These characteristics of cuneiform writing and its fundamental strokes, given by Dr. Grotefend, are founded on the comparison of all the published specimens of cuneiform inscriptions; and therefore it is to be considered as an error of the copyist when wedges or angles are observed in a copy with directions contrary to those above mentioned.

From those characteristics, no one can mistake the direction in which cuneiform inscriptions ought to be held, viz., so that the points of the perpendicular wedges be turned downwards, and those of the horizontal and sloping ones, as also the openings of the angles, towards the right. If that is observed, every one will be aware that cuneiform writing is written in a horizontal, and not in a perpendicular direction.

The greater or less simplicity in the construction of the characters from the two fundamental strokes, constitute the different species of cuneiform writing.

The least complicated cuneiform writing has hitherto (some inscriptions on Egyptian monuments excepted) only been found on the ruins of Pasargadæ and Persepolis, engraved on marble. There almost every inscription is repeated in three different species of writing, which are commonly placed under or by the side of each other, corresponding almost word for word amongst themselves. At Persepolis, on the windows of the building *g* (*Voyage de Niebuhr*, vol. ii., plates 18 and 26), the simplest and therefore first species, being probably the most ancient, is placed above; on the right side is the second, more complicated; and on the left, opposite to the right of the reader, the third species, less simple than either of

the preceding ones. The language of the first species which *has been deciphered by Dr. Grotefend, is Zend, or Median; that of the second he thinks is Parsi, or the * 173 language of Persia Proper; and that of the third bears, he says, also the characteristics of an Iranian† dialect, and cannot be Aramean,‡ from its want of prefixes. The second species, which in every respect holds the mean betwixt the first and the third, is distinguished from the first (which to Dr. Grotefend appears to be the ancient Assyrian writing mentioned in one of the pretended letters of Themistocles) by having more horizontal wedges and fewer angles; and from the third, by avoiding, like the first, sloping wedges, and by never making wedges cross each other. (Nos. 3, 4, 5.)

To the third species is also to be referred the inscription of the Babylonian stone, published by Mr. Millin in his *Monuments antiques inédits*, plates VIII. and IX. of the first number. Dr. Grotefend considered first the writing of that inscription, though he was aware of its resemblance to that of the third species, as forming a separate one: but the comparison he has lately made between it and the Persepolitan inscription of the third species (the result of which he has published in the *Mines de l'Orient*, vol. v., p. 225) has convinced him that they belong to the same species; as the differences observable between them are, he says, but unimportant, and may be either errors of the copyists, or proceed from the various modes used by different nations in writing the same characters. In that inscription occur already some connecting lines, which are

† As the term *Semitic* comprises the Arabic, Ethiopic, Hebrew, Phœnician, Samaritan, &c., so I beg leave to use here instead of *Persian*, as is in the original, and which is generally restricted to the modern Persian language, the word *Iranian*, a generic term applicable to the several kindred languages of the ancient and modern empire of Persia, as Zend, Pehlevi, &c., and Coordish; which last is generally also comprehended under that genus.—B.

‡ It was Prof. Lichtenstein who thought that the language of that third species might be *Aramean*, which term the German philologists apply to the Semitic dialects which were anciently spoken in Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia.—B.

peculiar to the Babylonian inscriptions, but not essential to cuneiform writing, as above stated. Characters which resemble those of the following species are also seen in it.

* The fourth and most complicated species of cuneiform * 174 writing is found in the great inscription from the ruins of Babylon, published in 1803 at London by the East India Company, and on the Babylonian bricks and cylinders; in all of which not only the same characters, but partly also the same words and contents, may be remarked. This species is distinguishable both by the number of connecting lines, and by the character, resembling a star with eight points, which is always at the beginning of the inscriptions on bricks, as well as of the great London inscription. This character being only found in this species, both the inscriptions of the bricks and gems of the desert between Basora and Aleppo, mentioned by Pietro della Valle, and that of the jasper published by the East India Company, are to be reckoned of this species. As Dr. Grotfend refers only to the specimens already published, and as it may yet be desirable to possess some additional ones, three inscriptions in that species are given in Nos. 6, 7, and 8, from the collections of Messrs. Rich and Hinc, who have kindly allowed me to copy any inscription in their possession which might serve to illustrate Dr. Grotfend's observations.

From a consideration of the four different species of cuneiform writing, Dr. Grotfend thinks he has established the two following general principles:

1. All cuneiform writing is written in a horizontal direction from the left to the right.

Pietro della Valle and Figueroa first concluded, from the direction of the wedges and angles in the Persepolitan inscriptions, that cuneiform writing was written from the left to the right; though Chardin adds to that observation that it might as well be read perpendicularly; by which he alludes to the inscriptions on the windows of the building *g*. (*Voyage de Nicbuhr*, vol. ii., plates 18 and 26.) It could with equal justice be argued that it may be read circularly, because on a cameo

in Tassie's collection (*Raspe's Catalogue*, No. 653) it is written round a head. Further, the characters are arranged in the same manner as in the legends of our coins, their direction being still from the left to the right, as in the horizontal situation. Niebuhr (*Voyage*, vol. ii., p. 117) * is also of opinion that it is written from the left to the right; and * 175 that this is the case with the three first species of cuneiform writing, Dr. Grotefend has proved from their correspondence with each other. (See Nos. 3, 4, and 5.) Mr. Millin has also incontestably shown that the inscription which he published is written in a horizontal direction from the left to the right.

That the same principle applies also to the fourth species is manifest from the great London inscription, and the table of comparison of all the known specimens of brick inscriptions, collated with similar passages of the former, published by Dr. Grotefend in the *Mines de l'Orient*, vol. x., p. 331. A comparison of the two inscriptions of bricks given here in Nos. 6 and 7 will prove the same.

"If," Dr. Grotefend observes, "the writing of the great London inscription and of the bricks be in a horizontal direction from the left to the right, the same must also be the case in that of the cylinders, since their characters are the same." Though Dr. Hager asserts that this species is written, like the Chinese, in perpendicular columns, beginning with the first column on the right, the inscriptions being held in such a manner that the wedges never point straight upwards, this assertion agrees still with the order in which Dr. Grotefend considers the characters to be ranged. But Dr. Hager holds the inscriptions in a wrong direction, deceived by the lines which separate the rows of characters, and by the perpendicular situation of the inscriptions by the side of figures on cylinders. Whoever has had an opportunity of seeing some Babylonian cylinders will be aware of the justness of that remark of Dr. Grotefend, and that the perpendicular situation of their inscriptions proceeds only from the want of space. By the help of the inscription of a cylinder, published by Dr.

Münter, in his *Essay*, plate ii., fig. 2, Dr. Grotefend has satisfactorily proved that it is written from the left to the right. But this seems to be the case with but few cylinders; for in all those in the possession of Messrs. Rich and Hine, the inscriptions are evidently written from the right to the left, as will be seen from the direction of the wedges in the specimen given in No. 8. From this irregularity, which is peculiar to the inscriptions on cylinders, we might be led to suppose that * 176 they were intended to make impressions, like seals; which of course will account for the reversed position of the letters.

2. The second general principle established by Dr. Grotefend is, that all cuneiform writing is alphabetical, neither symbolical nor strictly syllabic.

On an attentive examination of the different species of cuneiform writing, it must appear to every one, that in general several characters unite to form one word. Under the supposition that one of the more complicated species be symbolical, it remains inexplicable why the same characters should so often recur, and several of them even twice and thrice immediately one after the other. The first circumstance would argue, in a symbolical writing, a very limited sphere of ideas, and the last could only then be accounted for if it were merely observed in symbols signifying *king*, *lord*, *sacred*, &c., and not in so many characters. Perhaps it might be thought that the repetition of the same symbol twice denotes the dual, and thrice the plural of a word, since in the Zend and Pehlevi vocabularies of Anquetil Duperron the dual is also commonly denoted by the number two, and the plural by the number three. But in that case the repetition of a symbol twice or thrice should be more frequent than it really is, and sometimes even occur successively; nay, one might even expect that the triple repetition, as denoting the plural, would be more frequent than the simple repetition: the contrary, however, is observed. Dr. Grotefend has therefore no hesitation in rejecting the supposition that cuneiform writing is symbolical in any case.

In order that the assertion of all cuneiform writing being

alphabetical may be understood with the restrictions necessary for every particular species, Dr. Grotefend is led previously to examine the possible varieties occurring in the connexion of alphabetical signs into syllables. An alphabetical writing may either, as in the alphabets of the Semitic languages, only express the consonants, and denote the vowels by signs placed above or below the first; or, as is the case in European alphabets, express both consonants and vowels by letters; and finally, as in the ancient Persian alphabets, use even peculiar letters for long and short, * acute and grave vowels. An alphabetical writing may further express each character of a syllable separately, * 177 or affix to each consonant (as in the Ethiopic and Devanagari) an accessory stroke, varied according to the vowel which it is destined to denote, so that the writing might seem to be syllabic, when in reality it is alphabetical. "If," Dr. Grotefend observes, "the last-mentioned kind of writing be considered as alphabetical, it may be confidently asserted that all cuneiform writing is alphabetical;" but if it be not reckoned as such, then he acknowledges that the most complicated species of cuneiform writing are syllabic, though in such a syllabic writing characters for single vowels may exist, as there are in the Devanagari.

The first species of cuneiform writing has been generally acknowledged to be alphabetical, since both Prof. O. G. Tychsen and Dr. Münter discovered the separating mark of words, enclosing from two to eleven characters. The former remarked also that, in many inscriptions, the place of the particular series of characters which occurs so often is supplied by a single monogram. He would perhaps have anticipated Dr. Grotefend's discovery, had he, like him, considered that monogram not as the name, but as the title of the king. By Dr. Grotefend's more fortunate attempt it is now proved that this species has not only peculiar characters for vowels, but distinguishes even long vowels from short or acute ones, like the ancient Zend alphabet discovered by Anquetil Duperron. Professor O. G. Tychsen seems to consider the second and

third species as a similar alphabetical system ; but Dr. Münter regards the second as syllabic, and the third as symbolical. Though Dr. Grotefend abstains from pronouncing definitively in this respect until those two species shall have been completely deciphered ; yet he is confident, from the comparison of the corresponding inscriptions, that neither of them is symbolical, since in both, though more rarely in the third, inflexions may be observed, and the words consist of more than one character. From the numbers of characters which are found in each work, Dr. Grotefend infers that in the second species separate characters for long and short vowels are used ; but he supposes that there are also signs expressive of consonants united with a vowel, which would account for the great number of characters in general. To this latter supposition he * 178 was led by meeting, as he thinks, with some words, as *fróéléró*, *éúroghdé*, which he had previously found in inscriptions of the first species, literally preserved, that is to say untranslated, in those of the second. In the third species comparatively but few characters are used in the formation of each word, and the characters in the whole system amount to a number far exceeding that of the letters of an alphabet. Hence Dr. Grotefend conjectures that in this species the use of separate characters for vowels is avoided whenever it is possible, and that signs expressing consonants united with a vowel are used in preference.

With respect to the fourth species Dr. Grotefend observes that as he cannot, like the second and third, compare it with the species already deciphered, he can only, from a close examination, assert that it is not symbolical, but alphabetical, or syllabic, in the sense above mentioned.

Dr. Grotefend, after having laid down those characteristics of cuneiform writing in general, and shown that each species of it may be deciphered, since none is symbolical, next gives an account of his own process in deciphering the first species, referring at the same time to Mr. Silvestre de Sacy's Letter to Mr. Millin, in which that subject is treated of. I shall give here Dr. Grotefend's own words :

“ Among the Persepolitan inscriptions of the first species there are two of which Niebuhr (*Voyage*, vol. ii., *plate* 24, B and G) furnished very good copies; they are evidently accompanied with translations in the two other species of writing; they are of a convenient length for the purpose of experiment, and their contents are clearly analogous. On this account, and because the first species is the simplest of all, those two inscriptions have been selected by my predecessors for their attempt towards deciphering. I also began with them, because the word which both Prof. O. G. Tychsen and Dr. Münter believed to contain the key of the whole alphabet occurs the most frequently in them. By Prof. Tychsen’s Essay, I was induced to suspect that in those inscriptions which are seen above the figures of the Persian kings (*Voyage de Niebuhr*, vol. ii., pp. 112 and 117) their titles must be looked for; and perfectly * convinced by Dr. Münter’s work, that the word which occurs so often must signify *king*, I translated those * 179 two inscriptions, merely according to the analogy of the Pehlevi inscriptions deciphered by Mr. Silvestre de Sacy, as follows :

N. rex magnus (?) . rex regum. (rex —um)

Filius— (regis) . Stirps Achæmenis (?) (————)

In this way I could not fail to observe that the two kings must be father and son, since the king in the inscription G was called a son of the king in B, and the same relation between these two names is also preserved in the translations in the two other species of writing. I next considered to what epoch of the Persian kings the bas-reliefs on the ruins of Persepolis might relate, in order to find the names corresponding with them, because in a language entirely unknown, I could only hope to discover by proper names the value of some characters, and to ascertain gradually by their help the remaining ones. Convinced that two kings of the dynasty of the Achæmenides are to be sought for here, and considering the Greek historians, as contemporaries, to be the best authorities, I looked

over the series of kings, in order to discover which of their names could be the most readily accommodated to the characters of the inscriptions. Cyrus and Cambyses would not do, because the two names of the inscriptions had not the same initials; and, in general, it could neither be a Cyrus nor an Artaxerxes, because the first name was in proportion to the characters too short, and the other too long. There remained, then, only the names of Darius and Xerxes, and those accommodated themselves so easily to the characters that I could no longer doubt of the justice of my choice. I was further assured by the circumstance that in the inscription relating to the son the title of king was also given to the father; whereas, in the inscription relating to the father that title was not joined to the name of his father, a remark which is confirmed by all the Persepolitan inscriptions in the three different species of writing. As by correctly deciphering the names I should make myself master of more than twelve characters, among which I observed all the characters of the title of king, except one, * it was necessary to give to those names, which * 180 were only known according to the pronunciation of the Greeks, a Persian form, so that by exactly determining the value of each character I might be able to decipher the title of king, and in that manner ascertain the language of the inscriptions. The *Zend-Avesta* of Anquetil Duperron appeared to me to furnish in that respect the best information, as Dr. Münter, from the frequent use of vowels, had already conjectured that the language might be Zend. From the *Zend-Avesta* I learnt that the Greek name Hystaspes was in Persian *Gosh-tasp*, *Gustasp*, *Kistasp*, and *Vistasp*. I thus became acquainted with the value of the first seven characters in the name of Hystaspes in the inscription relating to Darius; and the three last I had already recognized for the inflexion of the genitive singular, by comparing the different passages where the word which I had assumed as the title of king occurred. But I could not admit, on the mere supposition of Anquetil Duperron, that the name Darius had been in Zend *Eanterafesh*, because in Reland's *Dissertat. de vet. Ling. Pers.* I found the following

passage quoted from Strabo: ‘*τον Δαξειανην* (therefore in the nominative *Dariaves*, or in the Persian manner *Daryavesh*) *Δαξειον εκαλεσαν*.’ and because I could not persuade myself that both the Greeks and the Hebrews should have corrupted the name *Eanterafesh* into *Dareios* and *Daryavesh*, I therefore pushed it no further with respect to Darius or Daryavesh, and endeavoured only to discover the Persian sounds of the name of Xerxes. Without attending to the name of Artaxerxes in Pehlevi and modern Persian, I took, because I gave to Zend the preference, the name of Araxes as a model, and found in the *Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions*, vol. xxxi., p. 367, the following passage of Anquetil Duperron: ‘*Araxes s’est formé de Weorokesche, ou Waraksche, en rétranchant simplement la première lettre; pour le ksche, les Grecs le rendent toujours par Ξ.*’ This, together with a comparison of the characters supplied by the names of Hystaspes and Darius, was a sufficient authority to me to read the name of Xerxes *Kshershe* or *Ksharsha*: no other difficulty then occurred than that in the inscription there was another character between the first *sh* and *e*, which last, as Dr. Münter justly supposed, * being the first letter of the Zend alphabet, has also the sound of a clear *a*. To be more sure, I compared a * 181 second time all the inscriptions of Niebuhr and Le Bruyn, to see whether the names had been correctly copied; and in that manner I found that in the name of Hystaspes the fourth character ought to have had three perpendicular wedges of equal length; that in the name of Xerxes the third character should be written with but one, and the fifth with three horizontal wedges. By that I perceived that the third character in the name of Xerxes was equivalent to the fourth and the last of the title of king; and as in the king’s title the value of the three first characters was given by the name of Xerxes, and that of the last but one by the name of Hystaspes, I endeavoured, by deciphering the king’s title entirely, to ascertain the value of the character yet unknown, which character also occurred in the name of Darius after the three first characters *Dár*, which I had already deciphered. I therefore searched in

Anquetil Duperron's vocabulary of the Zend, how the word *King* was expressed in that language: under *Kshe*, however, I found no word which signified king, but a number of synonymous forms under *Khshē*. By that circumstance I ascertained the language of the inscriptions, and also that the first character in the name of Xerxes was *Kh*; but the value of the unknown character was still undiscovered. No Zend form accommodated itself better to the characters of the inscription than *Khshēio*, if I assumed the unknown character to be the aspirate *h*. I had the less hesitation in admitting such an aspirate, as I found in the *Zend-Avesta* a great many words written sometimes with, sometimes without *h*, and as I had read in the above-mentioned *Mémoires*, p. 365, the observation, "*l'a final s'aspire comme s'il étoit suivi d'un h.*" Besides, both the third character in the name of Xerxes and the fourth in that of Darius could be best explained by *h*; this aspirate accommodated itself as well to the inflexion of the genitive singular *âhé*, as the sound *ch* to the inflexion of the genitive plural *échâo*. I found the value of this aspirate afterwards so well confirmed in several words of the Persepolitan inscriptions,—for instance, in *Dâhûchâo*, which I translated first *Daharum*, but which a further study of the Zend has proved to me to be equivalent to *populorum*,—that I think *I can *182 scarcely be mistaken in the value I assigned to it.

However, as Mr. Silvestre de Sacy has proposed some plausible objections to that aspirate, with respect to the names of Xerxes and Darius, it has occurred to me whether this character might not have been used to denote the exact pronunciation of the names, so as to prevent their being spelt *Khsher-she* for *Khsh-ershe*, and *Da-re-ush* for *Dare-ush*. In that case I would suppose that this aspirate after certain consonants takes also the value of *v* or *y*, and that consequently those two names might have been pronounced *Khshvershe* and *Daryeush*. This at least would account why the Hebrews, who prefixed to every name beginning with two consonants an *s*, to facilitate the pronunciation, should change the name of Xerxes into אֶשְׁמֶרֶשׁ, *Ahasverus*, and the name of Darius into

𐎧𐎠𐎧.† That the Persian name of Xerxes contained the sound of a *v*, which was omitted by the Greeks, having no sign for it in their alphabet, as in *Αραξης* for *Veorokeshe* or *Varakshe*, seems to be proved by the different spelling of the same name, if at all the names *Ασσουηπος*, *Οξυαρης*, *Οξυαρτης* and *Αξαρης* (in *Κυαξαρης*) are only various modifications of the name *Ξερης*, as also *Απροξαρης*, *Απραξαρης*, *Απραξαστης*, appear only to be modifications of the name *Απροξερης*, or *Απραξερης*, with the prefix, *Art* or *Arđ*, 'brave, magnanimous, mighty. Vide *Herodotus*, vi. 98. However, as I possess but a slight knowledge of Oriental languages, I shall not assert anything positive in that respect, and only add that Mr. Silvestre de Sacy subsequently acknowledged to me that he had found every attempt to assign to the character in question another value ineffectual. It is needless to say more on the manner in which I gradually discovered the value of all the other characters, as it is evident, from what I have related, that I proceeded in an analytical, and never in an arbitrary way. I have only to observe that though I may hope I have succeeded in deciphering the alphabet of the first species of cuneiform writing, merely by a logical method, founded on a comparison of all analogous inscriptions, and the *various combinations of their characters; yet the task of the decipherer must not be confounded with that of the *183 translator, and a completely satisfactory interpretation of all those inscriptions cannot be expected from me; the more so as there exist only fragments of both grammar and dictionary of the language in which the inscriptions are written. I must content myself with having proved that Zend is the language of the first species of cuneiform writing, and having deciphered its alphabet, a few characters excepted, on sure principles."

Dr. Grotefend next proceeds to enumerate the results of his labours, which are of the greatest interest in an historical point of view.

† The name of Darius in Daniel, chap. vi., is pointed 𐎧𐎠𐎧 *Dariavesh*, or *Daryavesh*, a strong confirmation of the antiquity and authenticity of the vowel points, the book of Daniel itself, and the Zend language discovered by Anquet Duperron.—B.

I. All the known cuneiform inscriptions of the first three species of writing (those of the third species found at Babylon excepted) relate to Cyrus, Darius, Hystaspes, and his son Xerxes ; therefore all the edifices on which those inscriptions are seen owe their origin to those kings ; and the bas-reliefs attest the civilization, manners, and taste of the Persians of those times. In order to set this matter in a clearer point of view, Dr. Grotefend specifies the place where each inscription was found, with the sovereign to whom it relates.

In the beginning of 1815, the director of the public imperial library at St. Petersburg communicated to Dr. Grotefend a cuneiform inscription copied by Sir Gore Ouseley from a pillar of the ruins in the vicinity of a village called Murghab, 52 miles distant from Persepolis. By comparing it with the Persepolitan inscriptions already deciphered, Dr. Grotefend found it composed of four words in the first three species of cuneiform writing, and its first word also at the beginning of the inscriptions I and K of Niebuhr. According to the analogy of the Persepolitan inscriptions, the second word must be a name, and the third and fourth the titles of king and sovereign. This name contains six characters in the first species of writing, which in Sir Gore Ouseley's copy would give the name *Zushudsh*. But the horizontal wedges of *D* appear to be so long, that it might well be conjectured it was not drawn over two, but over three perpendicular wedges, by which *D* becomes *â* or *é*. The first and third characters Dr. Grotefend had explained first in his alphabetical table by * *z* and *sh*, * 184 because then he considered them as equivalent with some similar character : but a closer examination convinced him that they are different. He therefore considers the first as a *K*, and the third as a double consonant *Sr*, † and reads the inscription (see No. 5) as follows :

Édo . Kúsrúésh . Khshchióh. ákhéochóshóh.

Dominus . Cyrus . rex . orbis rector.

† The annexed alphabetical table has in consequence been rectified accordingly.—B.

That the name of Cyrus was to be looked for in that inscription appeared to Dr. Grotefend the more probable, as in the other two species of writing the name is only expressed by three characters, which can scarcely design any longer name. The circumstance that in this name, as written in the two other species, no character is found corresponding with any one in the name of Hystaspes, Darius, and Xerxes, may be accounted for by supposing that the names of the Persian kings, being originally appellative, were expressed differently in different languages; which, as well as the mode of denoting the title of king by a monogram, has impeded Dr. Grotefend from deciphering the two other species of writing.

The name of Cyrus, which he thought he discovered in that inscription, made him of course very curious to know whether the ruins near Murghab might have been a place of abode of Cyrus, when Mr. Morier's Travels were communicated to him, in which he was not only surprised with a copy of the same inscription (though less correct than that of Sir Gore Ouseley), but found also the ruins described in such a manner that he could not but suppose that they were the remains of Pasargadæ, as Mr. Morier also appears to have suspected.

I omit, as not immediately relating to the present subject, the investigation in which Dr. Grotefend enters to prove, by the statements of ancient authors compared with those of Messrs. Macdonald and Morier, that those ruins are really the remains of the capital of Cyrus, and that the singular building a drawing of which is given by Mr. Morier, page 145 of his Travels, is the tomb of that *185 monarch. I shall only add, that in establishing these two points Dr. Grotefend seems to have completely succeeded, and thereby shown that the manner in which he at first, on the mere inspection of the inscription, made out the name of Cyrus, though bold, was nevertheless correct. I return to Dr. Grotefend's enumeration of the different inscriptions relating to Darius and Xerxes.

Two monuments found in Egypt belong to this class; the fragment with the Persian head and the hawk's wing, published

by Denon (*Voyage*, pl. 124), and the urn with cuneiform writing, accompanied by Egyptian characters, published by Count de Caylus (*Recueil d'Antiquités*, vol. v., pl. 30). Both inscriptions are in the first three species of cuneiform writing; the first contains the words *Darius the brave king*. With respect to the second Mr. Silvestre de Sacy entertained some doubts at first; but after a close examination of the original he acknowledged that it contained the words *Xerxes the brave king*. (See No. 4.) By those monuments the Egyptians showed their veneration for those two Persian kings, who wished to repair the cruelties committed by Cambyses. The hawk's wing on the first monument is the symbol of the apotheosis of Darius, an honour which, as Diodorus reports in his first book, was not bestowed on any other living king than him.

From the Persepolitan inscriptions Dr. Grotefend mentions first, for the similarity of their contents with the two preceding, the inscriptions on the king's cloak, which Le Bruyn (No. 133) assures us that he recomposed from the broken pieces. These are fragments of two inscriptions on both kings the figures of whom had been near each other in the first three species, but which Le Bruyn has so preposterously joined into one inscription that they must be read from below; so that the fourth to the first line contain the inscription on Darius, and the seventh to the fifth that on Xerxes. The inscription on Darius is, at least in the first species of writing, almost complete, and contains in the fourth and third lines pretty distinctly the following words:

* *Dârheush. K...h. eghré. góshâspâhe. bân. âkheóchóshóh.*

*186 *Darius. rex. fortis. Hystaspis. filius. orbis rector.*

The inscription on Xerxes can only be completed by the comparison of all the fragments of the three species of writing, since they are mostly fragments of different words. Compared with the above explained inscription, and with Niebuhr's complete copies E, F, G, the following contents can be ascertained: *Xerxes, rex fortis, Darii regis filius, orbis rector.*

Somewhat more diffuse than those are the inscriptions above

the figures of the kings on the doors inside of the buildings. The inscriptions on Darius (*Voyage de Niebuhr*, vol. ii., plate 24, B, C, D) are from the building *g* (plates 18 and 26); and those on Xerxes (*g*, F, E,) from the building T. This circumstance confirms Niebuhr's remark (page 116), who from the external appearance and the different structure of the buildings argued their being of different origin; but it shows also that he mistook the more ancient for the later one. The building *g* was unquestionably a palace of Darius, as is proved both by the inscriptions on the windows and the above-mentioned B, C, D, which equally relate to that king. Only on the south-west corner of that building stands a stone more than twenty feet high, at the top of which is Le Bruyn's great inscription, No. 131, which relates to Xerxes, and the contents of which are almost the same with the inscription A of Niebuhr on the fore-side of the principal terrace on the esplanade. But this stone is, as Le Bruyn says, to be referred to a later period, which, according to Dr. Grotfend's explanation of the inscription, was that when Xerxes, previous to the construction of the remaining edifices, ascended the throne of his father and received the oath of allegiance from all his courtiers, and presents from the deputies of all the nations subject to him. On Darius there is no other inscription besides the above mentioned, except H, I, K, L of Niebuhr (plate 31), which is cut on a stone twenty-six feet long and six feet high, about the middle of the principal wall towards the south. Other cuneiform inscriptions are dispersed all over the ruins of Persepolis, which prove that those buildings are the works of Darius and Xerxes, having been begun *by the former, and considerably increased but not finished by the latter, since in his buildings there are *187 still stones without inscriptions.† The twelve inscriptions on the pilasters at the principal entry have never been well copied, on account of the minuteness of the writing and

† A highly interesting and learned explanation of the antiquities of Persepolis is given by Professor Heeren in the work to which Dr. Grotfend's paper forms an appendix.—B.

inaccessible situation ; but besides those there are many other inscriptions of which no copy has ever been published. It remains to be seen what may be gained from the literary treasures which Sir William Ouseley is said to have brought home from Persia, and to what species of cuneiform writing those inscriptions belong which he has partly carried to England, and partly copied on the spot.

Professor O. G. Tychsen's opinion that at least the large palace L might owe its origin to the Arsacides, Dr. Grotefend finds too bold ; but the ruins of Naksi Roostam appear to him to be only of the time of the Sassanides, as there are no cuneiform inscriptions seen on them. Though Chardin (*Voyages, édition de Langlès*, vol. ii., page 174) says that under the figures of Roostam there were two inscriptions, one of which of fifteen lines contained cuneiform characters like those of Persepolis, Kämpfer (*Amœnitates exoticæ*, page 319) and other travellers mention only the inscription of twenty lines, which seems to be Pehlevi.

II. The language of the first species of cuneiform writing is Zend : therefore the Zend language, discovered by Anquetil Duperron, is not forged, any more than the Pehlevi and Parsi dialects are ; and in consequence we may also consider the *Zend Avesta* as a genuine work, and judge by it of the religious ideas of the ancient Persians. Although the language of the deciphered inscriptions does not completely agree with the forms and inflexions of the language of the *Zend Avesta*, as given by Anquetil Duperron, because the Zend during the time it flourished must have experienced many variations ; still, the degree of conformity alone, which on a comparison of the language of the inscriptions with that of the manuscripts of the *Zend Avesta* may be observed, proves the former existence of

* the Zend language, as Mr. Silvestre de Sacy's explanation of the Sassanian inscriptions† has demonstrated that Pehlevi flourished some centuries after it. It is even possible that the Zend alphabet published by Anquetil

† In the very learned work *Mémoires sur diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, Paris, 1793, 4to.

Duperron might have been in use in the time of the ancient Persian kings, and have been written from the right to the left, while cuneiform writing followed the contrary direction. The last being as inconvenient for common use as it is appropriate for inscriptions on stone, Dr. Grotefend argues that it was only used on monuments, amulets, seals, &c. as a sacred writing, and its two fundamental strokes might even have had originally some mystical meaning. That this sacred writing was written from the left to the right, while the direction of the writing in common use was from the right to the left, Dr. Grotefend accounts for, from the custom of the Orientals of writing while sitting with their legs folded under them, in which position the direction from the right to the left is the most natural and most commodious; whereas, on monuments the eye prefers a contrary direction. This was the case in Egypt, where the hieroglyphics were written from the left to the right, as Dr. Grotefend remarked by the comparison of some analogous inscriptions placed in a square; while common writing was written from the right to the left. But if cuneiform writing, like the hieroglyphics, were a sacred writing only used on monuments, &c., it must at the fall of the Persian empire have lost its consequence, and in course of time have become wholly obsolete. It may perhaps have still been known in the time of the Sassanides, because the contents of the inscriptions at Nakshi Roostam are copied after those of Persepolis: but it is very unlikely that that writing could still be read in the fourth century of the Hegira, as it is asserted in the Cufic inscriptions explained by Mr. Silvestre de Sacy.

III. The deciphered inscriptions speak only of Cyrus, Hystaspes, Darius, and Xerxes, and of the three last as grandfather, father, and son, but nowhere give the title of king to Hystaspes; whereas, the names of the two last appear also on Egyptian monuments, where even a symbol of apotheosis is joined to that of Darius. By this the history of the Persian *kings as preserved by the Greeks is completely confirmed, and cannot be refuted either by the corrupt *189
traditionary history of the modern Persians, or by the

incoherent accounts of the Biblical writers. The Greek history, notwithstanding the perversion it may have experienced, contains so much internal evidence of its veracity, that Dr. Grotendorf considers its correspondence with the inscriptions as a great proof of the exactness of his deciphering. Although the expectations formed by the learned of coming at important facts relative to the ancient history of Persia, by deciphering the cuneiform inscriptions, have not hitherto been completely gratified, yet enough has certainly been done to attach a character of great interest to Dr. Grotendorf's labours, and to excite our wishes for their further prosecution.

Professor Heeren, to whose work Dr. Grotendorf's paper is annexed, adds some remarks to it, of which I shall here give the substance.

At the point, he observes, where the reading and interpreting of cuneiform inscriptions now stand, any further progress can scarcely be made until the learned shall have acquired a more perfect knowledge of the ancient languages of Persia, especially of the Zend, than it was hitherto possible by the scanty fragments of grammars and vocabularies published by Anquetil Duperron. Dr. Grotendorf's labours, however, independent of other results, lead us far into the history of alphabetical writing, that most important of all human inventions. Cuneiform writing is evidently in its elements so simple, that it cannot but be acknowledged as being originally alphabetical. It cannot be derived from a symbolical writing; for this must in its very origin bear the characteristics of variety, which an alphabet derived from it would also preserve. Dr. Grotendorf has shown that it is not strictly syllabic; nor can it be conceived how it could be derived from a syllabic writing. The first species of cuneiform writing, especially, appears to Professor Heeren to bear in a remarkable manner the very characteristic of the infancy of alphabetical writing, in the quantity of characters in so many single words; which circumstance shows that it was anxiously spelt after pronunciation.

* 190 This seems already to be less the case with the second and third species; and from that alone * Professor

Heeren thinks these last to be of a less ancient origin, though their characters be more complicated.

Cuneiform writing is undoubtedly of Asiatic origin: it differs so completely from Egyptian, both hieroglyphical and alphabetical writing (as far as we are acquainted with the last by the inscriptions of Rosetta), that there is not even room for any comparison between them. The discoveries hitherto made in Persia and at Babylon prove that this writing had been adopted by several nations, with such variations, however, that from its two fundamental strokes they formed new alphabets. Its origin is certainly much remoter than that of the Persian empire, since it exists already on the monuments in Persia in three different alphabets. But to fix precisely where this writing took its origin is now almost impossible. However, as the language of the first species, the simplest of all, is Zend, we must feel inclined to consider Media, where that language and the doctrine of Zoroaster† were national, as the country in which it was invented. But when, on the other hand, we observe cuneiform writing on the remains of Babylon, which are certainly also of a very remote age, we may be easily disposed to consider this writing as of Aramean origin. This conjecture acquires some weight from the probability that the writing which the Greeks and Persians called *Assyrian* is no other than cuneiform writing. Professor Heeren infers this principally from the passage in Herodotus iv. 87, where two columns are mentioned on which Darius, after having passed the Bosphorus in his Scythian expedition, caused the names of the nations in his army to be cut, on one in Assyrian, and on the other in Greek writing. As cuneiform writing was generally used by the Persians for inscriptions on monuments, it is not likely that

† Professor Heeren proves in his work, in a very satisfactory manner, that Zoroaster was not, as is the common opinion, contemporary with Darius Hystaspes, but anterior to the Persian monarchy. He does not, however, more precisely fix the time when he lived; for this he refers to Professor Christian Theodor Tychsen's *Memoir De Religionum Zoroastricarum apud veteres Gentes Vestigiis*, published in *Comment. Soc. Gotting.*, vol. xi., page 112, in which it is made to appear that Zoroaster's reformation took place during the reign of Cyaxares I., about seventy years before Cyrus.

Darius would have employed another kind of writing on his columns.

* 191

**Explanation of the Plates.*

With Dr. Grotefend's consent, Professor Heeren extracted from the different memoirs which the former had laid before the Academy of Sciences at Gottingen the whole apparatus for reading inscriptions of the first species of cuneiform writing.

No. I. according to his explanation contains the Zend cuneiform alphabet arranged not in the grammatical order, but according to the progressive complication of the characters from the two fundamental strokes. Such an arrangement can scarcely fail of throwing some light upon the origin and formation of this alphabet.

The value of the Zend characters is expressed in Roman and modern Persian letters. However, as the modern Persian writing has no particular characters for vowels, they could only be explained by Roman letters. The last sign is the abbreviation used for the title of King, *Khshehioh*, which seems to be composed of the first and last characters of that word.

Next to the alphabet is a column containing the errors of copies, where N. denotes Niebuhr, and Le B. Le Bruyn. Both by the deciphering of the alphabet itself, and especially by the comparison of the copies of Niebuhr, Le Bruyn, Chardin, &c., Dr. Grotefend discovered a number of errors, which, from the condition of the inscriptions and the circumstances under which they were copied, could not possibly have been avoided. It was necessary to point out those errors; otherwise characters would be met with in the copies, the deciphering of which might be searched for in vain in the alphabet. They are ranged in such a manner, that next to each character the various incorrect modes of its writing may be seen.

No. II. In order to diminish the difficulty which might still be experienced in reading, Professor Heeren added this specimen, which he extracted from Mr. Silvestre de Sacy's *Lettre à M. Millin sur les Inscriptions des Monumens Persépolitains*.

* Nos. III., IV., V. In the second edition of his paper Dr. Grotendorf added these specimens, Professor Heeren * 192 says, partly for the sake of illustrating what the former had observed on cuneiform writing in general; partly to prove that the first three species, if read from the left to the right, correspond with each verbally, and that each is alphabetical where several characters unite for the formation of one word, and where only the title of king is expressed by a monogram, with or without inflexion. No. III. contains the already furnished specimen for reading in the three species of writing. No. IV. is the inscription of an Egyptian urn, published by Count de Caylus; and No. V. the inscription from the ruins of Pasargadæ, rectified after the copy of Sir Gore Ouseley. By these specimens it may be observed how Dr. Grotendorf discovered the division of the words in the second and third species, even when there was no mark of separation; and how he was able, without yet having deciphered any part of them, to translate a good many single words by the help of the first species, and also to discover the confusion created by Le Bruyn in joining preposterously two inscriptions together in his No. 133.

Nos. VI. and VII. Two specimens of the fourth species, copied from Babylonian bricks. According to Dr. Grotendorf's table of comparison of all the known specimens of brick inscriptions, none of the two varieties here given has ever been published, though that in No. VII. be the very commonest one. It is copied after eleven bricks perfectly similar and well preserved; and No. VI. after a single but perfectly preserved specimen, which is very seldom the case with bricks having inscriptions of three lines.

No. VIII. Another specimen of the fourth species, copied in the size of the original from one of the largest and finest Babylonian cylinders known, belonging to Mr. Hine.

CHARLES BELLINO.

Bagdad, 29th March, 1818.

* P.S.—Since the above was written, I have received a * 193 letter from Dr. Grotefend, in which he informs me that by the copies of two Babylonian inscriptions of the third species, which I had sent him some months ago, he has discovered, on comparing them with the great London inscription, that the fourth species is in fact the same as, or at most a variety of, the third, the difference between both being about like that which exists between the Roman character and the black letter. It is with great pleasure I add that Dr. Grotefend has nearly finished deciphering the second species.

C. B.

11th April.

[NOTE.—This article is valuable as showing with what difficulties scholars had to contend at the time it was written, and how much they were in the dark even on the manner of reading, not to say understanding the meaning of characters the decipherment of which had then just been attempted. The ingenious attempts at reading by Grotefend alluded to, have been crowned with success, but his lists of tribute registered on the obelisk of Nimrud were only published 34 years afterwards, namely, in 1852, at Göttingen, although Lassen had printed his celebrated dissertation on the Old Persian cuneiform inscriptions in 1838. These two scholars must be considered the first pioneers and discoverers in the art of reading and interpreting the cuneiform writings; Ménant, Oppert, Rawlinson, Westergaard, &c. followed in their wake and perfected what they had begun, each of them giving to the world the fruits of his own researches. The first-named two scholars published, mostly in connection with each other—“*Les Fastes de Sargon, Roi d'Assyrie*,” Paris, 1861; “*Textes Assyriens*,” Paris, 1861; “*Briques de Babylone*,” Paris, 1861; “*Recueil d'Alphabets cunéiformes*,” Paris, 1860; but “*Das Lautsystem des Altpersischen*,” in 2 vols., Berlin, 1847, was published by the latter alone, as well as his “*Etat actuel du Dechiffrement des Inscriptions cunéiformes*,” Paris, 1861; his “*Eléments de la Grammaire Assyrienne*,” Paris, 1860, and his “*Expédition Scientifique en Mesopotamie*,” Paris, 1863. Sir H. Rawlinson (Col., C.B., &c.) has as early as 1846 written in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* his “*Persian Cuneiform Inscriptions at Behistun deciphered and translated*,” and has afterwards added several *Memoirs* on the same subject. Westergaard's researches were chiefly published in the *Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord*, where his articles on “*The Deciphering of the Second Achæmænian or Median Species of Arrow-*

headed Characters" was inserted as early as 1844. The old scholars are gradually departing, but new ones are stepping into their shoes. Mr. Smith has vigorously taken up the study of the Assyrian language, and has already published several works, the principal of which is perhaps "The Chaldæan Account of the Deluge." The thousands of Assyrian tablets preserved in the British Museum alone would be sufficient to engage the labours of numerous scholars for many years ; new ones are being dug up, and Dr. Andreas will probably discover, during his journey of exploration, a number of inscriptions in places hitherto unsuspected to contain any, and will take fresh copies of several which have already been studied but not perfectly translated. Here are riches of ancient literature, chiefly of historical and religious character, some of them trilingual, *i.e.* the Royal Edicts of the Persian Kings, which fortunate circumstance greatly facilitated their interpretation; but the mass of all the cuneiform inscriptions, which are now divided into four or five classes and embrace several languages, now partly reconstructed from these monuments, must wait for a long time to come till they are all translated, because only few scholars have the perseverance, the love of science, the means and the leisure to concentrate their whole minds on the study of languages, promising beyond the consciousness of having done service to science and promulged some ancient records, no other reward than a little fame, but requiring more diligence than other subjects, and not seldom occasioning controversies of the most disagreeable kind.—ED.]

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* IX.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE CAVES NEAR BAUG,
CALLED THE PANCH PANDOO.†

By Captain F. DANGERFIELD, of the Bombay Military
Establishment.

Read on the 28th July, 1818.

BEFORE entering on a description of these caves, a slight sketch of the wild, mountainous, woody tract of country in which they are situated may perhaps be desirable.

This mountainous tract is contained between the twenty-second and twenty-third degrees of north latitude, ranging for a considerable extent in the direction of the course of the Nurbuddah, leaving, however, generally an intermediate plain, about ten or twelve miles broad, between it and the banks of that river. In this range few towns or villages are to be found, it being for the most part peopled by Bheels of the wildest description, few having any fixed habitations.

In the midst of this range, in north latitude $22^{\circ} 22' 15''$, and in nearly 75° east longitude, is the small town of Baug, three miles and a quarter S.S.E. of which the caves are found.

The town is situated at the foot of a low range of hills about one hundred feet high, which forms the western boundary of a pleasant valley extending north and south, about three miles, by an average breadth of one mile. It contains, within a small area surrounded by a low mud wall, about four hundred houses. At the summit and extremity of the range near which it is placed, overlooking the town, is a rudely built stone fort now falling fast to decay. The ascent to it is by a small footpath, very steep.

Baug is on the road leading from Guzerat to Malwa, by
* 195 what is termed * the Oudipoor Pass. From this place
the two roads leading into the latter province diverge ;

† With three drawings.

one constituting the Tanda Ghaut to the eastward, the other the Tirrella Ghaut, leading to Indore, Oujein, or by Rajghur to the northward : this last is by far the best carriage road.

Previous to the selast twenty years of anarchy and desolation, Baug is said to have contained between two and three thousand houses, and to have covered a considerable portion of the plain in which it is situated ; but, with the exception of two or three pagodas, few vestiges now remain to point out its former extent.

As a town, however, Baug does not claim any antiquity, it having risen into importance about a hundred years ago, from becoming the occasional residence of Jassoo Baumeah, a celebrated freebooter, who possessed himself of the Kotra district, and who built as places of security for his followers and plunder the forts of Soosaree, Baug, and Kooksee.

Jassoo Baumeah becoming by his bold depredations, which extended not only into Malwa, but even to the Deckan and Guzerat, so formidable as to excite the serious attention of the Mahratta princes, he was besieged by a large army during forty days in the fort of Kooksee ; at the end of which period, finding the place no longer tenable, he made his escape to Baug. To this last place he was pursued, and again besieged ; but not being able there to make any stand, he retired to the mountains, from which period nothing further of him is known. His country was divided among the conquerors ; Baug, with its dependent villages, falling to the share of Scindiah, to whom it still belongs.

The jungle for some distance round Baug is very open, and the hills do not rise to any considerable height, seldom exceeding one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet. They appear for the most part to be composed of the floetz and transition rocks, chiefly trap and flint slate ; and both these and the valleys abound with iron ore, the brown ironstone, and clay ironstone.

There are at this place some iron works on a small scale, consisting of three smelting furnaces and three forges ; giving employment to twenty-four blacksmiths, and many men,

women and children, in transporting, *pounding, and *196 sifting the ore, which produces about fifty or sixty per cent. of iron of an indifferent quality, chiefly arising from the imperfect fusion and forging of the metal. It is at once wrought into ploughshares weighing about two pounds each. From the little demand, however, the ore is only wrought about three or four months in the year. Each forge pays forty rupees to Government.

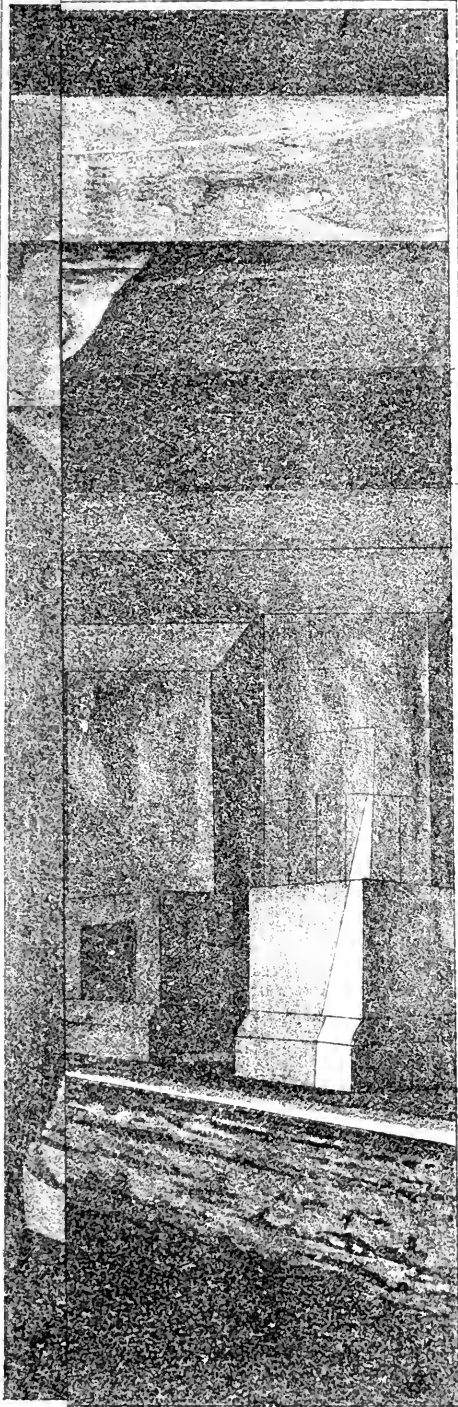
The whole of the alluvial soil, which on the hills seldom exceeds six feet in depth, is for ten or twelve miles round Baug strongly coloured with oxide of iron.

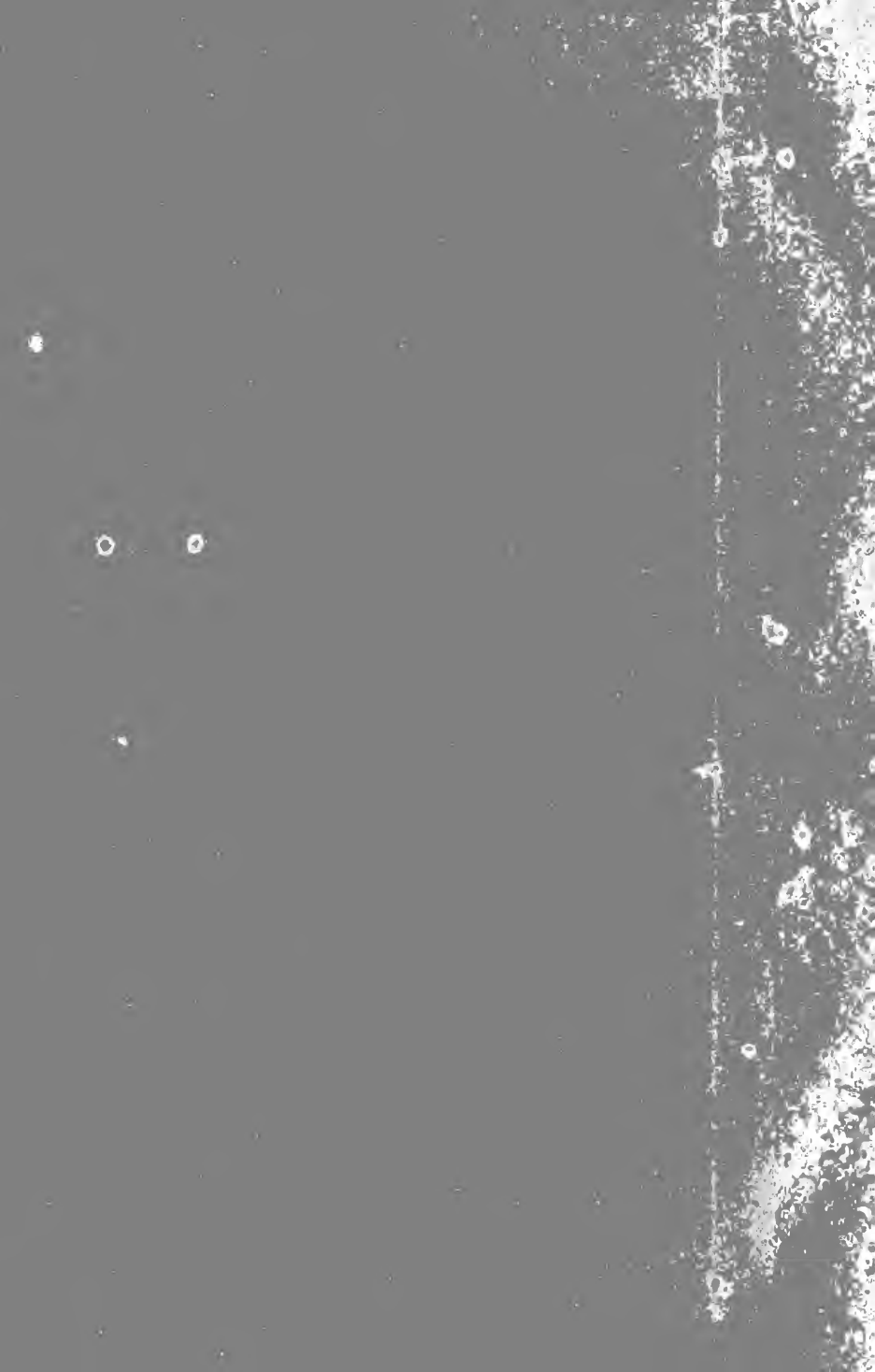
On leaving Baug to visit the caves, you proceed for three miles along the high road to Kooksee, when turning to the left a small footpath, after a quarter of a mile, leads you across the Waugrey river to the hills in which these caves are cut, and which rise close to the left bank of that river.

This range of hills does not exceed in height one hundred and fifty feet, having a direction nearly N.N.E. and S.S.W., the entrance to the caves facing the westward. The lower half of the hill is sloping, but steep; the upper perpendicular. The hill in which these caves are excavated is composed entirely of horizontal strata of sandstone and claystone alternating with each other.

The sandstone, which has an argillaceous cement, is coloured with oxide of iron varying from the deep red to perfect white. With its colour vary also its hardness and the fineness of its grain, the dark red being fine-grained and tolerably hard, the white coarse-grained, and so soft as to be rubbed to pieces between the fingers, and containing many organic impressions. Different shades of the red sandstone occupy the upper or perpendicular part of the hill, with thin layers of the claystone interposed. A broad stratum, however, of the claystone runs about six feet above the top of the caves; and it may here be observed, that it is solely from this stratum that the rock has given way beneath, causing the destruction of those caves hereafter mentioned.

The caves occupy the centre of the hill, commencing at its





perpendicular part. It is through the lower half of the caves, for about six feet * from their floor, that the stratum of white sandstone runs ; this, however, reposes on the old *197 red sandstone.

The upper part of the caves is mostly formed of the light red sandstone.

The caves are four in number ; one only of which, the most northern one, can however be said to be in a state of preservation.

Immediately after crossing the river you ascend up the sloping part of the hill, to the first or most northern cave, by a flight of seventy rudely formed stone steps, and arrive at a small landing-place for the most part overhung by the hill. This bears the marks of having once been formed into a regular veranda, supported by columns, the roof plastered and ornamented, as shown by its fallen fragments. The front of the cave still retains this plaster. At each end of this veranda is a small room containing small ill-covered figures, evidently of modern workmanship, that on the left being a female one much mutilated, that on the right a bad representation of Ganesa.

You enter this cave at the centre, by an unornamented rectangular doorway five feet and a half wide. There is also a similar one to the right, but much choked with the fallen fragments of the roof. The cave derives its sole light from those two entrances ; consequently, to examine its remoter parts, the aid of torches is necessary ; and as tigers, which abound in this country, have been found in the interior of the caves, this precaution becomes the more requisite.

On entering the cave you are impressed with its gloomy grandeur : it is not, however, till you have been a few seconds in it that you perceive its great extent. The open area of this cave is a regular square, measuring eighty-four feet each side. Its height is fourteen feet and a half. The roof is supported by four ranges of massy columns ; the two centre ones being round ; those on the right and left square at the base, but at the heights of five and eight feet formed into hexagons and dodecagons. The roof, but no other part of this cave, bears

the marks of having been once ornamented with paintings in square compartments of about one foot. From the frequent smoke of torches, however, sufficient of the design is not at present apparent to admit of any judgment on its merits.

* Passing between the centre range of columns, to the *198 end of the cave, you enter an oblong recess, or veranda, measuring twenty feet by twelve, open in front towards the cave, and supported by two hexagonal columns. In niches on the remaining three sides of this apartment are carved, in bold relief, the figures of which the accompanying (No. 1) is a sketch, the group A being at each end, and the figures B and C on each side the doorway of the inner apartment described below. The centre or female figure measures nine feet and a half high; and the male ones to the right and left nine feet. Those on each side the doorway (B and C) measure also nearly nine feet.

From this recess, or veranda, you enter in its back part, through a small doorway, an inner apartment measuring twenty feet by seventeen; in the centre of which, cut out of the solid rock, is what the natives term "The Churn," being a regular hexagon of three feet three inches each side, surmounted by a plain dome reaching nearly to the roof, to which it is joined by a small square ornament.

Around the large cave also, on three sides, are small apartments, called the *Dookans* or shops, each measuring nine feet in depth, with a separate entrance towards the cave. There are seven of these to the right, six to the left, and four at the end of the cave, two on each side of the recess.

Entering the second to the left of these small apartments, you perceive, at about four feet from the ground in the opposite wall, a small oblong excavation of about three feet by two; creeping through which you enter a small apartment of about twelve feet square, in the opposite wall of which is a similar excavation leading to a like apartment; and so on successively for five small rooms, gradually ascending the hill, the floor of each inner apartment being on a level with the lower part of the entrance from the outer one.





These secret apartments appear originally either to have led, or to have been intended to lead, to the top of the hill : at present, however, they receive neither light nor air, excepting from the first-entrance.

The cave I have described, which is the largest, though in the best pre*servation by far of the whole, still bears the marks of rapid decay. The shafts of five columns *199 are wanting ; and a kind of terrace has been raised with their ruins. The left-hand circular column on entering has also once shared the same fate ; but has been rebuilt with rude fragments of the same stone, and afterwards plastered to resemble the other pillars. This plaster has, however, almost entirely given way, leaving the rude construction of the column apparent.

Leaving this first cave, and proceeding southward twenty or thirty paces by a narrow ledge round a projecting part of the hill, you enter a second cave, evidently never completed, the columns being left in a rude state with deep marks of the chisel still remaining. This cave is nearly the same in length as the first, by about half the depth. It has originally been open in front, but with the exception of a small part it is now choked up with large fragments of the hill from above. It contains little worthy of notice.

Leaving the second cave, and returning by the same road, you descend the stone stairs and proceed along the bottom of the hill southward for about a hundred yards, and then reascend by a rugged steep footpath to the third cave.

This cave, which measures eighty feet by sixty, has been nearly similar in its arrangement to the first ; but it is now in a ruinous state from the giving way of a great part of the roof, bearing down in its fall several beautiful columns. This cave, which has none of the gloominess of the first, has been once finished and decorated in a very superior style, and it is apparently the most ancient of the whole. It has some similar features with the other. In the inner apartment is the octagon called The Churn, mentioned in the first ; but it wants the recess, or veranda, with the sculptures.

The whole of the walls, roof, and columns of this cave have been covered with a fine stucco, and ornamented with paintings in distemper of considerable taste and elegance. Few colours have been used, the greatest part being merely in *chiaroscuro*; the figures alone, and the Etruscan border (for such it may be termed), being coloured with Indian red.

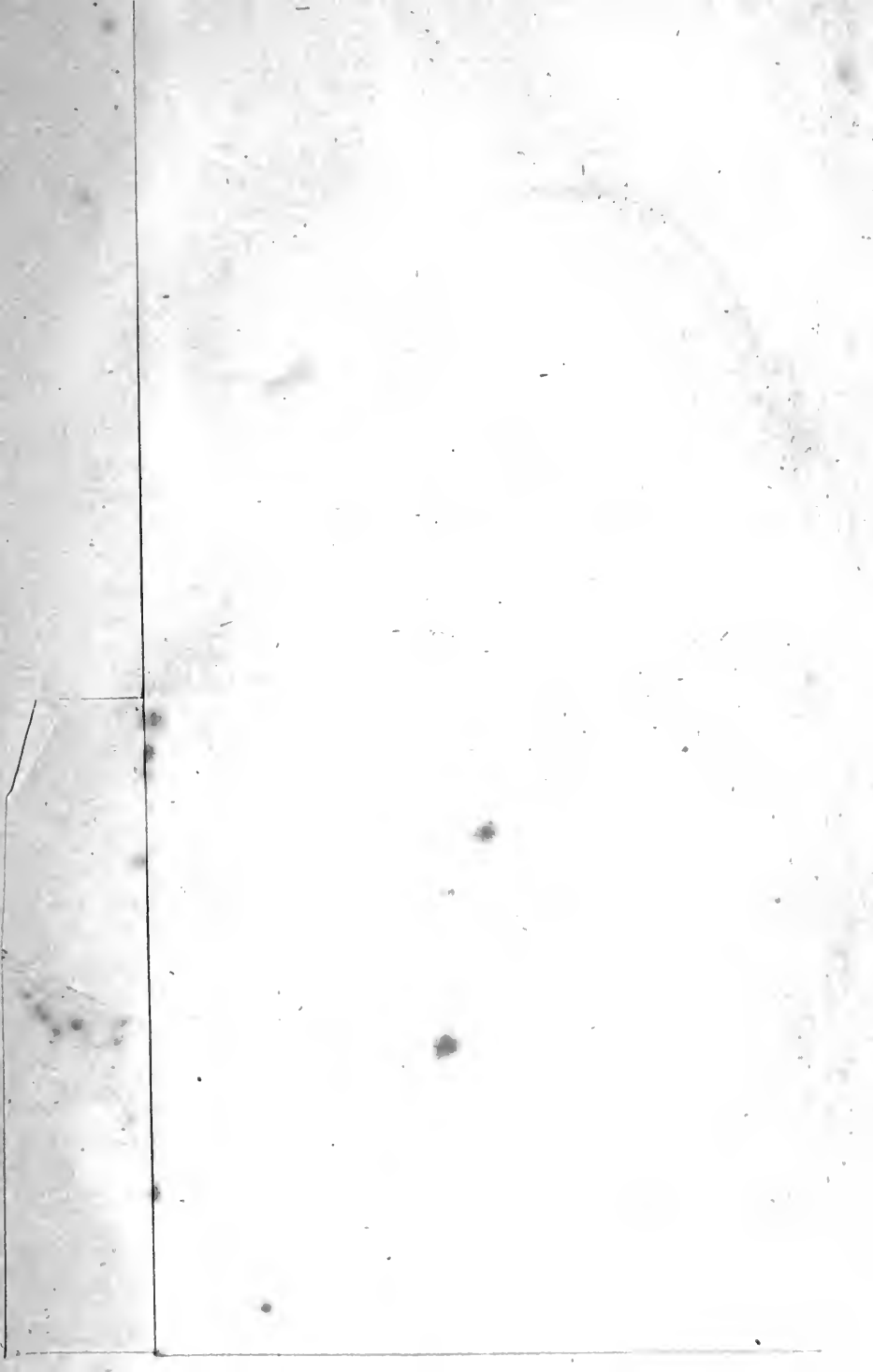
* On the walls near the top of the cave has been the * 200 border A (sketch No. 2), the greatest part of which, however, is now obliterated. The present sketch was taken from a small piece near the entrance, which is in tolerably good preservation.

The roof, it is easy to perceive by the falling fragments beneath, had once an elegant centring, with the remaining part divided into small square ornamented compartments filled up with designs of fruits, flowers, and the like. At present, however, these are so much obliterated as to prevent any correct judgment being formed of the merits of the design. By some few parts more perfect than the rest, they appear, however, to have been executed with considerable effect and correctness of light and shade. Some fruit, in the part to which I allude, had considerably the appearance of peaches and peach leaves grouped.

Surrounding the tops of the columns are many yet brilliant traces of the border B (sketch No. 2), which I have termed Etruscan, coloured as in the design. Beneath this are represented two dragons or animals somewhat resembling these (C), fighting, and the whole finished underneath with a festoon of small flowers now too indistinct to furnish a correct sketch.

On many places of the lower parts of the wall and columns have been painted male and female figures of a red or copper colour; the upper parts of the whole of which have, however, been intentionally erased. Such of the lower parts (the legs and feet) as remain, show them to have been executed in a style of painting far surpassing any thing in the art which the natives of India now possess.

Leaving this cave by the right-hand doorway, and proceeding a few paces further along the hill, you enter a fourth cave nearly





similar in dimensions and arrangement to the second. It has, however, been finished, and is falling fast to decay.

There appears at the extremity of this cave the rude commencement, or perhaps the ruins, of a fifth. It is not, however, sufficiently accessible, on account of the large fragments of fallen rock, to admit of any correct judgment of its former state.

* The above is a slight description of these caves from a short visit to them during a day's residence at Baug. * 201

In the total absence of books, or references of any description, it would be temerity in me to indulge in any speculations, or advance any opinion respecting the figures or other parts of these caves. This part of the subject I must therefore leave to the slight sketches which my time enabled me to make.

Concerning the origin or use of these caves the natives have no tradition. They derive their name from the same fabulous tradition as all remains of Hindu antiquity. They were excavated by the "Panch Pandoos," those celebrated heroes of Indian mythology to whom all wonders are referred.

In concluding I may remark that the jungle covering this mountainous tract presents (at least at this season of the year) nothing novel for the gratification of the botanist. The northern and the thickest parts consist for the most part of the teak (*Tectona grandis*, Thunb.) and blackwood trees (*Dalbergia latifolia*, Roxb.), with the *Feronia elephantum* and *Erythrina indica*, Linn. The more open parts consist chiefly of the *Butea frondosa*; the babool (*Acacia arabica*, Linn.), the gum tree (*Cordia obliqua*, Willd.), the bayr tree (*Zizyphus Jujuba*, Koenig), and *Morinda umbellata*; the digging the roots of the latter plant, for the use of the dyers, giving employment to many of the poorer class in the villages skirting the jungle.

Both this last and the *Morinda citrifolia* are cultivated also in many parts of this country. In one place there were several of the pudding-pipe trees (*Cassia fistula*, Linn.), but, as they were near the site of a ruined village, these were most probably not natives of this jungle.

Camp at Mhow, May, 1818.

NOTE BY MR. ERSKINE.

CAPTAIN DANGERFIELD having politely permitted me to add any observations to his paper which the subject suggests, I shall be excused for observing that it exhibits a very *complete account of a * 202 Bouddhist temple, and of the first excavation of that class that has been described in the country in which it is situated. It adds another to the examples of Bouddhist excavations found in India, in countries where we have no historical record that the religion of Bouddh ever existed, and where not a single individual of the sect is now to be found. That the excavations are Bouddhist there seems to be no reason to doubt. The figure and attitude of the contemplative Bouddh are not to be mistaken; the *Churna*, or as it is sometimes called, the *Daghop*, in this as in other Bouddhist temples, is the principal object of veneration; it is generally conical, and is considered as a tomb or mausoleum, containing the remains or any of the reliques, sometimes only a few hairs, of a Bouddh or Bouddhist saint, to whom the temple is dedicated. Another circumstance which marks the origin and design of the excavations is the number and arrangement of the small apartments round the temple, called *dookans* or shops: these we might expect to find in such a place: they are the cells of the priests, who are always found living in a monastic state round the chief Bouddhist temples in Siam, Pegu, and wherever the religion exists. The numerous smaller excavations at Kanara have the same object, as well as those at Karli. There is no trace of the Brahminical mythology in the whole excavation, except the mutilated figure of Gunesh at the entrance, which, as Captain Dangerfield remarks, is evidently of a later date. There are no unnatural or distorted human figures, nor any with many heads or limbs. The largest temple leading up to the principal object of veneration at Kanara and Karli is arched; at Bang it is flat; which might be owing either to choice, or to a necessity arising from the nature of the stone at Baug, which seems to be in some places deficient in strength.

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

NOTE.—It has been thought proper to subjoin the following letter from Captain DANGERFIELD to Sir JOHN MALCOLM, as it contains some further interesting particulars respecting remains of antiquity in Malwa, that have never been visited by Europeans.

Kurgoond, 24th April, 1819.

Dear General,

I have just returned from Wone, and start to-morrow towards Chiculda, which I expect to reach in five marches. I

was obliged to halt two days at Wone, to enable me to make even the slightest sketches of the pagodas, or notices of the inscriptions, of which there are several, few of which any person I can procure can make anything of. However, I have copied some of them as well as I could; but they are mostly very much worn out, and * appear never to have been cut very deep. From all I can as yet make out, they * 203 are *Jain* remains, certainly not Hindu; and are from seven hundred years upwards old. Thus much I have deciphered from the pedestals of some statues scattered about.

There is in one of the largest pagodas an immense statue in bold relief of thirteen feet high, a single block of granite, with similar ones of eight feet two inches high on each side. All these smaller ones have inscriptions on their pedestals, said, however, by the Shastries I got from Kurgoond to be *Muntrums*, which they were very unwilling to read or repeat. One, however, bears *Sumvit* 13; but this is beyond all probability without something else following. One pagoda (but which evidently differs from the rest) bears the name of Rajah Bular as the builder.

The town is entirely in ruins, and contains but seventy houses inhabited: these are in tolerable preservation. There are also eight large and four small pagodas, with vestiges of as many more.

The pagodas are of singular construction, of exquisite workmanship, and extreme superfluity of fine carving and ornaments of all kinds. They are of hewn granite without cement, but clamped with iron every three or four inches. Some of the blocks supporting the upper parts of the doorways and entablatures are fourteen or fifteen feet long, and proportionably broad and thick.

They were intentionally thus much destroyed by the Mahomedans; and most of the houses of the town are built with part of the materials.

The figures are ill-proportioned (in general), have curly hair, thick lips, very long ears, and are entirely naked, without string, bracelets, armlets, or any ornament, with the exception of one female figure with a species of sash. There are abund-

ance of small figures in relief, in the entablatures, columns, &c., well carved; and female figures also well executed, in general in graceful attitudes, support brackets, the capitals of the columns, and other parts of the building.

I have troubled you thus far in advance with a sketch of Wone. It is well worth looking at, though at first you experience a feeling of disap*pointment. It would require, * 204 however, many days to take good sketches and decipher the inscriptions, particularly the former, as both outside and inside there is scarcely an inch uncarved in any of them. I could not therefore attempt it, believing you would not like so much of my time devoted to this pursuit whilst my duty required me elsewhere: I have got, however, one or two scratches, which will perhaps convey some notion of their style of building and figures.

Yours, &c.,

(Signed) F. DANGERFIELD.

[NOTE.—See “Description of the Caves of Bagh, in Ráth,” by E. Impey, Esq., *Jour. Bo. Br. R. As. Socy.* Vol. V., pp. 543—573, where these caves are better described. I understand from Paṇḍita Bhagavánlál, who lately visited the caves, that the painting and writings in these caves are fast going to decay. Those at Ajaṇṭhá are more durable, whereas the Bagh cave paintings will, it is feared, be entirely obliterated after some years. The same gentleman has examined the sketches given here, and pronounces them to be inaccurate. See Fergusson’s *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, London, 1886, pp. 159, 160; and also *Tree and Serpent Worship*, by the same author, Introduction, p. 68.—Ed.]

* X.

* 205

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROVINCE OF CUTCH, AND
OF THE COUNTRIES LYING BETWEEN GUZERAT
AND THE RIVER INDUS :

WITH CURSORY REMARKS ON THE INHABITANTS, THEIR HISTORY,
MANNERS, AND STATE OF SOCIETY.

By Captain JAMES MACMURDO, Resident at Anjar.

Read 29th Sept. 1818.

Boundaries.

The province of Cutch is about one hundred and sixty miles in length from east to west, and nearly sixty-five in breadth from north to south. It is contained within the 68th and 70th degrees of east longitude, and the 22nd and 24th parallels of north latitude. The boundaries of Cutch are defined by nature in a more decided manner than those of almost any other country (not absolutely an island) with which I am acquainted. On the west is the easternmost branch of the Indus, and a barren waste of many miles dividing Cutch from Sindh; on the east is the Gulf of Cutch and the Salt desert called Run; on the north is the Sandy desert; while the sea washes the southern shores of the province. Such being its limits, it will be perceived that Cutch is insulated from every other country by water during the monsoon months, and in the fair weather by a desert tract varying from four to sixty miles in breadth. The whole of the northern frontier during the S.W. monsoon is covered with water, generally salt, and in no place sweet. This collection of waters is formed partly by the winds blowing the sea water up the Lukput river, so as to overflow part of the tract, and is completed by the falling of the rains, and *the flooding of some inferior streams which exist in the * 206 desert. After the monsoon abates, the waters retire both by the Lukput creek and to the eastward by the Gulf of

Cutch, leaving a marsh which gradually dries up, and yields a rich pasture, hereafter to be noticed.

Divisions.

The principal divisions of Cutch are—1st Ubrassa, and 2nd Gurrah, to the west; 3rd Pawur, and 4th Putchune, to the north; 5th Kanthi on the coast, and the south; and 6th Wagur, to the east.

This division of the province I should suppose to be ancient. The first district takes its name from Ubra, or Abra, the first Summa chieftain who settled in Cutch on the arrival of that caste of men from Sindh, whence they had fled to avoid the tyranny of the Soomrahs. This event took place before the end of the thirteenth century, and probably much earlier. The other divisions are possibly of an earlier date, as they are familiar in the most ancient legends of the country.

Name and Description.

In the *Pooranas* I am told that the country of Cutch is mentioned under the names of Catch and Catcha; that it is celebrated for the desert state in which it lay, and for the wildness of its inhabitants; and that (speaking according to Hindu computation) it was peopled in comparatively modern times. It is further said to have been barren and unproductive, until a celebrated religious Rooshi, who had long been absorbed in meditation and prayer on the banks of the Narrain Sirawar, or Lake of Narrain, despairing of finding his way from such a wilderness, subjected it by his power to the effects of fire. The earth everywhere sent forth flames, and the country was consumed; this was succeeded by luxuriant pasture, and in the course of time attracted erratic and pastoral tribes, who wandered throughout Cutch with their flocks. Such is the account that is given by the people themselves of the origin of the province as a peopled land: but I am not sufficiently master of the subject to trace this fable to its source. It is, * 207 however, to be remarked, that almost the * whole face of the country near the hills is covered with volcanic matter; the rocks of the mountains appear to have been rent and

split by the operation of fire; and their neighbourhood furnishes abundant and fine specimens of metallic scoria.

Through the centre of Cutch from east to west, and corresponding in some degree with the shape of the coast, runs a range of mountains of a moderate height. This range has generally the appellation of the Lunkhi or Lukhi Jubberl, or Mountain, although many of the remarkable hills of the range have distinct names. This mass of mountains, which divides Cutch longitudinally nearly into two equal parts, varies from one to eight miles in breadth. Throughout the whole extent there is little arable land excepting in the valleys, which generally consist of only a few acres. The hills are covered with a stunted brushwood, which is greedily devoured by numerous herds of goats and sheep reared among them. The Lunkhi is an entire mass of rock destitute of wood and soil, although trunks of decayed trees are found in abundance and sold for firewood, inducing a belief that these hills at some former period may have been clothed with timber of some kind. The general colour of the mountains is a rusty brown, which is natural to the rock, and a hill of entire white is often seen. The whole has a most confused and chaotic appearance, and conveys an idea of desolation and misery seldom experienced in wild and romantic countries. Little or no water is to be found throughout the Lukhi; for although numerous torrents descend both to the north and the south during the monsoon, yet they entirely fail with the rains; and those beds which do retain water derive it from springs below the hills, which are brackish and often unfit for use. Of this range the hill called Nunow is the most remarkable. It is in the figure of a sugar-loaf, nearly in the centre of Cutch, and is well known to navigators, who distinguish it from the sea under the name of Chigo; which, however, is a mistake. Another remarkable hill is Warra, lying to the eastward and northward of Nunow. The mountain is quite flat, and the edge of the whole extent, to a distant spectator, looks as if it had been drawn by a ruler, and so evenly defined as not to have a notch observable. *208

*To the north of the Lunkhi range is another run-

ning parallel, and in some places almost mixing with the former. The range in question, which has no particular name, can be traced from Kanmeer in Wagur on the east, as far west as Jharra, which borders on the desert dividing Cutch from Sindh. Here, as in the other, the remarkable hills are distinguished by names allusive either to their shape, colour, or some god or goddess supposed to inhabit their summits. The range now spoken of is not so connected as the Lukhi chain, and breaks off occasionally into detached hills, generally cones, and of considerable height. Towards the western side of the country the two ranges intermix, or are joined by a confused mass of hilly country, with irregular and small valleys everywhere intersecting it. In this chain, and about six miles north of Bhooj, is a large sugar-loaf hill called Jundria, from which all the millstones of Cutch are made.

The arable part of the province (generally speaking) consists of a valley formed between the two chains of mountains, the extensive plain between the Lunkhi and the sea, and inferior valleys formed by subordinate hills in the ranges. The plain running in from the coast is the most extensive, and is often twenty and even thirty miles broad, interspersed occasionally with detached hills. Close to the sea-beach is a high bank of sand, which extends from the Indus to the entrance of the Gulf of Cutch, and is called by the natives Chigo, which signifies in the Cutch dialect *a look-out place*. The bank in question resembles that on the coast of Coromandel, where, as in this instance also, the level of the country appears to the eye below that of the sea.

Along the north boundary, and skirting the desert, is a tract of land called the Bhunni; it extends directly along the northern frontier of Cutch, and is in few places less than seven miles broad. The Bhunni is never laid under cultivation, and produces most luxuriant pasturage. Cows and buffaloes in numerous herds are here fed; and the ghee made from their milk forms a considerable article of export. The proprietors and tenders of these herds, who are generally Charons, Rebarees, or Sindhi tribes of Mahomedans,

reside in small societies of six or eight families, which are * styled Wandhs or Nyces; and their huts are built of grass, which renders them easily removed or deserted * 209 when the state of the pasturage requires a change of situation. These people live here continually, and have little communication with the world. The Bhunni, as has been said, is the receptacle of the water from the monsoon torrents and the water of the Lukput river for three months in the year; but this being carried off, as has before been stated, leaves a marsh, which at one time forms an extensive meadow. The waters of the Indus are said in ancient times to have spread themselves over this tract, and to have formed the Lake of Narrain, or the Narrain-Sirawur, now a small fountain worshipped by Hindoos. Much later than the time now spoken of, however, and not a century ago, the water in this tract was quite fresh; and towards the westward, where the Indus is contiguous, rice was successfully cultivated. The water in this branch of that great river has, however, been failing for many years, and the Lukput branch utterly ruined a few years since by a dam erected by the Sindh government, which completely prevented the passage of the water to the sea, and spread it through their own territories for irrigation.

Soil and Productions.

I cannot venture to attempt a description of the soil or natural productions of Cutch in scientific terms; but I may say thus much, that few countries of similar dimensions offer a more interesting field for the geologist. Iron ore everywhere abounds; and that metal is worked to a considerable extent in many places. Specimens of the pyrites of iron and of the sulphate of iron have been found, the former in digging a well at Ghanithul in Wagur, and the latter at the village of Jhoorira to the westward of Bhooj, in the bed of the river Sone Chela. A species of wood-coal is found in the precipitous banks of a river near Bhooj, and can be traced at about twenty feet below the surface, in wells at a distance of several miles. The coal burns extremely well, and was used on experiment in the

public arsenal at Bhooj. I am informed that it is a singular instance of wood-coal having been found within the tropics. On a mountain called Shye, in Wagur, it was proposed some few years ago to build a fort, and in attempting to * sink *210 a well a bituminous earth was discovered; but the superstition of the natives caused the well to be filled up, and we are left in ignorance of its nature. Throughout the whole of Cutch petrifications of wood are found; but in the eastern parts of Wagur they abound. They are chiefly of the tree called by the natives the keejura and of milk-bush; the former is a singularly hard wood not unlike the tamarind.

On the borders of the chain of mountains, and about eighteen miles east of Lukput, the most westerly town in Cutch, is situated the village of Mhur: there is a small hill on which is a temple dedicated to a Hindoo goddess, named Assapoorā; which is, I believe, a variation of the more common Bhowany. In the neighbourhood of this temple is another hill: and although it has long ceased to emit flames, or even smoke, religious tradition and perhaps Hindoo writings have handed down the fact of its having been a volcano, and rendered it an object of worship or veneration among the natives of Cutch of every caste and description. In digging in the side of the hill in question a bituminous earth is found, and used as incense in the worship of Assapoorā. It has a disagreeable perfume, but is looked upon as more acceptable to the Davee than the more aromatic lobhan, being the earth produced by the body of a dyt, or giant, whom she slew on this spot. The earth is dug out in small pieces imbedded in the common soil, from which it separates perfectly.

From another hill in the immediate vicinity issues a small spring of water, which is surrounded by an artificial reservoir, and has the name of the Chachera Koond, from the goddess called Chachera, a variation of Assapoorā. The water of this reservoir is poured into pans formed in the sandy bed of a neighbouring torrent; and having remained there all night, in the morning the pans are covered with salt-like lumps and excrescences, as if an effervescence had taken place. These

with their moisture are put upon a fire and well boiled, when the fluid, with more water, is again deposited in the pans; and being in this manner three times exposed to the effects of fire, it is suffered to cool in large earthen pots, and forms alum of a tolerably good quality. The quantity thus made is regulated by the demand for the article. Some years it has amounted to several * hundred thousand maunds, and was exported to Guzerat and Bombay for the purposes of dyeing. Of late, * 211 however, it does not find a good market, perhaps owing to the exorbitant rise in the price, from three-quarters of a rupee to three rupees per maund, in the last fifteen years.† These alum works are exclusively the property of the government of Cutch.

Generally speaking, the soil of Cutch is a light clay, covered with a coarse sand, from one to four and six inches deep. Six or eight feet below the surface, in many places is found a clay of a perfectly white colour like lime, and in others we meet with a strong tough yellow clay mixed with small stones. In the former it is remarked that water is found most abundant, but not of the best quality; and in the latter, water of an excellent quality is generally got by penetrating through a thin bed of rock lying beneath it. In some of the plains near the hills excellent water is found by penetrating a sandstone which often lies within four feet of the surface; and in other plains wells have been sunk sixty and seventy feet deep without meeting with either water or stone of any kind. In Wagur the soil is more loamy than in any other part of Cutch; and in many instances under the hills throughout the province we meet with a rich soil thickly covered with a coarse kind of gravel, which seems in some way or other to aid vegetation. Extensive salt wastes, which are not uncommon, are frequently encrusted with a saline covering, and yield no vegetation.

The country is, properly speaking, destitute of wood. The common leem, peepul, and babool are met with at the villages occasionally. The tamarind and banyan are more rare. The

† Alum has lately fallen to 1½ rupee per maund.

mango tree is cultivated in particular places; and the cocanut is reared with great labour at a few places on the coast. Date trees are very common in many parts, and yield a fruit far inferior to that of Arabia, but better than any that I have met with in India. Impregnation of the female tree, by means of scattering the powder of the male flower upon that of the female, is immemorially practised.

Rivers.

The rivers in Cutch are more remarkable for their number than for their *size or utility. Few of them have any name, * 212 and those few are not generally known in the country.

I do not believe that there is a river in the province that has a stream which continues to flow throughout the year. Many are torrents which empty themselves the moment the rain subsides; and the greatest part are provided with springs at different situations of their course, which give rise to a stream that appears and disappears frequently before the channel terminates on the coast. The largest I have seen or heard of are two or three which fall into the sea between Moondra and Mandavee, and which had water in them in stream in April. The mountain torrents have generally high and precipitous banks, cut deep in the rocks by the rapidity of the current. A traveller may proceed for miles along the banks of these streams without being able to descend into their beds, if he has had the misfortune to lose the beaten path.

Like an island or a continent, Cutch sends its waters from the centre in every direction. The water on the north of the Lukhi chain is drawn off through channels, which running north fall into the Bhunni; whilst that to the south of the same range pursues a southerly, easterly, or westerly course, as it may happen, to the sea. The water of these streams is rarely fit for use, excepting for cattle; and in the hot season it becomes too brackish even for their palates. In the beds of the streams tolerable water is found by digging twelve or fifteen inches in the sand. Tanks are not uncommon, but they are neither so large nor so general as in some other parts of India. For one

that retains water throughout the year, there are twenty that are exhausted in six months. The soil admits of a constant filtration, which gradually empties the tank. Wells are everywhere abundant, and almost always yield good water. It is found from two to thirty cubits below the surface.

Grains.

The grains of Cutch do not differ from those of the other parts of India; jowaree, bajeree, muth, gowar, moong, and (by irrigation) wheat and barley are commonly cultivated. The first or early crop, ripe in November, consists of bajeree, muth, gowar, and moong; and the second or *late crop, * 213 consisting of jowaree and the common oil plants, is cut in January. In March and April the cotton is pulled, and completes the labour of the cultivation. The plough is seldom used in Cutch; the soil is light, and the ryots are anxious to cultivate much, rather than well. A pair of bullocks drag a three-pronged rake over the ground three or four times, after which the drill-plough is used. I have seldom seen such slovenly agriculture, and the produce is proportionally small. In irrigation, which is very general throughout Cutch, the ryots seem more industrious. Crops of bajeree in November, wheat in February, and jowaree in May or June, are cultivated for a continuance throughout the year. Sugar-cane in some places is cultivated, but it is of an inferior kind.

Cutch does not produce one-half sufficient for its consumption. Grains of all kinds are imported, some from Hullar or the peninsula of Guzerat, and others from Malabar or from Sindh: moong and muth have, however, occasionally been exported from Cutch, and the moong of this province is much valued. The cotton is cultivated to a considerable extent, and in quality it only falls short of that of Ahmood; but as it is pulled in the husk and afterwards separated, it loses in cleanliness, and is hardly fit for the European market. It is, however, exported annually to Bombay and Arabia to the value of several lakhs of rupees.

The common Indian vegetables are cultivated in plenty; and

the soil and climate have, on a partial trial, proved exceedingly favourable to European vegetables. Among the fruits, grapes and musk-melons are perhaps the only ones for which Cutch is celebrated. The former are well-flavoured; and I have observed a species of red round grape without seeds, which I believe to be the kishmish of Persia. The melons, which are reckoned superior to those of any neighbouring country, grow in the dry beds of rivers, where their roots are in a stream of water a few inches below the surface; and their leaves and fruit being exposed to the double effect of a burning sun upon a scorching sand, the fruit is brought to the greatest perfection; the melon (as well as all other fruits) is ripe in April, May, and June. Cutch possesses a wild fruit which I have seen nowhere else;

it is called the peeloo, and when ripe is about the size of
 * 214 a currant, *and of a purple or dark red: it contains a sticky and gelatinous juice of a pleasant taste, but so acrid as to ulcerate the mouth on first eating. The peeloo grows on a bush with a thick stem, and has a long pointed leaf, which has a strong pungent taste.

Animals.

Of the animal creation the first is the horse; and here he is to be found of an excellent description. The Cutch horse has long been known to and esteemed by Europeans, although he has generally been confounded by them with the Kattiwar horse. In the latter province there are a variety of breeds, easily distinguished by certain characteristics and features of the figure and appearance; whereas in Cutch there seems to be but one breed, although in the course of years this has branched out into several varieties. Almost every horse in Cutch has many characteristics of the blood-horse, so much so that I look upon the blood-horse as the only species to be met with in the country; although the blood be purer in some than in others. The general standard is between fourteen and fourteen hands two inches, and perhaps the former is most common. The Cutch horse is remarkable for rather a large and bony head and cheeks, a thin and long neck, large sparkling eyes,

with small soft, pliable ears. His limbs are clean and bony, of the kind called by the natives *sook nallee*, or dry shins. He has always a fine figure, with fire and action. The Cutch horse is, however, without exception, remarkable for his ram's forehead, which peculiarity will always doom him to be esteemed an ugly horse; and with his vice, which is also proverbial, will prevent him from ever becoming a favourite with most Europeans.

The breed of cows and oxen (excepting in the single district of Wagur, where they are equal to the finest cattle in the western parts of Guzerat) is inferior; being generally of a diminutive stature and possessing no beauty. They, however, as well as buffaloes, are to be had in abundance. The goat is held in great estimation among the pastoral tribes in Cutch; in particular by the Mahomedans, who are descended from the old Sindh tribes, and who eat the flesh of the animal, and almost subsist on its milk and butter. Colts also from * 215 the time of their birth are fed upon goats' milk, and for each colt twelve or fourteen goats are required. The male of this animal is not much valued, and is exposed to die in the field when born. Sheep are plentiful, but only kept for their milk, from which ghee is made: their flesh is not considered wholesome.†

Camels are bred in numbers, for sale and for use. All the military castes if they cannot afford to ride on a horse are seen on camels. This animal is also employed in the carriage of merchandize; and the milk of the female is drunk by the breeders. The Cutch camel is better adapted to the saddle than for burthen, being slimly made and generally possessed of much spirit.

Of wild animals are found the tiger, the cheeta, leopard or small hunting-tiger, the wolf, hyena, jackal, and fox. Of the latter animal are found three distinct species: the first is the common grey fox of India; the second is white with black

† The price of a good cow is 30 rupees; of a bullock, 60; of a buffalo, 60; of a goat, 2 rupees; a milch-goat, 5 rupees; a sheep, 1½ rupees; a horse, from 200 to 1,000 rupees.

belly and legs, similar to that which is mentioned in Mr. Elphinstone's "Journey to Cabul" as inhabiting the Desert; and the third kind is a large fox, like that of England, of a light brown colour, with the point of his brush quite white. The wild hog abounds, and is much hunted for the sake of the sport by many of the Jharejas.

On the north and east borders in and on the skirts of the Run and Desert the wild ass is to be met with. This animal, which is also mentioned by Mr. Elphinstone, is an inhabitant of the salt wastes so common in the Desert; but frequents the cultivated country in the cold season, and does considerable damage to the crops. The wild ass is thirteen hands high, has a back, neck, and body of a light brown colour, with the belly approaching to a white. He has the dark stripe down the back, in common with all dun animals. His ears are long, like the domestic ass; but his limbs are strong and well formed. His voice is a bray, but is so fine as to resemble the belling of a frightened deer. The animal is gregarious, being generally seen in herds of from ten to fifty; he is, however, occasionally *found single and in pairs. The wild ass is in the habit *216 of taking long journeys for his food during the night; returning in the day to the Desert. He has been said to prefer water a little brackish to that which is perfectly sweet: I am not prepared to assert the fact, but he certainly never drinks from the tanks in the country till the pools in the Desert are all dried up; a circumstance, however, which may originate in a wish to avoid man. His general food is the saline grasses and shrubs of the Desert, and he is never seen in bad condition.

When in herds the ass is not easily alarmed, and suffers himself to be approached and shot by horsemen. Of persons on foot he is more suspicious and timid, and the hunters watch for him in hiding-places and by moonlight. He shows a disposition to resist when attacked; and in the famine of 1813, when the wild asses were killed by Coolees and other low tribes, for food, the wounded animals frequently assailed the hunters. The flesh is said to be tolerable food; but it is contrary to the

prejudice of the lowest caste of natives to eat, or even to touch it, except in cases of absolute want. So much does this prejudice prevail, that I had much difficulty in getting those I have shot skinned. The natives of the country which they inhabit assert that the old males castrate the young with their teeth when newly foaled, leaving only a few entire: I have never met with an instance of it, and I should suppose it to be a fable.

Of game there is no scarcity; hare, partridge, quail, and bustard are as abundant as in other parts of India. Of the partridge kind there is a bird of a most beautiful description; we call it the black partridge, but it differs in every respect from the bird known by that name in other parts of India. The male is larger than the grey partridge, has a breast composed of feathers of a jet black, with one or more small oval spots of white on every feather. The head is black, with a red tinge above and a narrow stripe of white feathers below the eye. The rest of the plumage resembles the painted partridge, with a rusty red throughout. The hen bird has no black feathers, and resembles a common painted partridge, with the deep red tinge throughout: the call of this bird is the same as that of the painted partridge. It is somewhat extraordinary that one of *this species of partridge should never have been seen to the eastward of the Run, although the breed is abund- * 217 ant in Wagur, which is divided only by a Run of twelve miles from the peninsula of Kattiwar.

Towns.

The capital of the country is Bhooj, a modern town; it was founded by Rao Bharra about one hundred and eighty years ago, and subsequently surrounded by a wall with strong towers. Bhooj contains at present about twenty thousand inhabitants; but it was more populous before the oppressive governments that have existed for the last fifteen years. The city is situated on a plain on the S.W. side of a hill called Bhoojia, upon which extensive but ill-planned fortifications are erected. The hill is too far from the town to protect it, although within

common shot. On the summit of the mountain, which is about half a mile in height, by the road, is a temple dedicated to the worship of the Nag, or hooded snake; and hence M. de la Rochette's worshippers of the serpent. The town when viewed from the north has an imposing appearance; and the number of white buildings, mosques, and pagodas, interspersed with plantations of date trees, give a stranger an idea of the respectability of the town, which is removed on entering the gates. The palace is a castle of good masonry, with cupolas and roofs done over with a kind of enamel, giving a Chinese appearance. To the west of the town, and covering two short faces of the fort, is a *large tank*, with stairs from town wickets, for the convenience of washing and bathing. In the centre of the tank is an elevated terrace, containing the remains of a few bungalows and flower-beds: it was used by former chiefs as a place of recreation, but is now in ruins. Bhoj is justly celebrated for ingenious artists in gold and silver work.

Mandavee is the principal seaport and the most populous town in Cutch; it lies on the coast, about forty miles S.S.W. of Bhoj. The town is within gun-shot of the beach, and is surrounded by fortifications in the Asiatic style. Its environs are laid out in gardens well stocked with cocoanut and other trees. The bed of a river nearly dry, excepting in * the
* 218 rains, covers the east face, and joins the sea, forming the only harbour which Mandavee has. Small boats loaded can cross the bar at high tides, but vessels of one hundred candies unlade in the roadstead. There is a brisk trade kept up with Arabia, Bombay, and the Malabar coast, in which upwards of eight hundred boats of from forty to five hundred candies' tonnage are employed. The annual revenues, including the town and port duties, at present amount to about two lakhs and a half of rupees. The exports are chiefly cotton, musroo of silk and cotton thread, piece goods of a coarse kind, alum, and ghee. The imports are bullion from Mocha; ivory, rhinoceros horn and hides, from Powahil; dates, cocoanuts, &c., and grain of all kinds, also timber, from Malabar and Damaun. There is a considerable inland trade, by means of Charons and

other carriers, with Marwar and Malwa. Mandavee is said (and I think it very probable) to contain fifty thousand inhabitants, upwards of fifteen thousand of whom are Bhattias, ten thousand Banyans, five thousand Brahmans, and the rest composed of Lohannas, Mahomedans, and the low castes.

Lukput to the west and Moondra to the east of Mandavee are two other ports belonging to Cutch. The name of the former was originally Busta Bunder; but when the fort of Lukput was built, about twenty-five years ago, the population removed into it. Lukput is situated on a branch of the Indus, which having been dammed up by the Sindians above, the port is much decreasing in prosperity. The inhabitants may amount to fifteen thousand, and the revenues to sixty thousand rupees. Moondra contains about twelve thousand people, and yields a revenue of about thirty thousand rupees. Besides these there are many towns, such as Koteree, Nangercha, Kothara, Roha, Thera, Sandhan, Kyra, Mothara, Raopoor, Adooi, Wandia, and Arresir, containing from five to ten thousand inhabitants in the Indian fashion.

I have heard of no ruins in Cutch worth mentioning, excepting those of some large pagodas at Budresir, on the sea-coast, east of Moondra. They are considered as having been built by a Banyan named Juggoo Sá, about five hundred and seventy years ago; and I have been told by some gentlemen who inspected them that they are extensive and curious.

* *State of Society, &c.*

*219

The province of Cutch was, as far as we can now ascertain, peopled by wandering shepherds of Chawra, Kattee, Aheer, and Rehberi tribes. These appear to have possessed it in common, for the use of their flocks, without towns or permanent villages. They were guided in their residence by circumstances of local convenience. Agriculture was almost unknown, or not practised; for in this country the cultivator, or Koonbee, does not, nor ever did, exist. There appears to have been no form of government, nor can I trace anything like a patriarchate, which in this stage of society is so common. The Aheer, under

his various denominations, is certainly a branch of the same stock as the Kattee, to whom he assimilates in dress, dialect, and customs, although they do not intermarry.

At the time now spoken of, the Chawras were considered as the legal masters of Cutch : although they possessed little control, they were nevertheless a description of Rajpoot, which placed them as superiors to the other inhabitants. The numbers of the tribe would seem at all times to have been very limited ; and at present the Chawra is little known in Cutch, and only to be met with as proprietor of some trifling *gras*, which he enjoys more in the nature of a *khowas*, or household servant, to the Jharejas, than as a lord of the soil.

During the Soomrah government in Sindh, it has already been said that a body of Abra Summas settled in Abrassa. Early in the eighth century of Islaam, when Allah-u-deen, sultan of Delhi, attacked the Soomrahs, that race of men fled to Cutch, where Abra defended them, and ultimately fell in a battle fought in their behalf with the Delhi troops. Shortly after this period the Soomrahs were utterly ruined and dispersed, and were succeeded in an independent sovereignty by the Summas at Tattah ; upon which occasion many of this tribe returned from Cutch to Sindh, and resumed possession of their lands. Others remained in Cutch and its borders, and from those are descended the various Summa tribes, both Mahomedan and Hindoo, now to be met with. It is hard to determine

* whether the Summa tribe were all converted to the
 * 220 faith of Islaam on its reaching Sindh, or whether a few branches of the stock did not retain their original belief. In all probability the latter was the case. The Jharejas are a branch of the great Sindh Summa stock, and assumed the title of Jhareja to distinguish the progeny of a celebrated chief of the name. Various are the statements concerning this Jharra ; some say that he was a Hindoo, and others assert that he was a Mahomedan. According to a genealogical table which was communicated to me by a Jain priest, Jharra appears to have been a Mahomedan zemindar of some consequence, who married in his old age a daughter of a

petty chieftain in Cutch, of the Hindoo persuasion. When Jharra died, his young wife was expelled from the family by the other wives and their Mahomedan relations, and with an infant son sought refuge in her father's family, where her son was educated as a Hindoo. At this time the Kattee tribe held the districts of Pawur and Putchum; and in the feuds between the Summas and them, the offspring of Jharra were so successful as to establish themselves in independence, and took the distinguishing title of Jharejas. As their power acquired strength and stability, the chief took the title of Jam, corresponding with the same title assumed by their Mahomedan brethren in Sindh, and held it for nine generations in direct descent, until about the middle of the Emperor Akbar's reign, when Khengar, who had been compelled to fly from the enmity of his brothers, was established as the head of the Cutch government by a Mahomedan army sent by his brother-in-law the last sultan of Guzerat. It was then that the Noanuggur family was expelled; and they thus retained the title of Jam, and their territory received the name of Little Cutch, which, however, it holds only among foreigners. The titles of *Ras* and *Mirza*, with the honour of the *Mahi-Muratib*, or Order of the Fish, were afterwards conferred by the sovereign of Delhi, in return for an agreement on the part of the Raos to cause all pilgrims to be transported free of expense to Mecca. The present Rao is the eleventh in descent from Khengar. The Raos of Cutch have the privilege, in common with the Jam of Noanuggur and the Rana of Porcbunder, of striking coin in their own names. This coin, * which is silver, and is called a coree, in value is something less than one-third of a rupee. On one side * 221 is the name of the chieftain in Hindoo characters, and on the reverse the Arabic inscription,*not very intelligible.

Government.

The government of Cutch is that of a pure aristocracy, in which the power is vested in a variety of chiefs on their respective territories, which bear a strong resemblance to the feudal baronies. These chiefs have a head who is entitled Rao, to

whom they owe the duty of military service, with their relations and followers, when called upon. In like manner the principal chiefs are the heads, or teelats, as they are called, of their own families, who are scattered as grasias of entire villages, or portions of villages. These, again, owe military service to their own chiefs, and not to the Rao direct; and in cases of necessity always adhere to the former in opposition to the latter. The services of these federals were originally restricted to defensive warfare in circumstances of common danger to the society. Neither is the nature of these levies adapted to foreign conquest. They have, however, of late years lent their aid to ambitious superiors, with the success that might have been expected.

When the Rao has occasion for the services of his federals, an order is written out, and the seal attached, demanding their attendance, with their armed followers, on a day and at a place specified. Men mounted on camels are despatched in every direction; and as these animals travel from the centre to the boundaries of Cutch in one day, the whole are assembled and at the rendezvous on the third day after the summons has been issued. In times when the feudal spirit was high, and the country rich and populous, thirty thousand cavalry have thus been collected; but at the present day, if the whole body of Jharejas were unanimous and sincere in the object, about half that number could with difficulty be brought together, and perhaps only about one-half the number of mounted men.

It is a pleasing and wild sight to perceive parties of horse of from five to * fifty flocking to the *trysting-place*, from *222 every quarter, while the whole country is animated and in a bustle. This gathering is called the *chupper*, from an express camel which goes by that name in this country. The Rajpoots are almost exclusively armed with the sword and short spear. Firearms are generally confined to the attendants of other castes, and to mercenaries. The greatest portion of the levies are horsemen; the infantry being supposed to be left in defence of the respective forts of the chiefs. The head Jhareja has a small and shabby tent, which, with all the necessaries of his party, is carried on a camel or two that accompany

the party at a trot. The tent is open to all the followers; no bedstead is admitted in a Cutch camp, and even the Rao himself sleeps on the ground. This custom is very ancient, and arises from religious scruples connected with the goddess As-sapoorā, of whose favourite colour, the orange (or bugwa), the royal tent is made. The allowance to these levies is about the third of a rupee per day for every horseman, and something less for infantry. Some opium is also served out by the durbar to the chiefs, who defray all the expenses of travelling during their absence from home.

In other respects, the Rao or the chiefs of different bhyauds or brotherhoods have no power over their *grasia* relations, nor can they legally interfere in their village concerns in the smallest degree. There is, however, a general respect entertained for the *teelat*, which frequently induces the bhyaud to submit the differences to his decision. In Kattiwar the bhyaud pays a *vera* or tribute to the *teelat*, to enable him to discharge the foreign tribute. In Cutch, however, as there is no foreign power, so is there no pecuniary acknowledgment from the one to the other. The *Jharejas* of Cutch pride themselves in never having been conquered. Mussulman armies have frequently traversed the province, where they never made a settlement; a circumstance doubtless to be attributed to the poverty of the country, and the peculiar state of society.

Lands, the family proprietors of which have become extinct, revert to the chiefs by whom they were originally bestowed. In short, the feudal rights and privileges of the *grasias* have in general been preserved with *little *223 innovation; but many *grasias* have been deprived of their *gras* entirely, during the government of a Mahomedan usurper† who died about five years ago. The state of society is favourable for the labouring classes, as they are well treated by the chiefs, who depend upon them for subsistence. The facility with which the *ryot* or merchant can change from one village to another, gives him an importance

† Futtch Mahomed, a Sindhi, possessed of considerable abilities both for war and civil government.

known under no other description of native government. The subjects of the Rao are differently situated; they are fined and plundered without mercy: for although the blyaud can receive and protect them, both by power and prescriptive usage, still chiefs are cautious not to encourage the Rao's ryots to seek their protection. The greatest villain and the most innocent victim are equally safe if they can make their way to the town of a separate authority; but it is proper to explain that the state of society here described is more applicable to the western than the eastern parts of Cutch, with the exception of the district of Wagur, which was, until the interference of the British government a year or two ago, perfectly independent, and the asylum of robbers and murderers of every description and country.

Having thus shortly explained the nature of the province of Cutch and of its government, I shall proceed to notice the people who inhabit the country, and take a rapid view of any peculiarity which may strike me in their manners and customs.

The people of Cutch may be classed thus:

RAJPOOT Grasias.

1. Jharejas, and 2. Wagelas.

Branches of the Jharejas, 1. Dedas; 2. Amurs; 3. Hallas; 4. Hothes.

MAHOMEDAN Grasias.

1. Venes; 2. Notiars; 3. Abras; 4. Myannas, of which last there are various denominations; 5. Noras; 6. Raomas; 7. Nangorchas; 8. Sumejahs; 9. Hingorchas; 10. Modhs, &c. &c.

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* HINDOOS.

Merchants.

1. Bhattias; 2. Banyans; 3. Lowannas; 4. Brahmans of every description.

Cultivators and Labourers.

1. Aheers; 2. Rehbarces; 3. Koombhars; 4. Lowannas.

MAHOMEDANS.

1. Khojahs; 2. Memuns; 3. Meyanas.—Others called Megwalls, Charons, Bhats, Lungas, &c.

With exception of the Wagelas, all the Rajpoots enumerated are of one stock and never intermarry. The gras of the former in Cutch is confined to a small portion of Waghur, of which district they were the sole proprietors until the rise of the Jharejas ; they are, however, now confined to about a dozen principal families, of which Bela is considered the head. This caste differs in nothing from the common Rajpoot of Guzerat, excepting that the closer connexion with the Jharejas and Mahomedans has rendered the Wagela less scrupulous in matters of caste ; their daughters are married by Jhallas, Jharejas, Gohills, &c. ; and there are recent instances of their having been given to Mahomedans.

The Cutch Jhareja is half a Mussulman ; he believes in the Koran, worships Mahomedan saints, does not eat forbidden food, and in some instances repeats the prayers prescribed by this faith. They all eat food cooked by Mahomedans, smoke the same hooka, and drink of the same water. They wear a cap and trowsers, and commonly swear by Allah. To this, however, there are a few family exceptions ; for of late the religion of Vishnoo has become so prevalent in Cutch, that some of the Jharejas even have adopted it, with all its peculiarities. With regard to the others, they are Hindoos, inasmuch as they preserve a lock of hair on their heads, do not undergo circumcision, nominally adore everything in the shape of an image, and will not eat of the flesh of oxen or other proscribed animals.

The Cutch Jhareja is a very different being from that of Kattiwar : the * former country having been under one established head, the violent feuds of the latter are not * 225 to be met with : not but that Cutch has been the scene of contention for what may be called baronial rights ; but these feuds having been generally settled by the arbitration of the Rao or teelats, they have neither been so protracted nor so destructive as those we have heard of in Kattiwar. The chiefs have each their fort for defence ; these are, however, falling fast into decay, and little pains have of late been exercised to keep them in repair.

The Jharejas in their present state are a most ignorant and indolent race of men. They possess neither the activity, the spirit, the sense of honour, nor the jealousy of feudal rights and privileges, which were so remarkable in their ancestors, and which are not yet quite extinguished in the opposite peninsula. Their whole time is given up to sensual pleasures, among which the use of spirituous liquors is the most injurious. More than half the Jhareja population, I venture to say, is addicted to liquor to excess; and there is not one man in a hundred who does not drink spirits as regularly as an European drinks his wine. Those who are fond of spirituous liquors indulge in the morning early, at noon, and at night, so that they may be said to be constantly under the influence of spirits. Every town, or indeed *grasia* village, has a still, where liquor is extracted from coarse sugar, dates, or carrots, as the owners can afford. It is a very pure spirit, and much more pungent than European liquors, which are only valued by the natives when they can get them for nothing. In Cutch no disgrace attaches to a drunkard, and there are several deplorable instances among the Jhareja chieftains of the effects of constant intoxication. It is remarkable that wherever spirits are much in use, opium-eating is not so prevalent; and in Cutch, among the Jharejas, I do not think that opium is so common, or at least to such an extent, as in Kattiwar. This remark is not applicable to the Vishnoo Jharejas, whose prejudices prohibiting spirits, they go to a very excess in opium. I think that the latter is by far the more destructive of the two, if a judgment may be formed from their respective effects on the mind and body of the native.

*The Jhareja has no animation: he passes a life of
* 226 uniform indolence and sensuality; he seldom or never is seen on horseback, having recourse to a covered cart whenever he is compelled to leave his house. Palanquins are unknown, excepting one in which the Rao is supposed to ride. No subject is allowed to use one, or a rath with four wheels. He rises at an early hour, breakfasts and drinks, goes to sleep; rises at noon, dines and drinks, goes to sleep; rises about sun-

set and sups, drinks, and goes to sleep again. The business of his gras gives him no concern. Let him have his liquor or his opium, and his Bhat and Lunga to sing and rehearse the warlike deeds of his ancestors, which are now but as a dream, these are all he wants. While the master of the family is thus careless and lost to everything that is honourable or respectable, his wives (for they have often more than one) are active, jealous, and intriguing. They are the daughters of the Jhalla, Wagela, Sodha, or Gohill Rajpoots, who marry the gras, and not the man. These wives have each their respective establishment of servants, cattle, carriages, &c., and a village, or more or less according to the means of the husband. The women of the Rajpoots are much distinguished from those of any other caste of Hindoos. They are high-spirited, bold, and enterprising, and are justly celebrated for a remarkable neatness of person, and anxiety about personal appearance, even when advanced in life, which is met with in no other native. The Rajpootanee has her cosmetics and washes, as well as the ladies of Europe, and understands the method of making an artificial mole or patch on the most favourable spot to set off the beauty of the skin or countenance; and, next perhaps to the love of wealth and rank, the improvement of her personal charms is the strongest passion in this lady's breast.

They are no means exempt from the softer passion; but how can they love their drunken lords? and they have no access to gallantry of the higher kind. Sorry am I to be obliged to say that scandal loudly asserts that the fair and interesting Rajpootanee is reduced to intrigue with servants and menials. This is proverbial; but are the ladies so much to blame when their husbands are hardly ever free from the effects of opium * or spirits? The Jharejas strictly follow the Mahomedan custom of secluding their women from view, and * 227 the poorest family never allow their women to step beyond the threshold of the house. Their widows are not permitted to make a second marriage; but among the Abras†and

* There are both Hindu and Mahomedan Abras.

Hothees, who are inferior descriptions of the Jhareja, the younger brother marries a brother's widow.

Female infanticide is in universal practice among the Jharejas. I am not aware that any new light can be thrown upon the origin of this inhuman custom. Everything connected with that part of the subject appears fabulous. It is said that the Summas all practised it whilst they remained Hindoos, and dropped it when they became Mahomedan converts. The Summas consider themselves as originally natives of Arabia, which they assert to have been subject to Hindoo princes, and support what they say by some striking evidence from the *Poorans*. Now it is generally admitted that infanticide was at one period practised in Arabia; and in that case the custom would assume a very ancient character. It is, however, a very surprising fact that in the numerous Asiatic writers whom I have consulted, I have not met with one who mentions infanticide.

Another and very common opinion is, that infanticide was not prevalent among the Summas, and that it came into use among the Jharejas so recently as the seventh century of Islaan, when a marriage of one of their daughters to a Soomra chieftain of Amurcote was followed, as the tradition states, with misfortune and discredit to the Jhareja families. The practice was certainly in the first instance sanctioned by the Rajghor Brahmans, who have always been the priests of the Jharejas; and that class of men encouraged it by pretending to take upon themselves the guilt of the action, and the punishment declared by the sacred writings to attend it. The origin of this inhuman custom is, however, unknown, nor do the Jharejas give themselves any trouble on that head. A very popular opinion is, that it originated in the want of means to procure becoming marriages * for their daughters. This reason

* 228 satisfies the present generation, and is sufficient inducement for them to kill their female offspring: there is also a feeling of pride connected with the practice, for a Jhareja conceives it a loss of character that his daughter should wed any man.

With regard to the mode of depriving the infant of life, I

have heard none, excepting those already so often made public, —a little opium either administered from the nipple or the finger; immersing the infant in a basin of milk so as to produce suffocation; and lastly laying the placenta upon its mouth. Such are the only methods which I have been told are practised; but it requires little to destroy so young and delicate a life. When the girl is born, its fate is seldom referred to the father: he only hears of the delivery of his wife by being told that his child is an inhabitant of heaven; on which he bathes, and no further notice is taken of the event. On some occasions, however, when the mother is obstinate in her determination not to deprive the babe of life, the father is spoken to; but unless his heart relents, which is seldom the case, he declares his resolution not to enter the house or partake of food until the child is put to death. Thus in the first instance are the mothers forced to perform the unnatural and dreadful office; to which, however, by degrees they become accustomed, and are remarked to be ever afterwards more prejudiced and tenacious of the distinction of infanticide than the Jharejas themselves. The unfortunate victim is privately buried, according to the Hindoo custom of interring all children who die under the age of eight months.

Were the Jharejas to preserve their daughters, there could be no difficulty in procuring them suitable marriages; for surely no objection ought to exist to their being married into the castes from which the males are happy to accept of wives. These are, as has been said, Jallas, Wagelas, Gohills, Sodhas, and Purmars. The two latter may perhaps be objected to, they having lost on the score of respectability; but to the others there can be no scruples of this nature, for they are all confessedly as far above the Jhareja in point of purity of Hindoo character, as they undoubtedly surpass them in every other point of view whatever. The circumstances of these castes are not inferior to those of the Jharejas, and they resemble *them in their independent state of society. Nevertheless these wretches, half Mahomedans half Hin- *229
doos, the most despicable and abject race of Rajpoots,

addicted to every vice, assume to themselves a superiority which admits of their marrying the women of a race which they do not consider as sufficiently respectable to be honoured with their own women, and, under this blind sophistry, hesitate not to murder their innocent offspring; thus breaking through the most warm and social ties of human nature, and crowning their otherwise despicable character by the most atrocious of all crimes.

The result of the strictest inquiry that I have been able to make gives the gross number of Jharejas inhabiting Cutch at 8,000; of this number perhaps two-thirds are at that time of life when a family may be expected. Marriage is universal, though not contracted at the tender age at which it is generally celebrated among other Hindoos. Rajpoot women are commonly fifteen, and sometimes seventeen and twenty years old before the marriage is consummated; a circumstance conducive to a healthy and numerous family. Allowing, however, for non-marriages and other circumstances, we may safely reckon that of the 8,000 arrived at maturity 6,000 are actually getting children. A birth every three years will give 2,000 births annually; a number which I can hardly think exaggerated, when it is considered that Rajpoot women seldom or never suckle their own children, for fear of destroying the beauty of their persons. If of these 2,000 births one-half are allowed to be males, we shall have annually a destruction of 1,000 human beings in this small tract of country.

I wish it was in my power to give a favourable account of the number saved, at present actually alive; but it is a certain fact that there are not sixty (I say sixty purposely to be beyond doubt, although it should be nearer thirty) female Jharejas alive at this moment; and these are almost exclusively preserved by the influence of the precept of Vishnoo; which it may be hoped will yet spread its good effects more generally throughout this wretched country. A few have been preserved by such Jharejas as are particularly attached to Mahomedan tenets.

In addition to the foregoing sad detail, I must make a fur-

ther addition *to the list of deliberate murders. Mahomedans who consider themselves derived from the same *230 stock as the Jharejas, also assume the privilege of destroying their daughters. Among these are the Venes, Modhis, Dulls, Kewurs; besides Hothees, Mokursis, Jeysirs, Vurmsis, Jhadhas, Baraches, and Bhootas, half Hindoos half Mahomedans, to the number of 800 families, who generally practise female infanticide.

The Mahomedan tribes of *grasias* enumerated have nothing peculiar in their manners or customs. They are the descendants of Sindhis, and take their names from some remarkable individual among their ancestors. They are in general *grasias* employed as fighting men, and possess herds of goats, on the milk of which they formerly chiefly subsisted. Many have quitted their original pastoral habits, and, residing in the towns, are employed in military service. To this description the Meyanna, under all his various names, is an exception: he is a robber and assassin by profession, and is capable of performing the most daring and atrocious deeds. This race of men are all in the capacity of *grasias*, having had land bestowed upon them in lieu of service at some ancient period. They are from the Delta of the Indus, and are chiefly settled on the eastern borders of Cutch; where a division of hilly country takes its name (*Meyannee*) from the caste. They compose a body of about 3,000 fighting men, in which light they are highly esteemed, although as Mussulmans they are not reckoned fit to be associated with. Among the various appearances which the Meyanna assumes, is one called *Munka*, which is peculiar, inasmuch as the people who belong to it do not suffer circumcision, but intermarry and live entirely with Mahomedans. The *Munkas* place a bundle of burning grass on the face of their dead, and afterwards inter them.

The Banyans, being the same in Cutch as have often been described in India, require no notice here.

The Bhattias are of Sindh origin. They are the most numerous and wealthy merchants in the country, and worship the Gossengjee Maharaje, of whom there are many. The Ma-

haraje is master of their property, and disposes of it as he pleases : and such is the veneration in which he is held, that the most respectable families consider themselves honoured by his

*cohabiting with their wives or daughters. The principal Maharaje at present on this side of India is named

* 231 Gopinathjee, a man worn to a skeleton and shaking like a leaf from debauchery of every kind excepting spirituous liquors. He is constantly in a state of intoxication from opium, and various other stimulants which the ingenuity of the sensual has discovered. He is originally a Brahman.

The Bhattias were allowed (until they became followers of Vishnoo, which is within this last century) to eat fish, and even to drink spirits. The Bhattias in Sindh, who differ from the others only in accidental circumstances, still continue to follow their original habits. Those of India, however (as has been observed), now follow the customs of Brahmans, and there is not a more scrupulous caste to be met with : notwithstanding this they are great travellers, and are found in abundance in Muscat and in all the ports of Arabia and Western India, where they have the character of industrious and skilful merchants.

The Bhattia women devote much of their leisure time to needlework, at which they are very expert, and flower in silk in an ingenious and tasty manner. It is common to see the females of the highest families sitting together, each with her needlework and work-basket. They also spin cotton thread, in common with all castes excepting the Rajpoot, Naggar, and some particular Brahman castes. The Bhattias, after what has been said respecting the Maharaje, it may be supposed are not the most moral class of people in the world. The well-known *Ras Mundicees* are very frequent among them, as among other followers of Vishnoo. At these, persons of both sexes and all descriptions, high and low, meet together ; and under the name and sanction of religion practise every kind of licentiousness. In their families the Bhattias are not much better : a father cohabits with his daughter-in-law ; and if one brother is absent or dead, the other brother has little scruple in coha-

biting with his wife or widow. These matters are not publicly avowed, neither are they studiously concealed. The Bhattias are a remarkably fair and handsome race of people. They differ in appearance from any Indians I have ever seen, and have some peculiarities. At their marriages, and on occasions of the * first pregnancy of their women, the Bhattias, male and female, practise many indecencies both in manners * 232 and in action. These, as well as their more objectionable freedoms, are, however, in a great measure confined to their own caste. Their customs do not admit of polygamy; and they wear the Brahmanical string on the body.

The Lowannas are another Sindh race of people. In Cutch they are labourers, and cultivate the soil, or speculate in trade. They were many years ministers of the Cutch government; but the principal men having been cruelly put to death by one of the Raos, the caste since that time has declined in consequence and respectability. The Lowannas eat flesh and drink spirits in a public manner. They are of industrious habits, and, being naturally a robust and strong race of men, perform very severe labour. They are nevertheless licentious in their manners, and much importance is not attached to chastity. The Lowannas wear the Brahmanical string or junoo: polygamy is permitted and practised, and widowhood is not ordered to be preserved.

Brahmans of every description are to be met with in Cutch: Shri-Malees, the whole race of Odiches, Sarsuts, Madhs, Pokurnas, and Rajeghors. The Sarsut is the priest of the Lowanna, and like him eats and drinks of what he pleases. The Pokurna is the Sindhri priest of the Bhattia, who has laid him a good deal aside in favour of the Maharaj: and the Rajeghor is the ghor or priest of the Rajas, and resembles the Thuttri in his habits. The cultivators of the soil, such as Aheers, &c., I have already mentioned. They resemble the Kattee, and scruple not to eat with Mahomedans. Both Aheer and Relibaroo enjoy the privilege of a plurality of wives; and widows form second marriages, often at very advanced ages. The Khoja is a Mahomedan cultivator. The Khojas consider themselves as of Persian origin,

and frequently make a pilgrimage to a spot eight days' march to the N.W. of Ispahan, where they worship a living *peer*, or *saint*, to whom they pay an annual tax on their property.

Charons, Bhats, and other *Tragalla wurn* (or castes who commit *traga*), are numerous in Cutch. The Charons have extensive gifts of land from the Rao, and live in separate villages.

They employ their time in trading * to Marwar and * 233 Hindoostan, by means of bullocks. Ivory and various

other articles, the imports from foreign countries, are carried up, and a return brought in drugs, piece-goods, and fine cloth, &c. The system of *traga* was carried to great lengths in Wagur about four years ago. When the plunderers carried off any cattle the property of the Charons, Bhats, or Brahmans, the whole villago would proceed to the spot where the robbers resided, and, in failure of having their cattle restored, would cut off the heads of several of their old men and women. On one occasion there was a string of no less than four people with one spear through their necks. And frequent instances occurred of individuals dressing themselves in cotton quilted cloths steeped in oil, which they set on fire at the bottom, and thus dancing before the person against whom the *traga* was performed, until the miserable creatures dropped down and were burnt to ashes. I knew one instance of a young lad of about fourteen years of age, who, for the purpose of recovering a debt from a Rajpoot, had a spear-blade pushed through both cheeks; and when it was to be removed, the blade was so bad and rusty that the father was forced to place his knees on the boy's head and force it out. On asking the lad if it pained him, he said that it did; but on my observing that it was wonderful he did not cry out, he replied, that in that case it would have been no *traga*; and that if he had shown every symptom of pain, he would have been deservedly laughed at by the person against whom he was acting; and would have been considered ever afterwards as an useless and unworthy wretch, who had nothing of the Charon in him.

I am not aware that much remains to be said of this country, which is perhaps less favoured by nature, excepting in

climate, than any other I have heard of. The people, of whom about one-half are Mahomedans, are, generally speaking, wretchedly poor in their circumstances, and abominably debauched in their morals. In no Indian country does the most bestial of all vices prevail in so great a degree. Beasts in the shape of men dressed in women's clothes, called puyyas (men born impotent), publicly gain a livelihood by the practice of this disgusting vice. It is however in a great degree, or entirely, confined to the Rajpoots and Ma- * 234 * homedans, among whom it is spoken of as by no means disgraceful: on the contrary, gifts of land and grants of privileges have been from time to time made by the grasias to the puyyas. Abortions I believe to be universally and continually produced throughout India; nor can it be otherwise when eternal widowhood is ordered, and where reputation is at stake. But I must say, that until I came to Cutch I never heard of females procuring abortions merely to prevent their figures and their breasts being injured in appearance. This practice is also peculiar to the grasia class, and not frequent; although I have known a woman who acknowledged to five abortions of this kind in her own person.

Murders, and those of the most atrocious description, have been frequent for these last twenty years; but among the Rajpoots only. Poison is generally employed; but sometimes the sword is resorted to, and the deed openly done. Within these last three years several attempts have been made by sons upon their fathers' lives. Husbands, sons, and relations suffer indiscriminately from the jealousy of many wives. In every diabolical and bold act the women take the lead; and it is surprising how the wild Jhallee changes in disposition when she becomes the wife of a Jhareja. Perhaps infanticide tends to deaden all the natural feelings. The Cutch people are, however, proverbially treacherous; and it is a common saying, that if a saint was to drink the water of Bhooj he would prove faithless. A murder is not looked on with any degree of horror, and no stain is attached to a traitor or villain.

Although the climate of Cutch is excellent, the country

abounds in disease. Violent rheumatism seems to be peculiar to the climate ; and the effects of their abominable vices are perceptible in a loss of virility, with which an immense proportion of the description of men I have been speaking of are more or less afflicted.

The language of Cutch is not written ; it is a dialect of the Sanscrit, many words of which are retained pure. There is a mixture of Guzeratti and a great deal of Sindhi in it. The Guzeratti language and character are alone used in business and correspondence. The common dress of the Rajpoot is a cotton quilted cap of musroo, over which is tied a turban of * a quality corresponding with the state in life of the * 235 person ; an *ankerka* like those commonly worn in India, but with long and wide sleeves ; round the loins is tied a *doputta* of a dark brown colour, which descends to the knees, and is fastened at the waist by a variety of *kummerbands*. This *doputta* is called a *rettée*. A pair of loose trowsers with a light button at the ankle completes the dress, which is very becoming. They are generally large-sized men, with the Jewish nose, long whiskers reaching halfway to the middle, and mustachios, on which they pride themselves. Ornaments are not much in use among the men. The dress of the women and their ornaments do not differ materially from those of the same sex elsewhere ; but they are upon the whole, perhaps, more expensive.

The other countries alluded to in the title of the paper are those tracts of soil and desert lying two degrees to the north of Cutch, and joining Sindh and Guzerat. They have not yet been noticed, but a few words will suffice to explain their nature. Directly north of Wagur lies a desert Run of thirty miles, beyond which is situated the district called Parkur, forming an insulated piece of country about forty miles in length, surrounded on all sides by the Run, or by the Thull, or Great Desert. Parkur is accessible from Wagur through the thirty miles' Run ; from the east by Rahdenpoor across a branch of the Run thirty-five miles broad ; from Marwar and the north through the Great Desert, and a thinly inhabited and waste

country; and from Sindh by a route directly through the Desert.

Parkur is a sandy plain with a range of rocky hills near the eastern border, running nearly north and south. This range is generally esteemed as a single hill, and is called Kalinjur. It is covered with jungle, has abundance of tank water, and some arable land. Kalinjur is not more than a mile and a half in height by the pathway, for there is only one by which access is to be had to the mountain. It is therefore considered as a place of great natural strength, and is the asylum of all the natives on approaching danger. The soil of Parkur is sand upon a light clay, and produces bajeree and the poorer sorts of grain in scanty * crops. Water is found in wells at the depth of forty cubits; but it in general becomes *236 brackish in the hot months. There are a few tanks, but the soil does not admit of the water being retained throughout the year. To the west of the hill Kalinjur, however, is a piece of water called a *droh* or pool, which originates in springs at the bottom of the hill, and in which water is always to be had.

In Parkur there are about twenty-five villages, not more than half of which are inhabited. The capital is Parinuggur, commonly called Nuggur, containing about five hundred wretched hovels. It is affirmed that the remains of an ancient city are here to be traced, which lying on the direct route from Sindh to Guzerat, and from Marwar to the sea-coast, was a kind of emporium for the trade of their countries, similar to what Rahdenpoor was until within these few years. It is universally allowed that Parinuggur was a rich and populous place; at present the whole district, I believe, does not contain ten thousand inhabitants. Parkur is subject to the government of Sindh, which receives a tax upon ploughs, and half of the collections of road taxes, which used to be very considerable. Next to Nuggur, Veerawow is the largest village in Parkur, which, however, does not contain a well-built or substantial house in the whole district.

To the south-west of Parkur lie two other insulated spots of land belonging to Cutch. Those are much smaller in extent

than Parkur, and are known by the names of Kurreer and Kawra, which are the names of the largest villages in each. They contain, besides, only a few of the smallest and poorest description of *wandhs*, or hordes of shepherds. Kawra is valuable to Cutch, as it lies on a direct route to Sindh; to reach which, however, a desert of sixty miles without vegetation or fresh water must be crossed in a north-west direction. In the south-west monsoon this desert is generally covered with salt water from the Lukput creek, and with the rain which falls.

In the middle of the Desert, and to the northward of Parkur, lies another district called Dhut or Dhat, which extends among the sand-hills as far north as Amercote. In this there are two inferior divisions called Khori * and Khawra, approaching * 237 to the borders of Marwar. The sand-hills (or Desert) are by the natives called Thull; and the habitable country lying among them is called Dhat; little grain is produced, but pasturage in abundance. Vast herds of oxen are here reared, and carried away by Charons and other respected persons who dare venture into the wild country to purchase them.

The Desert, properly speaking, lies between Parkur and the borders of Sindh and the Pooran river. It commences on the north-west border of Cutch in a flat sandy Run, and soon assumes the Thull or hilly appearance, which it retains as high as Amercote, and perhaps much higher. Throughout this tract there are wells here and there, and in their vicinity *wandhs*, or hordes of shepherds, with their flocks. In several places are forts built by the Sindhi government to keep open a communication through this wild country, and for the deposit of treasure, which, however, has lately been removed, since the near approach of the English to their frontier. The best of these are Islaamghur, Meethi, and Bulliari.

Throughout the Thull the country is destitute of fresh water, excepting in wells, some of which are upwards of a hundred yards deep. Occasionally pools of rain-water are formed between the sand-hills; but they soon dry up, and it is surprising how so parched a country can yield such quantities of pasture as does the Desert. The Desert is described as a continuation

of loose sand-hills, like the waves of the sea, difficult and tiresome to a traveller. Camels, bullocks, and horses pass it easily, but wheeled carriages are not to be used in travelling.

Sindh is said to commence shortly after leaving Parkur; but I rather think that the country cannot properly be so called until we reach the Pooran or ancient Indus, which divides it from the Desert. Amercote, which was built by a Soomra upon the ruins of a Sodha independency, and re-possessed by the same tribe, has of late been contended for by the Sindhis and the Rathore Rajpoots of Jhodpoor, in the former of whose hands it now remains. It is a point of considerable importance, as it connects Sindh with India by a direct and safe route.

Throughout the whole of the Thull and Dhat, the south-west monsoon * is said to be experienced in rains which are irregular and scanty. The climate during the summer * 238 months is hot and disagreeable from dust; and in the cold, blows bitter over the sand for many miles, and is much more severely felt in its parching and chilling qualities than in richer and better cultivated countries. There are in many parts extensive bushy jungles, which afford shelter to the people and their flocks.

I have been informed that there are streams of water throughout this tract during the rains, some of which, descending from the hills in Marwar, empty themselves into the Desert, where they are lost, or find a drain in the Run to the north of Cutch. Others on the west border are branches of the Pooran, which to this day receives water from the Garrah or Sutledge, by a channel known by the name of the Narri. I have heard of the Nurgullee and Hagra on the west, and the Soni on the east; and I am inclined to believe that we must look to these for the Cagar and Puddar of Rennell, unless the latter is to be found in the Bunass, with which in position it precisely corresponds.

The grasias who inhabit the country are Rajpoots of the Sodha tribe. The territories over which this race anciently ruled, though always bordering on the Desert, were very extensive, reaching, according to their traditions, from the north of Jesalmeer to the banks of the Indus. Their power has in the course

of ages declined ; and although on the rise of the house of Ty-moor the Sodhas were still in possession of a considerable tract of country and of independence, we now find them in a state little short of barbarism, and exiled as it were from the habitable world. One of their chiefs is still to be seen in him of Parkur ; he can collect about two hundred of his bhyaud, generally mounted men, and in cases when plunder is in view, is followed by seven or eight hundred Khosab horse, and four or five hundred Codee infantry ; the former of whom inhabit the Thull, and the latter the district of Parkur.

The Sodhas reside in wretched huts, having the whole family under one roof. They possess none of the comforts of life ; and their dress, which resembles that of other Rajpoots, is made of the coarsest kind of cloth. Throughout the whole of the

Thull, Sodhas are found living mixed with * the various * 239 tribes of Mahomedan Sindhis, such as Onurs, Raomas,

Pullejas, Sumejas, Joomejas, &c., from which they are distinguished neither by dress, language, nor manners. They are, however, still considered as Hindoos, though possessing less purity, perhaps, even than the Jhareja. The population is involved, as may be supposed, in the most profound ignorance. None of them can read or write, if we except a few Lohannas and Banyans, who being natives are hardy enough to venture to trade among them.

Their time appears to be passed in wandering about with herds of cattle, consisting of camels, oxen, and goats, the milk of which affords them a plentiful and nutritious food, varied with the flesh of the last on particular occasions. The jungles afford them wild vegetables of a tolerable flavour, and with these the inhabitants seem contented and happy.

The Sodhas will not intermarry, but seek wives from the Dya, Khawri, Solinkee, Chawan, Rathore, and Wagela Rajpoots, who dwell in their neighbourhood.

The caste of Sodha has become remarkable for the marriage of their daughters to Mahomedans, every man of high rank of that faith, in the surrounding country, having a Sodhi wife. They are reckoned an extremely handsome race of women, and

are preferred by Rajpoots to any of the other castes with whom they intermarry. The Sodhees, if I may form an opinion from those with whose characters I am perfectly acquainted, and from the general voice, are gifted with great natural abilities and personal beauty, but are ambitious and intriguing. Their personal attractions generally secure in their favour the prepossession of their husbands, and this they are sure to improve and confirm by their arts and cunning; and as they make no secret of marrying for the gras, and not for the husband, they often dispose of the latter to get their son into power.

The Sodhees are so much valued, that a father reckons his riches by the number of his daughters, and rejoices at the birth of a female child in like manner as other Asiatics do for a son. The Sodha drives a hard bargain for his girls; and for those that are handsome, from one to ten thousand rupees are paid, besides an establishment for the girl and for half* a hundred needy Sodhi relations. It is surprising to see * 240 rajas, nawabs, and chieftains sending their Mercuries in the character of Charons, and other religious castes, to search the wandhs and hovels of the Desert for beauty destined to shine and rule in different scales of society; and it is still more astonishing to meet with two countries joining each other, in one of which the daughter is sedulously put to death, and in the other preserved as the credit and support of the family.

The inhabitants of Parkur have at all times been marauders, at least the Rajpoot part of them. In this respect they differ from those of Dhat and Thull, who until these forty years were considered as a peaceable race of shepherds. The latter country has, however, got a race of Sindhi robbers, called Khosahs, among them, who fled from Sindh about thirty years ago and have since subsisted by plunder. The Sodhas assemble their followers, and making surprising journeys through the Desert or Run, as it may happen, drive off cattle from villages in Marwar, Guzerat, Sindh, and Cutch; for it matters not to them whom they plunder, provided they do not receive black mail, in which case they are never guilty of aggressions. A Sodha gives his daughter or sister one day in marriage, and has no scruple the

next in driving off the cattle of the bridegroom. Their depredations were chiefly confined to marauding among cattle ; and, until the Sindhis joined them, cruelty was unknown.

Although plunder is the grand delight and support of the Sodha, the chief has another source of revenue, no less singular than lucrative. This is a Parisnath idol worshipped by the sect of Shrawuks; the image is of marble, and named Goreecha ; † he was, with his brother Mandow Rai, worshipped in magnificent temples in the flourishing period of the Pareenuggur government. On the ruin of that raj, and the desertion of the city consequent on Mahomedan interference, Mandow Rai was conveyed away by the Sodhas who migrated to Kattiwar, where they and their little god are still to be met with at Mooli; at which place the Sodhas are called Purmars. The less fortunate Goreecha was seized by a chief and secreted in the sand-hills; where having remained for a long time, he was at length drawn from his concealment,—or another likeness * substituted
* 241 by a Sodha family,—and was shortly visited by all the Banyans and Shrawuks of Western India. Since that time Goreecha has been fated to be interred in the Desert in a spot known only to the chief, who lifts him from his grave occasionally on the visits of pilgrims, who assemble to the number of fifty or even a hundred thousand persons. The Sodha chief brings the god to a particular spot ; where the pilgrims being assembled, he is produced to their view, and they worship him under a strict guard of Sodhas. The offerings made, which are immense, become the property of the Sodha families ; besides which, a bonus of many thousand rupees is paid to the chief before he will produce Goreecha. The ceremony lasts only a few days, when the idol is carried off and again consigned to his sandy grave. The present possessor is named Poonjajee, and his family have had dreadful feuds for the possession of Goreecha.

Such is the tract, to the north of Cutch, which is called the Great Desert, and is considered as dividing Sindh from India.

† [For an account of the worship of Parisnáth-Gaurichá, see vol. I., pp. 190-205 of reprint,—183-190 of first edition.—Ed.]

The routes through it are well known, and constantly travelled without difficulty. It is also now known that it is no desert, for it has inhabitants, and produces grain. Still, however, it is a natural barrier by no means inconsiderable ; and to overcome the difficulties of scarcity of water and supplies, must always cost a great deal of trouble and hazard to any considerable body of men with equipments.

From Parkur there are routes to Amercote, N.N.W. ; Hyderabad, W. by N. ; Jalore, N.N.E. ; Bhooj, S.S.W. ; and Rahdenpoor, E.

(Signed) J. MACMURDO,

Captain, Bombay Infantry.

Anjar, in Cutch, 25th June, 1818.

[NOTE.—See Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government: Miscellaneous Information connected with the Province of Kutch, 1855; Journal Bombay Geographical Society, vol. XVI., pp. 1-9, 16, 24, 56-66; vol. XVII., pp. 61, 291-293, 297. Amongst these will be found valuable papers by Major-General Sir G. LeGrand Jacob, C.B., K.C.S.I., and other officers.—ED.]

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* XI.

NOTICE RESPECTING THE RELIGION INTRODUCED
INTO INDIA BY THE EMPEROR AKBAR.

By Captain VANS KENNEDY.

Read on the 29th September, 1818.

REMARK.

NEITHER the *Tareek Firishtah*, the *Tabkat Akbari*, the *Akbar-Nameh*, nor the *Tareek Alifi* give any account of the religion introduced into India by the Emperor Akbar; nor, from the manner in which history is composed by Muhammadan writers, was it to be expected that it would be mentioned in these works. The materials, therefore, from which the following short notice has been compiled, have been extracted from the brief intimation given of this subject in the *Ayeen Akbari* of Shaik Abu'l Fazl, from the *Dabistan*, and particularly from an abstract of the *Tareek Budaooni*, contained in the *Guli Rana*, a biographical account of the poets of Hindustan, written by Luchmi Narayan, a native of Aurungabad, in 1761. The author of this *Tareek* he states to have been Shaik Abdul Kadur, who died in 1595, and was one of the most distinguished persons of his age for learning and abilities. He was also raised to the dignity of Imam by Akbar, and employed by him in the composition and translation of several works. This abstract appears to have been made with every fidelity, and agrees perfectly with the *Ayeen Akbari* and the *Dabistan*. It exhibits at the same time a curious instance of a struggle between self-interest and religion; as the author, although he takes every opportunity of inveighing against the new faith, cannot avoid allowing it to appear that, notwithstanding his abhorrence of all innovations, he yet outwardly paid such respect to them as was necessary to retain the emperor's favour, and that he even by his orders translated several com-

* positions of the "accursed" Hindus. There seems, therefore, no reason to doubt of the facts which he has * 243 related so much in opposition with his own prejudices ; and it is only to be regretted that his account is not sufficiently particular, and that he never attempts to explain the motives, or to detail the consequences, of the different measures adopted by Akbar for the establishment of the new religion.

The name of Shaik Abu'l Fazl, who was the favourite minister of Akbar, and one of the principal introducers of this religion, is alone a sufficient authority for whatever he has related respecting it. But he merely touches upon it in a cursory manner in the *Ayeen Akbari*, and adds, "Should my life be lengthened sufficiently, and should I have leisure enough, it is my intention to compose a volume on this interesting subject." His premature death, however, he being assassinated by order of Jehangir, then Prince Selim, in 1602, prevented his carrying this intention into effect, and has deprived us of a complete account of this religion.

Who the real author of the *Dabistan* was, I have never been able to ascertain ; but that it was not Mohsan Fani, as supposed by Sir W. Jones, is evident from every account which has been given of his life, either by biographers or historians. They concur in stating that Shaik Mohsan Fani, who is also called Mulla Mohsan, was distinguished for his abilities, accomplishments, and poetry ; that he raised himself into notice at the court of Shah Jehan, and that he was at length appointed to the Sadarut of Allahabad. As this office was invested with a control over the Kazis and other judges, and at the same time with the superintendence of all charitable grants of land or pensions in its particular district, it seems evident that no one would be appointed to it who was not in every respect an orthodox Mussulman. But no true believer would ever have ventured to compose such a work as the *Dabistan*. The question, however, is put out of doubt by its being mentioned that, on the conquest of Balkh, some poems written in praise of the prince by Shaik Mohsan were found in the prince's library, which so much displeased Shah Jehan that he imme-

diately removed Shaik Mohsan from his office. Now the conquest of Balkh took place in the latter end of 1646, and the author of the * *Dabistan* distinctly states, in the fifth * 244 chapter of that work, that he was at Surat in 1647.

Neither the date of Shaik Mohsan's appointment to the Sadarut, nor the date when the *Dabistan* was composed, is mentioned; but it appears clearly from the work itself that the author must have been employed in travelling and collecting his materials several years prior to 1647, and consequently that he could not at that time have been performing the duties of the Sadarut at Allahabad, as is related of Shaik Mohsan Fani.

Of the seven religions which have formerly flourished in Western Asia five no longer prevail. The Jewish is dispersed through every quarter of the world; the Christian has transferred its beneficial influence to other countries; the Pagan and Sabeian have ceased to exist; and the Zardushtian is confined to a few families in Persia, and a small class of people on the western coast of India. These different systems of belief have been replaced by one of comparatively modern origin, and from the shores of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Jaxartes,† the only national faith which is now acknowledged is that of Muhammad. No country in this extensive space, except India, repulsed the first invasions of the Moslems, and no country but India was enabled to preserve its ancient religion. There the Moslems failed in establishing Islamism; and even when the northern provinces of Hindustan were subdued by the family of Ghaznin, the conquerors were obliged to sanction a system of belief the most repugnant to Muhammadan prejudices. Nor during the course of upwards of seven hundred years, from the first invasion of Hindustan by Mahmoud, until that by Nadir Shah, did either persecutions, or the more powerful inducements of rank and honours, ever in the slightest degree succeed in effecting the conversion of the Hindus.

Two distinct religions have therefore continued for eight centuries to prevail in India, and except in a few instances

† Or Sirr.

Brahminism has enjoyed the fullest toleration. The mass of the people were indeed excluded from the dignities of the state ; but several rajahs long retained such influence as *to render their elevation to the highest honours a measure of political prudence. The slow and gradual *245 acquisition of power also obliged the emperors of Delhi to form treaties and alliances with the native princes, and to pay the strictest attention to the religious prejudices of their subjects. Hence, although conquered, and professing a faith different from that of their rulers, the Hindus continued to preserve, and but slightly impaired in its lustre, the religion of their ancestors ; nor can it be doubted that a constant intercourse with them, and the daily witnessing the effects produced by so different a system of belief, must have tended considerably to weaken the exclusive bigotry of the Muhammadans.

To this cause may be principally ascribed that freedom of thinking which was the distinguished characteristic of the Emperor Akbar.† For it was not until twenty years after his accession to the throne that he began to express his doubts respecting the truth of Islamism. During the preceding period he had been fully occupied in re-conquering Hindustan ; and it deserves to be remarked, that one of the conditions of peace which he granted to several rajahs was the admission of one of their daughters into his haram. It also appears that these princesses, after being admitted, continued to practise the rites and ceremonies of their own religion. At the same time Akbar delighted in the society of learned men, and in obtaining information on every subject, and was himself illustrious for uncommon talents and superior genius : nor must it be forgot that his principal favourites, Shaik Abu'l Fazl, his elder brother Shaik Feizy, and the Rajah Tudur Mul, were men of the most liberal sentiments and the most distinguished abilities.

To such persons the defects of Islamism must have been obvious ; and it may be even reasonably supposed that the introduction of a new religion, which might unite the Moslem and Hindu in one system of belief, occurred to them as a mea-

† Akbar ascended the throne A.D. 1555, and died in 1605.

sure of the greatest political advantage. But the prejudices with which such a plan must contend, and the obstacles which it must overcome, were equally evident: of this circumstance they were fully aware, and the steps which they in consequence pursued in order to change the religion of India, exhibit a singular instance of the * propagators of a new faith regulating their advances by the utmost prudence and the coolest reason.

It cannot be doubted that Akbar had entertained opinions adverse to the Muhammadan religion, and had indulged himself in a freedom of inquiry inconsistent with its tenets, long before he allowed this change of belief to be publicly known. But he seems to have waited until some opportunity should occur when he might declare his sentiments with the greatest probability of success. Such an occasion first offered in A.D. 1575, when a difference of opinion[†] arose among the principal doctors, respecting marriages, and the number of wives which a Moslem might legally marry. In the course of the disputes which took place on this subject, it evidently appeared that the decisions of the most esteemed Imams² were inconsistent with each other, and that they were all equally supported by the authority of traditions. Thus the authenticity of these traditions, and the degree of weight which ought to be attributed to the decision of an Imam, were brought into discussion; and the respect previously shown to them was in consequence much diminished. Of this circumstance the emperor availed himself to express his dissatisfaction with a law in which so much uncertainty prevailed; and from this period he openly entered into familiar conferences with persons of all sects and religions. In these assemblies every doctrine was freely discussed; and a Moslem writer observes, "The emperor frequently passed his time, particularly on Friday nights, in company with learned men, in ascertaining the truth of their respective sects and religions; when they so closely engaged in dispute, that they at last convicted each other of infidelity, and produced

† Vide Notes at the end of this Paper.

such confusion in religion that no one knew what he ought to believe." The purport, if not the exact words, of these disputations has been preserved by the author of the *Dabistan*; and as the arguments used in refutation and support of the different religions and sects may, perhaps, appear curious, the whole passage is here faithfully translated. To prevent, however, the continual repetition of "he said," and "he replied," the form of dialogues has been adopted.

* *Dialogue between a Sunni, a Shia, and a Jew.* * 247

Shia.—The Sunnis believe that prophets are not free from sin, and they even defend this tenet by the example of David, who ordered Uriah to be put to death.

Sunni.—It is so written both in the Koran and the Pentateuch.

Jew.—It is certainly written in the Pentateuch.

Shia.—But the Pentateuch has been altered by the Jews.

Jew.—What reason or what advantage could have induced the Jews to alter their books? As none can be possibly assigned, if any books have been altered, it is most probable that they are those of the Shias.

Shia.—Mortiza Ali was the most learned and the most pure of men, as he never tasted either wine or pork, nor touched any food which had been dressed by infidels.

Sunni.—Since the hand of an infidel is in your opinion impure, and the Koreish were not only unbelievers, but drank wine and ate pork, how came it that both the Prophet and Ali ate in the house of their uncles?

Shia.—Is it not related in the *Mallal* and *Nahal* that Abu Bekr deprived the holy Fatimah of the palm groves of Fadak; and that when she solicited its restoration, he rejected her petition, on the ground of this saying of the Prophet, That the society of prophets neither inherit nor give in inheritance. But even were this tradition correct, it could not apply to the case of Fatimah, on whom Fadak was bestowed in the lifetime of the Prophet?

Sunni.—Fatimah had no witnesses who were competent by

law to support her claim ; for the testimony of husband and wife, and children, is not admitted by law.

Shia.—On his deathbed the Prophet, according to the Imam Ismail Bökhari, said to the friends who were in his room, “Make haste and bring me pen and ink, in order that I may commit to writing such instruction as will prevent your deviating from the right path after my death.” But Omar prevented its being given, and observed that the *Prophet was *248 now overpowered by illness, and that the sacred Koran was a sufficient guide for their future conduct. Hence a dispute arising amongst those who were present, it increased to such a height, that the Prophet was displeased, and bade them in anger to leave him.

Sunni.—The Prophet himself said, “I am a man like yourselves, but I speak from inspiration.” Hence was he likewise subject to pain and disease, and life and death, as other mortals ; and hence it was possible that while under the influence of the sickness of death, he might have written something that did not correspond with what he had delivered when in a sound state of mind ; and he was therefore most properly prevented from doing so.

Shia.—But when the Prophet had put off the garment of mortality, Omar unsheathed his sword, and threatened to put to death whoever said that the Prophet was dead, as he was still living. How is this to be reconciled to his having denied him pen and ink ?

Sunni.—Mortals are liable to error.

Shia.—And what is to be said with respect to Osman, who favoured the oppressions of his relations the Omeyah, and permitted Hakim ibn Merwan to return to Medina, whence he had been banished by the Prophet, and also gave his own daughter in marriage to Hakim’s son Merwan, with one-fifth of the spoils of Africa ? Besides, did he not pardon Abdullah ibn Surge, whose blood the Prophet had ordered to be shed, and confer upon him the government of Egypt ? And were not all the governors whom he appointed remarkable for their wickedness, without his ever restraining them ?

To these objections the Sunni returned no satisfactory answer.

Shia.—The Sunnis also relate circumstances of the Prophet and his companions which cannot be ascribed without disgrace to the lowest of men. For instance, they relate that the Prophet danced and gambolled before Aisheh until she was satisfied; and what I have before mentioned of Omar's not complying with the wishes of the Prophet when on his deathbed.

* *Sunni.*—The dancing of the Prophet, which you have first remarked, is not, as you conceive, to be considered reprehensible. For has he not said, "I am sent to exalt all habits and customs?" *249

Shia.—But this tradition is evidently false.

Sunni.—How then, since you ascribe falsity to Imaih Bokhari and other traditionists, do you believe on their authority that Omar did not comply with the last wishes of the Prophet? or will you consider as true only such traditions as you think afford you the means of casting reproaches on the Sunnis, and deem to be false all the others which so fully establish the pre-eminence and excellence of the Prophet, his three successors, his companions, and their followers? But is it not mentioned in the Koran, that it is a sign of an unbeliever to say that the Prophet should not eat this, nor drink that, nor act in such a manner?

Shia (becoming angry).—Then is it not a calumny to say that the holy Prophet listened to music, and danced? and how can you contend for the purity of his three immediate successors?

Sunni.—The listening to music cannot be reasonably reprehended; and, since the founder of our law has listened to it, it is on the contrary laudable. - And if his three immediate successors were not pure, why were they honoured with the confidence of the Prophet, and why were the daughters of the Prophet and Ali in the houses of Omar and Osman? To open the path of contradiction is not laudable, or otherwise I would ask you, "Since Ali was, as you contend, acquainted with all the secrets of futurity, why did he wage war against Moaviah,

who was a true believer, and cause the death of so many Moslems?" For knowingly to occasion the death of any one cannot be worthy of praise. And is this not admitted by you and considered to be true?—That a Moslem retailer of onions and garlic having one day seated himself on the road by which the Prophet passed, the Prophet said to him, "If you would retire out of my path, and take your station in a corner, it would be well." The man made an apology, and the Prophet passed on. Shortly after Ali came to the same man, and said to him, "The Prophet dislikes the smell of onions and garlic, therefore rise and move out of his way." The man replied, "O * Ali, the Prophet told me to rise and I did not rise, why * 250 should I do so now?" Ali immediately drew his sword, saying, "And didst thou not rise when the Prophet bade thee?" and smote off his head. Now such an action is highly reprobated by the law, and has not the Prophet said, "Be not profuse in shedding the blood even of your enemies?" And has he not praised justice and mercy; would he then approve of a Mussulman's being put to death merely for not moving out of his way? Has he not, on the contrary, said, "The murderer of a true believer shall burn in hell to all eternity?" and yet your learned men relate this action as if it were a merry jest, although it is only a proof of Ali's want of forbearance and the influence of his passions.

Shia.—He was, nevertheless, the most excellent of all the Prophet's companions.

Sunni.—In knowledge or in practice?

Shia.—In both.

Sunni.—In what respect did he excel Omar in practice?

Shia.—Ali prayed the whole night.

Sunni.—Is it not your belief that Ali every night wedded a new bride, and that his strength was never impaired by the fatigue attending such frequent nuptials? How then could a person so occupied find time to pray, unless indeed your devotion be merely the *cultus veneris*?

Shia.—You were liars from the beginning, and your principal Imam, Abu Hanifeh, was a native of Kabul, and a servant

of the Imam Abu Jafier Sadik; and, although he is so much honoured by you, he himself retained and introduced the customs of his fathers, who were Magi.

Sunni.—As you yourself admit that Abu Hanifeh was a servant of Abu Jafier, had he introduced such customs, it seems most likely that he must have learned them from Abu Jafier. For your ancestors were Magi, and it was not until they were conquered, subdued, and had no other resource, that they embraced Islamism; and it is evident that with it they have mingled much of their former religion.

The Sunni was proceeding to expatiate on the other defects of the Shia sect, but the emperor put an end to the dispute.

* *Between a Mussulman and a Christian.*

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Christian.—Do you believe in Jesus?

Mussulman.—Yes; I acknowledge him to be a prophet from God, and he has foretold the coming of my prophet.

Christian.—That prophet, the Messiah, has said, “Many persons shall appear after me, who will pretend to be prophets; yet believe not in them, nor follow after them, for they are liars; but remain steadfast in my faith until I come again.” Nor in the evangelists is there any mention of your prophet.

Mussulman.—It was mentioned both in the Pentateuch and Evangelists, but your principal men have erased it.

Christian.—In this your incorrectness is evident; for if you did not reject the Evangelists, you would preserve them amongst you in the same manner as we the followers of Jesus preserve the Pentateuch, which is the book of Moses; but you have kept neither the Pentateuch nor the Evangelists: nor can there be a doubt but that we would have believed in your Prophet, had he been mentioned by Jesus, as it is our only wish to obey all his precepts. But now how can we ascertain that your Prophet has spoken the truth?

Mussulman.—By his miracles, one of which is his dividing the moon.

Christian.—If the dividing of the moon had really taken place, all the inhabitants of the earth must have seen it, and

the narrators of wonders of every country and the historians of every nation would have written the circumstance with the pens of truth ; but now no one but a Mussulman has the slightest knowledge of this event.

The Hindoos, Turks, and Parsees, who were present, were then asked if they had ever heard of such a circumstance, and they all replied that they never had ; which answer reduced the Mussulman to silence.

Between a Jew and a Christian.

Jew.—In the Old Testament there is no mention of Jesus.

Christian.—How is there not ? Does not David say, “My hands, my * feet, and my bones fall away” ? And is not * 252 this to be considered as a type of the agony and cross of Jesus ?

Jew.—In this passage David speaks of himself ; and, as ‘nothing but truth flowed from his lips, had he wished to speak of Jesus he would have expressed himself clearly.

Christian.—But it was prophesied that a virgin should conceive, and Mary was that virgin.

Jew.—Amongst us the virginity of Mary is not considered to be proved ; for, even according to your own belief, Mary was married to Joseph the carpenter before the birth of Jesus, and Jesus is said to be the son of Joseph the carpenter.

Christian.—This is true ; but Joseph knew not Mary.

The Jew exclaimed, “How do you know this ?” and notwithstanding whatever the Christian said, the Jew still repeated this question, until the Christian was reduced to silence.

Between a Philosopher, a Brahmin, a Mussulman, a Parsee, a Jew, and a Christian.

Philosopher.—The divine missions of your prophets have not been proved, because a prophet ought to speak nothing but what is consonant to reason, and at the same time he should be free from all sin, and not prone to injure others. But it is admitted that Moses was brought up by Pharaoh, and yet he caused without remorse the Red Sea to drown his benefactor.

That the Red Sea opened of itself a passage for Moses is an error. Nor did Moses attend to the repentance of Karun, but through covetousness of his gold caused the earth to swallow him up. And Jesus authorized the slaying and eating of animals. And Muhammad drove the camels of the Koreish, and not only caused the blood of men to be shed, but shed it with his own hands, and was notorious for his lust, and for taking the wives of other men. How then shall we know a prophet?

They all replied, By his miracles.

Philosopher.—But what are the miracles of your prophets?

* *Jew.*—Have you not heard that Moses changed his staff into a serpent? * 253

The Philosopher immediately took his girdle, and breathing upon it changed it into eight serpents, and then regarding the Jew while he changed them again to their former state, observed, There is the miracle of your Moses.

Christian.—The Messiah was born without the intervention of a father.

Philosopher.—You yourselves admit that Joseph was married to Mary, how then do you know that Jesus was not his son?

Moslem.—My prophet brought the Koran, divided the moon, and ascended into heaven.

Philosopher.—Is it not written in the Koran, “And they said unto him (Muhammad), We will not believe in thee until thou cause a fountain to spring out of the earth; or until thou possess a garden abounding in palms and vines, and in the midst thereof streams of flowing water; or until thou bring down the heavens in pieces on the earth; or until thou render God and his angels visible; or until thou ascend corporeally into heaven, and bring thence a writing which we may be able to read—say, Praised be my God! am I other than a man sent as an apostle?” From this it is evident that he who could not cause a fountain to spring from the earth could not have performed the miracles ascribed to him. And when he was unable to break the heavens in pieces, how could he divide the moon? And when he was unable to ascend into heaven corpo-

really, in presence of the unbelievers, how is his ascension mentioned in the Koran to be believed? And as he brought thence no writing, how can it be believed that the Koran was sent down to him?

Parsee.—Disbelieve not miracles, for my prophet also ascended into heaven.

Philosopher.—Do you not admit both Yezdan and Aherman, in order that Yezdan may not be said to cause evil? But are you not also of opinion, that Aherman sprang from the evil thoughts of the only true God, and as these proceeded from him, consequently evil must also have sprung from God? Thus the first principle on which your religion is *founded * 254 being erroneous, all that is derived from it must be equally erroneous.

Brahmin.—Why do you deny divine missions to men, for are not our Avatars a sufficient proof of them?

Philosopher.—You at first believe God to be without form, and then you say that God has assumed various forms. But the idea of God's assuming a corporeal form is contrary to sense and probability, although you even ascribe wives to your several deities. You also say that Vishnu, whom some of you conceive to be the second person of the Triad, and some believe to be the Supreme Being, has descended from heaven and become incarnate in the forms of a fish, a boar, a tortoise, and several men. Your own books also relate how, when he was incarnate as Rama, his wife was ravished from him without his being aware of the circumstance; and how he was, when incarnate as Krishna, addicted to lust and falsehood. In what manner, then, can mankind acquire justice and virtue by worshipping such a being or his various Avatars? or what advantage can be derived from the worship of the Lingum of Mahadeva, who is believed by many to be the Supreme Being? or the Yoni of his wife? And do you not know that perfection cannot be attained by entertaining erroneous ideas of the all-pervading and incorporeal essence of God?

The Brahmin being reduced to silence, the Philosopher thus addressed the assembly:—

“³ Know for certain that the accomplished apostle and the perfect messenger from God is the illustrious Akbar; that is, the imperial wisdom, on whom be the blessing of God! Nor can you require a stronger proof of this, than his being from his own essence skilled in all knowledge, and that his precepts are such as are intelligible to the understandings of all men. And since reason proves that a wise and almighty Creator has formed this world, and has showered many blessings on the inhabitants of this temporary abode, which are deserving of praise and thanksgiving, let us, as far as the light of our understandings will enable us, contemplate on the mysteries of his creation, and render praises unto him according to the extent of our knowledge of his sublime perfections. Then, when we have obtained such knowledge, * 255 and been led into the right path, should we deny his unity and become unmindful of his benefits, shall we not deservedly incur punishment? Since such is the case, why should we pay obedience to any man, who was a mortal like ourselves, and was subject to anger and lust, and covetousness and pain and joy, and love of rank and power, even more than ourselves. For if this mortal should teach knowledge and thanksgiving, we have been already made acquainted with these by the assistance of our own understandings; and if he should teach what is contrary to reason, this would alone be a sufficient proof of his falsehood. For reason assures us that the Creator of this world is wise, and a wise being would not prescribe to the created any worship which would appear to their reasons to be evil, since what appears evil cannot remain permanent. Now all religions are founded on circumstances which must be considered as evil; such as believing in the conversations of God⁴; the incarnation of the incorporeal essence in a mortal form, and his re-ascension into heaven in a human body; the ascension of men into heaven; the pilgrimage to particular edifices, and the ceremonies attending it; the throwing of stones, and running between two hills, and the kissing of the black stone. For if it be said that it is impossible to adore God without some visible medium, and that it is therefore necessary to have some fixed point to which

the mind can attach itself, it is evident that for remembering and praising God no medium nor particular place is at all requisite. But if they should be admitted to be necessary, the sun and the planets deserve the preference. Yet neither can be considered as exempt from a resemblance to Paganism, though the devout respect paid to particular edifices is most objectionable, as their being called the house of God may induce the ignorant to ascribe a corporeal form to God, and as also different prophets have conferred a sanctity on different places, such as the Kaba and Jerusalem. Since, therefore, a resemblance to Paganism exists in all worship of stone, earth, and corporeal forms, the most proper objects on which to fix the mind are fire, water, and the planets. If, then, any * 256 object be necessary, let it be the sun * and the planets.

Other defects in the existing religions are the sacrifice of animals, the abstaining from meats which are adapted for the food of man, and the admitting of meats by one prophet to be lawful which are forbidden by another. Thus, if it were improper to eat pork, why was it permitted by Jesus? and if it be forbidden on account of the uncleanness of the animal, why are not fowls also forbidden, as they are equally unclean? and several other similar precepts, which are all repugnant to reason. But the principal objection to divine missions is the being obliged to submit to the authority of a man like ourselves, who is subject to all the infirmities and imperfections of human nature; who appropriates to himself whatever he may wish; who renders the wife of whichsoever of his followers he may affect unlawful to her husband and lawful to himself; who takes unto himself nine wives, or as many as he pleases, and limits his followers to four; and who sheds the blood of any one he chooses. On account of what excellence, then, or what knowledge, is such a man worthy of being followed after; or in what manner can the truth of his pretensions be ascertained? If it be from his simple assertion, some of his sayings are inconsistent with others, and it is impossible, from the multiplicity of sects, to know which of these sayings are to be considered as correct. If from miracles, every miracle rests only on the

authority of tradition, which becomes continually weaker in the course of transmission. Besides, the power of the occult sciences is great, and the properties of bodies are infinite; and what may have appeared a miracle may have been nothing more than the effect of art, or the property of the body itself. Why should not you, who believe in the dividing of the moon by Muhammad, believe also in the moon of Al-Mokanna? And since you call Moses the word of God, why not also thus call Samri, who caused the golden calf to speak?

“But it may be said that every reason has not strength to understand exalted precepts, and that God has of his infinite mercy blessed his prophets with a superior degree of understanding. If so, prophets can be of no use to mankind; for if their doctrine be not understood, or not approved of by the people, they propagate it by the sword, saying to the * ignorant, ‘My doctrine is above your comprehension, * 257 and you cannot understand it;’ and to the wise, ‘My faith is above all human reason.’ Thus the doctrine is adapted neither for the ignorant nor the wise. But another evil is, that the original gift of reason can be of no benefit to mankind, yet the Prophet has said that ‘God will not task the soul beyond its capacity.’ But whatever is not understood by the capacity of our reason remains hidden: and to assent to it is foolish, as the writings of other wise men may surpass both the traditions and the book of that prophet. Were then the abstruseness or unintelligibility of the doctrine to be established as the test of a divine mission, every person may pretend to one, for there will be always weak men who will follow after him, saying, ‘His reason is superior to ours;’ since the reason of all men is not alike. Hence have arisen in Islamism and other religions so many sects, doctrines, and practices.

“Another defect is, that when the religion of one prophet has been embraced, and when the worship of God and the knowledge of truth has been established, according to his doctrine, another prophet arises who divulges a new doctrine and new precepts. Hence mankind become perplexed, and they know not whether to consider the first prophet a liar, or to

conclude that religions must change after certain periods of time. But truth is immutable, and admits of no variation or inconsistency ; and yet in the four books † there is a multitude of differences and contradictions. Hence, then, to wise men it must be evident that salvation is to be obtained only by following the path of truth pointed out by the illustrious Akbar ; in following which it is requisite to refrain from lust and voluptuousness, the slaying of what possesses life, the acquisition of other men's property, adultery, lying, calumny, violence, injustice, and contemptuous reproaches. The means of attaining future bliss are comprised in the following virtues :—liberality, forgiveness and forbearance, chastity, devotion, temperance, fortitude, gentleness, politeness, acting so as to please God and not man, * and resignation to the will of God. . And the

* 258 most exalted of men are those who are satisfied with the smallest portion of food, and turn aside from this transitory world, entirely abstaining from the pleasures of eating and drinking, from costly apparel, and from marriage. But a steadfast adherence to these precepts is difficult, as the devil is continually exciting the passions of men in order to make them deviate from the right way. Hence have prophets considered not only as lawful, but even as praiseworthy, the pleasures of eating and drinking, of pomp, of beautiful women, and of many other things that appertain alone to unbelievers. And hence have many learned men who have embraced the religion of these prophets become convinced of its falsehood, and have anxiously waited for an opportunity to withdraw themselves from it.”

Thus the Philosopher spoke, and none in the assembly were able to answer him.

As in the preceding discourse of the Philosopher, divine missions to men, either in the person of an incarnate God or of an inspired mortal, are equally called in question, it seems pro-

† The four books admitted to be of divine origin by the Muhammadans, viz. the Pentateuch, the Psalter, the Evangelists, and the Koran.

bable that the author of the *Dabistan*, in ascribing to Akbar the names of Apostle and Messenger from God, has merely conformed to the usual mode of speaking with regard to Muhammad. It is at least certain that Akbar never assumed these titles; and it is therefore impossible to ascertain, from the meagre accounts which have been given of this new religion, in what particular character he wished to appear. This point even Abu'l Fazzl leaves in doubt, as he has merely observed, "When through the good fortune of mankind the season arrives for the revelation of truth, a person is endowed with knowledge, upon whom God bestows the robes of royalty, in order that he may lead men in the right way with absolute dominion; such as is the emperor of our time." It must, however, be supposed that he ascribed to himself some perfection which rendered him superior to other men, and which might induce them to look upon him as a guide appointed by God to lead them into the paths of salvation. But the pretensions in former instances * to divinity or inspiration were denied, and neither could, therefore, with any propriety, be attributed to *259 Akbar. At the same time it was well known that the most effectual means to ensure the establishment of a new religion was the belief of some immediate communication between the Supreme Being and its founder. It was consequently necessary to ascribe a similar communication to Akbar, or to involve in uncertainty whatever regarded the peculiar powers intrusted to him for the instruction of men in the only true religion. Had the first been adopted, it would have exposed the new faith to be attacked by the same arguments which had been employed in refutation of former systems of belief: and it therefore seems to have been considered most prudent never to explain openly the exact nature of the attributes which Akbar was supposed to have received from the Supreme Being, but to communicate this mystery only to the higher orders of the initiated.⁵

It was, however, found requisite to distinguish both the new religion and its founder by some particular designation: the emperor therefore assumed the title of Khalifah Ullah, or Vice-

gerent of God: and his faith was honoured with the name of Iláhi, or Godly. He also so far imitated preceding prophets as to assign a specific characteristic by which the truth of the new doctrines might be ascertained. The conversations of God with Moses, the breath of the Messiah which cured distempers and resuscitated the dead, and the superhuman beauty of the Koran, were familiar to the Muhammadans: and Akbar accordingly selected in support of the divine nature of his tenets a still more singular proof, namely, their consonance with reason. To this alone he appealed, and by persuasion, not violence, was the new religion directed to be propagated.

But before any innovations were attempted to be introduced in the established systems of belief, the emperor published in A.D. 1578 an ordinance sealed with the seals of all the principal doctors in theology and jurisprudence, and of such persons as were most distinguished for their learning, in which they declared that the prosperity and increase of religion required that the emperor should be considered and acknowledged as the sole supreme director of the faith. From this period * 260 several of the * principal Ameeris openly denied the divine mission of Muhammad, ridiculed his miracles, and cast reproaches on his faith and those who adhered to it. Their example was followed by many, both Muhammadans and Hindus; and Akbar, encouraged by this success, ordered the symbol of Islamism to be discontinued, and this formula to be used in its stead, "There is no God but God, and Akbar is the khalif of God." A Moslem writer, however, remarks that this innovation gave such offence to the people, that it was some time before any one ventured to repeat these words beyond the precincts of the palace. At the same time he admits, with bitterness of spirit, "that the people of innovation and folly, in order to establish vanity and impiety, advanced from their ambush, and, investing falsehood with the appearance of truth, and error with the splendour of righteousness, betrayed the enlightened mind of the emperor, eager in the search of truth, into infidelity; and that their wishes so succeeded in breaking the strong chain of the glorious law and

the only true religion, that in five or six years not a trace of Islamism remained." This remark must of course be restricted to the court, and the departments immediately connected with it.⁶

The system of belief which Akbar wished to introduce was evidently a Deism, as pure as the weakness of mankind would possibly admit. Abolition, therefore, and not institution, was the perfection of his plan. He accordingly, during the twenty-seven years which elapsed between this period and his death, published various ordinances, by which every institution peculiar to Islamism was gradually abolished. He thus abrogated the five daily prayers, ablution, fasts, alms, and pilgrimage, as performed by the Muhammadans; the assembly for worship on Fridays, and the criers of the mosques; he ordered to be considered as clean what was esteemed unclean by the Moslem law; he permitted the sale of wine, and games of chance; and he forbade the marriage of more than one wife, and the circumcision of boys until they were twelve years of age, when the ceremony was to be left entirely optional. In order also to efface as much as possible the remembrance of the ancient religion, he commanded the dating by the Hijreh to be discontinued, and substituted in its place * the year of his accession to the throne; and at the same * 261 time changed the months and their names used by the Arabs into those which had been adopted by the ancient Persians. He likewise so discountenanced the study of the Arabic language and of the Muhammadan theology and jurisprudence, that every person acquainted with them was ashamed to avow so censurable a knowledge. It was even considered highly commendable to convert the letters peculiar to the Arabic alphabet, which occurred in many words, into such as were purely Persian. The names of Muhammad, Ahmed, Mustafa, and such like, were no longer given to children; and many who had received them in infancy now changed them into others not liable to reproach. For all persons were encouraged in showing every contempt to the Arabs and their prophet; and such verses as had been written in their disparagement by Firdausi or the Sufi poets were in the mouth of every one.

In introducing these innovations Akbar was at first greatly assisted by the Shias, who, ignorant of his real intentions, rejoiced in having an opportunity of humbling their adversaries the Sunnis. They therefore exhausted argument and invective in pointing out the imperfections of Muhammad's three immediate successors, his companions, and their followers. They successfully exposed the inconsistencies and contradictions which occurred in the various collections of traditions, and fully established that their authority was neither conclusive nor sufficient. But although they succeeded in thus proving that the tenets held by the opposite sect were liable to many objections, they failed in showing that their own sect was exempt from all reproach; and these discussions, in consequence, only tended to throw contempt on the Muhammadan religion itself, and to promote the projects of the emperor.

It is singular that, objectionable as idolatry must have appeared to Akbar, it never was abolished by any one of his ordinances, and that the institutions of the Hindus remained almost entirely exempt from alteration. The only changes which he ordered in them was the discontinuance of trials by ordeal, that no boy should be married before sixteen and no girl before fourteen years of age, that widows should be allowed to * marry, and that no animals should be sacrificed. He * 262 had likewise ordered that no widow should be permitted to burn herself with the body of her deceased husband; but he removed this interdiction some years afterwards, and widows were allowed to burn themselves, provided no coercion was used, and that it was on their parts entirely voluntary.

In the accounts given of this new religion, the motives which actuated Akbar in thus completely changing the faith in which he was born and educated, and abstaining from all material alteration in one to which he was a stranger, are nowhere explained. He seems, however, to be accused of a great partiality to the learning of the Brahmins, and it is certain that the *Ramayanam* and *Mahabaratam* and others of their works were translated into Persian by his orders.⁸ But as he adopted none of their rites or ceremonies in the mode of worship which he

prescribed to his followers, it is most probable that he was prevented by political considerations from hazarding any innovation in the religion of so numerous a part of his subjects. At the same time the origin of Brahminism was concealed by the remotest antiquity, and the course of ages had communicated to it a respect and veneration to which the faith of Muhammad had no pretensions. Nor must it be overlooked, that although the Hindus appear sunk in idolatry, yet the Brahmins profess a belief in only one supreme God, and that they consider images merely as points on which may be fixed the minds of those who are incapable of contemplating and adoring the infinity of God without the intervention of some visible medium. The persons, therefore, with whom Akbar conversed on the subject of the Hindu religion would no doubt sedulously conceal its defects, and only display its beauties; and in this case their system, being a pure and sublime deism, would entirely coincide with his own opinions.

Akbar, however, seems to have been aware that deism was too spiritual a system to admit of its becoming a national religion, and that it was necessary, in order to recommend it to the people, to introduce some ceremonies and some visible mode of worship. But, anxious to divert the minds of men as little as possible from the direct contemplation of the Supreme *Being, he adopted as intermediate objects of respect the sun and planets, and as their representative the sacred * 263 fire. It is probable that he was led to select these for types of the Divinity by the superstitious belief in the influence of the planets, which is firmly entertained by all the people of Asia; and perhaps by a wish to imitate the ancient kings of Persia. It does not, however, appear that the new religion ever received any distinct form, as no mention is made of either temples or priests having been dedicated to its preservation and extension. It seems to have been considered sufficient that the initiated should individually address their prayers, the form of which was not prescribed, to the sun, or the planets and sacred fire, and that they should occasionally assemble together for the purpose of conversing on the sub-

ject of the new doctrines, and of receiving instruction from such as were most deeply skilled in them. Akbar himself frequently assumed the office of teacher, according to Abu'l Fazl, who observes, "In his infancy the emperor involuntarily performed such actions as astonished the beholders ; and when at length, contrary to his inclination, those wonderful actions exceeded all bounds and became discernible to every one, he considered it to be the will of the Almighty that he should lead men in the paths of righteousness, and began to teach ; thus satisfying the thirsty who were wandering in the wilderness of inquiry. Many of his disciples through the blessing of his holy breath obtained a greater degree of knowledge in the course of a single day, than they could gain from other holy doctors after forty days' instruction." The only ceremonies which were adopted were the principal annual festivals of the Zardushtian, and the only prayers that are mentioned to have been prescribed were two, one at midnight and one at sunrise ; and at mid-day the followers of the new religion were likewise directed to repeat and meditate upon the thousand and one names of the sun, which had been borrowed from the ritual of the Brahmins and translated into Persian verse by Moola Sheeri. No particular fasts were appointed, but abstinence was recommended to be observed at all times. But the perfection of this religion consisted not in prayers or ceremonies, but in leading a pure and spotless life, in rendering good to man ; and particularly in withdrawing the *mind

* 264 as much as possible from worldly affections, and in fixing it entirely on God in every action and in every thought.

Of the positive institutions established by Akbar, there was only one in which he departed from his usual prudence, and which appears to have given general dissatisfaction and to have met with considerable resistance. This was an injunction that the Muhammadans should shave their beards. Obnoxious as this order was, it seems that all persons who attended the court, or were employed in the different departments of the state, were obliged to conform to it. On this subject the Moslem writer before quoted relates the following anecdote.

In the year of the Hijreh 1001 (A.D. 1592) Khan Azim was recalled from the government of Guzerat, the reason of which was that it had been reported to Shaik Abu'l Fazl and the Rajah Tudur Mull, that he had spoken disrespectfully of the new religion. They accordingly represented this circumstance to the emperor, and aggravated it by pointing out that Khan Azim persisted in wearing his beard (for in a war with the Jan Rajah he had made a vow to that effect); on which the emperor directed a mandate to be addressed to him to this purport: "Is it on account of the weight of thy beard that thou delayest to hasten to the presence?" Khan Azim no sooner received this letter than he returned a harsh and indignant answer, and immediately took refuge at Diu with his family and treasures, that he might there await an opportunity for proceeding to Mecca. The same writer, however, who was a principal Imam, and attached to the court, relates an anecdote of himself which shows that the courtiers had no great difficulty in sacrificing their beards in order to retain the favour of their sovereign. "I met one day (says he) at the house of Mir Abu'l Ghais, the Hakim Abu'l Fath, who received me in a cooler manner than usual; Mir Abu'l Ghais asked me if I had given him any cause of offence: I replied, The fault is not mine, but the barber's."† On this point alone Akbar appears to have been tenacious; and it is therefore not improbable that several Muhammadans incurred disgrace for not complying with his wishes; but no mention is made * of his ever having testified his displeasure by any act of violence. It is impossible to discover any reason * 265 which can even plausibly account for Akbar's attaching so much importance to so seemingly trivial a circumstance: for he could not be actuated by any political motive in proscribing the beard from its being a marked distinction between the Muhammadan and the Hindu, as he at the same time permitted the latter to wear the distinctive marks of his caste.

In this instance only did Akbar authorize an interference with

† Alluding to his beard being shaved.

even the most trivial custom of his subjects; for although by his ordinances he had abolished Islamism as the religion of the state, the Muhammadans were still permitted, as well as all other religions and sects, to enjoy the fullest toleration. The strictest injunctions were given to the different governors that no class of people, whatever their faith might be, should receive the slightest hindrance or obstruction in erecting places of worship, and in following every rite and every ceremony of their respective religions. Nor does it appear that Akbar ever showed a partiality to any particular one; unless the prohibition to slaughter cows and oxen may be supposed to have proceeded from an inclination to favour the Hindus. This general toleration he may have considered as one of the most effectual means of weakening the prejudices which the different systems of belief that existed in India entertained against each other, and of gradually opening the way for the reception of his own doctrines. These he declared were to be propagated by persuasion alone; and in order to admit of its influence being exerted, it was absolutely necessary that the Hindu and the Muhammadan should be induced to deviate from that exclusive bigotry which deemed the listening to any arguments against their own religion, or in favour of another, to be one of the most heinous of sins. Conversion, however, merely by an appeal to the reasonableness of the doctrines proposed, if such an event be possible, must have required a considerable course of time. But Akbar possessed a more powerful resource; for, as soon as it became known that the most certain path to rank and dignities was by embracing the faith of the sovereign, religion was without difficulty sacrificed to ambition, and numbers hastened to declare their conversion. * Even as early as the year * 266 1582, several Amecrs had, in order to recommend themselves still more effectually to the emperor's favour, introduced the custom of every person's delivering, on their being converted, a written declaration to this effect: "I, such a one, son of such a one, voluntarily and of my own accord with my whole soul renounce the Muhammadan faith as I received and learned it from my fathers, and enter into the Iláhi religion

of the Emperor Akbar; and I at the same time agree and consent to its four conditions, namely, the sacrifice of property, life, reputation, and religion." The exact meaning of this engagement is not very apparent; but the author of the *Dabistan* explains it as containing a solemn contract, that the convert would in case of necessity sacrifice all that he possessed, and all that he valued, in the defence and preservation of the new faith.

To effect the conversion, either real or feigned, of all persons belonging to the court and the principal departments of the state, the example and influence of the emperor was sufficient. But it does not appear that the new religion obtained a similar success amongst the other classes of the nation. Nor is it easy to understand in what manner Akbar expected that it could be propagated without appointing some particular persons for that express purpose; and yet he seems not to have established a priesthood, or to have substituted in its place any other institution whatever. The Brahmins therefore, and the Muhammadan doctors, met with no opposition in retaining their power over the minds of the people, and in preventing their being seduced from the faith of their fathers. At the same time, the new religion was far from being adapted to popular feelings and prejudices: it displayed no pomp of outward ceremony to captivate the mind, nor were its doctrines recommended by the miracles and wonders of other religions. It, on the contrary, called upon every one to exert their own reason; and to be directed by it in paying a suitable adoration to one Supreme Being, and in yielding obedience to the few injunctions prescribed for their conduct in life. There were no divine revelations, no mysteries, no prophets, to be believed in as the only means of salvation. So spiritual a system, it is evident, could never be properly appreciated by the generality of men, and it cannot therefore be supposed that it ever obtained any considerable influence amongst * 267 the people of India.

No particulars, however, are mentioned from which the exact extent of this influence can be ascertained. But that the new religion never became popular, and that the conversions to it

proceeded from other motives than a sincere conviction of its truth, may be inferred from its immediately sinking into neglect on the death of its founder. During thirty-one years Akbar had endeavoured to propagate his new doctrines; but so little stability had they acquired, that no sooner did Jehangir ascend the throne and re-establish Islamism as the religion of the state, than the Iláhi faith was instantly renounced, or only professed in secret. For it seems not improbable that some might still adhere to it, and that from the close resemblance of its tenets to those of the Muhammadan Sufis, who reject the Koran and the divine mission of its author, and of the Hindu followers of the Vedanti school, they might be induced to prefer concealing themselves amongst those philosophers, to attempting the preservation of a separate system exposed to the resentment of the Moslem doctors. But, whether this were the case or not, the new religion immediately disappeared; and when the author of the *Dabistan* composed that work, only forty or fifty years after the death of Akbar, it no longer continued to exist as a distinct sect.

Such was the final result of an attempt to change the religion of India, planned by one of the most powerful emperors, conducted with prudence and ability, and supported for thirty-one years by every inducement which could gratify interest or ambition. The too great spirituality of the system of belief proposed to be introduced, the want of some class of men whose duty and interest it was to propagate the new doctrines, and Jehangir's adherence to Islamism, may be considered as efficient causes in preventing the success of this plan. But it cannot be doubted that its failure was occasioned principally by that pertinacity with which the Muhammadans and Hindus have at all times resisted every innovation in their respective religions.

¹ The legal number of wives has been repeatedly a subject of dispute amongst the Muhammadans, although it does not appear that there ever was any difference of opinion on this point between the four principal Imams. The example of their prophet, however, and

the interested decisions of inferior Imams, have countenanced a belief that there was no particular number prescribed, and that a man might therefore marry as many wives as he chose. But in the time of Akbar, besides this opinion, another also prevailed in Hindustan, namely, that this text relative to marriage which occurs in the Koran, "Take in marriage of such women as please you, two or three or four,"† ought to be translated "two and three and four," and consequently that nine wives were permitted by the law. The difference arises from the conjunction "wa" having two significations in Arabic, as it may either mean "or" or "and;" and this translation was supported by several authorities. But the principal dispute was relative to marriages called *mutaa*, and respecting the legitimacy of the children produced by them. This subject cannot be better explained than in the words of the celebrated and approved digest, the *Hedaya*: ‡ "A *mutaa* marriage is when a man takes in the presence of two witnesses a woman to cohabit with him for a certain time and for a certain stipulated remuneration. The Imam Malik is of opinion that such marriages are legal, for the Prophet declared them to be so; and until they be abrogated by the same authority they must continue to be admitted as legal. But the Imam Abu Hanifah and others are of opinion that the previous permission to contract such marriages has been abrogated, according to the universal concurrence of all the Companions, on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who relates that Ali informed him that the Prophet had declared to him, on the day when the battle of Kheiber was fought, that such marriages were forbidden." Here, therefore, is an express permission of Muhammad abrogated on the authority of tradition, to which the Sunnis assent; but the Shias, on the contrary, consider such marriages perfectly legal, and consequently that the children produced by them are also legitimate. On no subject, indeed, does there appear to be a greater variety of opinions and of corresponding authorities among the Muhammadans, than on that of marriages: Akbar therefore could not have selected one more propitious to his design of exposing the uncertainty and fallibility of the Moslem law and its most esteemed commentators.

² Imam is a name that has been bestowed equally on the doctors of the first ages of Islamism, as being the most ancient theologians and the first interpreters of the Koran and the laws of Muhammad; and also on the ministers of religion who perform in the mosques the functions of the Imamut, that is, presiding at the public prayers on Fridays and festivals. Abdul Kadur, the author of the *Tareek Budaoni*, ap-

† Sale, vol. i., page 92, adds "and not more:" which words are not to be found in the Koran.

‡ I quote from the Persian translation published at Calcutta.

pears to have been appointed to the Imamut of the principal mosque at which the emperor attended.

*³ This discourse of the Philosopher clearly appears, from every *269 account of this religion, to express in a summary manner the objections which were brought by Akbar and his followers against all other systems of belief; and it at the same time intimates, but very concisely, the nature of the new doctrines. The author of the *Dabistan* further adds, that when the Philosopher ceased speaking, Akbar himself addressed the assembly, and personally enforced the different arguments and precepts which had been previously adduced. But neither in the *Dabistan*, nor in any other work with which I am acquainted, is there any account of the whole plan of the new religion; and not the slightest mention is made of Akbar's opinions respecting a future state of rewards and punishments. It may hence perhaps be justly inferred that he retained on this subject, although no doubt in a modified degree, the belief of his younger years, which he had imbibed from the Muhammadans. Several, however, of the persons who were admitted to his confidence are accused of believing in the doctrine of the Metempsychosis.

* This applies equally to the Jews, the Zardushtians, the Muhammadans, and also to the Christians, in as far as they believe in the Old Testament; for Moses is emphatically designated by the Muhammadans by the epithet of *Kaleem Ullah*, or the Converser with God.

* The peculiar perfection of Akbar, as may be gathered from the *Ayeeen Akbari* and the *Dabistan*, was his more than human knowledge and wisdom: but no instances are mentioned in which these were demonstrated by their visible effects to the conviction of his followers. Shaik Abu'l Fazl, however, also states that Akbar performed numerous miracles. But as this assertion is inconsistent with every account which has been given of his opinions, and of his avowed disbelief in all miracles, it seems probable that Abu'l Fazl has attached some other than the usual meaning to the word miracle. Not possessing, however, the original of the *Ayeeen Akbari*, I am unable to ascertain to what cause this apparent inconsistency ought properly to be ascribed.

* Besides the Muhammadan profession of faith, Akbar ordered the mode of salutation on two persons meeting to be also changed; and that instead of the *Salam aleikum* and *Salam aleik*, before used, his followers should address each other in these terms; the first person should say, *Allah Akbar*, God is greatest: to which the other should reply, *Jelle Jellüle-hu!* May his glory be glorified! It is remarkable that the mode of salutation has been always thought of the greatest importance, and that it has always been one of the first changes made and adopted by the Seikhs and other sects.

⁷ The intention and operation of these ordinances are not properly explained: for it is evident that, notwithstanding their publication, the Muhammadans continued to enjoy *the full exercise of their religion. I am therefore inclined to suppose, as I have elsewhere explained it, that they were only intended to abrogate Islamism as the religion of the state, and consequently to exempt all persons from the pains and penalties which they might otherwise incur by acting in opposition to its laws and doctrines. In this view of the subject, it necessarily follows that such abrogation was not requisite with regard to the Hindu religion, as although this was the faith professed by far the greatest part of Akbar's subjects, still it was only tolerated, and any transgression of its institutions was not liable to be punished by the laws of the state. The various ordinances, therefore, published by Akbar were intended to give every person in his dominions the full liberty of freely embracing and of freely professing whatever religion he might think proper, and to abrogate all laws or customs which might subject him to punishment for entertaining what were previously deemed heterodox opinions.

⁸ It may be supposed that the worship of the sun and of the sacred fire was borrowed from the Hindus; but it seems more probable that it was adopted from the followers of Zardusht, as Akbar not only adopted their year, but also their festivals; and to the adoration of the sun was also added that of the planets, which never were, I believe, individually worshipped by the Hindus.

[NOTE.—The *Guli Rana*, from which the author took a part of this article, may be seen in the Mulla Firúz library, and occurs in the Catalogue of it under Section VII., Nos. 121 and 122, and all he knew about what he calls the *Tareek Badaooni* is the very brief abstract of it occurring in that work. Hence it is rather curious that he ventured to write on the religion of Akbar with such scanty resources at his disposal, although it must be acknowledged that he made the best use he could of them. He ought to have procured the said *Tareek* itself, the full title of which is *Muntakhab Al Tawa'rikh of A'bd Al-Qádir Bin-i-Maluk Shah Al-Badáoni* and supplies one of the best and most abundant sources concerning this subject; as the notices on Akbar's change of sentiments from a professor of Islam to the rejection of it, and the promulgation of the *Jovohid Elahi Akbar Shahi*, or "Divine monotheism of Akbar Shah," are scattered throughout this large work, which must be carefully perused to discover all the passages bearing on this curious subject. The task of searching for them is not a very amusing one; it has nevertheless been performed by Mr. E. Rehatsek, one of our most learned members, and all the passages have been translated by him. They make up a little book consisting of 103 pages, which was published by him under the title of

“The Emperor Akbar’s Repudiation of Islam,” Bombay, 1666. Those who are acquainted with the tenets of some Hindu sects in which the abandonment of *Tan*, *Man*, and *Dhan* is inculcated, will perceive that the last words in the abjuration of Islam (which occurs on p. 51 of the just-mentioned little book) made by the professors of the new religion are analogous ; the abjuration is as follows :—

“ I, A. B., who am the son of C. D., have, with great pleasure and of my own free will, abjured the insincere and hypocritical religion of Islam which I have heard of, and seen practised by my fathers, have adopted the *divine religion of the Emperor Akbar*, and have received the four degrees of loyalty, which consist in the abandonment of property, life, honour, and religion.”—ED.]





DESCRIPTION OF A CURIOUS BIRD OF THE
OTIS GENUS.†

By Captain JOHN STEWART, of the Bombay Military
Establishment.

Read on the 23rd Feb. 1819.

I think the following singular bird may safely be reckoned among those of India which have hitherto remained undescribed in books of natural history : it is no doubt, however, familiar to many persons in this country, being what is called the three-toed Quail, which gentlemen who follow the sports of the field must frequently have observed.

Although this bird has been commonly considered as a variety of the Quail, the structure of the foot, so very different from that of the *Tetrao* genus, must at once point out this impropriety, and prove its title to a place among the genus *Otis*. I shall, however, state presently its generic characters, by which this will appear more satisfactorily ; and if so, the bird must be looked upon as the smallest of the Bustard tribe which has ever been described. The bird which I examined weighed eleven drachms and sixteen grains, and measured from tip to tip of the wings, when stretched out, nine inches and a half.

The habits of this bird appear very similar to those of the common grey Quail : it generally frequents the same places, and is most frequently found in cultivated spots : it flies very actively, and, when it settles, drops down suddenly among the grass or brushwood as if wounded. Its flesh is very delicate. It is common in Guzerat and in Malwa.

The general form of the bird is more delicate than that of the Quail, and its size much less : its plumage is more variegated,

† With one drawing.

and brighter in colour, and its bill more slender and less convex.

* The following may be stated as its generic characters:
 *272 Bill rather slender, and somewhat convex; nostrils long; tongue even; toes only three.

By the above characters the bird certainly appears more nearly allied to the genus *Otis* than to any other; there are, however, the following anomalies which ought to be mentioned: 1st, The shape of the nostrils, which in the bustard are oval and open; 2ndly, Being feathered above the knee. The last, however, I consider a very trifling difference, as some of the bustard species in this country have feathers on the thighs. The feathers on the thighs of the present subject are very thin.

The plumage is variously marked, and barred with black, brown, white, and ochrey rust colour; the external edges of the vanes of the scapular feathers, and of the plumage of the back, are light ochre, and the feathers elegantly barred with brown and black; the feathers on the rump are a fine purplish black barred with white at the tips: the breast of a light rust marked with oblong spots of deep brown. As I may probably, however, better describe the plumage by the pencil than the pen, I have the pleasure to send a drawing of the bird, taken from nature, which will convey a pretty correct idea both of its plumage and its natural size.

NOTES RESPECTING THE TRIAL BY PANCHAYAT,
AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AT
POONA, UNDER THE LATE PEISHWA.

By THOMAS COATS, Esq., Surgeon, Bombay Establishment.

Read on the 23rd February 1819.

There were no formal judicial establishments under the late Government at Poona; yet there were many channels either acknowledged by it, or means suffered through which justice was administered or might be obtained. They, however, were all considered in the public opinion impure, and having much of the character of chance: every person, therefore, who had a cause to litigate deemed it essential to propitiate his judges, and many were tempted to bring forward claims they knew to be unfounded. This state of things must necessarily have produced a most pernicious effect on the morals of the people; and we accordingly find bribes everywhere given and received almost as a matter of course, shameless demands persevered in, and cunning appearing in every possible shape.

Under a government which afforded no protection to the weak against the strong, acts of injustice and violence, however, seem to have been much less common, at least near Poona, than could have been expected. The cause of this is not very evident; but perhaps is chiefly to be looked for in the mildness and abhorrence of cruelty in the dispositions of the people, produced by many of their religious maxims; and the necessity there was even for the powerful, where their own elevation was so precarious, to conciliate and strengthen themselves by avoiding a behaviour that would make enemies. When a poor man had a claim to urge against a rich one, which he did not choose to acknowledge, the poor man anticipated delay, but never despaired of ultimate success. He set all his little * 274 tricks to work to carry his object. He threw himself

continually in the way of the great man, and made himself and his case familiar to all his dependants. Promises or threats (though he was seldom treated harshly) did not induce him to relinquish his claim, and in the end he often got redress. If this did not succeed, he made a like appeal to the prince, and as a last resource threatened, and even sometimes destroyed himself; which always operated powerfully on the superstition of his oppressor.

The disposition that prevailed to make appeals was checked by the written engagement the parties were always called on to enter into, to abide by the award of the Panchayat, or authority to which the cause was referred. Appeals, however, were admitted; and when the suitors were rich, probably encouraged. When it was wished to put a final stop to the appeal, the party cast was required to give a written confession that his cause was unjust, and that he would not litigate it again. But it appears not to have been uncommon, on the death of the parties entering into these engagements, or on any change of government, for the point in dispute to be again brought forward.

Delay, so serious an evil where European forms are observed, seems not to have been much complained of; the numerous dealers in justice, and the greater simplicity of proceeding by Panchayat, perhaps left not much ground for dissatisfaction on this head.

A sort of ecclesiastical court and one for the administration of criminal justice were acknowledged in the city. A learned Shastree, assisted by other Shastrees supposed to be acquainted with Hindoo law, was at the head of the first. It took cognizance of all offences against the ordinances of religion and breaches of rules of caste. It was also referred to for judgment in intricate criminal and civil cases, particularly when Brahmins were the parties concerned. Disputes, &c. in castes were permitted to be settled by their own body: appeals, however, were always open to the Shastrees, and it is said, were encouraged. The head Shastree was paid by the assignment of some villages and occasional presents from the Peishwa; but his chief income was from bribes.

* The criminal court was composed of a Brahmin president, some Brahmin clerks, and a Shastree. Its mode * 275 of proceeding, if the accused were professed thieves or old offenders, was summary, and had something of a sanguinary character. It was always essential to conviction that the offender should confess his guilt, and the investigation turned much on this. The facts and evidence were all taken down in writing by the karkoons (or clerks), and persuasion and threats were used from time to time to obtain confession. If this failed, and when from the evidence recorded there appeared little doubt of the guilt of the accused, torture was had recourse to, and he was flogged, the chilly-bag was put to his nose, &c. &c. If he persevered in his innocence, he was sent back to prison, put in the stocks, and only allowed a very scanty subsistence; and after an interval was brought forward again and again to try to get him to confess. This refers chiefly to Ramoosees, Mangs, and persons of bad character. In other cases the proceedings were conducted with more deliberation and forbearance, and there were probably few instances where those entirely innocent were made to suffer. Persons accused of robbery and theft were readily admitted to bail, if the bondsman made himself responsible for the lost property in case of conviction. Murder was notailable, unless a compromise was made with the friends of the deceased. The accused might summon what evidence they pleased, but were not allowed to have any intercourse with them. When the offender had been convicted on his own confession, the President, Shastree, and Brahmins of the court in ordinary cases awarded the sentence; and in intricate cases this was done by a body of learned Shastrees, sometimes in the presence of the Peishwa. No severe punishment was inflicted till the case had been submitted to the Peishwa for his approval. Brahmins of course, whatever their crimes, were never put to death, or subjected to any punishment considered ignominious. For small crimes they were often merely reprov'd, ordered to dispense charities, and perform religious penances; or were subjected to slight fines, imprisonment, or flogging: for those of a deeper dye they were heavily

fined, or confined in hill forts, sometimes in irons, where * 276 the climate and their scanty and unwholesome * food commonly soon put an end to them; and their property was sequestrated, and their sins visited on the children. Gangs committing murder, highway robbery, and house-breaking, were punished by death, and their bodies hung up on the side of roads; other professed and incorrigible thieves were punished, according to the extent of their crimes, by cutting off a finger, or hand, or foot, or both, and left to their fate. But if the criminal could pay a fine or a handsome bribe, and get a Patel or tangible person to become security for his future good behaviour, he was often set at liberty. Murders amongst the people in consequence of family or private feuds, or even when committed from worse motives, were seldom punished by death. The murderer was taken into custody by the Government; but it did not encourage his being put to death, probably because, if he was saved, it usually got a large fine. If the friends of the deceased were urgent for revenge, this was combated by their being told that forgiveness was God-like; that what had been done could not be undone; that as blood had been shed, it only added to the evil to shed more, &c.; and advising them to be satisfied with the price of blood, which was fixed at three hundred and fifty rupees. They often thought it best to submit to this advice: if not, a compromise was made by the murderer being sent to a hill fort, or they took an opportunity to revenge themselves; but this was not common. Perjury was punished by the perjurer being made to make good the loss that depended on his false oath, and paying a fine to Government. Forgery ought by the Hindoo law to be punished by cutting off the right hand; but this, like almost every crime at Poona, was commutable for money. Women were never punished by death for any crime. Turning them out of their castes, parading them on an ass with their heads shaved, cutting off their noses, &c., were the usual punishment.

The police and a share of the criminal justice in the districts was formerly administered by the revenue servants; but since the adoption of the farming system by Bajee Row, a particular

person (Tuppassnees), with an establishment of peons paid from the treasury, was appointed to the charge of these duties. This plan was probably thought expedient from * the frequent removal of the revenue contractors, and from there often * 277 being none in whom the Government could confide so important a trust. The plan is said not to have been so efficient as the old one, and the ryots complain of it as multiplying authorities, and subjecting them to the exactions and insolence of a host of peons. In the districts near, criminals on being apprehended were sent to Poona; but if remote, the Tuppassnees instituted an inquiry on the spot, and submitted a statement of the proceedings to the "presence."

Civil causes when men of rank were the suitors, or which involved much property, were generally referred to the ministers, and submitted to their arbitration, or tried by Panchayat. They also heard appeals. If the case could warrant a revision, this was ordered; if not, the appellant put a stop to the course of justice by bribes, or was outbribed by the other party.

Small crimes and disputes in the villages were within the jurisdiction of the Patel, who punished the former by reproof or stripes, but he was not permitted to levy fines. The latter were settled, on his authority, or, if the parties demanded it, by Panchayat. Disputes of greater importance, or if the parties belonged to different villages, were referred to the revenue officer, who again settled them on his authority, or by a Panchayat constituted of members from the neighbouring villages. The Shet and Mahajans and the civil officers of trading towns were supposed to have the same authority within their divisions that the Patels had in the villages; but their power of late had been curtailed.

Sirdars and men of rank, besides administering justice to their immediate servants and dependents, were often called on by their neighbours; and many disputes were equitably adjusted in this way.

Together with these different chances that the people had of getting justice, custom in many instances allowed them to take the law into their own hands. This was especially the case in

the recovery of debts. Debtors were seldom submitted to imprisonment, but the modes of annoyance resorted to by the creditor were perhaps more effectual in bringing them to a speedy settlement.

* Causes that could not be satisfactorily settled simply * 278 by the authority they were referred to, were tried by Panchayat. A Panchayat assumes in the eye of Hindoo law a sacred character, from whence it is also termed Panch Parmeshwar, or the God of five persons. No oath is administered to the members of a Panchayat; but, before proceeding to try a cause, they are reminded of the sacredness of the character they have to maintain, and the punishment that awaits them in the next world should they violate it by acting contrary to their consciences. If the person cast thinks the members have been influenced by bribes, &c. to give a decision against their consciences, he has a right to challenge them by some solemn rites, which if they object to, he is entitled to a new trial, and they are subject to the penalty of perjury. A Panchayat may consist of from two to twelve members, or more; but four is the usual number. It was optional with the disputants to nominate the members themselves, or to leave this to the Government; but even in this case they had the right of challenge. The same indulgence and apparent carelessness that characterizes the people in everything, showed itself in summoning members for Panchayats. These public calls, however, seem seldom to have been considered a hardship: custom had rendered them familiar, and the selection was thought a mark of distinction. Besides, time under any circumstances was not considered of much value, and there was always a chance of profit from bribes or in some shape. The Government of course had a right to call on the numerous list of Deshmooks, Deshpandeas, Koolkurnees, Patels, &c., as being its own servants. When it summoned any other of its subjects, any trifling excuse was admitted for their non-attendance; and even if they refused to attend without any reason, they were passed over as persons wrong-headed or without manners. When the plaintiff and defendant nominated the members, they generally arranged with them themselves for their

attendance ; and it was customary, if the members required it, to give them their dinners during the investigation.

The trial by Panchayat was pretty uniform, and went in a great measure on the principle of deciding on the case as represented by the parties themselves. The plaintiff on applying to an authority for justice was * called on to furnish, 1st, a full statement in writing of his case; 2nd, a written engage- * 279 ment from a person of property and character, making himself responsible for the appearance of the plaintiff, and for submission to the award of the Panchayat ; 3rd, an engagement from the plaintiff himself to be satisfied with the decision of the Panchayat ; 4th, all his written proofs ; and 5th, a list of his witnesses, with a declaration that he had nothing further to adduce in support of his cause. The defendant was now summoned, and required also to tell his story in writing, and to enter into similar engagements with the plaintiff, and further to deposit a sum of money or give a security, which was forfeited if he did not appear to answer the suit entered into against him. When the members had assembled, the documents furnished by the plaintiff and defendant were handed to them, with instructions to decide the cause submitted to them according to justice. The court met without any appearance of form, and it was always open, unless when the question in dispute had been submitted entirely to Government, and the members were of its appointment ; when it was optional. The investigation began by reading the documents to the plaintiff and defendant, and requiring their acknowledgment of them ; or to make any alterations they thought necessary. It then proceeded to a minute examination of each fact as stated by the parties, and their proofs that bore on it ; and the members of the Panchayat respectively advocated the cause of their clients in the form of a noisy debate. When they could come to no decision, an umpire was called in, or more members were summoned on both sides, and the difficult point was re-argued. An abstract of the proceedings was recorded for the information of the Government ; and if the suit related to hereditary rights, boundary

disputes, &c. a copy was deposited with the village or district register for future reference.

The village Panchayats were likely to be the most pure, and there were strong checks against any of their decisions being glaringly unjust. The members of the Panchayat were all well known amongst their neighbours, and had an interest, and often an honourable anxiety, to establish a fair character amongst them. The question in dispute was generally familiar

* to the whole community, and was freely argued in the *280 public building of the village. The elders and those whose intelligence was respected were referred to by the members of the Panchayat. Any person might suggest a question, or make any observation that occurred to him; and the whole presented a turbulent and by no means a reverential scene; but it was, perhaps, well calculated to get at truth and give satisfaction.

[NOTE.—The Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his *Report on the Territories conquered from the Paishwa* (pp. 55 to 53, 2nd edition), describes a trial by Panchayat and all its incidents. I would also refer to Elphinstone's *History of India* (3rd edition, p. 84), in which he refers to different modes of arbitration, though he does not describe them. The Elphinstone Code of 1827 enacted a special law for the determination of suits by Panchayat (Regulation VII. of 1827). This has now been repealed by Act X. of 1861. The Code of Civil Procedure (Act VIII. of 1859) makes provision in regard to arbitration awards. A mass of interesting information on the Panchayat or Jury system in Bengal is embodied in a memorandum by Mr. H. Lushington, appended to the 1st Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, Session 1852-53, pp. 682-693. The system seems to be again coming into favour in many parts of Western India; but it would be premature to speak as yet confidently of its results.—ED.]

SOME ACCOUNT OF MAHUMMUD MEHDI,† THE
WALI OR SAINT OF THE MEHDIVIS.

TRANSLATED AND ABRIDGED FROM THE BOOKS OF HIS DISCIPLES
AND FOLLOWERS.

Read on the 30th March, 1819.

To the SECRETARY of the Literary Society at Bombay.

SIR,

I do myself the pleasure to forward some account of the Mehdivis and their tenets, translated and abridged from their books, for the Literary Society of Bombay, should they deem it worthy acceptance.

It is generally known that the Mussulmans expect the appearance of the Imam Mehdi on earth before the last judgment. The question whether he has or has not yet appeared, forms the great distinction between these and other Muhammadans.

The Mehdivis say he discharged his office at the end of the 8th century of the Hejree. The Sunnis, &c. say he is still to come.

I am very uncertain whether I have correctly translated many of their dogmas. In some there appear an obscurity and ambiguity which manifest a desire to interpret agreeably to circumstances.

Many of their opinions are common to other sects, and therefore might have been omitted, but I thought it best to take them as I found them; repetitions will be accounted for in the same manner.

I have left out a number of frivolous observances, as they are said to be virtually included in the 30 Articles.

Want of precision in the choice of words has caused some difficulties;

† The word *Mehdi* signifies a guide, or leader.

* and in some part the original is unintelligible (to me * 282 at least). Words included in a parenthesis are not in the original.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

(Signed) W. MILES.

Pahlumpore, Feb. 10th, 1819.

THE father and mother of Mahummud Mehdi were descended from Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet, and were inhabitants of Joonpore, a town near Benarcs. His father's name was Abdullah, and his mother's Amina.† He was born in 847 Hej.: many miraculous circumstances attended his birth; he is said to have spoken in his mother's womb, and when he was born it was observed he had no shadow.

At five years of age he was sent to school, and shortly after that period was able to confound all the doctors of Hind by the extent of his knowledge. He was therefore termed the Lion of the Learned. He never read himself, but heard books read by others.

In his youth it appears he followed the profession of arms, and in conjunction with a Puthan chief, Sultan Hussein Sirkhi, defeated and slew a Hindu prince named Dulput Rai Gour.

There is no further mention of him until he commenced the functions of his office of Wali at Joonpore in 887; he was then 40 years of age. He afterwards publicly declared himself the Mehdi, at the black store at Mecca, in the musjid of Taj Khan Salar at Ahmedabad in 903, and at Birli, near Puttun, in 905 Hej.

It is related that when he received the command from God to commence the duties of his mission, he humbly represented his unfitness for so weighty and important an office, which had been filled aforetime by such great men as Abraham, Moses, &c.,

† These are the names of the father and mother of the Prophet Mahummud.

and begged it might be revoked. This he continued to do for many years.

* The injunctions were, however, repeated in so threatening a manner, that he was at length forced to * 283 obey them.

Before this time he thought his imagination had deceived him, and that what he heard or saw was mere illusion.

His principal companions and assistants were two Syuds named Meer Khondmir and Syud Mahmood.

The miracles ascribed to him are numerous; he raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, and speech to the dumb. He also travelled much.

It is gravely reported in his history, that while on his passage to Mecca he saw the whale which swallowed Jonas, and that it made three obeisances to him.

Mehdi insisted that those who did not see God in this world would never see him hereafter: in conformity to the saying of the prophet Mahummud, that whoever was blind to the truth in this world would be so to eternity. This appears the leading and most distinct feature in his doctrine.

He died of a fever in Furuh, a city of Khorasan, on the 19th Zikad, 910, protesting to the last moment of his existence that he was the promised Mehdi.

After his death his disciples dispersed: part returned to Guzerat under Syud Khondmir, and part remained at Furuh with Syud Mahmood. The former appear to have been a considerable time unmolested, professing their faith, and even challenging controversy on its origin and truth.

In 930 Hej. they attracted the attention of Muzuffur, king of Guzerat, who executed some for nonconformity at Ahmedabad, and sent troops against the rest, who had taken up their abode in the vicinity of Puttun; Syud Khondmir with his followers opposed them, and was killed with 100 of his men, at Khambil, a village a few miles from Puttun.

They were again persecuted at Ahmedabad during the soubahdari of Aurungzebe, and several put to the sword for declaring that the Mehdi had appeared and was gone.

The Mehdivis form small communities called Dairas, or Circles, which are governed as far as possible by internal regulations. Their houses and *property, in default of *284 heirs, devolve to their Syuds, or religious men, who also claim a certain portion of the effects of every person dying in their faith. They are most numerous in Guzerat, the Deccan, Hindoostan, and Sind.

The Religious Tenets of the Mehdivis.

The Usool, or fundamental tenets, of the Mehdivis are thirty; they are called Faràiz, or absolute commands. Twenty of these are relative to faith, and ten to actions or works.

As the name imports, they are considered indispensable; and controversy on their propriety, meaning, or truth, is positively forbid: Mehdivis must receive the whole implicitly.

In the illustrations I have collected from their books on these articles, I have followed the interpretation of a Mehdivi Syud.

Articles of Faith.

ART. 1. Belief in Mehdi, with love for him.

Remarks. This article is, they say, supported by the Hadis or sayings of Mahummud, the writings of many holy men, and lastly by the life of the Mehdi, his doctrine, and miracles.

Mahummud declared that a pseudo-Mehdi would arise in every 100 years; but that he who should appear in the tenth century was the true one, and whoever believed in that Mehdi believed in him.

Our Saviour's prophecy regarding the Paraclete, or Comforter, is interpreted by them as pointing out the coming of the Imam Mehdi. Other Mussulmans understand it to denote the mission of Mahummud.

At a public disputation in the city of Furuh, Mehdi is said to have cited the prophet Mahummud to give evidence of the truth of his mission, and desired the learned men to question him; for he was present, although invisible: the assembly, struck with awe, reverentially desisted from further inquiry.

It is the opinion of many learned men that the two Imams, Jesus Christ and Mehdi, will appear together. The Mehdivis consider the grounds *for this opinion as mere forgeries * 285 of the Sheeas, and affirm that it is moreover contrary to certain Hudis, which mention that a considerable time will elapse between them.

It is said that as the time occupied in the creation was six days (and one day of rest); and as a day of God is 1000 years, so the earth will be 7000 years to its end or dissolution. The Imam Mehdi must appear in the last thousand, as it is pretended he has.

ART. 2. To consider the denier of Mehdi as being an infidel.

Remarks. By a train of argument not very conclusive, his followers attempt to prove that the denier of Mehdi denies God, the prophets, and the holy books.

ART. 3. To believe the inspiration of the Mehdi to have been without medium, directly from God.

This is one of the peculiarities of Mehdi's mission; for, with the exception of Moses and some few others, all the prophets received their commands by the angel Gabriel.

ART. 4. To understand the commands of Mehdi as those of God.

ART. 5. Whoever denies a single word of the precepts of Mehdi will be punished in hell.

ART. 6. The equality of Mehdi and Mahummud, or the Khatimein, *i.e.* the last of the prophets and walis: also the equality of the two companions of the Mehdi, Syud Mahmood and Syud Khondmir.

Although they only claim equality for their saint, yet in their writings there appears a desire to make him superior to Mahummud.

ART. 7. The Hudis or sayings of Mahummud to be held true only as they agree with the appearance of the Mehdi, and the Koran.

This article is necessary to do away many Hudis which are insuperable objections to Mehdi's appearance, and which are therefore at once declared false. One of these prophecies says

that Jesus Christ and the Mehdi will appear at the same time ; and the other, that Mehdi at his coming shall fill the earth with justice and truth : neither of which seems to have been accomplished.

The Mehdivis explain the latter away, by proving * 286 that in many writings the word *aiz*, the earth, means only a portion or part of it : but the Hudis is besides in opposition to certain sentences in the Koran.

ART. 8. The faith and obedience of every man is determined from the first day of the creation, or *yaum el misak*, the appointed day.

The Mussulmans are of opinion that after the coming of the Mehdi there is no forgiveness of sin.

ART. 9. The selection of the blessed, and rejection of damned souls, entirely confided to the Mehdi.

The review and judgment of the infinite multitude of mortals of all religions who have been in existence since the creation, will be confided to the Mehdi, and the acceptance or rejection of them entirely committed to him.

Mehdi on one occasion told his disciples, that he had been three days employed in receiving the souls of the departed, and that God had given him the power of knowing every individual among them.

This article is interpreted, Whoever believes in Mehdi and his commands, will be blessed ; and whoever denies them, damned.

ART. 10. The expositions of commentators which are in opposition to the Mehdi to be considered false. The interpretations of the Koran by commentators, say the Mehdivis, are altogether unworthy reliance.

ART. 11. The works and words of Mehdi to be considered the inspiration and word of God, and conformable to those of the Prophet Mahummud.

ART. 12. The appearance of the Mehdi peculiarly to promulgate and explain the religion of Mahummud.

The mission of Mahummud was to preach the laws of faith, but the appearance of the Mehdi was entirely to explain the

commands relative to good works.—*Ihsân*—which explanation appertains to the office of Wali.

ART. 13. *Tamm alina baranehu.* To understand these words to establish the Mehdi's interpretation (of the Koran).‡

The Koran descended to Mahummud, but its explanation belongs to the Mehdi.

ART. 14. To believe it possible to see God in this world.

* *Remarks.* The reward of all the duties of religion is the sight of the Deity : and this Hudis, "I am the life, * 287 seek me and you will find me ;" also "Fast and pray, perhaps you may see God even in this world," with many others of the same kind, are incentives and injunctions to perseverance in this endeavour. It is the object and end of all devotion.

Belief in the unity of the Godhead, the prophets, and holy books, is merely the means to attain the favour of God and this blessed consummation.

It is not, however, to be gained but by a total oblivion of self ; or, as it is expressed, moral or spiritual death.

After this nothing remains to obstruct the sight of God. Perfect faith depends on this command, the remainder being mere repetitions, preparations, and aids.

The mission of the Mehdi was peculiarly to prepare mankind and make them worthy by faith and good works to see God.

Meer Khondmir says that earnest endeavour, seclusion from the world, and absorption or annihilation of existence in the contemplation of the Deity, are the means to attain this perfection.

In progress to the sight of God there are several degrees. The first is termed Melkut.†

A man in this stage is presumed to have attained the object of his endeavour. Below this there is no degree.

The medium degree is called Jabrut ; and the devotee in

† There are properly four degrees of religious attainment, Nasut, Melkut, Jabrut, and Lahut, which are said to denote respectively preternatural knowledge of whatever happens in the world, in the minds of men, of the nature of angels, and the last unity with the Deity.

this is supposed to have reached his object in truth, but without becoming united to the divinity.

The highest is the identity of the desirer and desired, or figuratively the reunion of the spark to its native element and is called Lahut.

The desire productive of the first degree may be likened, but *parva componere magnis*, to the wish of a man for light in the darkness of night. * On passing the impediments * 288 of this degree, when the believer is freed from the gloom of existence (or of the world), the splendour of the sun of truth will gradually enlighten his mind. There still remains, however, a slight taint of darkness; but when by the divine assistance he advances further, he becomes lost in the refulgent beams of his beloved sun, and attains eternal beatitude.

Holy men have established eight preparatory duties to be observed by those desirous of attaining this high rank.

1. Ablution, or purity of the body.—Purification is half the faith, and without it no internal sanctity can be obtained.

2. Abstinence.

3. Silence; *Man sakata salama*, In silence is safety.—Silence is a preservative from many sins, and it is also written that when the tongue sleeps the mind awakes.

4. Seclusion. The end of this is to repress the senses.—Sensuality is only to be conquered by silence, hunger, and solitude.

5. Constant meditation on God.—This is the chief condition. The fruits of this are the revelation of the invisible world, and the sight of God. It is said to consist chiefly in the repetition of the creed, "There is no God but God."

Mehdi insisted so much on the pre-excellence of meditation, that he forbade the reading of the Koran, or any study, deeming them superfluous.

The Mehdivis believe that in profound meditation certain lights of different colours are seen: some of these denote angels, good and evil, the devil, &c.

The following, which is explanatory of this condition, is trans-

lated from one of their religious tracts called *Mulla ul Wilaiut*.

“When the believer shall be in deep meditation, should any form appear to him, or he see light or lightning of any colour, he must not regard it; he may be certain the true light is colourless and boundless, and that if it be merely the imagination it will change.

“If, however, it should be the true light, he must not be elated, but proceed * on; for God has created seventy thousand veils of light and darkness, all which must be * 289 raised or passed before he can be seen.

“The veils or obstacles of light have their origin in the soul, and those of darkness from the body, as the elements, senses, &c.

“In passing these, many wonderful disclosures will be made. On being freed from the difficulties offered by the body and the senses, genii will be visible, and the condition of the damned be shown.

“After passing the impediments which relate to the heart, the happiness of the inhabitants of Paradise will be known; and on overcoming those of the soul, the believer will be visited by the spirits of holy men. Proceeding further the prophets will be seen; and on arriving at the light of truth, by the aid of the prophet Mahummud, the glory of God will appear, and in it every other light be totally absorbed and lost.

“But we shall here say something of the true and false lights, If a light appear over the right shoulder, it is that of the angels who attend the body to note all good actions; if on the left, it is the light of the angels of bad actions, and if on the left shoulder, that of the Devil. Also, if the likeness of an old man be seen standing on the left with a staff and rosary in his hand, it is Azaziel, the angel of death.

“If a light appear on the breast, and its colour be dark red, it is Khunnas, the spirit of doubts and infidelity.

“But if the light be without form or colour, and at its appearance the heart be at rest, it is the light of God.

“Its peculiar signs are, that it be without definition, colour, or similitude, and that life seems revived at its presence.

“ There are other descriptions of light which are respectively assigned to Angels, Mahummud, the Devil, &c.

“ The source of the obstacles to the sight of the Deity is existence ; they are altogether of seven kinds, and are ascribed to the

1. *Kàleb*, or body ;
2. *Nafs*, or the life ;
3. *Kalb*, the heart ;
- * 290 * 4. *Rùh*, the soul or spirit ;
5. *Sirr*, mystery ;
6. *Kheft*, invisibility ;
7. *Hakíket*, or a belief in the reality of the visible universe.

“ Ten thousand veils, *Hijab*, are allotted to each of these. It is easier to overcome the difficulties which have relation to the body than those of the soul.”

6. Preparatory duty.—*Nafi el-Khuàter*, the extinction of doubts and fears, or their expulsion from the mind.

7. Constant obedience and attachment to one spiritual guide.

8. Abandonment of all irregularities of temper.—“ It is sinful to feel an aversion to any thing, for in it God may have placed many an excellence.” Suffer, therefore, no apparent difficulty to make you dissatisfied, but repose perfect confidence in God.

The object of these eight conditions or duties is the purification of the soul, that it may be rendered worthy the presence of the Most High, and this worthiness consists in the expulsion of the four enemies of the soul ; the things of this world, the senses, mankind, and the Devil.

The latter is interpreted the spirit of evil and infidelity, which is blended in the nature of the sons of Adam.

ART. 15. To believe that faith is (belief in the unity of) God.

The laws of Mahummud may be subdivided or classed as follows :—*Aimàn*, or the command respecting faith ; *Islàm*, or the duties of religion ; and *Ihsàn*, or good works.

The first is faith in God, his angels, his books, and prophets.

The second, obedience to the ordinances of God, and avoidance of what is forbidden.

The third is to perform your duty before God as if you saw him, and, if that be not possible, as if he saw you.

Mahummud came to explain the two first, and Mehdi the last.

Some commentators say that there can be no increase or diminution of faith.

* Mehdi argues the contrary ; that as profession must * 291 indispensably be accompanied by belief and works, it naturally admits of increase and diminution.

The learned differ regarding the essence of faith, some being of opinion that it is the conviction of the heart, as that is the first principle of religion—profession by the tongue being only its evidence to the world—and that at the moment of dissolution the conviction of the heart is sufficient. This is the general opinion.

Others again say that faith is profession as well as belief, both being indispensable.

But the opinion of the learned of the Sunnal (*i.e.* the Mehdivis) is, that faith is belief from the heart, profession by the tongue, and works conformable to the commandments ; and that these are the true principles of faith.

The definition of faith by commentators is rejected by the Mehdi as incomplete.

Some pretend that works admit of increase and diminution, but that faith cannot. Iman Saaduddeen Tuftuzani remarks that two points are here to be considered ; one, that works by this are not understood to be a part of faith ; and the other, that faith is belief alone without profession, &c.

In the Koran, however, the word *Aamàl*, or works, is attached to *Aimàn*, faith, by a conjunction, and therefore one must be taken with the other.

Abu Haneefa is also of opinion, that there can be no increase or decrease of faith ; but, if what is said of its immutability be true, the faith of any individual is equal to that of the greatest prophets ; which is certainly incorrect.

ART. 16. The eternity of punishment (to the wicked), agreeable to the doctrine of the Koran.

The Sunnis say that sinners mentioned in the Koran as doomed to eternal punishment must be infidels, because faith alone will save believers from hell. They also pretend that, if a believer be condemned, he will remain in hell only a certain period, and after that be received into *heaven; that by * 292 the word 'eternity' in the Koran is only meant a long time or duration.

Mehdi on the contrary asserts that whoever goes to hell must remain there for ever.

That works being inseparable from faith, faith cannot be proved to exist in one who neglects the duties of his religion; his faith is therefore a nullity, or rather it is taken from him, and the sinner having nothing to save him must remain to eternity.

The Hudis say that "whoever knowingly omits his prayers is an infidel:" works are therefore a part of faith. The Koran, that "whoever wilfully kills a believer will be condemned eternally to hell." Commentators say that by the word 'whoever' is meant an infidel. Mehdi declares its meaning general, and to include both Mussulmans and infidels, and the same in every other passage agreeable to the Motuazites.

ART. 17. To believe that religious works are not restricted to those prescribed by the four sects, those of Hunbul, Shafai, Malik, and Haneefa.

As many of the opinions of these men are evidently incorrect, Mehdi, who is independent, and to whom the explanation of the Koran is committed by the Most High, has abrogated them all.

ART. 18. The promise of punishment to those who follow the world, conformable to the Koran.

The Mehdivis are of opinion that the possession of wealth, the profit of trade, attachment to women, children, and even animals, all induce infidelity, and that these propensities will condemn a man to hell.

ART. 16. The conformity of the four qualities with those of the prophet Mahummud, viz. *Hijreh*, flight; *Ikhraj*, expulsion;

Iza, persecution; and *Kital*, or martyrdom, to be considered the proof of the truth of Mehdi's religion.

Mehdi abandoned or was expelled his country and persecuted; but the crown of martyrdom was reserved for his successor Syud Khondmir, as before related.

ART. 20. Those who oppose or deny flight and companionship to be deemed infidels.

* This is said to signify, that those who do not conform * 293 to the will of their priests or teachers by associating with them, or quitting their country in company with them, when persecuted, are infidels.

Articles relative to Works.

ART. 1. Abandonment of the world—Houses, land, women, children, gold, silver, &c.

ART. 2. Flight or the abandonment of one's country.

When the Mehdivis are persecuted on the score of their religion, they may either have recourse to arms, or abandon their country. One is absolutely necessary.

ART. 3. The conversation or society of the virtuous.

ART. 4. To quit all but God—that is, seclusion from the world.

ART. 5. Constant remembrance or meditation on God.

The perfect fulfilment of this command includes every moment of a man's life.

There are, however, certain times of prayer esteemed most excellent; one called *Sultan el-leil*, the King of the night, from *Aazr* to *Aashi*, or from four in the evening to about eight at night; the other *Sultan el-nchâr*, the King of the day, from daylight to sunrise.

ART. 6. Endeavour (by prayer, &c.) to obtain the sight of God, until it be accomplished either by the eyes of the head, those of the heart, or in a vision, &c.—Regarding this, see ART. 14 of Faith.

ART. 7. To fight for the word of God either with the sword of war, or the sword of poverty or of prayer.

This command was not given to the Mehdi, but to his succes-

sor Syud Khondmir. The original is to be found in the Koran —“They killed and were killed in the way of God.”

They are of opinion that the killing an infidel is no sin, and that they may lawfully retaliate and revenge themselves on any by whom they or their sect may be molested.

This appears to extend very far.

A division of this sect named Kundelwals, and certain Mehdivi Pathans * called Punnees, are considered by the * 294 Mehdivis themselves mere assassins. They are accused of holding it lawful to murder, on slight pretexts, any differing from them; and assigning a high rank in heaven to the murderers.

ART. 8. Repentance before the last moment of existence.

ART. 9. To possess the qualities or perform the duties which are presumed to constitute a Momin, namely,

1. To turn the heart to God entirely.
2. Continual meditation.
3. Seclusion from the world.
4. Oblivion or extinction of self.

ART. 10. To be endowed with those qualities and perform those duties which are the sources of religion, and by which a believer is deemed a Momin, namely,

1. The fear of God.
2. Increase of faith at hearing the Koran read.
3. Perfect resignation to the will of God.
4. The observance of the five stated times of prayer.
5. The bestowal of alms consistent with one's ability.

There are other duties of religion, but they will all on reflection be found comprehended in the above.

[NOTE.—The Indian Mehdi here mentioned, who was born A.D. 1443 and became the expounder of his own doctrines, was not himself the founder of the sect named after him; it was established only after his death by his disciples, and, being considered heterodox by all the others, never had many followers. He is not to be confounded with the son of Hassan al A'skeri, who is to be the Mehdi or the *director*, and the twelfth Emám; he was born A.H. 255 (A.D. 868) at Sermanrái, but disappeared in a mysterious way during his boyhood. This Mehdi, who will bear the same name with the prophet, *i.e.* Muhamud Abulkásem, is by the

Shiâhs believed to be now alive ; and his reappearance in public is in their opinion to be one of the signs of the end of the world, of the resurrection, and of the day of judgment.

The Indian Mehdis a few months ago distinguished themselves in Hyderabad, where one of their number assassinated the Arabic and Persian tutor of the Nizam while praying in a mosque, because he had written a book refuting their doctrines. The culprit was, it appears, not punished, but the annual Lungur procession, which might have afforded an opportunity for bloodshed, was not held this year. Further details on this subject may be seen in the daily papers of the last few months. The appearance of Emám Mehdi is still expected by a large portion of the Musalmáns, who often get into a ferment in consequence.—Ed.]

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* XV.

ON THE SACRED BOOKS AND RELIGION OF THE
PARSIS.

In a Letter from WILLIAM ERSKINE, Esq., to Brigadier-General
Sir JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B. and K.L.S.

Read 27th April, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,

The desire which you express to ascertain any circumstances that may fix the real age of the *Zend-Avesta* of the Parsis, and of the *Desâtir* now in the possession of Mulla Firuz, has induced me to make some inquiries connected with those subjects, and I shall make no apology for troubling you with the result at considerable length. In the present letter I shall make a few remarks on the religious doctrines of the Parsis and on the antiquity of their present opinions. The wide range which you took in your *History of Persia* prevented you from entering into any minute examination of the present state and tenets of that ancient but obscure sect; a subject which is indeed better fitted for a separate dissertation. In a subsequent letter I shall examine the authenticity of the *Desâtir*, and attempt to ascertain what degree of credit is due to the accounts of the ancient sects of Persians detailed in the *Dabistan*.

The observations on the first of these subjects shall be divided into four parts: in the first I shall take a rapid view of what is known of the ancient languages of Persia: in the second I shall examine the comparative value and authenticity of the details of ancient Persian history, as contained in the writers of Greece and Rome on one hand, and of Persia on the other: in the third I shall give a short sketch of the tenets of the modern Parsis, and of the works ascribed to Zoroaster or Zertusht, on which they are founded: and in the fourth I shall endeavour briefly to indicate the proofs of the antiquity

of many of their particular doctrines and observances. The subject is in itself obscure, and, like most of those in * which religion is concerned, has been rendered still * 296 more so by fiction and forgery.

I. *Of the Ancient Languages of Persia.*

The knowledge which we possess of the ancient languages of Persia is very limited. No Persian writer that has reached our times, at least none of acknowledged authenticity, lived much more than eight hundred years ago; and even such as we possess are unfortunately more anxious to detail the military transactions of the periods of which they treat, than to afford any correct notions regarding the manners or languages of the different tribes or provinces of their country. The best account of the older languages of Persia is that of the learned author of the *Ferhengi Jehangiri*,† which you have adopted. He mentions seven: the Farsi, Deri, Pehlevi, Hervi, Segzi, Zaweli‡, and Soghdi.§ These are evidently not different languages, but dialects of the same tongue as spoken in different provinces. The Farsi is the dialect of Fars, or Persia Proper; the Hervi that of Heri or Herat, that is of Khorasan; the Segzi is that of Segistan; the Zaweli is that of Zabulistan, formerly a very extensive province, which comprehended in its limits Kandahar and even Ghazni; and the Soghdi that of Soghd, a province that included the rich cities of Samarkand and Bokhara, and probably the greater part of the cultivated country between the Oxus and Jaxartes, where from the remotest times a dialect of the Persian seems to have been spoken. All of these four dialects, it will be remarked, except the first, were spoken to the east of the Great Persian Desert. What language the Deri was has been disputed. Some would make it the dialect of the valleys that stretch among the Persian mountains, and of the remote glens or *deras*, from which word

† Jemal-u-din Husain ibn Fakhr-u-din Hasan Anjû.

‡ Anquetil calls this the Draveli.

§ In the *History of Persia*, vol. i., p. 202, called the Suodi, probably from the Persian manuscript consulted reading *سودی* for *سودی*

they derive its name. But it is generally alluded to as a highly refined dialect, and as the most polished of the whole ; so that it was probably *rather the language of the * 297 *Der-i-Shah*, of the Royal Gate or Court, in short the *Derbári* or Court language, in all countries held to be the most elegant. That it was not regarded as the language of rustics, is sufficiently plain from the traditionary saying recorded of Muhammed, that if the Almighty wished to address the angels in the language of command, he used the Arabic ; but if in the tone of mildness and beneficence, the *Deri*.†

The Farsi and Pehlevi appear to have been collateral languages, spoken, like all the other five, at the same time in Persia, but to the west of the Great Desert. But they probably differed more from each other than the other five did from the Farsi. As the Farsi was the language of the province of Fars, the Pehlevi seems to have been that of the *Pehlu*, the Arabian or Chaldean border, and appears to have prevailed in Khuzistân, at Kermanshah, and, probably, at Hamadân, and over all Persian Irâk. The Arabian Irâk, as well as Mesopotamia and the Chaldean provinces along the Tigris, and to the east of that river, was subject to the Persian monarchs for a long series of ages, from the destruction of the Assyrian empire by Cyrus till the destruction of the Persian empire by the Mussulmans. As many kings of Persia, especially under the Parthian and Sasanian dynasties, had fixed their capital in countries where the spoken language was of Arabian or Simmetic origin, the intercourse between the liminary Persian and Arabian countries, subject to the same princes, and governed by the same laws, must have been very considerable. The road from Persia to Ctesiphon, or Al-Modain, lay through an Arabian district ; the Persian troops served year after year on the Grecian or Roman frontier, in the same ranks with troops levied in the Arabian provinces of the empire, and in districts where the language was wholly of Arabian, Syrian, or Chaldean growth ; so that necessity must have compelled them to acquire

† Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.* p. 429, ed. Oxon. 1760.

at least a slight knowledge of some of these kindred tongues, to be able to communicate with the inhabitants of the country in which they served, and to understand their companions in arms : all merchants, *traders, courtiers, or soldiers, as well as the various officers of government whose business *298 led them to pass the line of the Persian language, must, from necessity, have picked up a few words of some Arabic dialect. The uniform and regular intercourse of trade or business, supported for centuries between the neighbouring towns and villages along the imaginary line that divided two nations which, though speaking different languages, were under the same government, must have heightened the influence of these causes in an especial degree over all the tract of country that lay on the Chaldean and Persian borders, and introduced a more disproportionate number of foreign words into the vernacular languages of this central frontier. This mixture appears to me to have produced the Pehlevi tongue, which is chiefly characterized by the number of Chaldee or Arabic words that belong to it. It is in the tract in question accordingly that we still chiefly meet with Pehlevi inscriptions, and with the remains of the grandeur of the Sasanian kings, with whom it seems to have been the prevailing language, as it is used even on their coins. I have never heard of any Pehlevi inscription to the east of the Great Desert that divides Persia, nor of any Pehlevi work written in that tract of country. Perhaps, therefore, you will not regard me as going too far, if I consider the ancient Pehlevi as the language of the Persian and Arabian frontier, and of the neighbouring districts on the Persian side. The historical facts which we possess concerning that ancient tongue seem to me to accord tolerably well with this hypothesis.

That the Farsi or Persian is not a language derived from the Pehlevi, but a collateral and independent tongue, seems to be sufficiently certain. It has been observed as remarkable, that of the ancient Persian words to be found in the Greek and Roman writers from Herodotus downwards, a much greater number correspond with the Persian, and can be explained by it, than with the Pehlevi. The very name of *Pehlevi*, which

differs from that by which the monarchy was designated, and by which it was known to the ancients, indicates that it was a local or casual dialect.

It is to be observed as worthy of particular notice, that in this enumeration of the languages of Persia, no notice is taken of the Zend, the lan*guage in which the books of Zertusht or * 299 Zoroaster are composed. Indeed there seems no reason to believe that it ever was a spoken language within the limits of the Persian empire. It has every appearance of being foreign to Persia, and its use was probably confined to the sacred books of that country. There can be no doubt in what class of languages the Zend is to be ranked. It is altogether Sanscrit.† But though many words of the Persian and Pehlevi are evidently derived from a Zend or Sanscrit root, a great proportion of the words in these two languages are not of this description, but appear to be borrowed from some common but different source. A comparison of the specimens in Anquetil du Perron's *Zend-Avesta* leads to this conclusion. In the last volume of his translation of the sacred volumes of the Parsis, there are two vocabularies; the one Zend and Pehlevi, and the other Pehlevi and Persian. In the Zend and Pehlevi vocabulary, the proportion of Pehlevi words that correspond nearly or altogether with the modern Persian is very great; insomuch as, in some pages, to have the appearance rather of a Persian than of a Pehlevi translation; while in the Pehlevi and Persian vocabulary, the Pehlevi words that correspond with the modern Persian are very

† "When I perused the Zend glossary," says Sir William Jones, than whom no one was better qualified to decide on a question regarding languages, "I was inexpressibly surprised to find that six or seven words in ten were pure Sanscrit, and even some of their inflexions formed by the rules of the Vyakaran." *Asiat. Res.*, vol. ii., pp. 53, 54, 8vo ed. See also the learned Essay of Dr. John Leyden on the Indo-Chinese Languages, *Asiat. Res.*, vol. x., p. 213, 4to ed. Having followed Sir William Jones, he had an opportunity of investigating the subject with still greater accuracy, and conjectures that the Zend may correspond with the Suraseni dialect of the Sanscrit. He had made collections for pushing his inquiries regarding the Zend still further, when he was prematurely torn from literature and his friends. We are not likely soon to meet with another who can complete, with the same prodigality of knowledge, the task which Dr. Leyden left unfinished.

few. The latter, it is probable, was intended as a glossary of uncommon Pehlevi words for the use of persons to whom Persian was familiar, rather than as a complete vocabulary of the Pehlevi tongue, and would consequently comprehend those Pehlevi words only which required explanation to a Persian from their being remote from his native language. In the Zend and Pehlevi * vocabulary, the Pehlevi words being used to explain the Zend, appear without selection, and conse- *300
quently we see the Pehlevi language in its natural state, in which it visibly approximates to the Persian ; a conclusion that receives confirmation from an analysis of even a single page of the commencement of the *Bundehesh*, which Anquetil has printed in the original tongue as a specimen of the Pehlevi. From its Indian form it seems probable that the Zend was either the Suraseni, or some other cultivated dialect of the Sanscrit, or that it was an Indian dialect spoken by some nation or tribe of Hindu origin, to the east or north-east of Persia, and adopted, perhaps in its natural state, but more probably with some changes, as the sacred language of the country. In that case the Zend liturgy could not have been understood by the ancient Persians any more than by the modern Parsis, but was likely to be only venerated the more on that account.

Anquetil du Perron, it is true, had a very different theory of the origin of the Zend. In his Dissertation on the Languages of Ancient Persia† he attempts to prove that the Zend was spokēn in ancient Media, and that the Zend and Georgian are kindred tongues. It is curious that the four Zend words which he adduces‡ to prove the similarity of the Zend and Georgian should all be Sanscrit § ; and though I should be far

† *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxi., pp. 367, &c. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 368.

§ I subjoin the Zend and Georgian words given by Anquetil to establish the similarity between the Zend and Georgian, and add the Sanscrit words from which the Zend were more probably derived :

ZEND	GEORGIAN	SANSCRIT	
<i>Outche</i> or <i>Vetche</i> , to say	<i>Utchui</i> ,	<i>Ouatchen</i> ,	speech
<i>Peto</i> , lord	<i>Pathoni</i> ,	<i>Pati</i> ,	lord
<i>Metem</i> and <i>Meno</i> , to wish, think	<i>Menda</i> ,	<i>Matha, Man</i> ,	mind, thought
<i>Pooro</i> , much	<i>Beuri</i> ,	<i>Poorn</i> ,	full

from bring*ing this as any proof of the derivation of * 301 the Georgian from the latter tongue, from which it seems extremely different, yet it may be admitted as a striking accidental confirmation of the Sanscrit origin of the Zend.

Another observation may lead to similar conclusions: the *Zend-Avesta* is supposed to have been written in Zend characters by Zertusht or Zoroaster, at least 500 years before Christ. We do not know that the Pehlevi was a written language till the time of the Sasâni kings. Yet the Zend has forty-eight characters corresponding with those of the vulgar Indian languages of Sanscrit extraction, and includes twelve vowels; while the Pehlevi, with truly Arabian poverty, has only nineteen characters, without any to express the variety of vowel sounds. As an alphabet borrowed from another is not likely to be more imperfect than that from which it was taken, and especially to such an excessive degree, it is easy to judge that the system of the Pehlevi has not been borrowed from that of the Zend, but that the Zend has been borrowed from its native Sanscrit; the Pehlevi, from its neighbouring Chaldean or Sy-

The termination *tehe* of the Zend genitive and dative, which he supposes (*ut supra*, p. 369) to be the same as the Georgian *sa*, still more nearly resembles the genitive of the Sanscrit, which is *sya*, and in one class of nouns *sa*. The genitive of the Mahratta, an offset of the Sanscrit, is *tcha*, *tehc*.

Anquetil oddly asserts (p. 363) that in modern Persian, when one noun governs another, the governing noun is usually put last. It is certainly quite the reverse.

I know not what to make of his assertion (p. 393), "*Le Samskretam subsiste encore dans toute sa pureté au milieu des montagnes qui séparent la Perse et l'Inde.*" He must have been misinformed.

Anquetil du Perron had great merit, and Oriental literature owes him much for the firmness with which, under many difficulties and disadvantages, he persevered in procuring and translating the sacred books of the Parsis. It is a service to letters never to be forgotten, and honourable to his resolute spirit: but I fear that there his principal merit ends. He was very imperfectly acquainted with any Asiatic tongue, and his works, without possessing much learning, generally exhibit a tissue of confused and inconclusive reasonings. From this censure must be excepted some of his Memoirs in the volumes of the Academy of Inscriptions, in which he throws considerable light on the history of the religion of Zoroaster.

riac ; and that, in Persia, the Pehlevi is the elder of the two. If it is necessary to add any thing to this remark, it may be observed, that some of the sounds which the Zend characters represent are not to be found in the Persian or Pehlevi : thus, there are three characters to represent the sound of *d* ; we have the consonants simple and aspirated ; and we find nasals as the *ng* ; and the slightest comparison of the Zend and Sanscrit alphabets evinces that the former owes * these, * 302 as well as all its other peculiarities, to the latter. The system of the Zend alphabet is Sanscrit, its characters Pehlevi ; and an attempt has evidently been made to accommodate the Pehlevi characters to express the new and foreign sounds of the Zend. This alone disguises its origin for a single moment ; Anquetil, indeed, tells us that the Persian writers make the Pehlevi go back beyond Zoroaster, and that this uncontradicted testimony † should be respectable. ‡ The Persian writers to whom he alludes wrote at least 1800 years after Zoroaster ; and we may be pardoned for not relying with implicit confidence on the historical criticism of the Mussulman antiquaries of Isfahan, and for asking something more than the vague assertion of writers indifferent about the truth or falsehood of the fact, and who had no means of knowing what they affirmed. § But it will be necessary to return once more to this subject.

My own opinion, I confess, is, that there are no good grounds for ascribing the *Zend-Avesta* to Zoroaster ; and I agree with

† An observation somewhat similar of Sir William Jones may excite still more surprise, as coming from so accomplished a writer. In his sixth anniversary discourse, "On the Persians," when mentioning the original migrations of nations from a central point in Asia, he says, "And thus the Saxon Chronicle, I presume from good authority, brings the first inhabitants of Britain from Armenia." *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ii., p. 65, 8vo ed. Nothing but an excessive fondness for a favourite system could have induced a man of his sound knowledge and accurate judgment to cite such an authority for such a fact.

‡ *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, vol. xxxi., p. 406.

§ There is no such language as the Pazend. What is called the Pazend is merely the Pehlevi translation of the Zend books, sometimes interlineary, sometimes written in alternate sentences with the Zend. It is *pa-Zend*, at the foot of the Zend. At what time the Pehlevi translations were made is uncertain. The Desturs pretend that we owe them to the sons of Zoroaster.

the accurate Brucker, and with the Abbé Foucher,† in thinking that we cannot fairly give the Zend writings a higher antiquity than the age of the Sasânis. I incline to the reign of Ardeshr Babegân, the restorer of the Persian religion, under whom we are told that the imperfect remains of these holy volumes were collected from the memory of the priests and committed to writing.

* As for the credit due to *the uniform voice of Persian history*, it becomes necessary, before proceeding further, to make a few observations on that subject.

II. *Comparative Credibility of the Greek and Persian Historians.*

A detailed examination into the authenticity of the early history of Persia, as recorded by Mussulman writers, would lead to inquiries too extensive to be comprehended in a sketch in its nature so limited as the present. You know that I am disposed to rate it very low; and I see no reason to deviate, in regard to the Persian historians, from the rule that is found safely applicable to all others, to consider no history as authentic that is not founded in one way or another on contemporary evidence; and to hold the authority of all original history as decreasing in proportion to the remoteness of the time of its composition from the events described, and to the number of intermediate witnesses through which the facts recorded in it have passed. Applying this test, we may not err much in asserting that there is no one fact in the history of Persia previous to the time of Ardeshr Babegân, to which credit is due merely because it is recorded by an Arabian or Persian historian.

Very ingenious attempts have indeed been made to place the authority of the Oriental historians above that of the writers of Greece and Rome.‡ As a play of fancy, as a trial of ingenuity, the amusing sophistry may be excused: but surely no one ever examined the character of the two classes of authors gravely and soberly, without discovering that the writings of the one were a historical romance, while those of the other presented

† *Supplément au Traité Historique de la Religion des anciens Perses: Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxix., pp. 689-794.

‡ See Richardson's *Dissertation on the Eastern Nations*, Oxford, 1778, 8vo.

the fragments of a genuine history. Of the Peshdâdi, the first of the four dynasties of Ancient Persia,—for the earlier monarchies of the *Dabistân* may for the present be passed over,—it is sufficient to remark that the reigns of eleven princes occupy 2,450 years, an average of upwards of 222 years to each reign; to which it may be added, that one prince reigns 1,000, another 700 years. The second or Kyâni race brings us down to the age * of Alexander the Great; and if any event in the ancient history of the Persians might be expected to receive * 304 ample and correct commemoration from their national writers, the fame of his exploits, and the influence he exercised on the fortunes of their country, might have secured it for the transactions of the Macedonian conqueror. We discover him indeed, but he is no longer the Alexander of the Greeks: he is the son of Darab, † who returns from exile to reclaim his paternal inheritance, who wars on the Chinese, and who has the sage Aristatalis for his prime minister. If such be the liberties used with a hero whose fame filled the world, what is to be expected from the history of ordinary and more obscure kings? We find, it is true, in the Mussulman historians, names that bear a resemblance to those mentioned in the contemporary historians of the West; and, as we have a Sekander and an Aristatalis, we have also an Ardesâr Derazdest, or Artaxerxes Longimanus. Whether these names were borrowed in later times from Grecian history, admits of some doubt. But we must judge of the authenticity of Persian story in what we do not know, by the credit due to it in those events the history of which we do know; and the whole has the distorted air of a romance. It is making rather too large draughts on our historical good-nature to expect us to resign the contemporary evidence of Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, and Aristotle, to be guided by historians who lived 2,000 years after the events they describe; or even by the venerable Ferdausi, who lived only 1,500 years after them. That some of the events contained

† It is true that some of their writers make him the son of Filikns, and a Greek; but authors of equal note make him the son of Darab; and such is the general and favourite tale of Persian history and poetry.

in the history of these dynasties may have happened, I do not dispute: I only affirm that they are not worthy of credit merely because the modern Persian historians relate them. They are not history, though ingenious men, by confirming and propping them up from other quarters, may convert some of them into good and authentic history. Till that is done they belong to romance. The interval from the conquest of Alexander the Great till the accession of Ardeshîr * 305 * Babegan, containing the successors of Alexander, and the whole series of the Ashkâni or Arsacidæ, the Parthian kings, though comprehending a period of upwards of 500 years, is nearly a blank in Persian history. It is comprised by Ferdausi in a few lines, which contain a confession of his total ignorance of the events of that long period; after which he proceeds to the history of the Sasânis.† By the Oriental historians the dynasty of the Arsacidæ, or Parthians, is designated as the *Mulûk-al-tewâîf*, the kingdoms of the tribes; and they seem to regard it as an interregnum during which the different tribes and provinces had each its separate government.‡ This view is confirmed by the researches of the Baron de St. Croix,§ who seems to establish that the exclusive kingdom of the Parthians extended from Mosul to Rei and Isfahan; while many tribes in the centre of the country, the Paraitakeni, Uxii, Cossæi, and Elymæi, were never subdued. The Elymæi had always independent kings,|| and Fars had separate princes, who acknowledged first the Macedonian and afterwards the Parthian monarchs.¶ Indeed, the Parthians appear to have been a foreign race, who never fully assimilated with the native inhabitants. They were originally Scythians, and always preserved the Scythian manners and mode of warfare. Justin** talks of their language as a mixture of the Scythian and Median. They

† Malcoln's *Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii., pp. 243-244.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

§ See his very learned and judicious *Mémoire sur le Gouvernement des Parthes*, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, tom. 1, p. 48.

|| Tacit., *Ann.*, lib. vi., c. 44.

¶ Strab., *Geog.*, lib. xv.

** Justin., lib. xli., c. 2. *Sermo his inter Scythicum Medicumque medius, et ex utrisque mixtus.*

resembled those Tûrki tribes who still compose so great a part of the population of Persia, and maintain their own usages in the plains and deserts that intersect the cultivated country. Literature seems to have made no progress during the ascendancy of this foreign and migratory race; and the greater part of the little that formerly existed was probably lost. All the coins of the race have Greek legends; a proof how low the national literature was at that period. Some Persian writers tell us that even the sacred volumes of Zoroaster, the *Zend-Avesta* itself, *perished during the confusions and ignorance * 306 that prevailed in this period of darkness; and that when a family of native princes was restored to Persia, and the foreign Parthian race expelled from the throne, in the total want of any manuscript of the sacred books, the most learned and aged mobeds and priests were assembled from all parts of Persia, some accounts say to the number of 40,000, and that from their recitation the *Zend-Avesta*† was recovered, and again used in the religious ceremonies of the church. However this may be, it is certain that a religion like that which prevailed in Persia before and afterwards, maintained itself during the Parthian period. The sun was still a marked object of the public veneration, and fire and the other elements were still addressed in prayer, with many of the ceremonies yet in use. “From the death of Alexander till the reign of Artaxerxes is near five centuries; and the whole of that remarkable era may be termed a blank in Eastern history; and yet, when we refer to the page of Roman writers, we find this period, abound with events of which the vainest nation might be proud, and that Parthian monarchs whose names cannot now be discovered in their own country, were the only sovereigns upon whom the Roman arms, when that nation was in the very

† Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 563. The *Revaïets* of the Parsis mention the books of Zoroaster as having been translated into Greek by the orders of Alexander, and the originals burned, on which account the soul of Alexander is in hell. The *Mujmil al Tewarikh* gives the same account: see *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, vol. xxxviii., pp. 216 and 217. For the corruption of the sacred books of the Persians, see also *Notices des Manuscrits*, &c., vol. viii., p. 159.

zenith of its power, could make no permanent impression."† Had they possessed any history, we might have expected the annalists of Parthia to have revelled in the glory they achieved by their triumphs over Crassus, and by the repeated calamities which they inflicted on the Roman empire. As not a trace of these memorable events is to be found in the national historians of Persia, we are inevitably led to conclude that the Parthians had no history.

Under the fourth or Sasâni dynasty we begin to have some glimmerings* of the dawn, but still we do not enjoy the * 307 strong light of historic truth. No two Persian historians agree with one another, and still less with the Greek historians, concerning the events of that period. Nor is this complaint confined to the present day. Hamzah of Isfahan, a historian who lived in an early age of Mahammedanism, represents the sciences as abolished in Persia by the conquest of Alexander; as neglected under the tumultuous reign of the Ashkanis; and as reviving under Ardeshir Babegan, who caused his life to be written,—a circumstance in which he was imitated by several of his successors. Yet Hamzah himself confesses, that after having long attempted to arrange the genuine history of the Sasâni princes, he had scarcely found any two books that agreed on the subject. And Procopius, so early as the middle of the sixth century, and while the Sasâni race were still in their glory, complains that, even in his day, though the Persians pretended to give the whole history of Rome from Æneas to Justinian; and though they boasted that they possessed in their records the history of their own kings, were yet so defective, and so inconsistent with each other, that they had not given with any accuracy even the names or length of the reigns of the Sasânis themselves.‡

The dangers which the religion and literature of the ancient Persians had to support did not terminate with Alexander, nor with the Parthian dynasty: they had to sustain a cruel and

† Malcolm's *Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii., p. 87. See also pp. 243 and 250.

‡ See *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, vol. xxxvii., p. 576.

bigoted persecution under the Mahometans. Haji Khalfa informs us, that when the Musulmans conquered Persia, Saad the son of Abu Wakhas wrote to Omar to be allowed to send a number of books to him. Omar's answer was, to throw them into water as useless to the faith. They were all burned; and thus, says Ebu Khaldun,† perished the sciences of the ancient Persians. At a much later period, when the Emir Abdalla ben Taher, the governor of Khorasan under the Abasside Khalifs, was at Nishapur, a man presented to him a book containing the *Loves of Wamik and Adhra*, a story dedicated to Nushirwan. "We read the *Koran*," said the Emir; "we need no books * but the *Koran* and the traditions. These others are useless. This is a work of the Magi, * 308 and is evil in our sight." He made it be thrown into water, and directed all the books of the Persians and Magi that could be found to be destroyed by the same means. "Hence," says Douletshah Ghazi Samarkandi, "we see no Persian poetry down to the time of the Samanis; for, if any was composed in Persian, it was not committed to writing:"‡ a very strong testimony from a well-informed and industrious historian.

But it has been said, and again and again repeated, that the historical poem of Ferdausi was compiled from ancient Persian and Pehlevi authorities, collected with great assiduity and expense, but all of which have since unfortunately perished. That many of his materials were drawn from works now lost, may fairly be admitted. I should however imagine, that he chiefly followed and imitated the popular and national poems and romances that were then current throughout Khorasan; and doubts may reasonably be entertained, whether he possessed or could have read a Pehlevi manuscript. But let the value of the unknown materials be estimated by the authenticity of Ferdausi, who compiled from them, and little injustice will be done to him or to them. A single observation which you

† See the *Relation de l'Egypte* of Abdallatif, published by the learned De Saci, pp. 241-2.

‡ De Saci's Appendix to the *Relation de l'Egypte*, p. 528. The above account is confirmed by Leo Africanus; *Ramusio*, tom. i., fol. 7 and 8.

make on the subject appears to me to comprehend the whole *rationale* for judging of the historical evidence of that beautiful poet, and of those historians of Persia who confessedly borrow from him and follow his footsteps. You remark that Ferdausi despatches† in *a very few words the affairs of the Greeks, * 309 and the transactions of the west of Persia ; but lingers with pleasure in his account of the wars of Turân ; that even the captivity of emperors, and the destruction of imperial armies, occurring on the western frontier, are unnoticed in his page, where we look in vain for the most momentous events—the defeat and death of the emperor Valerian, the discomfiture of the imperial army of Galerius, the death of Julian, or the humiliation of Jovian—while trifling inroads of the Tartars on the eastern border are described in detail. May not the fact be explained by recollecting that Ferdausi was a native of Khorasan, and flourished in that quarter ; that he wrote for a Sultan of Ghazni himself of a Tartar race, and whose family had not long left Tartary ; that the recent dangers and wars of Khorasan and Ghazni, countries which were very slightly connected with the west of Persia, had always been from Turân ; and that these regions, as well as many countries to the east and west of Khorasan, were at this period in the hands of Turkish dynasties ? His prejudices and the traditional tales of his youth were all those of Eastern Persia. The story of the West, which had long obeyed a different race of Arabian princes, was nearly forgotten, and in some measure

† “It is indeed remarkable that Ferdausi hardly records the name of one king or hero of Assyria, Greece, or any other nation, except Iran and Turan, the modern Persia and Tartary ; and this fact will sufficiently account for all his scenes being laid in one or other of these countries. His materials were slender, and he had to adapt the story that he made from them to the prejudices and the limited knowledge of his countrymen, who were only familiarly acquainted with those regions to which he has confined the chief actors of his drama. It is from this cause that we find events which occurred on the banks of the Euphrates often transferred to those of the Oxus ; and while one stanza describes a great expedition into Greece, a hundred pages are devoted to an inroad into Persia of a few freebooters from the plains of Tartary.”—*History of Persia*, vol. i., pp. 213, 214, 226.

foreign. Hence, though Istakhr is mentioned with respect, Balkh is really his imperial city ; and Turân the formidable enemy of Persia. The glories of Ecbatana, of Susa, and of Ctesiphon, remain unsung. Though the poetical record goes back to the remotest ages, the Greeks and Romans and the western frontier are hardly noticed. Kai Khusro, who from the general outline of his story seems to be Cyrus, is secretly educated during his childhood in Turân ; and Ferdausi makes no mention whatever of the Median dynasty. This silence regarding the most important events, joined to the transfer of the seat of government and of the most memorable transactions to the eastern provinces, seems to afford the strongest grounds for believing that Ferdausi wrote from no regular histories ; that none existed ; and that the few scattered facts and popular traditions which had floated down the stream of time in his native country had been connected into the semblance of a history by the fancy of the poet. Had he really possessed Pehlevi histories, the * scene would * 310 oftener have been laid on Pehlevi ground. The sculptures of Kermanshah and the West, less frail than the history of the Persians, still exhibit the pride of their exploits ; but we look in vain for any account of the origin or object of these monuments in the imperfect poetical traditions that have been preserved. We are even left to guess under what monarchs, and in what ages, the magnificent structures of Persepolis, the glory and wonder of their country, were raised or destroyed.†

Towards the latter period of the Sasânis, as we approach the era of the Arabian ascendancy, we arrive at more accurate information ; and the account of the reigns of the last Sasâni princes has the air of history, though of very imperfect history. From the Muhammedan conquest we enjoy, by the aid of the Arabian writers, a regular narrative of well-authenticated events, for there the era of contemporary history commences.

† Le Comte Caylus has given strong reasons for believing that the magnificent edifices of Istakhr existed long after the times of Alexander. Their remains exhibit no marks of burning, which however are indelible.

If this be a correct delineation of the nature of what remains of Persian history, it is evidently not entitled to be placed in competition with the few but valuable fragments preserved to us by the historians of Greece and Rome. The remains of these ancient writers present us with no professed or continuous history of Persia; they only relate detached events, or allude to recent or memorable occurrences. These, however, have the chance of being the more authentic, from being in general such as were called for to complete the course of the narrative, and at least exhibit the opinions and belief of contemporary or of recent times. The very first historian of Greece, the venerable Herodotus, in his account of the history, manners, and religion of Persia, many of the dominions of which he visited and viewed with the eyes of a historian and a geographer, has preserved to us a more authentic and a more judicious survey of the ancient state of Persia than we could glean from all the writings of all the Oriental historians. His lively portraiture of manners; the caution with which he distinguishes what he had seen from what he had only heard; and

* the invaluable description of the twenty satrapies of the Persian empire, a description the accuracy of which

has been confirmed by the latest investigations of our most improved geography,† support the fame of scrupulous fidelity and curious knowledge, which the strictest scrutiny has left entire to the most amusing of ancient historians. The scanty gleanings of succeeding authors do not enable us to form a complete or connected history of Ancient Persia; but the writings of Thucydides, of Xenophon, of Strabo, of Polybius, of Arrian, and of later writers, furnish a touchstone by which the Eastern historians may be tried. Appian, Marcellinus, Procopius, and a few others of the historians, with the Greek and Syriac ecclesiastical writers, and the Medallists who have illustrated the events of the Ashkani and Sasâni races, afford a similar though imperfect means of trying the accuracy of the modern Persian accounts of those remote times. With-

† See Rennell's *Geography of Herodotus*.

out some support from these quarters, it is unsafe to repose any confidence in the Oriental history even of the ages immediately preceding the Mahomedan invasion.

Under these circumstances it would be vain to look for any authentic account of Zertusht, or of the origin of his sacred volume. The *Zend-Avesta* does not belong to the age of history; it remains single in the Zend tongue; and we cannot rely on anything recorded by the historians of Zoroaster, all of whom, besides being comparatively modern, have allowed their imagination to run riot in their accounts of his wonderful works and miracles.

Nor is there anything in the remains of Pehlevi literature that can assist us in this exigency. Translations from the Zend original of the *Vendidád*, the *Vespered*, the *Yesht*, and *Khurda-Avesta* of Zertusht exist in the Pehlevi tongue. I know of only three other works in that language, the *Vimf Naméh*,† a description of the Parsi Paradise and Hell, ascribed to the reign of Ardeshr Babegan; the *Bundehesh*, an account of the Creation, according to the ideas of the Parsis, certainly not *written till after the Musulman invasion; ‡ and the *Tale of Akhez Iadu and the Destur Gush-Perian*, which was *312 probably written at a still later period. Of the Pehlevi histories and records, of which we have heard so much, not a fragment has ever been given to the world. We may safely say that none such exist.

III. *Of the Sacred Books and Religious Opinions of the modern Parsis.*

The *Zend-Avesta*, which comprehends all the writings now extant that are ascribed to Zoroaster, is the only work known to be written in the Zend language. It is believed by the Parsis to have been composed by Zoroaster, under the influence of divine inspiration in the reign of Gushtasp, which we may suppose to be that of Darius Hystaspes, or of some prince

† See a translation of it by Capt. John Adolphus Popc, London, 1816.

‡ This is plain from its conclusion, which alludes to the Mahomedans.

who lived not long before or after that monarch.† Although the writings of Zoroaster ‡ are alluded to by the ancients, the name of *Zend-Avesta* first occurs, I imagine, in the * 313 geographical work of Masaûdi, fifteen hundred years after they are supposed to have been published. Before the downfall of the Sasanian monarchy we have few authentic remains of Persian history; and since that period, the Parsis having been a persecuted sect, we are not to expect, and do not receive, any very explicit or distinct information regarding the nature of their sacred volumes, which were cautiously concealed from the inspection of the profane, until Anquetil du Perron drew them from their obscurity, and under great

† See Pridcaux's *Connections*, vol. i, part i., book iv., p. 262: Lond. 1808. Anquetil du Perron's *Vie de Zoroastre*,—*Zend-Avesta*, tome i. See also *Recherches sur le Temps auquel a vécu Zoroastre*,—*Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxvii., pp. 710-754.

‡ Though many ancient writers speak of Zoroaster as the legislator of the Parsis, yet direct allusions to his books are not frequent. The most remarkable are the following, which I extract from Anquetil du Perron's *Mémoire dans lequel on établit que les Livres Zends sont les ouvrages de Zoroastre*,—*Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.* vol. xxxviii., pp. 167-268:—

1. Hermippus, as quoted by Pliny, lib. xxx, c. 1, says that he had seen two millions of Zoroaster's verses. (It is worthy of remark that no part of the *Zend-Avesta* is in verse.) He lived about two hundred and fifty years after Zoroaster. 2. Dio Chrysostom mentions the sublime way in which Zoroaster had celebrated the car of the Lord of Nature, *Orat. Borysth.* 3. Suidas, *voce Zoroastre*, mentions the subjects of the different books which that legislator composed. 4. Eusebius, in *Præpar. Evang.*, p. 42, speaks of the collection of liturgical works of the Persians, which Anquetil presumes must be the production of Zoroaster: *Mém. des Inscript.*, *ut supra*, p. 173. These evidences are far from being satisfactory. In more modern times we have—1. Tabari, in the ninth century, who mentions the works of Zerdusht as written on twelve thousand skins. 2. Masaûdi, in the tenth century, repeats the fact, mentions as his the *Estā* and *Zend*, and speaks of the *Puzend*. 3. Josua bar Bahlul, in the same century mentions the *Abistogo* (or *Avesta*), as does Ferdausi the *Avesta* in the close of the same century, from which period downward it is often spoken of. But though the direct mention of Zoroaster's works is by no means frequent, yet it will hereafter be seen that there is a long and well-connected chain of authorities to prove the continuity of the peculiar doctrines of the ancient Persians from the days of Herodotus to the present times.

disadvantages completed a translation, by which we are enabled to judge of their nature and authenticity.

We are informed by the Parsi writers, all of whom are of very recent times, that originally the work of Zertusht consisted of twenty-one *nosks* or books. Now, however, we have only one *nosk* entire, the *Vendidâd*, which is said to have been the twentieth. There are, besides, a few fragments of the others, which compose what are called the *Yesht-Sadeh*, the *Yesht-i-Vespered*, and the other prayers known by the name of *Khurda Avesta*. Nothing else exists in the Zend tongue. In the *Dabistân* indeed, in the account of Zertusht, we are told on the authority of the Mobed Azer-Khirâd, that in his time, that is nearly two hundred years ago, there were extant, among the *Desturs* or priests of Kerman, fourteen entire *nosks*, with fragments of the other seven; that the parts which were not to be found had been lost during the wars and confusions that so long distracted Persia; and, finally, that in the *Zend-Avesta* all sciences and arts were contained, though chiefly wrapped up in symbols and mystery. I shall hereafter have occasion to show that the authority of Azer-Khirad is not of the highest class; and this relation is certainly not very consistent with the account given of the renovation of their sacred books from the memory of aged priests, when no copy of them was to be found, † on the reformation of their religion under Ardeshir *Babegan. Nor is it easily reconcileable with another very remarkable fact. In the parts of the *Zend-Avesta* that *314 we possess, the *Vendidâd* of Zertusht is often invoked, ‡ but no other of the twenty-one books of the *Zend-Avesta*; and in like manner, in the *Sed-der* the *Vendidâd* alone is referred to. § This would seem to prove that the *Vendidâd* alone was known, not only when the *Sed-der*, a work of no great value or antiquity, was composed, but even when the sacred Liturgies of the *Avesta* were compiled, whenever that may have been.

† See Hyde's *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 568.

‡ *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii., pp. 302, &c. § See *Door*. 22, 62, 78, and 100.

The greater part of the *Zend-Avesta* is a series of liturgic services and prayers for various occasions. The compilers of it appear to have been desirous that religion should mingle in every concern of life. Some of these services are to be performed on certain solemn days; some are addressed to the guardian angels of the sun and planets, and some to the various good genii that preside over the different elements and productions of the earth. There are services for purifications, for marriages, for every situation in which religion is usually introduced, for every occasion of life, and every function of nature. They are filled with the petitions and praises usual to such services, and with repetitions beyond even the usual license of such compositions. Directions for the order of the service are frequently intermixed in the Guzerattee language; but these are no part of the holy writings, but added in India for the benefit of the priests who are ignorant of the original tongue. The only portion which presents any thing like a continuous narrative is the *Vendidád*,† said to be the twentieth nosk of the *Zend-Avesta*, throughout the whole of which Ormazd is interrogated by Zertusht, and answers his questions. No part of the *Zend-Avesta* possesses any portion of literary merit. But this very defect, instead of being a reason for refusing to assign the *Zend-Avesta* to Zoroaster, might perhaps with some justice be considered as really in favour of its claims, as marking the production of an early and ignorant age. The Abbé Foucher, who has examined this question with some warmth, but with considerable ingenuity ‡, does not * regard the *Zend-*
 * 315 *Avesta* as being the actual work of Zoroaster, but as consisting of liturgies, of a much later age, containing some passages out of the writings of that prophet, and adapted to the various offices and services of the Parsi church. Liturgies, he remarks, do not belong to a religion in its infancy, but are introduced in later times to prevent or remedy abuses. “The *Zend-Avesta*,” says the Abbé, “is

† *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii., p. 263.

‡ *Mém. de l'Acad. des Insci.*, vol. xxxix., pp. 689-794.

to the books of Zoroaster what our missals and breviaries are to the Bible."†

That the liturgies of the *Zend-Avesta*, if any part of them was really taken from the writings of Zoroaster, were reduced into their present shape by another compiler, is sufficiently proved by numerous addresses to Zoroaster, to his *ferwer* or soul, and to his descendants.‡ We find in them such expressions as "May your name be famous as that of Zoroaster!" "I invoke Zoroaster, holy, pure, and great;" "May your life be long as that of Zoroaster!" and many similar, which we can hardly suppose to have been written by himself. The same may be said of the *Izeshmeh*, or Prayer to his ancestors, wives, children, and cousins, which savours of the reverence of a remote age.§

To me it seems probable that the *Zend-Avesta* was compiled in the reign of Ardeshir Babegan, the first of the Sasâni princes, and the reformer or restorer of the old religion; and that at the period of his ascending the Persian throne, being desirous not only of cherishing a national spirit among the Persians, but of adding the sanction of religion to his government, he wished to embody whatever remained of the theological opinions of their ancestors, especially such as they still fondly clung to; and to unite the various rites, ceremonies, and usages, that were held in particular veneration, into one body, with the addition of such other enactments and rules, whether of doctrine or ceremony, as it was found convenient to introduce. The change of dynasty made it desirable to connect the veneration of the people for the new dynasty, who represented *316 themselves as lineally descended from their ancient native kings, and as restoring the genuine empire of the Persians, with something so sacred as a renovation of the religion

† *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxix., p. 727.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 717.

§ Numerous passages of a similar tendency might be pointed out. In the following, Zoroaster seems to be alluded to as different from the author of the book:—*Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii., pp. 80, 83, 87, 91, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 104, 117 (a very strong instance), 126, 127, 130, 131, 133, 134, 141 (strong), 147, 148, 152, 184, 186, 259, &c.

of their national legislator, Zoroaster; which, though it had been neglected, had never been abolished, and was still venerated as the religion of Persia. In a former part of this letter I have attempted to show, that the monuments of Persian learning and religion had gone to decay in the long and dark interval between the reign of Darius Codomannus and that of Ardeshir Babegan. Even the Persian writers agree that towards the close of the Parthian period, no copy of the *ZenĀ-Avesta* was to be found; and that the portions of it which we now possess, were taken from the recitation of the aged monks and desturs. I shall not make any observations on the opportunities which this afforded for exhibiting as the genuine books of Zoroaster, any system whatever that was not very remote from the popular belief. It is quite plain that it placed the form and substance of the sacred volumes altogether in the hands of the governors. We find that complaints prevailed at this era of an alarming laxity of faith; and the best proof that the religion of Zoroaster had lost much of its influence over the minds of men, is afforded by the fact that there were two missions of saints or holy men during the reigns of the two first princes of the Sasāni line, for the express purpose of fortifying and attesting the truth of the ancient religion. Ahri-man, we are told, had shed doubts over the earth. A number of arbitrary usages disfigured the exterior of the law; its divinity was impiously questioned; religion was considered as a fable, and the state of man after death passed for a pious fraud. To remove the doubts that hung over the important doctrine of future rewards and punishments, was the purpose of Arda Viraf's revelation. He was conveyed in a trance to heaven and to hell, and published a description of what he saw, of the happiness of the good and the misery of the

* 317 wicked.† The mission of Aderbād Mahrespand, in the succeeding reign of Shapur, was intended * to confirm the truth of the religion of Zoroaster; and he submitted, un-

† See Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 278; the *Dabistan*, chap. xiv.; and Capt. Pope's Translation of the *Ardai Virāf-Nameh*, in the beginning.

hurt, to the decisive proof of having melted metals poured on his body, This victorious argument established the faith, and silenced infidels.† No other period of ancient Persian history seems to suit so well with the quiet and unobserved introduction of a volume like the *Zend-Avesta*. The priests were in a state of ignorance ; the literature of the nation was extinct ; the reigning family was popular, and venerated, as restoring the glory and religion of the country by rescuing it from a race of foreign rulers. Ardeshir is celebrated as a legislator. He was an encourager of learning, and is said to have caused his own history to be written, in which he was imitated by several of his successors. Persia enjoyed a long tranquillity from the reign of Ardeshir downwards ; and the opinions sown in his reign had time to take deep root and flourish.

But it is time to give some more particular details of the doctrine and belief of the Parsis. I shall therefore proceed, first, to give a brief account of the ideas they entertain of the Cosmogony ; secondly, an abstract of the *Vendidâd*, the only one of their sacred volumes ascribed to Zoroaster that is not a mere liturgy ; and, lastly, a short sketch of their usages and knowledge at the present day.

No religion on earth, that of the Jews excepted, has continued from such remote times as that of the Parsis with so little apparent change of doctrine or ritual. Different opinions are held among them concerning the nature of things, and the writings ascribed to Zertusht are very imperfect on that subject. All the laity, or Behdins, consider Ormazd the author of good, and Ahriman the author of evil, as having existed from the beginning ; and Zerwan, or Time, as a production of Ormazd ; an opinion which seems to be favoured by the *Avesta*. But many of the destûrs, following the expositions of later authors, hold that every thing has originated from Zerwan, or Time, and that Ormazd was the first active and creative being produced by that original principle. Zerwan, however,

† Hyde, *ut supra*, p. 280 ; and the *Dabistân*, chap. xiv.

is seldom mentioned in the sacred volumes of the Parsis : and

* if he was at any period esteemed the grand original
* 318 principle of all existence, yet as he has long ceased to operate directly, and as all the changes of nature are held to be effected by the agency of Ormazd and Ahriman, from whom immediately flow all good and evil, Zerwan remaining inactive like the God of the Epicureans, the whole attention of the Persians being constantly directed to those two who possessed the immediate power of conferring benefits and inflicting injuries, Ormazd the agent of good is now regarded as the sole ultimate object of worship.

As Ormazd is all light, purity, and excellence, and inhabits the primal light, so is Ahriman all darkness, impurity, and wickedness, and inhabits the primal darkness.

Ormazd and Ahriman appear to be co-etaneous. The first production of Ormazd was the *Ohnover*, or *Honover*, The Word, by means of which he created † all material things, the heavens, the earth, and all that they contain.

The *Ohnover* or Word is a text of the *Avesta* held in great veneration.

While Ormazd was originally engaged in the enjoyment of his perfections, he discovered Ahriman at an immense distance off in mud and filth, and knew instinctively that he was to confound and deface his formations : Ormazd therefore employed himself for three thousand years in making the heavens and their celestial inhabitants the *Ferothers*, which are the angels and the unembodied souls of all intelligent beings. All nature is filled with *Ferothers* or guardian angels, who watch over its various departments, and are occupied in performing their various tasks for the benefit of mankind. Ormazd was induced to create those *Ferothers* at this time, as a protection against the Evil One, and as the means by which the world was finally to be

† See as above, p. 618. But in regard to *The Word*, which acts a very dark and uncertain part in the *Zend-Avesta*, see *Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre*, vol. i., part ii., pp. 86 and 87, where *The Word* is invoked. See also pp. 138 and 139, which is very curious, and like St. John i. 1. In vol. ii., p. 239, it appears as the *I AM* of the Hebrews.

purified from sin. Ahriman, dazzled by the refulgence of light, and discomfited by a single enunciation of The Word, or *Ohnover*, fled to hell, where he created an opposite class of *spirits, the Divs and Darujs, or male and female demons, the inhabitants of darkness and ministers of all * 319 evil, in order to annoy and injure Ormazd and his works. The *Vendidād* makes the evil beings so created amount to ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety. Ahriman, cast down into the abodes of darkness, there completed the second period of three thousand years, during which time all the productions of Ormazd were free from wickedness and pain, and happiness alone prevailed in heaven and on earth. But the universe was still in a state of comparative waste. During this second period of three thousand years the other *Ainshaspands* or superior angels, for Ormazd himself is considered as the first, were produced. Of those now created, the first, Bahman, was to watch over living animals, and to keep peace among men; the second, Ardebehesht, presides over fire; the third, Shahrivar, was placed over metals and riches; the fourth, Ispendarmed, a female angel, watched over the earth; the fifth, Khurdad, diffuses the blessings of running water and of plenty; the sixth, Amurdad, † watches over the multiplication of trees, plants, and grain. Ahriman, on his part, created six superior Divs to counteract and injure their operations.

Ormazd, having arranged the heavens, assigned to various guardian angels the charge of all the stars and planets; of the different months and days of the month; of the three watches of the day and two of the night; of the elements and their parts. All nature is full of watchful guardian spirits.

Yet in spite of this multiplication of superior beings, and though in the Liturgy of the Parsis all of these are occasionally addressed, they are never worshipped as deities, but only as the media through which praise is conveyed to the Supreme Being, to whom all adoration is finally addressed; the

† The duties of these angels are not always described uniformly.

ancient Persians, like the modern Parsis, being strict Unitarians.†

* According to one system (for even among the Parsis * 320 there are various systems), towards the end of this second period of three thousand years, the Feroher, or unembodied prototype of man, which was still in the heavens, being delighted with the appearance of order and harmony that reigned on the earth, Ormazd proposed that it should descend in order to combat the Darujis, and contribute to the eradication of evil from the lower world, promising that he should finally restore the souls of men to their celestial abodes.

Ahriman trembled in hell at this appalling intelligence. The Divs, or demons whom he had created from time to time to keep pace with the creations of his rival, asked him to rise and combat this new enemy, to whom the destruction of sin was destined. After various reviews of his troops, and some indecision, he at length rose up with his bands, combated the light, and by means of his demons, many of whom assumed the appearance of serpents, of flies, and of venomous and ravenous animals, confounded all things on earth. Ahriman, who after penetrating into heaven had thrown himself on the earth in the form of a serpent, parched up every thing by a

† Hyde's proof of this is very successful. No one ever entered with more interest into his subject than Hyde seems to have done, and he apparently was more than half a believer in the religion he describes. In his Dedication he speaks of Zoroaster in these words: "Is (quamvis Pseudo-propheta) *peculiaribus quibusdam revelationibus adjunctus videatur*;" and in his Preface, after mentioning some supposed predictions of Zoroaster, he returns to the subject: "Quæ omnia suadent et persuadent Zoroastrem, hac in parte, *vere divinam revelationem habuisse*." An instance of the curious anxiety of the Hebrew Professor of Oxford, on his favourite subject, is amusing. Having learned from the *Kamus* that the Magi were so called from the shortness of their ears, and recollecting the story of Smordis Magus, he had the curiosity to desire one of his friends in the East to ascertain, by a careful inspection of the ears of the Parsi priests, whether there was any truth in the assertion: "Quod plane falsum esse compertum est, cum amicis, meo rogatu, *eorum aures aliquoties explorando*, tale quid reperire non potuit." *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 278. I have great pleasure in adding my ocular testimony to that of Hyde's friend, to relieve that ancient body from so unseemly a calumny.

burning drought. By his orders the Feroher of man, which by an odd enough arrangement contained also that of the bull, whose shape it had assumed, was wounded, and finally died. From the right fore-leg of this celestial bull, at the moment he expired, fell Kayomers, the parent and king of the human race; from the other parts of *his body issued the germs of numerous animals, trees, and vegetables, useful to * 321 man.

Kayomers, the father of the human race, was created to live for ever, but Ahriman attempted to destroy him. The parent of evil covered the world with night, and burned it up by his demons. He attacked the revolving sphere, which Ormazd preserved. For ninety days and nights did the angels of Ormazd and the demons of Ahriman encounter each other: at length the latter were precipitated into hell. Ahriman was completely expelled from heaven, to which he has never since attempted to return; but from hell he penetrated through the earth, and renewed his war on all the productions of Ormazd. Kayomers died of the injury he had sustained.

We are not yet arrived at the end of fable. In forty years a plant like the *rivas* sprang from the seed of Kayomers, bearing living fruit resembling two human bodies united together, and inclosing fruits that contained ten different species of men. The two bodies became Mashia and Mashiane, a male and a female. Ahriman finding that they adhered to Ormazd, whose influence was superior to his own, resolved to corrupt them. By his lies he induced them to rebel. They became Darvands, and their souls were doomed to hell till the resurrection. A flood succeeded which covered the earth to the height of a man, and killed the Kharfesters, or evil beings invested with bodies, that had taken shelter in the holes of the earth; from their remains poisons and putridity and noisome animals arose. The hapless pair were still doomed to new trials, and were seduced by Ahriman to drink the milk of a goat, and to eat the fruit of a tree, by which they lost their remaining advantages. They ceased to praise God, and the Divs raised quarrels between them. Ahriman from hell invited them to worship the

Divs, and Mashia poured out libations of milk to the north, the region of darkness. After fifty years the hapless pair met again, and had several children. The whole of this cosmogony is evidently Chaldean, and often reminds us of the fable of Paradise Lost. It ought to be remarked that it is extracted from *the *Bundehesh*, † a Pehlevi work, written posterior to the fall of the Sasáni dynasty, and from Persian works of a still later date, which do not in every particular agree with the cosmogony of the *Vendidad*. The *Vendidad* indeed often alludes to mythological tales as known, without explaining them. The account of the cosmogony is no part of the popular doctrine. Not one in a hundred even of the Desturs has studied it. It is given here chiefly on account of its coincidence with some very ancient notices of the opinions of the Persians.

Misery and sin having thus found their way among the children of men, some prophet or deliverer was required to rescue them from the wretchedness and defilement under which they laboured, and to guard them from the temptations and dangers that pressed on every hand.

Before the age of Zertusht certain distinguished saints, such as Hoin, Jemshid, and others, had instructed mankind in the will of Heaven. But the whole law was at length promulgated by Zertusht, the chosen of Ormazd. It teaches how to keep away and to subdue all bad demons, the authors of evil in the world, and how to attain perfect bliss here and hereafter. Since the time of Zertusht no demons have been allowed to assume a visible form.

But the best notion of the nature of the sacred volume ascribed to Zertusht may be got from a short abstract of the *Vendidad*, the only part of it that admits of abridgment.

It commences ‡ with an account of the chief cities and districts of Persia, the geography of which is far from being clear

† See *Zend-Avesta* of Anquetil du Perron, vol. iii., p. 348 *et seqq.*, Lord's *Religion of the Parsees*. Much of the cosmogony is evidently Chaldean, and later than the Musulman conquest.

‡ *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii, p. 263.

or intelligible. Most of them seem to be in Khorasan and the adjoining countries. The diffusion of all evil is ascribed to Ahriman. A short history of former times is given, in which Jemshid acts a distinguished part, and the ridiculous mythology that accounts for the origin of mankind from a body * composed of a male and female is referred to. The peculiar notions of the Parsis are strongly visible in * 323 the particular injunctions given not to defile the earth, by burying a dead body under it, or by other pollutions which are mentioned in detail. The duties of labouring the soil and of increasing population are highly commended. Men are cautioned to be on their guard against the Divs or wicked demons, who are ever on the watch to injure them: some good moral precepts are given:—to adhere to a bargain; to be just to one's cattle, and respect one's master; to abstain from violence; to give the priests their dues; and punishments are annexed to the violation of them. There appears too a pecuniary† compensation for crimes. Directions succeed for the construction of the Dokhmehs or places of sepulture. We are told that when a person is drowned or burned alive, it is not done by the water or fire, but by particular demons who inhabit those elements. The law consists in purity of thought, word, and deed. Numerous idle ceremonies to be observed with the dead bodies of men and dogs are enumerated, and various purifications for real or imaginary defilements. Adultery is prohibited under severe punishments. Physicians are to receive their honoraries, but are enjoined to try their experiments on infidels, before applying them to Parsis. Various ceremonies regarding the impure times and miscarriages of women are disgustingly detailed; and the prayers to be recited on the death of relations are pointed out. While minute instructions are given to cherish dogs of all descriptions, and to watch against and combat the demons; all snakes, frogs; and gnats are directed to be killed. The instruments and vessels of the priest, the arms of the soldier, and the

† *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii., p. 288.

husbandman's tools are described, and men are encouraged to clear the ground, to establish ferries, and to give lands and a handsome young virgin to the priests, to expiate certain crimes. Prayers † and minute observances are enjoined on cutting the hair and the nails, the omission of which is a capital offence. Particular injunctions follow:—Never to be without the *kusti* or sacred cord round the body; the Fire is regularly to have prayers addressed * to it, and to be * 324 fed at particular times; and the domestic cock and hen to be valued and cherished as representatives of the vulture, the prime minister of the guardian angel of the earth. Four circumstances ‡ are mentioned as making the demon Eshem conceive, and these are especially to be guarded against. Ahriman, who runs about the world to do evil, was vanquished in the beginning, we are told, by Ormazd, who pronounced the Honover, or holy word. On the birth of Zoroaster he wished to destroy the prophet, but was checked and repulsed. Rules regarding the purification of animals succeed. We are told that the Divs watch near a body for three nights after death to carry off the wicked. The good and evil go to the bridge Chinevad, which the just pass accompanied by celestial spirits, and are welcomed to heaven by the angel Bahman on his throne of gold. Wishes are expressed for the destruction of demons. An account follows of Feridun, the first who protected and promoted the pure law, before the days of Zoroaster, and who removed many vices and many demons from the earth, and rendered it happy. Prayers are to be addressed to the celestial bull and to the rain, which spreads beauty and abundance over the world. In conclusion, Ormazd mentions that after he had created the pure earth, as he walked in his glory, the great serpent Ahriman perceived him, and produced ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety evils; these Zoroaster was to remove by the promulgation of the law, and by doing homage to the pure and holy blessings conferred by Ormazd: by these he was to expel from the world all

† *Zend-Avesta*, vol. i., part ii., p. 406.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 390, 391.

malice, avarice, unruly passion, as well as impurity, death, and magic, and to banish all evil-doers and demons. Nothing can be more loose or unconnected than the whole structure of the *Vendidad*, which is a series of questions and answers, apparently suggested by circumstances occurring at random, and to which no arrangement has been given. In many parts of the *Vendidad*, as in some other Zend writings, we are struck with a resemblance to the ceremonies and expressions of the Hindu books; but the cosmogony, and the *Bundehesh* in particular, * are as strongly marked as being of Chaldaic origin. The liturgies in general are of a mixed character, partak- * 325 ing of the nature of both, though it seems to me rather Chaldaic than Indian.

It appears, therefore, that the leading, or at least the most commendable, doctrines of the Parsi religion are, to adore Ormazd as the author of all good; to preserve purity of thought, word, and action; to reverence all the angels and subordinate spirits and agents of Ormazd, with which nature swarms in all her elements, and to pay them honour. For this purpose, endless prayers must be repeated, as contained in a tedious liturgy, which prescribes the solemn words to be used not only on great and important occasions, but even on the most common and vulgar operations and functions of life. Numerous vain and frivolous ceremonies are prescribed, some to be performed by the priest, and others by the laity themselves. As the language of the *Zend-Avesta* is known to none of the vulgar, and to few of the priesthood, the stated prayers are mumbled over, as contained in the ritual, with incredible velocity, and are considered rather as charms and incantations producing effects by their sound, than as in any degree fixing the mind on its object, or elevating it to the Father of spirits.

The whole system is founded on the supposition of a continued warfare between good and evil spirits, which fill all nature; and religion is the art of gaining the aid of the former, and, by due observance of the law, of inducing them to assist the votaries of Ormazd.

The great visible objects of veneration are the elements, and

especially the Fire. Light is regarded as the best and noblest symbol of the Supreme, who is without form.

In consequence of this veneration for light and fire, the sun, moon, planets, stars, and the heavens themselves, are objects of peculiar respect; and in praying, they delight to turn to them, especially to the rising sun.

They have no temples considered as the residence of God or of superior beings, nor any images or paintings of Ormazd or his angels. Their *atesh-kadohs*, or fire-mansions, are merely edifices for guarding the holy fire undefiled and unextinguished.

In all their temples, if they can be so called, the sacred fire is kept for * ever burning, and it is approached with * 326 the greatest reverence. Their most awful ceremonies are performed before it.

There are two species of the sacred fire in India, the *behrâm* and the *adirân*; the former of which ought to be composed of a thousand and one different species of fire, and the latter of at least fifteen or sixteen. These various kinds are enumerated as fire generated from rubbing two pieces of wood, from a kitchen fire, a funeral pile, &c. Some of them evidently originated in India. The *behrâm* fire, to which high reverence is paid, is found only in three temples in all India: at Udvari or Udipur, a town near Doman; at Nausari; and at Bombay. The *adirân* fires are much more numerous; there being five or six of them in Bombay alone, and many in other places. Each temple has only one sacred fire before which the daily prayers and certain others are read. There are occasional services, as, if a person wishes the *Yesht*, *Vespered*, or *Vendidâd* to be read for the benefit of a living or dead person; and for more solemnity that it should be in the fire temple. In such instances, any fire is brought from without, placed in the temple, and, if it be a *behrâm* fire temple, is removed again when the business is over; if an *adirân*, it is placed below the *adirân* fire. The great fire, whether *behrâm* or *adirân*, is seen, at least in India, by all Parsis; certain ceremonies being performed before it.

These fire temples are always covered, and so constructed that no rays of the sun can fall directly on the sacred fire

which they contain. Certain parts of their liturgy are repeated only by the priest standing or sitting, in long and pure white attire, in the fire temple, before the sacred fire. On his mouth is the *panam*, a small piece of white cloth, to prevent the saliva from spurting or dropping out to defile the fire while he reads the *Vendidâd* or other sacred volume, chanting the suitable texts. When he reads the *Yesht*, *Vespered*, or *Vendidâd* before the common fire, he holds in his hand the *barsom*, tied by the cord called *eviangen*. The *barsom* consists of a number of small twigs, about a span long, which have been previously cut from a particular† tree by the priest with a consecrated knife* and with great ceremony. These, from time to time at particular parts of the prayer or * 327 reading, are placed on the *mahrub* or stand. The fire is usually fed with any dry wood. The prayers of the Parsis are not repeated distinctly, but muttered through the teeth with a kind of inarticulate noise, without opening the lips. In reading the *Avesta*, the passages containing the directions inserted by the *mobeds* are perused in total silence.‡

They have various classes of priests, of whom the chief are the *desturs*, who ought to study their sacred books, and are the doctors and expounders of the law. Not being officiating priests, they are not necessary to a fire temple. Next are the *mobeds*, who are the ministering priests, read the holy books in the temples, and superintend all religious ceremonies, whether there or in private houses. They are not in general learned, seldom understanding the meaning of the books which they read, or the prayers which they recite, these being in the Zend or the Pehlevi languages. In reading the holy books in the temple, one reads straight forward, another at particular passages chimes in, or makes a response: the *mobeds* are styled *juti* or *raspi*, according to the parts they take for the occasion: but the distinction is not permanent, and he who is

† In India, from the difficulty of procuring twigs of the proper wood, small rods of brass, sometimes of silver, are used.

‡ This is probably the *baj* of Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 351.

raspi on one occasion acts as juti on another. The Hindus and Indian Parsis call the mobeds *andârus*. The *hirbeds* are such mobeds as have the immediate charge of the sacred fire, which they must be careful to feed. They also sweep and take care of the temple. They can recite some prayers as mobeds, but are generally ignorant and untaught.

The priests are a peculiar tribe, the priesthood being hereditary in their family. They have no fixed allowance or salary, but are paid according to their work and the circumstances of their employer ; so much for a marriage, so much for chanting a *vendidâd*, so much for a *yeshneh*, and so forth. Many of them follow secular employments.

They have now no *desturan-destur*, or mobed-mobedan, no high-priest : though Mulla Firuz is generally regarded in that light, the opinion has arisen solely from the high and * 328 just estimation in which he is held, and * his acknowledged literary superiority ; no such office having ever existed in India.

In their public prayers much use is made of the consecrated water called *zor* or force. It is supposed to be powerful in repelling demons, and to impart peculiar efficacy to the sacred rites. In the course of the service they pour it from one cup into another, dip the point of the barsom into it, and sprinkle another barsom with it. After the religious service is over, it is poured into a spring or running stream, which it is supposed to purify.

The *hom*, also of singular use in their ritual, and, like the *zor*, perpetually alluded to in their sacred volumes, is the consecrated juice of a particular shrub, which is brought from Persia, pounded and prepared with many ceremonies. Besides its important uses in the public devotions, it is usual to give a drop of it to a new-born infant to cleanse it from the impurities of the womb ; and to persons supposed to be at the point of death, in order to keep away malignant demons, and to purify the departing soul for future bliss and immortality.

Besides the occasional prayers or ejaculations that the Parsis are taught to repeat in particular circumstances, each Parsi

ought to pray at five stated times every day ; once between sunrise and noon, once between noon and the middle point between noon and sunset, once between that point and sunset, once between sunset and midnight, and lastly between midnight and sunrise. On awaking in the morning and rising from his bed, he first of all unties and ties again his *kusti*. As he ties each knot in the form prescribed, he ejaculates or mutters the prayers ordained for the purpose. They pray in all situations, whether public or private, frequently interrupting their prayers to scold or give directions.

When a child is born, a name is given it, either at the moment of birth or a few days after, with little ceremony. The chief solemnity is on investing a child, whether male or female, with the *kusti* or consecrated cord or girdle, and the *sadra* or sacred shirt : the former is made of seventy-two threads of camel's hair, or of wool. He receives them between the age of seven years and of fourteen years and three months, never * laying them aside till his death, except to change them or for temporary purposes. The *sadra* is worn below the * 329 *kusti* and next the skin. These are considered as the armour of a Parsi man against the temptations of Ahriman.

But though the *kusti* and *sadra* may be taken so early as seven years of age, the assumption of them must not be delayed beyond the age of fourteen years and three months, when the grand bathing or purification to wash away all the impurities contracted in the womb of the mother is always performed. At that age the young Parsi is considered as a reasonable creature, and answerable for his own sins ; which he is not before. He remains apart for ten days during this washing and purification.

Their most efficacious morning ablutions are with the urine of the ox, after which they wash themselves with pure water.

The Parsis do not admit of polygamy, unless the first wife be barren, when a second may be taken. The priests may marry as often as the laity. The laity are not allowed to marry the daughters of mobeds, but the mobeds may marry either from their own class or from the laity. To correct this abuse, the

Parsis of Bombay now refuse to give their female relations to any priests.

Every season is good for marriage, which is a laudable work ; but in India the time is generally fixed by a Hindu astrologer.

The Parsi women are not shut up like those of the Mussulmans. Their practice of marrying while children I regard as the greatest obstacle to the mental and moral improvement of the Parsis.

The use of concubines is strictly forbid, but the practice is widely different.

The Parsi is not an exclusive religion, and converts are received into it ; though, except in infancy, few are known to have been admitted. The children of Parsis by women of a different religion may not only be admitted into the Parsi religion, but may succeed to their father's property, on his acknowledgment that they are his children, and that he holds them for his heirs.

* No Parsi can eat or drink out of the same vessel
* 330 with a person of a different religion ; nor are they fond of drinking out of the same cup with another Parsi, for fear of becoming a sharer in his sins.

They have something similar to auricular confession, as appears from the ritual in their *patets* † ; and in the *Vendidâd* we find that sins may be bought off by money and offerings ‡ : certain sins, considered as crimes, are to be punished with stripes, for which, however, in many instances a pecuniary compensation is allowed : but I am informed that in practice, the priests having no means of enforcing this discipline, or commutation, they have fallen into disuse.

The Parsi is one of the few religions that have no fasts. God delights in the happiness of his creatures ; and it is even meritorious to use the best meat and drink, the best clothes, and the best accommodations of every kind that are attainable.

As to their meats, all birds and beasts of prey, with the dog and the hare, are forbidden. They may by their own law eat

† *Zend-Avesta*, vol. ii., pp. 28-55.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i., part ii., p. 288.

beef; though in India they abstain from it, either in consequence of a contract entered into with the prince of the country on their first arrival, or more probably from a fear of offending the Hindus, and perhaps partly from imitation. Pork is not forbidden; but by a direction of one of the *revaiets* §, the swine ought to be kept apart and fed on clean food for a twelvemonth before it is killed.

Few good works are in their estimation more meritorious than the planting of trees. They have a great unwillingness to cut down any fruit tree. In Bombay none of them are cultivators or gardeners; but many follow merchandise, and numbers of them are shopkeepers, and are very active and successful in their trades. Others engage themselves as servants; numbers of them are employed as ship-carpenters in the dockyard, and others draw the date trees and sell spirituous liquors. They are perhaps * the most active part of the population of the island; and in the midst of the deep- * 331 coloured and effeminate Hindus and Mussulmans, they still retain the fair complexion, the hardy constitution, and stubborn activity of more northern climates. They possess large estates both in Bombay and Salsette.

As the life of a Parsi is a warfare with evil demons, in which constant vigilance is required, the watchful animals, and especially the cock and the dog, are held in great regard, as they are supposed to give intimation of the approach of wicked spirits. On the other hand, it is meritorious to kill serpents, frogs, and reptiles, which are subject to Ahriman.

Their year is divided into twelve solar months, and is known to be very accurate.

Their reverence for the elements makes them careful in no manner to defile them. No impurity is allowed to be thrown into the fire or the water. None of them are smiths, though prevented by no positive injunction: they never extinguish

§ These *revaiets* are answers from the *desturs* of the Parsis in Persia to the questions of their brethren in India, and are written in the Persian tongue. Some of them are several hundred years old, and in practice they are held of great authority.

any light, nor do they enlist as sepoy's, pretending that they dare not defile the fire by the use of fire-arms. In the great fire in Bombay in 1803, they stood for a long time idle, witnessing the progress of the flames; but when they found them continuing to spread, to the ruin of their houses and property, their interest got the better of their scruples, and many of them wrought with great alacrity both in procuring water and in helping to extinguish the fire. All other natives of the East when about to take an oath cast off their shoes or sandals; the Parsis alone put them on, so as in some measure to insulate themselves from the elements. To their reverence for the water, as well as to their want of good seaports, may be ascribed their aversion in all ages to navigation; though in cases of necessity, as in long voyages, their law allows them to throw impurities into the sea. Hence, too, they never bury the bodies of their dead, for fear of defiling the earth, but leave them to moulder away, and to be consumed by the birds of prey. Their *dokhmehs*, or places of sepulture, have often been described. They are round towers, having platforms or terraces near the top, sloping gently to the *centre, in * 332 which is a round hole for receiving the bones and decayed matter. On these the dead bodies are laid exposed to the wind and rain, and to the birds of the air.

As it is supposed that the malignant spirits, ever watchful to injure mankind, are particularly eager to assail the soul at the moment of its separation from the body, the Parsis not only recite prayers and read their books near their dying friends, to keep the demons away, but are careful to have a dog close by, as they imagine that that animal from its quicksightedness will perceive, and by its barking will alarm and chase away, the infernal assailant.

The dead body is dressed in clean but old clothes, and conveyed to the place of exposure on an iron bier; for wood being the aliment of fire, it might, if wooden, be accidentally burned, and so the element of fire defiled. The bearers are tied to each other by a piece of tape, to deter, as they allege, by their union the wicked demons who hover round the body from

defiling them. They place meat and drink near the body for three days, as during that time the soul is supposed to hover around in hopes of being re-united to it. They watch the corpse, to see on which eye the vulture first seizes: if on the right eye, it is a fortunate sign. The dogs drive away the evil spirits, who during that time are continually on the watch to carry off the soul to hell. If a dog takes a piece of bread from the mouth of the deceased, his happy state is considered as secure. He who touches the dead is impure for nine days. On the fourth day the soul ceases to linger about the body, and goes to happiness or woe.

Should any one revive after having been carried to the *dokhmeh*, he is shunned by all, as having had commerce with impure spirits, till duly purified by the priest. But there is reason to imagine that the popular superstition goes still further, and that no return is now ever heard of.

When the fourth day has arrived, the angel *Seriosh* appears and carries the soul to the bridge of *Chinevad*, which extends from earth to heaven: the evil spirits attempt to bind and ruin it, the good angels protect it. The angel *Rashncrast* weighs its actions, standing on the bridge: if the scale of good preponderates, the bridge, which in its natural state is *as narrow as a hair, widens, and the celestial dog that guards its further extremity suffers the soul to proceed * 333 on to heaven: if the evil prevails, the soul is precipitated over the narrow bridge into the gulfs of hell which open below.† Other accounts represent the virtuous as met by an angelically beautiful form, which addresses them, saying, that it is their good works come to conduct them to heaven: the wicked are encountered by a hideous monster, their evil works, that drags them down to the fiery pit.

The good, who are allowed to proceed to heaven, immediately enter on the enjoyment of inexpressible felicity.

The river of hell is composed of tears shed for deceased relations, all mourning for the dead being unholy.

† See the *Dabistan*.

The *Viraj-nameh* describes the punishments of hell, which very much resemble the vulgar notions of the Christians on that subject. They are inflicted by scorching fire, by serpents, by devils gnawing and tormenting their victims, tearing some limb from limb, hanging others on hooks, and hewing them to pieces alive: some of their tortures are as hideous as any described in Dante's *Inferno*.

Besides heaven and hell they have a middle state, or *hamestan*, where the souls of those whose good and evil actions are equally balanced remain till the judgment.

The Parsi hell is not eternal. When the third three thousand years are past, in which the influence of Ormazd and Ahriman are equally divided on earth, and which include the present time, the fourth three thousand years commence, which are to belong to Ahriman, and in which scourges of every kind, pestilence, contagion, hail, famine, war, are to afflict the earth; and human kind is to be reduced to the last degree of suffering and misery.

At the end of that period is the resurrection. Ormazd is then finally triumphant. Each element gives up what it holds of man. Two liquors, the *hom*, and the milk of the bull, *heziosh*, will restore all mankind to life. *Kayomers *334 will rise first, then Meshi and Meshiane, and afterwards all their posterity, whether good or bad.

The angel Sosiosh is the judge. The wicked will see the deformity of their crimes and bewail their transgressions. They will be punished for three days and three nights, into which time there will be compressed an aggregate of suffering more painful than 9000 years of torture. The pure and the blest will weep over the sufferings of the wicked. The lamentations of the tortured will rise from hell to Ormazd, who will deliver them. The blazing star *gursher* will fall on the earth, the hills and mountains will melt with fervent heat, and all mankind will pass through the liquid boiling mass. The just will feel it only milk-warm; the wicked will suffer excruciating agony, but it will be the last of their sufferings.

Ahriman will cross the bridge of Chinevad and return to

hell ; he will be burned and purified in boiling metals. Hell itself will undergo this purification : all its impurities will disappear. The mountains on the earth will be levelled, and earth become a paradise. Nothing will wax old. Mankind will remain in eternal pleasure, knowing and loving those friends and relations whom they loved on earth. Ahriman himself will be restored, and evil will disappear from the universe ; but on this, as on most other of the doctrinal points, there is a diversity of opinions. Indeed it may be said that the usages and ceremonies are the only certain part of the Parsi religion. The popular opinion is, that Ahriman and all his Divs and demons will be annihilated.

Such is a general view of the religion of the Parsis, collected from oral communications, and from their sacred books, as well those which are ascribed to Zoroaster, as those which are confessedly of later date and explanatory of the former. For what regards these last, I have been chiefly indebted to the works of Anquetil du Perron.

If it be asked what has been the moral effect of this religion on the Parsis, I can speak from observation only of those of this side of India, to whom, indeed, all the preceding observations chiefly extend. It is not saying too much, however, to affirm that whether from the ignorance of the priests and the little respect in which they are held, or from whatever *other cause, it seems to have very little influence of any kind *335 except of a social and political nature, arising from the connexion of caste. Their religion, if we may judge from their practice, has but little connexion with morals at all. It is a religion of ceremonies and of prayers ; and the prayers being in an unknown language, and their meaning unknown to those who repeat them, cannot be supposed to have much influence on the conduct of life. The priests are very little attended to, except by the women, whose attentions have a greater effect in exciting the jealousy than the respect of the men. The priests are generally not only disliked, but despised. They are for the most part poor, except a few who engage in trade, which all of them without exception may do. The Parsis have little

regard for their religion as such: if they show an attachment to its rites and usages, it is as to the rites and usages of their tribe or caste, not merely as to a religion. They may have some respect for the opinion in which they are held by one another; they have little regard for the opinions of any out of their caste, and appear totally insensible to any of the remoter sanctions of religion. They are bold, active, enterprising, intelligent, persevering in the pursuit of wealth, and successful in it. Many of their merchants have accumulated large fortunes by their superior talents and address. On the other hand, where they have power they are tyrannical, and regardless of the feelings and rights of others; they put no value on truth, and among themselves are not the less valued for lying or falsehood, which they regard as very good worldly wisdom.

Hence they exhibit no shame when detected in fraud or deceit; it is only the fate of war. They are, however, no niggards of their wealth, which they habitually spend lavishly in ministering to their fancies, their vices, and especially their voluptuousness; and sometimes generously in assisting each other. Their great expenses are at the marriages of their children, when, in imitation of the Hindus, they frequently throw away large sums in idle show. Their dwelling-houses are ill laid out, in small confined apartments, wretchedly furnished, very dirty; and generally exhibit men, women and children, master, mistress and servant, lying about stretched on the floor in all quarters, some asleep, others lounging. In

them they seem * never to make any attempts at elegance, or even neatness. Their merry-making houses are generally a little in the country, at a distance from the dwelling-house; and are often handsomely furnished with lamps and lustres, in imitation of English houses. To these the men resort to dine and to indulge in wine. On such occasions, unlike the other natives of India, they generally imitate the Europeans in the disposition of their table, and in their whole arrangements. They are apt, however, to drink more deeply than our manners permit. The richer Parsis are fond of having many rather than fine equipages; and used to delight in having

crowds of poor relations and dependants about their houses, a custom which is now on the decline. They are said formerly to have been eminent for their charity, which of late has not been conspicuous, or is shown chiefly in feeding a number of useless dogs, which become a nuisance on the public road and streets. The Parsis are, however, the most improveable caste in India. Religion, and customs supposed to be connected with religion, are the great obstacles to the improvement of the Orientals, whether Mussulmans or Hindus. From such restraints the Parsis are remarkably free; they are in every respect much liker Europeans than any other class of natives in Southern Asia; and being less restrained by ancient and acknowledged law, are more prepared to adopt any change of which they see the benefit. They do not attend to learning of any kind; but, take them all in all, they are probably the most vigorous, the most active and intelligent class of natives in all India.

IV. *On the Antiquity of the Religious Opinions of the Parsis.*

But though I regard the *Zend-Avesta* as the production of an age much subsequent to that of Zoroaster, and probably to belong to that of Ardeshír Babegân, and though the other Parsi books are all certainly of a still lower date, yet it is remarkable that not only these books, but many of the existing usages of the modern Parsis, agree in a surprising manner with the various accounts of the religion and manners of ancient Persia transmitted to us by the historians of antiquity. In mentioning these coincidences, I shall chiefly avail myself of the series of passages on this * subject collected by Anquetil du Perron.† Herodotus tells us that the Persians had no statues of the Deity, * 337 no temples, no altars, and treated it as folly to have any. They revered the whole vault of heaven, and sacrificed to it on the top of high hills: they offered sacrifices to the sun, moon, earth, fire, water, and winds. The modern Parsis reverence all these objects and address prayers to them, but

† *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxviii., pp. 197 et seqq.

cannot be said to have any sacrifices. Herodotus, however, explains what he calls their sacrifices; the only sacred rite of which was, that one of the Magi blessed the victim by chanting a theogony over it; after which the whole animal was taken away and disposed of at the pleasure of him who brought it. They did not suffer rivers to be defiled even by spitting or washing one's hands in them; they did not inter a dead body till it had been torn by a bird or dog, nor even then till its remains were inclosed in wax. The Magi might kill all animals except man and the dog; and it was held laudable to kill ants, serpents, and other noxious animals.†

Xenophon in his *Cyropædia* represents the Persian Magi as celebrating the gods in hymns from break of day; which agrees with the Persian ritual.

Theopompus, who lived 350 years before Christ, informs us, as quoted by Plutarch,‡ that Oromazes and Arimanius, according to the Magi, were each to be three thousand years victorious over the other; and three thousand years vanquished; and employed three thousand years in warring upon and destroying what the other had made; but that in the end, the evil being was to be destroyed; when men were to become happy, to have no need of food, and to cast no shadow: and from Diogenes Laertius§ we learn that Theopompus also mentions them as teaching the resurrection; after which men would never die, but live in eternal enjoyment.

* 338 * According to Damascius, Eudemus makes Time the author both of the good and evil being.

Clitarchus, in the age of Alexander the Great, mentions the Magi|| as directing the worship of the gods, and as discussing questions relating to the substance and generation of the gods,

† One passage of Herodotus is very inconsistent with the *Zend-Avesta*: "They each marry many virgins, but keep a still greater number of concubines:" lib. i., c. 135. See also Strabo, lib. xv., p. 733, who copies Herodotus.

‡ *De Iside et Osiride*.

§ *In Procmio*.

|| Diog. Laert. *in Procmio*; if indeed it be intended to ascribe all the passage to Clitarchus.

that is, the fire, earth, and water; as blaming the use of images, as holding it impious to bury the dead.

All of these, it is to be observed, wrote under the Kyani dynasty, that was destroyed by Alexander; which makes their evidence very strong.

Strabo † mentions some curious facts regarding the religion of the Persians. In the beginning of his account he copies Herodotus. He adds that the Magi feed the fire with pieces of dried wood that has been barked: they pour oil on the fire, which they ventilate, but do not breathe upon: for any one who defiles the fire by breathing on it, or by throwing any impurity into it, is capitally punished. Strabo had himself seen in Cappadocia some large fire-temples, in which ashes and fire were always kept on the altar. Their religious rites began by prayers to the fire. The Magi daily repeated their incantations or litanies before it for an hour together, holding in their hand a bundle of rods, and having on their head a cap or mitre, with flaps depending from it that covered their cheeks and lips. It is clear that the *barsom* and *penom* are meant. The Persians suffered no impurity to be thrown into a river, not even bathing in it.‡ Their marriages were celebrated at the vernal equinox, and they delighted in a numerous progeny.

Cicero mentions their exposing dead bodies to wild beasts; § and Pliny, their refusing to sail upon the sea, to avoid the necessity of polluting it; and that they did not even spit into water.¶

Pausanias, in his *Description of Greece*, describes the fire-temples of Lydia, and the priests as entering them and approaching an altar on which * were ashes: the priest, after arranging the wood, put on his cap and prayed * 339 in a barbarous tongue|| from a book, while the flame caught of itself.

† *Geogr.*, lib. xv.

‡ The modern Parsis never use a close bath, but have water poured on them, which is suffered to run away freely.

§ *Tuscul. Quæst.*, lib. i.

¶ *Hist. Nat.*, lib. xxx., cap. 2.

|| Hyde's *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 361.

In the second century Plutarch tells us† that Oromazes was considered as the author of good, and as resembling light; Arimanius, as the author of evil, and as resembling darkness. According to him, sacrifices were performed to express gratitude to the one, and to propitiate the other; an error which might be natural enough to a Greek. He describes them as braying the herb that they call *omomi*, by which the Parsi *hom* seems to be meant, and as using it in their sacred ceremonies; that some animals belong to the good, some to the evil spirit; and he mentions the dog, the birds of the air, and land porcupines as belonging to the good being, while they have an aversion to aquatic animals (which probably alludes to its being meritorious to kill frogs and reptiles); that Oromazes was generated of the purest light; Arimanius, of darkness; and that they war on each other: that the good spirit created a certain number of celestial beings, guardians of particular virtues or enjoyments; the other produced an equal number of demons their contraries; that Oromazes adorned the heaven with stars, intrusting the superintendence of the whole to Sirius; that the good and evil spirits have been mixed over the world, and produced the mingled scene of pleasure and suffering that we witness; but that a predestined time would come, when Arimanius, having brought pestilence and famine into the world, would be destroyed by them: after which the whole earth would be a smooth level plain, there would be only one government, one language, and all mankind would live in bliss.

It is to be observed that all these last authorities are in the Parthian times, before the dynasty of Ardeshir Babegân, whose reign began A.D. 226.

In the time of the Sasâni dynasty the number of authorities increases, but it would be tedious to recount them.
* 340 Bardesanes, a Syrian writer, says, that the Medes kept dogs for the purpose of presenting the dying to * them.

† See a very excellent dissertation of Anquetil du Perron, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. xxxiv., p. 376. *Système Théologique des Mages selon Plutarque, &c.*

This is clearly the *Sag-did*. Eusebius has preserved some curious circumstances ; and especially that the Magi taught that God in his substance was like light ; in his soul like truth : † and Ammianus Marcellinus mentions the sacred fire supposed to have fallen from heaven. Agathias mentions the feast on which the Persians went out to kill serpents and other productions of Ahriman. He mentions, too, that the dead were carried out of the cities to be devoured by birds of prey ; and that such as had been placed among the dead could not be re-admitted among the faithful, till purified from their converse with impure demons. Finally, Photius in the ninth century quotes Theodoxus of Mopsuesta of the fifth, who mentions *Zarwam* or Destiny as the principle of all things ; that adoring himself to engender Ormisdas he produced both him and Sata-nas. This *Zarwam* is certainly the *Zarwan* or Time of the Parsi mythology. It is mentioned in the fifth century by Moses of Chorene ‡ as spoken of in the Chaldaic books.

Anquetil after this detail very triumphantly, and with some justice, asks if any other religion can bring ampler testimony of its dogmas and nature, through so long a period, and from authorities altogether foreign. None perhaps can. The *Vendidad*, the fundamental part of the *Zend-Avesta*, if a forgery, is framed with great skill to prevent detection. It has few references to facts ; and however idle its enactments may be, they easily coalesce with what we are told of the ancient religion. It must, upon the whole, I think, have been promulgated when the old Persian doctrines were still in considerable vigour.

The time which I have chosen for the publication of the *Vendidad*, is earlier than that assigned for the composition of the Parsee books by the indefatigable Brucker, who had antiquity before his eyes, and who thinks that they cannot be older than the age of Eusebius, who was contemporary with Constantine, and consequently lived near a century after Ardeshr Babegân. He has, however, his doubts whe- * 341
ther they be not of * a still later period ; and particularly

† Hyde, *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, p. 385.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

thinks that suspicions may be entertained regarding the attributes of God in the *Yesht* of Ormazd, and the dogma of the resurrection, as not agreeing with the general notions given of the philosophy of Zoroaster. He thinks they savour of the Mahometan school, and are conceived in metaphysical terms remote from the character of the Oriental philosophy. We observe in some of the preceding authorities, that the resurrection is mentioned as a tenet of the Magi long previous to the Sasâni period; and the various heresies of Mani and Mazdeh, and of the Eastern Christians during the first six hundred years of the Church, may have sufficiently exercised the mystical acumen of the Persians to admit of their composing such prayers without requiring to resort to Mussulman times.

It is possible that all the parts of the *Zend-Avesta* were not written in one reign. Different prayers and addresses may have been introduced into the public service by the priests, as occasion seemed to require. Brucker remarks that the Greeks, especially under Alexander and his successors, should have known of the Zend books had they existed. Finally, that had there been any real writings of Zoroaster, the Gnostics and other sectaries, who in the first centuries of the Christian Church drew a number of errors from the system of Zoroaster, would have appealed to these writings, instead of forging new ones in their place as they have done.†

Such are the only observations that occur to me on the Parsis and their sacred books. Having thus cleared the way, I shall take an early opportunity of sending you some remarks on the *Desâtîr* and *Dabistân*, and on the religion ascribed to the ancient Persians in these volumes.

Believe me, my dear Sir John,

Ever yours faithfully,

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

Bombay, 22nd Feb. 1818.

† See *Zoroastri Oracula* in Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, p. 803, &c.

[NOTE.—Although the precise age in which Zoroaster lived is still as much a subject of dispute as ever, and some even believe him to have had no real existence, but to be a mythical person, the languages connected with the religion of which he was the founder, or at least the reformer, have, since this article was written, been subjected to critical examination and serious study, chiefly by Germans, but also by Frenchmen, and to some extent by Englishmen and even Russians. Now we possess grammars and dictionaries of all of them, with editions of various texts, not only in the original, but also in translations. Haug, Spiegel, Sachau, Westergaard, and many other scholars have distinguished themselves in the study and investigation of Zoroastrian literature, a list of the chief works of which may be seen in Rehatsek's *Catalogue of the Mulla Firuz Library* (which has been so often referred to) in the Appendix, where not only the chief works written by Europeans, but also by Zoroastrians themselves, are registered.

Although more than 57 years have elapsed since this article was written, and so much light has since been thrown on everything connected with Zoroastrianism that many parts of it have been illustrated by the study of their sacred languages, as well as by archæological researches and the study of various monuments since discovered, yet the testimony of the writer of this article may still be considered valuable in several respects. Thus, for instance, he supposes that the Pehlvi language was chiefly spoken in contact with and where Semitic influence was predominant, and was gradually extinguished when that predominance ceased; some modern scholars will of course not admit this, but the majority do. He is also right in stating that Zend was not a language current in Persia proper; and modern researches have proved it to be Bactrian. As to the opinions of Greek and Roman authors on the Zoroastrian religion, they have in recent times been more fully illustrated by Rapp and others than could be done here. The author is, in spite of his opinion that the *Zend-Avesta* itself was compiled during the reign of Ardeshr Babegán, ready enough to admit that many of the existing usages of the modern Parsees agree in a surprising manner with the various accounts of the religion and manners of ancient Persia as recorded by ancient Greek authors. Mr. Rehatsek's Catalogue gives a list of all the Zend and Pehlvi works and their translations available here. I would refer to some of these to make this note somewhat more complete:—*Zend Avesta*, or sacred volume of the Parsees, edited and translated by N. L. Westergaard, Copenhagen, 1852-54; Ditto, by Spiegel, with translation into German by himself and into English by Bleek; *Commentaire sur le Yaçna* by E. Burnouf, Paris, 1833; *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsees*, by Martin Haug, 1862.—ED.]

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* XVI.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE *DESATIR*, WITH
REMARKS ON THE ACCOUNT OF THE MAHABADI
RELIGION CONTAINED IN THE *DABISTAN*.

In a Letter to Brigadier-General Sir JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B.
and K.L.S.

Read on the 25th May, 1819.

In a former letter I have examined the more ancient and received accounts of the religion of the Parsis or Gabrs; I shall now proceed to make some remarks on an ample addition to their religion and history, which has been made within these few years by the publication of the *Dabistân*, and the discovery of the *Desâtîr*. To the latter work I have recently had access by the kindness of Mulla Firuz,† who is supposed to possess the only copy of it extant. I wish that I could pronounce the additions so made to the history of the Parsis, as authentic as they are ample.

The contents of these volumes, so far as relates to ancient Persia, are so extraordinary, that they probably would have been placed with little notice in the rank of idle tales unworthy of attention, had it not been for the marked and distinguishing praises bestowed on the *Dabistân* by Sir William Jones. His opinion is not given casually or in passing; it exhibits the cool and studied judgment of that accomplished writer on the facts relating to ancient Persia contained in that volume; and yet shall I be forgiven for saying
* 343 an instance of a more perverted judgment on historical evidence? * In his sixth discourse,‡ on the Persians,

† This letter was written previous to the publication of that work.

‡ *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ii., p. 43.

in speaking of Persia he calls it "one of the most celebrated and most beautiful countries in the world; a country, the history and languages of which, both ancient and modern, I have long attentively studied." His peculiar qualifications for the task of weighing testimony he has himself very elegantly stated: "Since I have no system to maintain, and have not suffered imagination to delude my judgment; since I have habituated myself to form opinions of men and things from *evidence*, which is the only solid basis of *civil*, as *experiment* is of *natural* knowledge; and since I have maturely considered the questions which I mean to discuss, you will not, I am persuaded, suspect my testimony, or think that I go too far, when I assure you that I will assert nothing positively which I am not able satisfactorily to demonstrate." He tells, that it had long seemed to him unaccountably strange, that although Egypt, Yemeu, China, and India, had their monarchs in very early times, "yet Persia, the most delightful, the most compact, the most desirable country of them all, should have remained for so many years unsettled and disunited. A fortunate discovery," he adds, "for which I was indebted to Mir Muhammed Hussain, one of the most intelligent Mussulmans in India, has at once dissipated the cloud, and cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of Irân and of the human race, of which I had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter.

"The rare and interesting tract on *twelve* different religions entitled the *Dâbistân*, and composed by a Muhammedan traveller, a native of Cashmir, named Mohsan, but distinguished by the assumed surname of Fani, or *Perishable*,† begins with the wonderfully curious chapter on the religion of Hushang, which was long anterior to that of Zeratusht, but had continued to be secretly professed by many learned Persians even to the author's time; and several of the most eminent of them dissenting in many *points from the Gabrs, and persecuted *344 by the ruling powers of their country, had retired to

† See note A at the end of this Letter, for an examination of the question, "Who was the author of the *Dâbistân*?"

India, where they compiled a number of books, now extremely scarce,† which Mohsan had perused, and with the writers of which, or with many of them, he had contracted an intimate friendship. From them he learned, that a powerful monarchy had been established for ages in Irân before the accession of Cayumers; that it was called the Mahabadian dynasty, for a reason which will soon be mentioned; and that many princes, of whom seven or eight only are named in the *Dabistân*, and among them Mahbul, or Mahi Beli, had raised their empire to the zenith of human glory. If we can rely on this *authority, which to me appears unexceptionable*, the Iranian monarchy must have been the oldest in the world.” ‡

After some new and valuable remarks on the ancient languages and characters of Irân, a subject on which Sir William Jones could not touch without diffusing light and affording instruction, he proceeds to characterize the religion of the *Dabistân* and *Desâtîr*, which he does with so much eloquence, and so much in the spirit of an enthusiast,

whose undoubting mind
Believed the magic wonders that he sung,

that I shall not do him the injustice to abridge any part of what he says; because the extract contains at once the most plausible account of the Mahabadian sect, and that which is likely to be referred to with most complacency by those who support the authenticity of the *Desâtîr*.

“The primeval religion of Irân, if we rely on the authorities adduced by Mohsan Fani, was that which Newton calls the oldest (and it may be justly called the noblest) of all religions, ‘a firm belief that one supreme God made the world by his power, and continually governed it by
*his providence; a pious fear, love and adoration of him;
* 345 a due reverence for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species, and a com-

† Some of these books are still to be met with in India. They are chiefly mystical and metaphysical.

‡ *Asiatic Researches* [vol. ii.], pp. 48, 49.

passionate tenderness even for the brute creation.' A system of devotion so pure and sublime could hardly among mortals be of long duration ; and we learn from the *Dabistân* that the popular worship of the Iranians under Hushang was purely *Sabean* ; a word of which I cannot offer any certain etymology, but which has been deduced by grammarians from *saba*, an host ; and particularly the *host of heaven*, or the *celestial bodies*, in the adoration of which the Sabean ritual is believed to have consisted. There is a description in the learned work just mentioned of the several Persian temples dedicated to the sun and planets, of the images adored in them, and of the magnificent processions to them on prescribed festivals ; one of which is probably represented by sculpture in the ruined city of Jemshid. But the planetary worship in Persia seems only part of a far more complicated religion which we now find in the Indian provinces, for Mohsan assures us that, in the opinion of the best informed Persians, who professed the faith of Hushang, distinguished from that of Zeratust, the first monarch of Irân, and of the whole earth, was Mahabad (a word apparently Sanscrit), who divided the people into four orders, the *religious*, the *military*, the *commercial*, and the *servile*, to which he assigned names unquestionably the same in their origin with those now applied to the four primary classes of the Hindus. They added, that he received from the Creator, and promulgated among men, *a sacred book in a heavenly language*, to which the Musalman author gives the Arabic title of *Desâtîr* or *Regulations*, but the original name of which he has not mentioned ; and that *fourteen Mahabads* had appeared or would appear in human shapes for the government of this world. Now when we know that the Hindus believe in *fourteen Menus*, or celestial personages with similar functions, the first of whom left a book of *Regulations*, or *divine ordinances*, which they hold equal to the *Veda*, and the language of which they believe to be that of the gods, we can hardly doubt that the first corruption of the purest and oldest religion was the system of Indian theology invent- * 346 ed by the Brahmans, and prevalent in *these territories,

where the book of Mahabad, or *Menu*,† is at this moment the standard of all religious and moral duties. The accession of Cayumers to the throne of Persia in the eighth or ninth century before Christ seems to have been accompanied by a considerable revolution both in government and in religion: he was most probably of a different race from the Mahabadians who preceded him, and began perhaps the new system of national faith which Hushang, whose name it bears, completed. But the reformation was partial; for while they rejected the complex polytheism of their predecessors, they retained the laws of Mahabad, with a superstitious veneration for the sun, planets, and fire; thus resembling the Hindu sects called *Sauras* and *Sagnicas*, the second of which is very numerous at Benares, where many *agnihotrus* are continually blazing, and where the Sagnicas when they enter on their sacerdotal office kindle with two pieces of the hard wood *semi* a fire, which they keep lighted through their lives for their nuptial ceremony, the performance of solemn sacrifices, the obsequies of departed ancestors, and their own funeral pile. This remarkable rite was continued by Zeratusht, who reformed the old religion by the addition of genii, or angels, presiding over months and days; of new ceremonies in the veneration shown to fire; of a new work which he pretended to have received from heaven; and above all, by establishing the actual adoration of one supreme Being. He was born, according to Mohsan, in the district of Rai; and it was he (not, as Ammianus asserts, his protector Gushtasp) who travelled into India, that he might receive information from the Brahmans in theology and ethics. It is barely possible that Pythagoras knew him in the capital of Irak; but the Grecian sage must then have been far advanced in years; and we have no certain evidence of an intercourse between the two philosophers. The reformed religion of Persia continued in force till that country was subdued by the Musalmans; and, without

† Sir W. Jones had not an opportunity of making the comparison; but nothing can be more different from the *Book of Mahabad* than the *Institutes of Menu*.

studying the *Zend*, we have ample information concerning it in the modern Persian writings of several who professed it. * Bahman always named Zeratusht with reverence : but he was in truth a pure theist, and strongly disclaimed * 347 any adoration of the fire or other elements ; he denied that the doctrine of two coeval principles, supremely good and supremely bad, formed any part of his faith ; and he often repeated with emphasis the verses of Firdausi, on the *prostration* of Cyrus and his paternal grandfather before the blazing altar. ‘ Think not that they were adorers of fire ; for that element was only an exalted object, on the lustre of which they fixed their eyes ; they humbled themselves a whole week before God ; and if thy understanding be ever so little exerted, thou must acknowledge thy dependence on the Being supremely pure.’ In a story of Sadi, near the close of his beautiful *Bustan*, concerning the idol of Somanath, or Mahadeva, he confounds the religion of the Hindus with that of the Gabrs, calling the Brahmans not only Moghs (which might be justified by a passage in the *Mesnavi*), but even readers of the *Zend* and *Pazend*. Now, whether ‘this confusion proceeded from real or pretended ignorance I cannot decide,† but am as well convinced that the doctrines of the *Zend* were distinct from those of the *Veda*, as I am that the religion of the Brahmans, with whom we converse every day, prevailed in Persia before the accession of Cayumers, whom the Parsis from respect to his memory consider as the first of men, although they believe in an universal deluge before his reign.

“ With the religion of the old Persians their *philosophy* (or as much as we know of it) was intimately connected ; for they were assiduous observers of the luminaries which they adored, and established, according to Mohsan, who confirms in some degree the fragments of Berossus, a number of artificial cycles with distinct names, which seem to indicate a knowledge of

† It is surprising that Sir W. Jones had not observed that contempt and intolerance lead the Musalmans to rank all unbelievers, or supposed pagans, in one class, the nice distinctions of which are not worthy of the attention of a pious believer.

the period in which the equinoxes appear to revolve. They are said also to have known the most wonderful powers of nature, and thence to have acquired the fame of magicians and enchanters."† To this succeeds a beautiful account of * 318 the modern Sufis and their poetry, adorned with all the charms of an elegant and polished style.

After a few words on the monuments of sculpture, and the sciences and arts of the ancient Persians, he concludes, "*Thus has it been proved by clear evidence and plain reasoning that a powerful monarchy was established in Iran long before the Assyrian or Pishdadi government; that it was in truth a Hindu monarchy, though if any choose to call it Cusian, Casdean, or Scythian, we shall not enter into a debate on mere names; that it subsisted many centuries; and that its history has been engrafted on that of the Hindus who founded the monarchies of Ayodhya and Indraprestha; that the language of the first Persian empire was the mother of the Sanscrit, and consequently of the Zend and Parsu, as well as of the Greek, Latin, and Gothic; that the language of the Assyrians was the parent of Chaldaic and Pahlavi, &c.*"‡

Ingenious and fanciful as these speculations are, they seem to be stated a good deal too decisively, especially as they are altogether unsupported by any authority prior to the *Dabistán*. But such was the influence of Sir William Jones's name in literature, that since his time the account of the ancient Persian sects in the *Dabistán* has been received with much favour, and very generally adopted by such authors as have touched upon the history of these remote times. It now became an object of particular curiosity to discover the *Desátir*, if indeed any fragments of that ancient work had escaped from the wreck of ages; and the Honourable Jonathan Duncan, Esq., the late Governor of Bombay, considered himself as supremely fortunate in having at length made the longed-for discovery.

You knew Mr. Duncan well. He was a man of no inconsi-

† *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ii., pp. 58-60.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

derable parts. His knowledge, though rather extensive and varied, was not equally accurate. His reading had been desultory and indiscriminate; an ordinary effect of which, unless in powerful and ardent understandings, is to produce a state of mind exceedingly prone to receive or form theories. It may be expected that minds so constituted, and in which the natural limits of knowledge are but ill * 349 defined, should often meet with facts or reasonings that easily coalesce with the loose and unsettled notions which they had formerly entertained; and that the casual coincidences so afforded should favour the reception of their favourite notions. Mr. Duncan read and spoke the Persian language with ease, and, without being very profoundly versed in any branch of Oriental learning, had a great reverence for every part of it; and was not without those notions, which have been frequently cherished by many well-informed English gentlemen, of something strange and unknown that might perhaps be brought to light by a curious inquiry into the records of Persian and Sanscrit lore.

While in this state of mind he learned that Mulla Firuz, whose learning and talents those that know him best will most readily acknowledge, was possessed of the precious volume which had excited the curiosity, but escaped the research, of Sir William Jones. The Mulla had, I believe, allowed you to take a copy of this volume; which from some accident was lost by our regretted friend Leyden. But, after the *Desâtîr* had attracted the particular notice of Governor Duncan, that gentleman requested the Mulla to show it to no person whatever, and having undertaken a translation of it, continued to prosecute his work, at intervals, for several years, intending on his return to England to present it to His Majesty as the most valuable tribute which he could bring from the East.

The mysterious terms in which the work was mentioned, as being composed in an ancient and now obsolete tongue, contributed to keep up some indistinct ideas of its value as well as its antiquity. But as Mulla Firuz has been lately enabled to undertake the publication of the work, which makes it public

property, he has allowed me to peruse it, and I hasten to offer you such remarks as have suggested themselves on its authenticity and merits.

The new system of ancient Persian history is contained in two volumes, the *Desâtîr* and the *Dabistân*; and the most distinct way of judging of their value will be, to state at some length the doctrines of the *Desâtîr*,* and to take a rapid
 * 350 glance at the historical facts detailed in the *Dabistân*, so as in some measure to render these works their own interpreters. We may then be better enabled to judge what degree of credit is due to the assertions contained in the preceding extracts, and whether these works have that air of credibility which they ought to possess, in order to induce us at once to give admission to so large a mass of very extraordinary facts into the body of general history. In this inquiry we can derive no assistance from the writings of the ancient historians; for the religion of Mahabad is presented to us as a secret religion which has not been openly professed for many thousand years. Why its doctrines, after being concealed so long, came to be published for the first time about two hundred years ago, is now here explained.

The *Desâtîr* professes to be a collection of the works of the different prophets of the religion of Mahâbâd, beginning with Mahabad, and ending with the fifth Sasan. Mah-Abâd, or the Great Abad, is described as having lived before the period of recorded history, while the fifth Sasan flourished in the reign of Khusro Parvez, not long before the empire of the Sasânis was destroyed by the Muhammedans.

The *Desâtîr* is written in a language of which no other specimen appears to remain. Indeed it would have been altogether unintelligible, had it not been accompanied by a translation into Persian, said to be made by Sasan, a son of the fifth Sasan, and himself, too, an inspired writer and a prophet; who informs us that his spirit often left this material body, and was carried aloft in beatific vision into the presence of Deity. This pious and gifted writer has added to the translation a long and curious commentary, in which he explains and expands the opini-

ons of the various inspired writers whom he has translated, particularly of the first and fifth Sasan ; and has interspersed many explanatory metaphysical reasonings among his comments.

The *Desâtîr*, like the *Dabistân*, represents a religion called that of Abâd, as having prevailed in Persia in all ages ; and describes four new dynasties of princes, totally unknown to preceding historians, as having flourished in that country before the Peshdadi race. These new dynasties * are the Mahabadi, the Jyani, the Shyani, and the Yasani. * 351 The world, according to the theory of the *Desâtîr*, is subject to periodical destruction at the end of certain grand cycles, containing a period of many millions of years. It seems that Mahabad and his wife were the only survivors of the human race at the close of the last of these mighty periods ; for at the close of each the Divine Providence preserves a pair for the renovation of the race of man.† By their offspring was the world peopled, and a new order of things begun.‡ In each of these grand cycles, as in those of Plato, the planets commence their revolutions from the same points, and a new series of events ensues in the world, exactly similar to what has already occurred in an infinite series of preceding cycles.

The Mahabadian dynasty consisted of fourteen prophet kings ; the first being Mahabad, the last Abad-Arad, who withdrew from public life and betook himself to meditation and retirement, after the dynasty had reigned exactly six hundred sextillions of years. The world, which under the revelation and institutions of Mahabad had reached a degree of splendour, population, and learning, never again attained in these later and degenerate ages, began to fall into confusion. Discord and rapine prevailed. The rivers ran with blood in the wars that ensued. The magnificent cities, the palaces and porticos,

† Many notions in the *Desâtîr*, as well as much of the *Bundelesh*, appear to be founded on Chaldean doctrines, which have also entered deeply into the other sacred books of the Parsis.

‡ *Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.*—*Virg.*

that had been constructed, went to ruin ; the inhabitants of the plains fled from the oppression and tyranny that prevailed, and sought shelter like wild beasts in the tops of the mountains, in caverns, and in the thickets and forests that were scattered over the country. By adopting the life, they soon acquired the habits and sunk into the ignorance, of the lower animals.

In this miserable situation some sages, for sages it seems are to be found in all periods of the world, induced Jyafrám, who is styled the son of Abad-Arad, to assume the reins of government. He is said to have * been called the son * 352 of Abad-Arad, though whole ages intervened between them ; because he alone, in his own times, possessed the perfections of that monarch. Jyafram, being a prophet and a legislator, restored the religion of Mahabad, and enacted useful laws ; so that a period of happiness ensued that lasted exactly one *aspar*, or a thousand millions of years ; a period occupied by the reign of Jyafram and of his successors, who were styled *Jy*, like himself. The last sovereign of this dynasty was Jy-Abad, who from his fondness for a life of devotion having retired to the hills and wilds, the kingdom again became a prey to confusion and rapine.

From this wretched state it was raised by Shy-Kiliv, a venerable prophet, called the son of Jy-Abad, though divided from him by many centuries. Shy-Kiliv mounted the throne at the entreaties of the wise men of the earth ; and, having republished the religion of Mah-Abad, and restored the world to its former greatness and prosperity, transmitted his authority to a long race of descendants, all like himself called *Shy*, who ruled for the course of one *shimar*, or the more moderate period of ten millions of years, till Shy-Mahbul, seduced by a mistaken piety, retired from the world, which fell into disorder.

Yasan, called the son of Shy-Mahbul, having after a long interval of ages been raised to the throne by the public voice, founded the fourth ancient dynasty. Under this king and prophet, who restored the religion of the great Abad, the world again became flourishing and prosperous. His descend-

ants the *Yásáns* reigned ninety-nine *salams*, that is, nine millions nine hundred thousand years. Not content with the length of these periods, which might have satisfied the arithmetical appetite of ordinary mortals, the author of the *Amighistán* would have every day of them to be a revolution of Saturn, or thirty common years. The last prince of the Yasan race was Yasan-Ajam, on whose death his son Gilshah, called also Giomert and Kayomers, was not to be found, having retired into the desert to worship Ized, and devote himself to austerities and prayer. The world went to ruin; towns, castles and palaces, were again thrown down, and murder and rapine stalked abroad. The use* even of clothing was lost; all the blessings of social life disappeared; and a wretched * 353 remnant of the human race, retaining few marks of their rational nature, lived as savages among the wild beasts in forests and in mountains.

When Gilshah or Kayomers was called from his retreat by the divine command, he collected the scattered remains of his own race and family, whom he united into one political association and gave them laws. He was thence called the Father of Mankind. The rest of the human race had long been confirmed in the habits and temper of beasts of prey; and Gilshah and his sons were compelled to wage constant war with them. Hence the fable of Kayomers and his sons having combated the Divs and Demons. Kayomers was the founder of the Peshdâdi dynasty, with which the history of Persia generally commences.

The founder of each of the four Mahábâdi dynasties has a sacred book in the *Desâtír*, as a prophet sent by God to reform mankind.

In the Peshdâdi race the gift of prophecy still continues to be frequent, there being no less than seven volumes in the *Desâtír* ascribed to as many personages of that family; of these, six belonging to the first six princes of the race, Kayomers or Gilshah, Hoshang, Tahmuras, Jemshid, Feridun, and Manuchehr; the seventh is that of Siâmek, the son of Kayomers, and father of Hoshang, who is described as having

been translated to heaven in the lifetime of his father ; so that he never mounted the throne.

The Kyâni race of monarchs were not so highly favoured of heaven. Only one of them, the illustrious Ky-Khusro, appears as a prophet ; and the book of Zertusht or Zoroaster belongs to the same period.

To the books of these thirteen prophets succeeds a book of advice addressed to Sekander, the son of Darab, by whom is meant Alexander the Great. This book was revealed at the special desire of Zertusht, to be presented in a future age to Sekander, and admonishes him not to suffer the people of Irân, who are his household, to be oppressed by his army.

The remaining two prophets are of the race of the Sasânis, and are distinguished as the first and fifth Sasân. The last of the two lived under * Khusro Parvez. His son, already * 354 mentioned, is the translator of the whole into Persian ; and he has illustrated them with commentaries chiefly mystic and metaphysical.

The works of the prophets themselves consist in a good measure of liturgical addresses to the Supreme Being, conveyed through the medium of ministering angels. The religion of all the prophets is the same, only modified as to a few forms and extraneous circumstances. According to the first, which is the book of Mahâbâd, there is one only supreme God, almighty, omniscient, of perfect wisdom and goodness ; without beginning or end ; without form ; included in no space ; affected by no qualities ; incomprehensible, infinite, and unchangeable. This supreme deity (the description of whom certainly reminds us of the Vedanti philosophy) is Mezdâm. As it is not consistent with the majesty of God to conduct the affairs of the universe by his own immediate operation, he has created, or caused to be created, a series of ministering angels and spirits, by whom the work of creation and the events of the world are produced and directed.

God from the beginning created an immaterial being, free from the affections of time, place, or body, named Behrâm, a pure intelligence, the chief of angels.

By means of this first intelligence he next created Amsham, the second intelligence; Manistâr, the soul of the highest heaven and the chief of souls; and Tauistâr, the body of the highest heaven and the chief of bodies.

In like manner, by means of the second intelligence he created the third intelligence, and the guardian soul and the body of the second heaven; and so forth till he had completed the system of the heavens and of the planets.

Besides the planets, each fixed star has its intelligence, its soul, and its body, created in a similar way, their number exceeding calculation.

The stars are not subject to change, possess life, are directed in their orbits by their own knowledge, and are not subject to decay or death.

But it is not merely the stars that have their guardian angels. All nature is full of them; the elements, the animal, vegetable and mineral * kingdoms have their protectors. Every genus and every species has its guardian; the fog, the * 355 snow, the rain, and the thunder, every operation and every production of nature has its particular angel.

But every object is also animated and possessed of a soul: not man and animals alone, but every vegetable and mineral has a distinctive portion of the sentient principle, varied indeed in acuteness and sensibility according to the nature of the substance in which it dwells, but susceptible of continual and unlimited improvement, until it is qualified for the highest transports of heaven.

The system of the metempsychosis pervades the whole; a remarkable circumstance, in which the *Desâtîr* differs from all other systems of Persian mythology, and agrees with those of India. This circumstance is not accidental, but of fundamental consequence in the two systems. All reward and all punishment, all happiness and misery, in this world, are only a retribution for actions done in a former state of being. Those who are miserable now were formerly wicked; those who are now happy or powerful have lived virtuously in a former existence. Men are free agents. Such men as are remarkable for

vice, or for their degraded habits, sink into the brutal shape ; or, falling still lower, are inclosed in the body of vegetables ; or, even descending to the lowest stage, are shut up in the bowels of the earth in metals or minerals. The virtuous, and especially such as have purified their souls by abstinence and self-denial, are elevated to the rank of angels, and are raised by just degrees to the ineffable delight of the divine vision, and to the eternal contemplation of the Most High.

This doctrine of the transmigration of souls naturally leads to a mild and humane treatment of the lower animals, whose forms may contain the souls of our dearest relations or friends. The religion of the *Desâtir* does not permit any harmless animal to be put to death ; but it is as meritorious to hunt ferocious or ravenous beasts as to punish criminals.

The operations of the universe are not infinite, but proceed in their varied course during one grand period ; after which the world is destroyed and a new order of things commences ; and a series of events in all respects resembling the * 356 former begins to revolve ; a single pair being always spared to renovate the human race.

The duration of the grand period is marked in a complicated way, each star and planet in succession ruling the world for a thousand years by itself, and another thousand years associated with each other star and planet, one after the other.

The souls of the blest, which have shaken off the impediments of the body, rise to the rank and enjoyments of angels, to raptures which no transports of the lower world can equal ; to ecstasy which the tongue cannot express, nor the ear hear, nor the human eye perceive.

The moral maxims extend chiefly to humanity to every animated being, and, like those of other religions, to honesty in regard to contracts, and to continence of life. The religious injunctions are altogether of an ascetic and Sufi character ; self-denial, mortification of the flesh and passions, abstinence from meat and drink, fasting and solitary meditation on the divine nature and attributes. The entrance of each planet into its mansion is to be celebrated as a festival.

It is worthy of particular notice, that a corpse may be either dissolved in a vase of aqua-fortis, or deposited in the earth, or consumed by fire; all of them instances of defilement of the elements, than which nothing can be conceived more hostile to the uniform practice of both the ancient and modern Parsis.

The second, third, and fourth books, those of Jyafram, of Shy-Kiliv, and of Yasan, are chiefly litanies in praise of Mezdâm. The last contains some rules for religious purity; and the notes are filled with directions for prayer, with postures and observances that clearly point out their derivation from the Hindu Yogis and Sanyasis.†

* In the forms of prayer in these four first books, the Creator is addressed directly; in most of the remaining * 357 he is approached by the agency of inferior beings. The formulary of Gilshah, or Kayomers, the fifth prophet, invokes Keiwan or Saturn, beseeching him to ask the Intelligence who created him, and all the refulgent lights subordinate to him, to ask the First Intelligence to ask the Almighty to shower down favour and mercy on his worshipper. In like manner Siâmek,

† See for example the ridiculous directions of the *Desâtir*, book of Yasan, commentary on verse 60. "It is to be remarked that there are several kinds of prayer. One of these is the *Ferz-zemiâr* or Great Prayer, which is in this wise: A person stands before anything that burns, folds his hands before him, bends his head down to his navel, and again raises himself up; he next once more bends down his head, lays one hand upon it, and removes that hand; lays his other hand on his head, and then raising up his head joins his two hands, placing the fingers against each other, the two thumbs excepted, which he keeps disengaged. He next places his two thumbs on his eyes, extending the extremities of his fingers as far as they can reach over the crown of his head, and bends down his head to his breast: he then raises up his head, and afterwards lies down on the ground, placing his hand and knees on the ground in such a way that his forehead reaches the earth; after which he places first one side of his face, and then the other side of his face, on the ground. Next he stretches himself out, and lies like a log, as if asleep, while his breast and belly, as well as his thighs, rest on the ground, his arms straight out, and the palms of his hands flat on the earth; he first lays his forehead, then one cheek and next the other cheek on the ground; after which he sits on his two feet, and then with his feet crossed under him. Next he sits crouching on his feet, clenches his two fists, and places his head on them. He now rises, and opening both his hands, raises them up," &c.

the sixth prophet, addresses the intelligence of the planet Jupiter; Hoshang, the seventh, that of Mars; Tahmuras, the eighth, the Sun; Jemshîd, the ninth, Venus; Feridun, the tenth, Mercury; Manuchehr, the eleventh prophet, the Moon; and the series of vicarious intercession passes from the inferior through all the superior beings up to Mezdâm, the Almighty.

The twelfth book, that of Ky-Khusro, contains no form of prayer, but is addressed by Mesdâm himself to that great and good monarch, enjoining him to receive the pure religion of Mahabad, and to cherish holy penitents and ascetics. The whole cast of this book is accordingly mystical.

The thirteenth book, which is that of Zertusht, we might have expected, had both books been authentic, to contain only a transcript of the *Zend-Avesta*; but this is not the case. It contains the answers of God to the questions put by Zertusht regarding the creation; to which succeeds the Tale of a Sage sent by the wise men of Greece to prove whether Zertusht

* was really a prophet or not. The Almighty desires * 358 Zertusht to cause one of his disciples to read from the sacred book the answers to the questions of the Grecian wise men before they are proposed; and a distinct prophecy follows of the conquests of Alexander the Great, who was to cause the Persian books to be translated into the Greek, whence the Grecian sects, whether founded on mysticism or reason, were to arise.† The sage is of course converted, and, returning to Greece, converts the inhabitants of that country to the faith of Zertusht.

This tale of a Greek is succeeded by that of Chengerengacheh, a learned Hindu, converted by one chapter of the *Avesta*, which is followed by the appearance of no less eminent a personage than the holy Viâsa himself, whose thoughts are in like manner discovered; and the author of the *Vedas* is converted into a follower of the Persian prophet. To this succeeds the story of the *Ahwan-us-sefa*, the Brothers of Purity, a narrative which may be traced from the Arabic up to the Sanscrit, and which is

† This is evidently an attempt to derive the philosophy of the Greeks from Persia.

well known to all who have attended to Oriental literature†. The story of Chengerengacheh‡ is a favourite popular tale among the Parsis; Viasa I have nowhere else seen sacrificed to the prophetic character of Zertusht.

The book of advice to Alexander *the son of Darius* has nothing worthy of notice, except the proof which it affords that no part of the *Desâtîr* is so ancient as the age of that conqueror.

The book of the first Sasan, the fourteenth prophet, which is perhaps the most curious of the whole, is chiefly remarkable for the metaphysical Persian commentary, containing proofs of the existence and attributes of God, with elucidations of the nature of spirit and of the senses. It may safely be affirmed, that no such train of reasoning is to be found in any * Persian work that is more than three hundred years old. In the close of the book God reveals to the first * 359 Sasan, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, the restoration of his house in the person of Ardeshir Babegan: he explains the calamities that are to succeed, the heresy of Manes§, and that of Mazdek, the murder of Parvez, and the tumults and dissensions that preceded the fall of the Sasani monarchy; the rise of a new religion, hostile to all images, that was to overturn the fire-temples of Medâin, of Tûs, and of Balkh: the internal dissensions and religious quarrels of the Mahomedans are alluded to; and the invasions of the Temuds, who I imagine are the Turks, are predicted, with a promise of the eventual restoration of the true faith.

The fifteenth and last book, that of the sixth Sasau, who lived at the period of the death of Khusro Parvez and of the ruin of the Persian monarchy, treats the misfortune that ensued as a judgment for the murder of that prince. It predicts that "when the religion" (of the Arabs) "has lasted a thousand

† An edition of it was some time ago printed at Calcutta, I believe for the use of the College of Fort William.

‡ The History of Chengerengacheh is written in Persian, and a high antiquity is ascribed to it by Anquetil. There is no reason for believing that it is more than three hundred years old.

§ The Persian notes also mention the Christian religion.

years, it shall become such, in consequence of divisions, that were their legislator to see it he would not know it again." Whether this is merely a general prophecy, such as that believed in the middle ages, that the world was to be destroyed at the end of a thousand years from the death of Christ, or whether it was a prophecy written after its own fulfilment, may not at first appear evident. The prophecy is not very distinct; but it is not unworthy of notice, that in the close of the same prophecy the sects of Muselmans are described as still in fact exhibiting the fire-temple; "and their mouth shall be the chimney of the fire-temple;" a circumstance supposed to refer to the constant habit of the Mahomedans of smoking tobacco, a practice which is thus converted into a virtual though involuntary observance of the old religion. This explanation would inevitably make the prophecy subsequent to the discovery of America; and other circumstances to be immediately stated seem to lead to a similar conclusion.

In the *Desâtîr* now published reference is made to a more extensive *work under the same name, and the two *360 latter books of that which we possess are chiefly selections from earlier mystical works. The *Great Desâtîr* is not to be read till the *Lesser Desâtîr* has been studied.

The great argument brought by those who support the authenticity and antiquity of the *Desâtîr* is the language in which it is written, which is so ancient as to be now totally extinct, the precious remains of it being found in the *Desâtîr* alone.

It is certainly singular, that the language in which the *Desâtîr* is written, like that in which the *Zend-Avesta* is composed, is nowhere else to be met with. It is not derived from the Zend, the Pehlevi, the Sanscrit, Arabic, Turki, Persian, or any other known language. In its grammar it approaches most nearly to the modern Persian, as well in the inflections of the nouns and verbs, as in its syntax. The basis of the language, and the great majority of words in it, belong to no known tongue. It has a mixture of Persian and Indian words. A few Arabic words occur. The Persian idioms it is

unnecessary to particularize ; but it is worthy of attention that among the words of Indian origin, not only are many Sanscrit, which might happen in a work of a remote age, but several belong to the colloquial language of Hindustan ; which is suspicious, and seems to mark a much more recent origin. Many words indeed occur in the *Desátir*, that are common to the Sanscrit and to the vulgar Indian languages : such, perhaps, are *biz*, origin, from *bij*, seed ; *antam*, end, from *ant*, *fiter* ; father, from *pitr* ; *dehas*, body, *deh* ; *kar*, time, *kal* ; *anterideh*, hidden, removed, from *anter*, a separation ; *sirír*, body, *shirér* ; *sang*, near, *sang*, union with ; *raka*, a keeper, *rakh*, protect ; *rajudegam*, guardians, from *raj* and *raja* ; *mirtaj*, death, from *mirtya* ; *lajam*, wrong, *laj*, shame ; *kashti*, trouble, *kasht* ; *agaj*, fire, *ag*, *agni* ; *minhush*, man, *manush* ; *mitr*, a friend, *mitr* ; *aferknun*, not good, where the privative of the Sanscrit is used ; *datisur*, giver, *Data-sur*, giver of good ; *Madan*, the sense-destroyer, from *madan*, love ; *sheterengan*, rulers, *chaturang* ; *shesheng*, mighty, *shashang* ; *pargat*, visible, *pragat* ; *dasiaram*, servants, *das* ; *perkashtaram*, stars, *prakash*, resplendent ; *dam-sirír*, Gemini, *devashirír*, two bodies ; *shiu*, servant, *sewa*, service ; *gul*, a revolution, *gol*, *round ; *mad*, middle, *madhya* ; *nid*, always, *nithya* ; *tapas* and *tapashe*, self-mortification, *tapasya*, used in * 361 its technical religious sense ; *kas*, the heaven, *akas* : many others might be pointed out. But the more remarkable class of words is that which belongs to the pure Hindu ; such I imagine are the word *shet*, † respectable, prefixed to the names of the prophets and others ; *pashe*, near, *pas* ; *hír*, any ; *her*, every ; *sab*, every, *sab* ; *sab-kash*, every person, *sab-kas* ; *ab*, his, *ap* ; *kaj*, work, as *kam kaj* ; *fir*, again, *pher* ; *fertár*, again, *pher-ker* ; *nurin*, a wife, *nourin*, a bride or wife ; *itar*, so much, *ita*, *itna* ; *rika*, property of one deceased, *reha*, what is left ; *lab*, *labid*, find profit, *labh* ; *sareh*, all, *sara* ; *sabsara*, whole, *sab sara*, all and whole ; *sidar*, eternally, *sada* ; *sídár*, right, *sída*,

† The Sabaites have the *Sahfeh Shet Nabi*, or Book of Shet, the Prophet of God ; and the Druses reckon the oath *Washet*, by Shet, more binding than *Walla*, by God. But in both of these instances *Shet* is regarded as the name of the antediluvian prophet Seth. (Hyde, pp. 125 and 515.)

straight ; *kas*, work, *kaj* ; *kachmend*, some, *kuch*, with a Persian termination ; *hovid*, may be, *howe* ; *tular*, the balance, *tolua*, to weigh ; *tidesh*, thirteen, *tin*, three, and *das*, ten. Whatever may be thought of the words of Persian descent, it is not probable that those from the Hindustani are of a very remote age ; they may perhaps be regarded as considerably posterior to the settlement of the Muselmans in India.

There is still another and a very considerable class of words that deserves to be particularized ; they are such as seem to be derived from Persian words chiefly ; but sometimes from words of other languages, by a slight corruption, such as might arise from provincial barbarisms, or might offer themselves to persons contriving a gibberish : thus we have *ferekke*, *gerche* ; *nuiend*, *guiend* ; *asar*, *azar* ; *haiend*, *aiend* ; *virend*, *girend* ; *chirk*, *chirrh* ; *ras*, *rah* ; *hez*, *az* ; *rasméd*, *resíd* ; *kanchem*, *ancheh* ; *gam*, *gah* ; *werdid*, *gerdid* ; *kumíd*, *kuníd* ; *han*, *an* ; *háred*, *áred* ; *chemín*, *chenín* ; *chemiz*, *chiz* ; *imám*, *inán* ; *chim*, *che* ; *chimanche*, *chenanche* ; with many similar ; and a great part of the litanies in the second book is a roll of words that seem to be selected merely for correspondence of sound. That the whole language

is a late invention, I was first led strongly to *suspect * 362 from the total want of coincidence between the proper names in the text and those in the translation. They in no case agree, and I imagine can in few cases be derived from each other : the same simple idea is often expressed in different places by different long and complicated words, and the language altogether has a heaviness and embarrassed movement, very unlike the fluency of a spoken tongue. The account given of it in the *Dabistán* confirms this notion ; “ And Yezdán,” says the author, “ sent down a book for Abád, called the *Desátir*, in which was all manner of knowledge and every tongue, divided into various parts, there being several volumes for each tongue. And among these was one language which resembles no tongue spoken by men, and they call it *The Heavenly Language*. Mahabad gave a distinct tongue to each tribe, sending each to its proper residence, whence the Parsi, Hindi, Rumi, and other tongues originated ;

and revelation was settled in each tribe by evidence from the spiritual world, which is called Manistar." This theory, to account for the diversity of spoken languages, extends itself to that of the *Desâtîr*, which is evidently regarded as not spoken, and as confined to a single book. But it must not be forgotten that the author of the *Dabistân* lived close upon the time when the *Desâtîr* is first named; and was in strict intimacy with the sect of enthusiasts by whom it was venerated, and whose rule of faith it was. Suspicions may therefore be reasonably entertained, that it was a language invented for a religious purpose, certainly not prior to the Muselman conquest of Persia, and probably several centuries later.

The Persian translation and commentary ascribed to the son of the fifth Sasan are extremely curious. They are written in Persian, which the best judges consider as very pure, though antique. I must frankly own that to me they have not much of an antique air. Many antiquated words are found in them; but the style and manner are simple, and in general perspicuous. There is no mixture whatever of words of Arabic or Chaldaic origin. This very freedom from words of foreign growth, which the learned natives consider as a mark of authenticity, appears rather to me to be the proof of an artificial and fabricated style. We *find Arabic words in Tabari; they abound in Ferdausi, the earliest and purest Persian writers. This * 363 depuration of style I should regard as a reason for bringing down the work to a much later age. An antiquarian attention to the peculiarities of style at different eras is one of the latest literary luxuries of a refined age. Let it be remarked, too, that the style of the translation is as well formed as that of the earlier Persian writers we possess, though said to be written nearly four hundred years sooner; which would lead to the conclusion that the Persian language was as completely formed in the age of the later Sasânis as it is now, on the credibility of which I shall make no comment. Nor shall I inquire whether many of the acute metaphysical remarks that abound in the commentary, and the general style of argument which it employs, have not rather proceeded from the schoolmen of the

West, than directly from the Oriental or Aristotelian philosophy. All that I shall remark is, that the whole *Desâtîr* does not add one direct fact that can be incorporated with history.

If the circumstances that have been mentioned shall make us despair of seeing by means of the *Desâtîr* "the cloud that covered the history of early times dissipated, and a gleam of light cast on the primeval history of Irân, and of the human race,"† it may yet be worth while briefly to examine whether the *Dabistân* can afford any better hopes of our being permitted to lift up the awful veil that has so long been dropped before the shrine of sacred antiquity. And first of all, if there be any truth in the observation, that we can only grope our way through remote times, cautiously and uncertainly, by the help of the feeble lamp of contemporary evidence, which, even when it does not itself directly illumine the whole gloom, often sheds rays, the reflection of which from objects around enables us to direct our footsteps and to judge of the truth or falsehood of the descriptions we have received, it is to be feared that the details of the *Dabistân* can convey to us no such advantages; like those of the *Desâtîr* itself, they are unknown to the ancients, they are unknown to the historians of Persia; they make their first appearance in the seventeenth century, * 364 * and are confessedly derived from a sect of religious mystical enthusiasts. The doctrines of the work, too, and many of the technical terms employed in it, are confessedly Hindu. No proof of the early existence, or regular transmission, of any histories or records is hazarded; and we are abandoned entirely to our own sagacity, to judge whether those histories which recently started up were the production of the age in which they appeared, or whether they were indeed preserved, along with the peculiar doctrines of the sect for many thousand years unknown to all the world, to break out in their whole lustre for the illumination of the seventeenth century. A short review of the *Dabistân* will afford the best answer to these questions.

The *Dabistân* is a valuable book, because it comprehends in

† See before, p. 343 (p. 363 of this edition).

one volume a very ample collection of facts regarding the various religions that have appeared in Asia. The author has been extremely industrious; but I need hardly recall to your recollection, that he is frequently far from being critical in the use of his materials. His object was to procure an account of each religion from its own sacred books, and from the persons professing it; for which purpose he travelled a great deal and saw the chief men of many different sects. From their books, when he could procure them, and from the conversation of the priests and leading men, he drew up a popular account of each different faith. His work has all the excellencies and defects that might be expected from the mode in which it was compiled. As the author was extremely tolerant, he did not consider a difference in rites or forms as of any moment: and even as to doctrines, he was a kind of latitudinarian or universalist, who believed that all religions are equally true, and only variations of one great religion, by which the praises of the universe and all its inhabitants are conveyed in one unbroken and harmonious anthem to the Author of all being. The history of recent sects is written with much spirit and skill; but where research was necessary, the accuracy of the wandering historian, as might be expected, sometimes fails. The account which he himself gives of his mode of inquiry is creditable to his impartiality and love of truth. "In this abridged account of the various sects of Parsis," says he, "I have not used a *single word that is not derived either from the books of the sect, or from conversation with its adherents; * 365 because I am aware that there are many tenets which their enemies ascribe to them merely from animosity." That he truly related what he saw and heard, cannot be doubted; and as he was a well-informed and honest writer, of great curiosity, he has left a valuable though by no means a correct work. It is equally clear that he was credulous, and, without perhaps being the sectary of any one religion, had a mind strongly tinged with superstition. The history he gives of his being cured astrologically of a fever, merely by a Brahman's dipping the image of a planet in water and muttering an

incantation, furnishes of itself a sufficient proof of this assertion.

The *Dabistân* opens by a spirited account of the Sipâsi or ancient Mahabâdi religion of Persia, which is described as being deism. God is incomprehensible and unsearchable; he knows whatever exists, for he has made it, and it is ever subject to his will. An abstract of the doctrines of the *Desâtîr* is given, but with a strong Sufi cast, and illustrated by quotations from modern Sufi poets. The division into castes is also mentioned; but while the *Desâtîr*, the *Vendidâd*, Ferdausi, and the modern historians of Persia, give these castes peculiar names, the author of the *Dabistân* has boldly approached the Hindu designations by calling them *Barman*, *Chetteri*, *Bas*, and *Sudi*; which at once connects the history of Persia with that of Hindustan. For this he has no authority, though the passage has been eagerly seized by theoretical writers. The authenticity of the rest of this first part of his work depends on that of the *Desâtîr*.

A very long and detailed description follows, taken from the *Akhteristan*, a volume the age of which I have not been able to ascertain, but which seems to me to have been written by one of the followers of Azer-Keiwan, in which case it must be of the seventeenth century. It tells us that the Sipasis hold that the stars and heavens are shadows of the pure lights, or superior angels; that therefore they have decked out the images of the seven planets, and have made for each planet a talisman of a particular metal; these talismans they have placed in the chapels of the different planets under a fortunate ascendant, and worship them at appropriate times. After adoring the images, they burn incense or perfumes of various kinds suited to the character of the star; and these chapels they hold in great veneration, styling them the *idol-house of the luminaries* and the *idol-house and place of lights*.

On this astrological idea of each day of the week being subject to a particular planet, there follows a complete astrological system of religion and idol-worship, supposed to have prevailed in the first ages of Persian history; each planet has a certain

dress and colour, and certain insignia, with a large establishment of servants and attendants, a public table, a hospital for the sick, and public inns for travellers; the king daily repairs to one of these in succession; and the nobles and armies, with the population of the kingdom, are in waiting on the occasion, and join in the worship. The description is very minute, and seems liker the childish religious Utopia of an idle astrologer, than any thing that ever actually existed in the world even 3000 years ago.† It certainly exhibits no materials by which ancient history can be reformed.

But the author from whom the account is copied is not satisfied with making his religion of immeasurable antiquity and trifling minuteness, unless he can derive the veneration shown to all the sacred places on earth from this Abadi or Sipasi faith. According to him, the Kaaba of Mekka, the temple of Jerusalem, the tomb of Ali at Nejed, that of Muhammed at Medina, that of Imam Husain at Kerbela, the temple of Dwarka, and, in general, every place of pilgrimage whatever, was originally a temple of some planet under the Mahabadi system; and this theory is supported by some false and ridiculous etymologies. Such a system, however, is extremely favourable to the Sufi latitudinarians; for, as they hold that holy places can be rendered impure by no false rites or ceremonies, they are at liberty to go on pilgrimage to any of these places, and worship in them and perform externally the customary rites; only with a Jesuitical mental reservation, keeping in mind their own theological tenets. They allege * rize the whole of their ancient history; whenever a *div* is mentioned, understanding by it a wicked man; * 367 and the conquest and destruction of the demons, they hold to mean only the conquest of man over his passions. In like manner the whole history of Ky Khusro, and of Alexander the Great, is reduced to a moral and allegorical romance. The

† Similar conclusions are drawn in the *History of Persia*, vol. i., p. 182, where a suspicion is expressed, "that the historical part of this work is a mere fable." See also pp. 189 and 190.

accounts given of the wars and hunting-matches of the ancient Pishdadi kings, being inconsistent with the supposed injunction not to kill, are also allegorized more absurdly, but in a much less fanciful and amusing strain, than are the struggles of a good Christian, or the operations of the loom, in the puritanical volumes of Bunyan's *Holy War*, or *The whole Art of Weaving Spiritualized*. There is this further difference, that none of our antiquaries have pretended to reform or improve ancient history by these last-mentioned ingenious volumes. I shall not tire your patience by repeating what follows regarding the recluses and ascetics of the Mahabadis, whose doctrines and practices are evidently taken partly from the Sufis of Persia, partly from the Yogis of India; their gradual reduction of their food till they are able to exist on a quantity incredibly small; their silence, watchfulness, seclusion, and meditation on Deity; their eighty-four modes of sitting for contemplative purposes; their holding the great toe, squinting to the point of the nose, to discover the sacred light; their closing first one nostril and then another; breathing through them in succession while they repeat the names of God; and finally, by closing the nose altogether, compelling the breath to advance upwards from the lower parts of the body through seven assigned stages, till, by force of imagination, in very distinguished saints, the spirit and breath spring up to the brain like a playing fountain, and reach the crown of the head,—when the celestial, beatific vision ensues. All the ascetic practices, the description of which follows, are professedly taken from writers of the seventeenth century, are altogether Hindu,† and can throw no light whatever on the ancient history of Persia.

The second chapter of the *Dabistân* seems to me to afford the clue to *guide us through the labyrinth of confusion * 368 which the first chapter presents. It describes a sect who called themselves Sipâsis, and who appear to have attempted to introduce a system of Sufism on a slight Parsi foundation. They pretended, without any evidence, to have ex-

† I consider the greatest part of the later Sufi doctrines as borrowed from India.

isted in the most remote times, tracing their religion back to the Mahabadi times, and venerating the *Desâtir*. As the sect prevailed chiefly in Hindu countries, it borrowed largely from the opinions, ascetic practices, and revered austerities of the religious mendicants and mystic philosophers of India. The sect was not confined to one religion; it comprised Muselmans, Gabrs, Hindus, and even Christians. Indeed their religion was secretly what has been called the religion of Nature; though in practice the wildest and most absurd superstitions were engrafted on it. The father of Azer-Keiwan, the pretended reviver but the real founder of the sect of Sipâsis, traced back his descent to Kayomers, and thence to Mahabâd; his mother boasted that she was of the family of the Emperor Nusherwan the Just. He is said to have been born in Persia, A.D. 1535 or 1536; to have left it when twenty-eight years of age, about 1564, and to have proceeded to India, where he spent the rest of his life; the latter part of it at Patna, in which city he died A.D. 1618, when eighty-five lunar years of age. From the age of five he had practised fasting and religious austerities. He pretended to have received much of his knowledge in dreams and visions, from the philosophers of Greece, India, and Persia; and having acquired a high reputation in his college, when a young man, by answering the questions put to him in a manner that excited universal wonder, he acquired the epithet of Zu-al-ahim (the Man of knowledge), by which he was afterwards generally known. His superiority was attested not only by his own dreams, but by the visions and trances of his followers, who were instructed by the divine inspiration to submit to all his tenets with undoubting confidence. He attended little to exterior worship, a peculiarity of all Sufis, chiefly following the current of his own meditations. He forbade the killing of animals, and the use of animal food; he advised all his followers to conceal their peculiar doctrines, even from their friends, as a means of preventing inquisitorial persecutions; and recommended * that each man should continue in the * 369 public profession of the religion of his birth. From

anecdotes related of him he seems to have been a man of considerable ingenuity. He and all his followers affected the names of ancient Parsi worthies.

His scholars, though some of them were certainly men of talent and learning, have in general far too much the air of conjurers and jugglers. We are told in the *Dabistân* of a battle between two of the most eminent of them, the doctors Fershidwerd and Bahman. Every arrow that Bahman shot, Fershidwerd cut in two with his sword; when Fershidwerd shot his shaft, Bahman with incredible velocity stepped aside and shunned it. Bahman took to his gun, and discharged it at his antagonist, but Fershidwerd's bullet meeting that of Bahman halfway in the air, both fell harmless to the ground. When Fershidwerd discharged his piece at Bahman, the latter shunned it by marking its course and quickly stepping aside. These philosophers seem to have been much addicted to quarrelling. An author named Khushi, quoted in the *Dabistân*, saw Khiridmend, one of the disciples of Azer-Keiwan, encounter a certain Rustom, who was another. The former thought proper to assume the form of a dragon, and vomited forth flakes of fire: the relater marked the consequence, and saw a sturdy and flourishing plane tree burnt up by his fiery breath. "They relate," says the author of the *Dabistân*, "that these eminent men performed many wonderful acts, not only in the heavens above, by obscuring the sun and by showing it by night, and the stars by day, but in this earth of ours, by walking upon the water, by causing trees to bear fruit out of season, by making withered trees grow green, and by forcing trees to bend down to pay them obeisance. In the space between heaven and earth, too, they produced thunder and the like; and they influenced the microcosm of man, assuming the form of animals, rendering themselves invisible to the eyes of men, and assuming various figures and appearances."

"It is said that this sect possessed such powers of separating themselves from the body, that they could leave it at pleasure. Their knowledge, both visible and secret, was acquired by them in the ninth heaven. Many are the wonders related of them,

and by force of their austerities, the * essence of the elements obeyed their bidding. The compiler of this * 370 book saw these four holy men, viz. Khurrad, Fershidwerd, Bahman, and Khiridmend, in Patna, and received their blessing. He carried from them good hopes of a happy termination to his high aspirations."

The author of the *Dabistân*, therefore, was a believer. That these Sipâsi philosophers "acquired the fame of magicians and enchanters" (as Sir William Jones informs us), cannot be denied: that they "knew the most wonderful powers of nature" may fairly be doubted. They appear to have condescended to practise the common tricks of conjurors, and to have been mere ordinary jugglers. Yezdan-sitai, a servant of Mobed Serosh, we are told, being applied to for a few pieces of money, stretched out his hand, took up a piece of a broken earthen pot, out of which he formed twenty round pieces, and breathing upon them, they became good and current pieces of gold coin. "He gave them into my hand," says Mobed Hushiâr, one of the authorities of the *Dabistân*, "and I used them for my expenses." He threw his turban into the fire, but the fire made no impression upon it. He mumbled a few words and became invisible. "Shidosh, the son of Anush, told me an anecdote of him in these words, 'We were sitting near him, he placed a candle in a basin full of water, peacocks appeared and swam upon the water, dipped their heads into it, and adjusted their plumage.† We were fixed in astonishment.'" And is it by the writings of such dupes and knaves that we are to reform the history of ancient ages? Is it from them that a gleam of light is to be cast on the darkness of antiquity? It is unnecessary to enter further into the biography of the disciples of Azer-Keiwan, which is all in the same strain, and to one of whom the author of the *Dabistân* was introduced in Kashmir when he was standing on his head with his heels in the air; an attitude which we are told he sometimes preserved from the even-

† The mode of practising this vulgar optical deception is given in all the books of sleight of hand.

ing twilight to the dawn of morning. Besides various Muselmans, we find among them two Jews, Mûsa and Hârûn (Moses and Aaron) ; one Anton (or *Antonio), a Feringi, who *371 chose to show his philosophy by going about stark naked in the summer heats and winter colds ; Ram Bhut, a Brahman of Benares ; and Ramchund Kehtri, a rich Hindu merchant. From this school the *Desâtîr* proceeded ; and I think there can be little doubt that in this school it was fabricated.

It would be a waste of time to detail the account given (in the third chapter of the *Dabistân*) of the *Peiman Ferheng*, a pretended treatise of Mahabad. Suffice it to observe that it is merely a counterpart of the *Desâtîr*, equally technical, but much less plausible in its principles, and like it altogether unworthy of credit.

In the next chapter of the *Dabistân* we have an account of Jemshaspis, a sect which it is pretended originated from Jemshasp, the son of Jemshid, in the fabulous times of the Pishdadi race : the next nine sects, the Semradis, the Khodais, the Zadis, the Shidrengis, the Peikeris, the Milanis, the Alaris, the Shidâbis, and the Akhshis, all belong to the reign of Zohak, which according to the Persian annals† is between 2000 and 3000 years before Christ ; and according to the more reduced chronology of the learned Langlès‡ was about 780 years before our era. The tenets of several of these sects are very curious ; but the accounts given of them only show what were the tenets of certain philosophers in the north of India and in Persia in the beginning and middle of the 17th century. That the history and tenets of all these sects were preserved entire between 2000 and 3000 years, unknown to the world, and that, when all other monuments of the times had perished, these were reserved to be published by a sect of dreaming impostors, is not to be credited. The tenets which these heretical sects disclose might

† *Hist. of Persia*, vol. i., p. 248.

‡ *Notice Chronologique*, p. 158, subjoined to the 10th vol. of his valuable edition of Chardin. Paris, 1811.

well belong to the learned and inquisitive age of Akbar and Jehangir, when they were published; though they bear no likeness whatever to any thing to be expected from the era of Zohak, a prince who, if he lived at all, lived in an ignorant * age, and in a period of tumult and confusion. The truth is, that the reign of an usurper and a tyrant * 372 is pitched upon as most suitable for the origin of what are regarded as heresies from the religion which the Sipâsis favoured.

From what I have already said, you will be sufficiently aware what my opinion is regarding both the *Desâtîr* and the *Dabistân*; you will see that I am not sanguine enough to hope that any gleam of light can be cast from any such quarters over the early history of mankind. You will have discovered that, far from regarding the doctrines of the *Desâtîr* and the historical narrative of the *Dabistân* as resting on *unexceptionable authority*, † and as consequently believing that the learning and philosophy of Persia existed some thousand years ago, and produced the science of the Greeks and the Brahmans; I consider the whole of the peculiar doctrines ascribed to Mahabad and Hoshang as being borrowed from the mystical doctrines of the Persian Sufis, and from the ascetic tenets and practices of the Yogis and Sanyasis of India, who drew many of their opinions from the Vedanti school: I regard them as having had no existence before the time of Azer-Keiwan and his disciples in the reigns of Akbar and Jehangir, and as having been devised and reduced into form between 200 and 300 years ago in the school of the Sipâsi philosophers. The language of the *Desâtîr* I regard as one fabricated, with no great address, to support this religious or philosophical imposture, and as at no time having belonged to any tribe or nation on the face of the earth. The planetary religion of the *Desâtîr* seems indeed in part borrowed from the old Persian system, but in a far greater number of particulars from the ancient Chaldean; the memory of which has

† He is supposed to have reigned 1000 years.

‡ See before, p. 344 (364 of this edition).

been preserved in Asia in the writings of Arabian authors.†

To enter into any inquiries on that subject would * be
 * 373 needlessly to prolong these remarks, which have already
 attained far too great a length : but, if you should be
 disposed to censure me for an unnecessary diffuseness on this
 subject, I must entreat you to recollect the confidence with
 which the works have been brought forward to public notice,
 the great authority which the name of Sir William Jones carries
 with it among the generality of readers, the number of specu-
 lators who, encouraged by his opinion, and following a slender
 thread of evidence, have recently written as if they considered
 the ancient Persians and the ancient Hindus as being beyond
 all doubt the same race, and the weight assigned to the authority
 of the history of the Parsi religion, as recorded in the *Dabistân*,
 especially on the continent of Europe. The strong indications
 which the Persian language bears in many of its parts of owing
 much to the Sanscrit, or to some more ancient language
 whence both have drawn in common, I shall be the last to
 dispute. But there I must stop. The earliest page of the
 history of the two countries exhibits them as already totally
 differing from each other in laws, manners, and religion. The
 character of the two nations has always, from the remotest
 times, been extremely different : and however convenient it might
 be to consider them as one people, to soften the difficulties
 attending the radiating migrations of the human race from one
 central point, which no doubt unconsciously influenced the
 luminous mind of Sir William Jones, or to smooth the difficul-
 ties that present themselves to such as would derive all the
 languages of mankind from some favourite tongue, which has
 influenced many others, I must still contend that every history,

† The system of religion most resembling that of the *Desâtîr* and *Akhteristan*, that I have met with, is that mentioned by Shahrestani as quoted in the learned Pococke's *Specimen Hist. Arab.*, pp. 148 *et seqq.*, Oxon. 1806 ; and in Hyde's *Rel. Vet. Pers.*, pp. 103 and 296. But it is to be noted, that though the long cycles of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Hindus are evidently astronomical periods, those assigned in the *Desâtîr* to the four Abad dynasties have not the same character, but are merely long arithmetical multiples.

to deserve our credit, ought to bring with it the evidence that belongs to its peculiar class, and that hitherto no such evidence has been brought to enlighten the early ages of Persian history. It is idle to build theories while we have no facts that can afford us a single ray of light, those few derived from partial similarity of language excepted. The visions of Brahminical antiquaries must slumber with those of William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth, till some historical critic, armed with a salutary scepticism, shall separate the few grains of truth which they may contain, if indeed they * contain any truth, *374 from the mass of mythological absurdities under which they are buried.

Believe me to be very sincerely yours,

WILLIAM ERSKINE.

Bombay, 5th March, 1818.

NOTE A.

Who was the Author of the Dabistân ?

ABOUT ten years ago the *Dabistân* was published at Calcutta, under the auspices of the College of Fort William. In that edition it is ascribed to Mohsan Fani, who indeed is generally considered as the author, though I know not on what authority. Mr. Gladwin in his translation of the first chapter concurs with Sir William Jones, and with the popular opinion, in giving it to Mohsan. The only account of that writer which I have been able to discover is that contained in the *Gul-i-Raana*, or Charming Rose, of Lachmi Narayan, who flourished in Hyderabad about twenty years ago. Lachmi was related to Raja Chandulal, now in high authority at the court of the Nizam, and was as voluminous as he was deemed a correct historian. He informs us, under the article of Mohsan Fani, that Mohsan, who was a native of Kashmir, was a learned man and a respectable poet, that he was a scholar of Mulla Yakub Sufi of Kashmir, and that after completing his studies he repaired to Delhi, to the court of the Emperor Shah Jehân, by whom, in consequence of his great reputation and high acquirements, he was appointed *Sadder* or chief judge of Allahabad, that there he became a disciple of Shaikh Mohib-ulla, an eminent doctor of that city who wrote the treatise entitled

Teswîch, or The Golden Mean. Mohsan Fani enjoyed this honourable office till Shah Jehan subdued Balkh, at which time Nazer Muhammed Khan, the Wali of Balkh, having effected his escape, all his property was plundered. It happened that in his library there was found a copy of Mohsan's *Diwân*, or poetical collection, which contained an ode in praise of the Wali. This gave such offence to the Emperor, that the Sadder was disgraced, and lost his office, but was generously allowed a pension. He retired, as Lachmi informs us, to his native country, where he passed the rest of his days, without any public employment, happy and respected. His house was frequented by the most distinguished men of Kashmir, and among the rest by the governors of the province. He had lectures at his house, being accustomed to read to his audience the writings of certain authors of eminence, on which he delivered moral and * philosophical comments. Several scholars of note, among * 375 whom were Taher Ghawri and Haji Aslem Salem, issued from his school. He died A.H. 1081 (A.D. 1670). His *Diwân* contains about six or seven thousand couplets. The Khan, known by the poetical name of Arza, has made a selection from Mohsan Fani's verses in his *Tezkireh*, or Account of the Poets. It is to be observed that Lachmi does not mention the *Dabistân* as a production of Mohsan Fani; though had he written it, it must have been his most remarkable work.

To this let it be added, that the account given by the author of the *Dabistân* of his travels does not agree with the facts which Lachmi relates of Mohsan Fani. The author of the *Dabistân* in that work mentions his being at Patna some time between the years 1618 and 1620; of being at Kashmir in 1626-7, in 1630, in 1632, and also in 1633, when he accompanied Mehrân from Lahôr to Kashmir. In 1639 we find him at Kashmir. In 1642 he was at Rawalpindi on his route from the Panjab to Kabul. Balkh was taken on the 2nd July, 1646 (*Shah Jehan Nameh*, *sub anno*); so that if Mohsan is supposed to be the author of the *Dabistân*, there is hardly time for his return from Kabul to Delhi; his appointment to Allahabad; and his studying under Shaikh Mohib-ulla. The author of the *Dabistân* speaks of meeting at Surat in 1647 the Padre Francis, a priest held in great respect by the Portuguese and men of Goa; and the same year we find him at Hyderabad. In 1649 he is found at Guzerat, where he speaks of meeting with some Peikeris. In 1651 he appears in Chicacole-Kaleng; and two years after, in 1653, in Sri Kakal of Kaleng.—All this is at variance with Mohsan Fani's being the author of the *Dabistân*, as Lachmi informs us that Mohsan, far from spending seven years in the Dekhan, immediately on his disgrace retired to Kashmir, where he spent the rest of his life. To this it may be added that the author of the *Dabistân*, though he mentions several anecdotes of himself, takes no notice of his having resided at Delhi or

Allahabad, or of having filled any public office; nor does he, perhaps, mention any event after 1653; though Mohsan Fani lived seventeen years after that period, and, if he wrote the *Dabistân*, was likely to have done it during the leisure he then possessed after his retreat from public business. Lachmi takes no notice of any journey of Mohsan either to Kabul or to the Dekhan, though his residence in the latter country seems to have been prolonged for several years. It seems very improbable, therefore, that Mohsan Fani and the author of the *Dabistân* were the same person.

In Dr. Leyden's curious paper on the Rosheniah sect (*Asiatic Res.*, vol. x., p. 416), the author of the *Dabistân* is made to speak of Shah Beg Khan Arghun as being his own father. This oversight arises from inattention to a Persian mode of writing. The passage ought to run thus: "The author has heard Mirza Shah Muhammed, surnamed Ghazni Khan, say, 'Miyan Roshen acquired strength and established his sect A.H. 946. My father,' " &c. That is, the father of Mirza Shah Muhammed, who related the incidents to the author of the *Dabistân*.

In the only MS. copy of the *Dabistân* which I have seen, that of Mulla Firuz, towards the close of the fourteenth chapter, where the conversations of Dawer Huryar, the lord of *Sekandergird, with the author are detailed, is the following marginal note: "In the * 376 city of Daurse, a king of the Parsis, of the race of the Imperial Anushirwân, the Shet Dawer Huryar conversed with Amir Zulfikâr Ali-al-Husaini (on whom be the grace of God!), whose poetical name was Mobed Shah." This Zulfikâr Ali, whoever he was, the Mulla supposes to be the author of the *Dabistân*. On so slight an authority I would not willingly set up an unknown author as the compiler of that work: but it is to be remarked that many verses of Mobed's are quoted in the *Dabistân*, and there is certainly reason to suspect that the poetical Mobed, whoever he may be, was the author of that compilation.

To all this let it be added, that the author of the *Dabistân* in his account of Mobed Serosh says that one Muhammed Mohsan, a man of learning, told him that he had heard Mobed Serosh give three hundred and sixty proofs of the existence of God. This at least makes Muhammed Mohsan, whoever he may be, a different person from the author of the *Dabistân*.

Since writing the above, having communicated it to Mulla Firuz for his opinion, he has suggested a conjecture on the origin of the supposed mistake, which to me appears to be singularly happy. Between the printed copy and his MS. before alluded to, a difference occurs in the very beginning of the work. After the poetical address to the Deity, and the praise of the Prophet, with which the *Dabistân*, like

most other Musalman works, commences, the MS. reads, " Mohsan Fani says," and two moral couplets succeed. In the printed copy the words " Mohsan Fani says," which should occur between the last word of the first page and the first word of the second page, are omitted. As no account of the author is given in the beginning of the book, as is usual with Muselman writers, Mulla Firuz conjectures that a careless or ignorant reader may have considered the words "*Mohsan Fani says*" as forming the commencement of the volume, and as containing the name of the author of the whole book; whereas they merely indicate the author of the couplets that follow, and would rather show that Mohsan Fani was not the writer of the *Dabistân*. This conjecture, I confess, appears to me at once extremely ingenious and very probable. A comparison of different manuscripts might throw more light on the question.

I may be allowed to add that these remarks were written before I had an opportunity of seeing Captain Vans Kennedy's learned and conclusive observations on the same subject.

[NOTE.—The analysis of the *Dabistân* given in this article may still be of some use to those who do not wish to wade through the original, which is now very common, and to be had in the bazaar in lithographed copies, or through David Shea, and Troyer's English translation of it. The same may also be said of the *Desâtîr*, but the difference between the two works is that the former is very large, and contains, with a great deal of trash, some very correct information about nearly every religion of the world, and is no forgery, whilst the latter is such not only in the matter, but even in the language itself, which is a curious fabrication, and had Sir W. Jones, who was so anxious to obtain a copy of the *Desâtîr*, but was unsuccessful, lived a few years longer, he would probably have considerably modified his opinions on various points. In the Introduction to the translation of the *Dabistân*, Anthony Troyer strongly contends for the genuineness of a great portion of the *Desâtîr*. —ED.]

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