

“MANIA furnish the money and provisions for the subsistence of his troops; and 1720.  
 “if in the execution of those orders, there was any mixture of prejudice or resentment, this is a fault that ought not to be ranked amongst crimes committed  
 “against the state.

“SUCH was the real cause of those irregularities which have been so greatly exaggerated. In regard to the motives which determined LUTF ALI KHAN to advance towards SHIRASS, it is easy to account for them. This general, grown wise by the fatal example of KHOSROFF KHAN, had determined to surprize the rebels, lest they should destroy the crop, which is gathered in that country two moons before the vernal equinox. He could not therefore take a more prudent step than to advance towards KHERMAN; because here he was in a situation to traverse the deserts by the shortest way: besides, he considered that it was much easier to form magazines in the center of a fruitful province, and at a less distance from the capital, than on a barren coast. It is notorious, that he spared neither money, solicitations, nor care, to gather in those provisions; and that I even sent, at my own expence, three thousand camels loaded with rice. If we had any design, as our enemies pretend, to march the army against ISFAHAN, the carrying away such a prodigious quantity of provisions was an unpopular measure, and tended to incense the people against us; for they were already irritated by the burthens laid on them. But it is needless to spend any more time in justifying a conduct, the rectitude and prudence of which are evident: it is now time that their happy majesties, who are the shadow of God upon earth, should determine the cause between innocence and imposture.”

## C H A P. III.

*Death and character of the ATHEMAT DOULET. Excursions of the LESGEES. Magnanimity of VACHTANGA; is named VALI of GEORGIA. Preparations made by this prince against the LESGEES, who are saved by a court intrigue. VACHTANGA takes an oath never to appear in arms in defence of PERSIA.*

FATEY ALI KHAN having thus finished his apology, the king, far from being offended with the liberty with which he had delivered himself, could not help weeping at the misfortunes occasioned by his precipitate judgment. And yet as the disgrace of this minister was irreparable, and the court imagined they could no longer put any confidence in a man who had been treated so barbarously; after he had been a victim to malice and credulity, he fell a sacrifice to policy, and was sent a prisoner to the castle of SHIRASS. To soften in some measure the rigour of his sentence, SHAH HUSSEIN granted him a considerable pension, and endeavoured to comfort him by representing the inevitable necessity of fate<sup>a</sup>. The ATHEMAT DOULET died in prison a little after the taking of ISFAHAN two years afterwards. It was imagined that he made use of poison, fearing lest MACHMUD should oblige him

<sup>a</sup> Predestinarianism is a fundamental principle of the MAHOMMEDAN religion.

1720. him to make discoveries prejudicial to the state; but it is more probable that he fell under the weight of his own misfortunes, with the addition of those in which his country was now involved.

By this removal SHAH HUSSEIN lost the wisest of his ministers. He had the noblest mien of any person at court; and as he mentioned in his justification, owed to his oeconomy and good management, that great fortune of which he was possessed. As to the conspiracy, it was undoubtedly a contrivance of his enemies; but tho' his integrity was untainted in this particular, his reputation was not without blemish. It is beyond dispute, that after MIR VAIS was sent prisoner to ISFAHAN, FATEY ALI KHAN took him under his protection, and sent him back to KANDAHAR. Now, whether he was moved by compassion for that prince, who was a SUNNI, as well as himself; by an aversion to GURGHIN KHAN; or lastly, through the temptation of the great presents he received from the prisoner, and a belief of the sincerity of that artful AFGHAN, it was certainly a dangerous step, and the consequences sufficient to render his fidelity suspected. Besides, he was already appointed ATHEMAT DOULET, or of the same party as the person who then occupied that post, when KHOSROFF KHAN marched against the AFGHANS; and this cabal was charged with being the cause of the death of that prince, and of the total defeat of the army, as no care was taken to supply them with necessaries.

BUT these are not the only crimes with which some writers have stained the memory of this minister. A missionary, who was at SHAMAKIE at the taking of that city, asserts, that FATEY ALI KHAN, provoked at not having been able to obtain of SHAH HUSSEIN the abolition of the CARAK<sup>a</sup>, imposed on the SUNNIS, and the custom of uttering maledictions against the three first caliphs, with which the PERSIANS always end their public prayers, formed a project to subvert the government of the SCHIAS, and to ascend the throne himself. If he really did entertain any such thoughts, which seems to me very improbable, no nation could be depended on so well as the LESSGEES, because he was descended from their ancient kings, and moreover most of their tribes are of this sect. The same missionary imputed to him, that he engaged the LESGERS to take up arms, and make incursions into the province of SHIRVAN; not questioning but as a considerable number of the inhabitants professed the same religion, the province would shake off the yoke, and join their forces to those of the rebels.

BE that as it may, SHAH HUSSEIN remained so strongly persuaded of the innocence of this minister, that tho' he had the great weakness to pardon his accusers, yet the conduct he observed towards those who had been confined upon this account, sufficiently evinces that he did not believe him guilty. All of them, without exception, had their estates restored to them; and if some who were possessed of governments were deprived of them, and others detained at ISFAHAN, this was an effect of fear, lest they should be induced by their resentments to justify the suspicions conceived of them. Tho' the ATHEMAT DOULET's estate was confiscated, yet the several portions which belonged to his sons-in-law, MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN,

<sup>a</sup> A poll-tax paid in MAHOMMEDAN countries by subjects who are of a different religion from that of the prince.

KHAN, the prince of KAKET<sup>a</sup>, and to the KOULLAR AGASSI<sup>b</sup>, brother of the VALI of GEORGIA were excepted, as their wives dowries. The fidelity of these lords was indeed well known, and they were not included in the number of those whose conduct the court thought it necessary to watch. LUTF ALI KHAN, who had been considered as one of the chiefs of the pretended conspiracy, and as such had been removed to TÆHIRAN, underwent no other punishment than that of restoring to the king the plunder he had taken upon the frontier. When he came to ISFAHAN he was also watched, not as a state-criminal, but as a man who had just cause to be disaffected to the government.

THIS storm was at length succeeded by some days of calm. The LESGEEs, whose incursions had given great uneasiness to the court, sent deputies to ISFAHAN to sue for a reconciliation. The anxiety with which their revolt had filled the minds of SHAH HUSSEIN and his ministers, was well founded: for those people having driven away the collectors and other officers belonging to the king, towards the beginning of 1719 assembled to the number of two thousand men, commanded by MULLAH ABDALLAH, and KANLU SABAN, and made incursions, spreading terror and desolation in some of the neighbouring parts of GEORGIA. Their reputation and forces having increased by their success, they were joined by a body of near thirty thousand of the inhabitants of SHIRVAN, who were of the sect of the SUNNIS, and pushed their hostilities to the gates of GANJA and SHAMAKIE. The khan, who commanded in the latter, having received orders to oppose these hostilities, marched at the head of forty thousand men against the rebels, who were then encamped in a plain between GANJA and the borders of SHIRVAN. But just when he was preparing to attack them, they surprized him in the night, cut part of his army in pieces, and dispersed the remainder. The khan<sup>c</sup> himself perished on this occasion, with most of his principal officers.

THE fear of the resentment of a power over whom they had obtained so signal a victory, was not the motive which induced these people to sue for peace. They were determined to make this step by a more pressing consideration; which I shall explain by tracing matters somewhat higher.

AFTER KHOSROFF KHAN was slain before KANDAHAR, VACHTANGA, as the eldest of the family, ought in course to have succeeded him in the dignity of VALI of GEORGIA; but as he refused to wear the turban<sup>d</sup>, his younger brother, tho' the patriarch of that country, offered himself in his stead. Their father, then DIVAN BEGHI of ISFAHAN, tho' a MAHOMMEDAN himself, was so incensed at this scandalous proposal, that he ordered this irreligious priest to be bastinadoed, and kept to his sacerdotal function. The investiture of this principality was then given to the third

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son,

<sup>a</sup> KAKET, a province, the government of which is sometimes joined to that of KARABAGH, and sometimes to that of GEORGIA. It has also had its general governors; from whence they have derived the name of prince.

<sup>b</sup> The chief of the slaves: a body of cavalry, composed of men of distinction, who stile themselves the king's slaves.

<sup>c</sup> This being the first battle of any consequence that was fought between the PERSIANS and LESGEEs in HUSSEIN's reign, renders it probable, that this khan was the nephew of FATEY ALI KHAN, mentioned in his vindication, page 134.

<sup>d</sup> This is sometimes used as an expression to denote the MAHOMMEDAN religion; tho' the ARMEINIANS, who are christians, wear turbans in PERSIA.



1720. son, who being less scrupulous than the eldest, and somewhat less culpable than the second, embraced the MAHOMMEDAN religion.

VACHTANGA, tho' banished to KHERMAN, persevered in his glorious resolution many years ; but at length the sollicitations of the court, joined to the irksomeness of his exile, overcame his constancy : he renounced, or more probably pretended that he renounced, christianity ; and in consequence thereof was named VALI of GEORGIA. This new prince repaired to TEFFLIS in 1719, where he beheld with sorrow and indignation, the devastations which the LESGEES had committed in his territories ; and determined to revenge the cause of his people in such a manner, as should secure them for ages against their dangerous neighbours. Having obtained the consent of the nobility, who were convened upon this account, he ordered every GEORGIAN that was able to bear arms, to join him in that capital ; and the ensuing spring would have been ready to take the field at the head of sixty thousand men.

THE LESGEES saw into this design, and concluded they were undone : their only resource was to implore the clemency of SHAH HUSSEIN, and to persuade this prince to interpose his authority in their favour. Such was the motive of the deputation they now sent. The GEORGIANS were in arms, when the king's first MULLAH, and the physician <sup>a</sup>, invoked their infernal genius to conjure up another storm. These treacherous courtiers, reflecting that a son-in-law of the ATHEMAT DOULET, who lately fell a sacrifice to their impostures, was brother to VACHTANGA, were afraid lest after having defeated the LESGEES, this prince might attempt to make use of so fine an army, to oblige the court to punish them for their iniquitous conduct. They availed themselves therefore of the ascendant they had gained over their weak and deluded sovereign, and represented that VACHTANGA, after defeating his enemies, might occasion great troubles in PERSIA, especially as it would then be very easy for him to receive considerable succours from RUSSIA by sea : therefore the only way to prevent these misfortunes, would be to grant a peace to the LESGEES, and order the VALI to cease all hostilities. Such a step would oblige this GEORGIAN prince to disband his troops, and remove all apprehension of danger from his ambition ; moreover, that this measure would prevent the depopulation of a province, which the vicinity of the sea rendered very considerable, without exposing PERSIA to any future invasions from those people ; for the dread of being delivered up to the resentment of the GEORGIANS, would necessarily contain them within the bounds of their duty.

SHAH HUSSEIN, persuaded by this artful discourse, made no difficulty to grant a peace to the rebels. And without keeping any measures with the VALI of GEORGIA, he forbid him in the most imperious and haughty manner to give them any further disturbance. His orders were : " If you have got your foot in the stirrup, alight immediately. If you have drawn your sabre, put it directly into the scabbard ; and if you are in pursuit of the LESGEES, stop the moment you receive our commands. In a word, take the utmost care not to infringe the peace which these people have obtained from the clemency of him whom the universe obeys."

VACH-



VACHTANGA, was already in full march, and upon the point of crushing his enemies, when he received these strict and unwelcome orders. It is generally believed that the only motive which induced him to stop his pursuit, and obey these imprudent orders of the PERSIAN court, arose from an apprehension lest the chiefs of the nation should desert him, as they had formerly deserted GURGHIN KHAN. Be that as it may, he declared he would OBEY, but it was in terms that clearly demonstrated the height of his resentment. After ordering the courier into his presence, he drew his sabre, and swore he would never fight again in the service of the king, nor in the defence of PERSIA. He then disbanded his troops, and withdrew to TEFFLIS, fully determined to observe his oath inviolate. 1720.

PART

P A R T VI.

T H E

REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR 1721.

TO THE

BATTLE OF GULNABAD IN 1722.

C H A P I.

*Pacific dispositions of the AFGHANS. Arrival of the TURKISH ambassador at ISFAHAN. HUSSEIN sends an ambassador to the grand signior; and, frightened by various presages, returns to ISFAHAN. The LESGEES take SHAMAKIE and SHIRVAN, beat the KHAN of ERIVAN, and lay siege to GANJA. The court in great consternation.*

1721.

**A**T the commencement of this year, things seemed to promise tranquillity. The ready submission of the VALI of GEORGIA, and the pacification of DAGESTAN, put an end to the anxiety which had been created by the formidable army of that prince, and by the excursions of the LESGEES. Advice was also come, that the rebels of KANDAHAR, intimidated by their defeat, were ready to enter into an accommodation: and the peace with the ARABS, with the restitution of the isle of BAHARAI, which were negotiated by the king's orders, by means of eight thousand tomans<sup>a</sup>, gave room to hope, that the empire thus delivered from her principal enemies, might subdue the rest, whom fear and example would hereafter contain within proper bounds.

BUT there was yet one circumstance which still disturbed the court. They had heard by letters from HASSAN BASHA, the governor of BAGDAT, that an ambassador from the OTTOMAN port was ready to set out for TEHRAN: and as it was well known that the grand vizir<sup>b</sup>, ALI BACHA<sup>c</sup>, designed to declare war against PERSIA,

when

<sup>a</sup> Twenty thousand pounds.

<sup>b</sup> Vazir or vizir, in the ARABIAN tongue signifies a porter. In TURKEY this title is given to the counsellors of state; and that of vizir-azem, or grand vizir, to the first minister.

<sup>c</sup> This minister was remarkable for his integrity; but he was severe, and hated the christians, whom he considered as the natural enemies of his master.

when he was killed at the battle of QETERWARADIN<sup>a</sup>; they had reason to apprehend, left his successor should inspire the grand signior with the same sentiments, especially at a time when the peace of PASSAROWITZ, and the cessation of the intestine commotions of that kingdom, afforded a favourable opportunity for such an undertaking.

UNDER these circumstances, the timorous court of HUSSEIN concluded that this minister was come to demand the cession of some province, and to declare war in case of a refusal. And tho' the king had already resolved to send an ambassador to CONSTANTINOPLE, in order to sound the disposition of the port; and, if there should be occasion, to purchase the continuation of the peace, by offering to yield some extent of territory towards ERIVAN or KERKOUZ; yet the uncertainty he was under, whether the TURKS would be contented with these terms, occasioned great uneasiness.

As the king could not avoid giving audience to this minister, the governors of the places through which he was to pass, had orders to receive him with all the honours and respect due to his character. He came by KERMANSHA, HAMADAN, DERGHESIN, and CASBIN to TEHRAN, where he arrived towards the beginning of JANUARY 1721, two months after his departure from the frontier, and the disgrace of the ATHEMAT DOULET.

THE ambassador, whose name was DOURI EFFENDI<sup>b</sup>, has given the following relation himself of the ceremony of his audience. "In this order I went to the palace of TCHARBAG, where having alighted from my horse at the third gate, I entered the audience chamber. The SHAH was seated opposite the door: at his right and left were a great number of officers<sup>c</sup>: there were also thirty PERSIANS<sup>d</sup> magnificently armed, and about ten ministers or great officers of the kingdom; the latter were seated. I passed thro' the midst of them with a stately gait; I wore a stiff turban on my head, a gown lined with sable on my shoulders, and held the imperial letter as high as my head. I walked on very gently till I came near the sofa, on which the SHAH was seated; and when I was within two steps of him, I raised the imperial letter with my right hand; and with my left, I saluted him in the manner sovereigns are saluted<sup>e</sup>, and I spoke to him thus:

"MAY health reside with thee<sup>f</sup>: God preserve me from the SCHEITHAN<sup>g</sup> ALRAGIM. In the name of the most merciful God, this present writing tells thee the truth<sup>h</sup>. Behold the most happy and most magnificent imperial letter of their  
"ma-

<sup>a</sup> A strong town of SCLAVONIA on the DANUBE, subject to the house of AUSTRIA. <sup>b</sup> EFFENDI signifies skill'd in law.

<sup>c</sup> Beglerbegs and khans. <sup>d</sup> Of those who are called KUZLEBASH, which signifies red heads; so called from the crimson caps worn when they were first formed into a body under this name, by SHEICH HEYDR, father of ISMAEL I. the founder of the SEFFIE dynasty. They have been sometimes considered as the janisaries, or more properly ingecherris among the TURKS, tho' this distinction is in a great measure lost, for the PERSIAN soldiers and people in general wear crimson caps; the only distinction is that the corps of every different nation are kept distinct. <sup>e</sup> I presume he took the hem of his garment and kissed it. <sup>f</sup> The TURKS generally begin all their recitals and writings with an invocation.

<sup>g</sup> SCHEITHAN OF SATAN, with us satan; whom the MAHOMMEDANS believe to have been cursed for having resisted the will of God, when he was commanded to prostrate himself before ADAM. RAGIM, according to some commentators, signifies deprived of grace. <sup>h</sup> A passage of the khoran.



1721. "majesties, the most magnificent, the most formidable, the most majestic, the  
 "most potent SULTAN ACHMED, KHAN GAZI<sup>a</sup>; may GOD give glory to those who  
 "assist him; sovereign of the two continents, emperor of the two seas<sup>b</sup>; who is  
 "a second ALEXANDER ZUL KARNEIN<sup>c</sup>; servant of the holy ORIENTAL cities<sup>d</sup>;  
 "sultan, son of a sultan. He wishes all health to the most fortunate presence of  
 "their majesties, the SHAH JEMJA<sup>e</sup>, whose crown glitters like the sun, and desires  
 "to be informed of his precious health.

"I MADE him this compliment in the tone in which we sing the EZAN<sup>f</sup>, throw-  
 "ing my words into a cadence. The prime minister<sup>g</sup>, who was during this time  
 "on my right hand<sup>h</sup>, attempted twice to take the imperial letter from me; but I  
 "took no notice of him. The SHAH himself stretched out his hand with the same  
 "intent; but your slave<sup>i</sup> cast his eyes on no sort of object till he had finished his  
 "harangue. Then I kissed the imperial letter; and raising it twice to my head, I  
 "presented it to the SHAH, who had already thrice offered to take it. He raised  
 "himself on his knees to receive it; and having kissed it, he made a sign to the  
 "chief of his eunuchs<sup>k</sup>, who came for it, kissed it, raised it twice to his head, and  
 "then held it in his hands. The SHAH ordered me at the same time to sit down;  
 "but your slave out of respect refused it. He commanded me a second time; and  
 "as I continued to refuse it, the chief master of the ceremonies<sup>l</sup> took me hold by  
 "the arms, and forced me to sit down."

THE king asked the ambassador many questions; and after they had dined in the  
 same hall according to custom, he took his leave of the king, and retired. The  
 10th of MARCH<sup>m</sup> SHAH HUSSEIN gave audience for the third and last time to this  
 ambassador: on which occasion a minister from RUSSIA, two envoys from the OUS-  
 BEGS, and ninety four deputies of the LESGEEs were introduced. The latter were  
 come to demand, each in the name of his particular tribe, the ordinary subsidies,  
 the payment of which had been settled by the late peace. The king being pre-possessed  
 with an opinion that the TURKS intended to take an advantage of the divisions  
 which had rent the kingdom, was agreeably surprized when the ambassador of the  
 port assured him, that his master was fully determined to observe the peace. The  
 beginning of APRIL the TURKISH ambassador set out on his return to CONSTANTI-  
 NOPLE. MORTAZA KOULI KHAN, appointed ambassador to that court, was also  
 preparing to take the same rout, with a more explicit answer than that which the  
 king had given to the TURKISH minister.

IN

<sup>a</sup>This surname is given to those MAHOMMEDAN princes, who have made conquests over the enemies  
 of their religion.

<sup>b</sup>The BLACK SEA, and the ARCHIPELAGO.

<sup>c</sup>With two horns,

that is, whose empire embraces the east and west, named by the eastern people the horns of the world.

<sup>d</sup>MECCA and MEDINA.

<sup>e</sup>As great and as potent as GEM or GJAMSCHID, an ancient king of PER-  
 SIA.

<sup>f</sup>The EZAN is what they cry five times with a loud voice from their turrets, to give the peo-  
 ple notice that it is the hour of prayer.

<sup>g</sup>ATHEMET DOULET.

<sup>h</sup>GJAMCHID, the ancient

king of PERSIA just mentioned, gave the preference to the left; though in general the right is esteemed in  
 the east, as with us in EUROPE.

<sup>i</sup>This description was given to the grand signior.

<sup>k</sup>The

KISLAR AGA.

<sup>l</sup>The ESIK AGASI BASHI, chief master of the ceremonies, whose office it is to hold  
 the ambassadors by the arm, while they pay their respects to the king.

<sup>m</sup>Venal equinox, or PER-

SIAN new-years-day.

In the mean while, the SHAH received fresh alarms from the eastern parts of the empire: the governor of MESCHED sent an express to acquaint the court that the ABDOLLEES of HERAT had made great incursions; observing, that if speedy measures were not taken to protect MESCHED and its dependencies, they must soon be obliged to submit to the rebels. This intelligence was soon followed by news of a more dreadful nature: the 26th of the same month, TAVRIS, the second city of the kingdom, and capital of the province of ADERBEITZAN, was destroyed by an earthquake, in which near a hundred thousand of the inhabitants perished <sup>a</sup>.

UNDER these melancholy circumstances, SHAH HUSSEIN prepared to take his leave of TÆHIRAN, and return to ISFAHAN, where he arrived with his whole court the first of JUNE. Towards the end of this month, the consternation of the people was increased by a phenomenon, which might be considered as such in that climate. They were ten days without seeing the sun; during that time, it is said, the horizon was covered with a reddish cloud, with but little more light than when the sun is totally eclipsed <sup>b</sup>. The astrologers pretended that all these signs presaged great misfortunes to ISFAHAN; and the king having questioned them concerning the nature of these calamities, some of them predicted an earthquake like to that which had lately happened at TAVRIS: others, that fire would fall from heaven and cause a general conflagration; but not one of them had sense enough to see, or not honesty and courage enough to tell this monarch, that his effeminacy and weakness had rendered him contemptible, and that his own subjects, no longer restrained by any sense of obedience, would be themselves the cause of all the misfortunes with which he was threatened. Frightened at these predictions, the king quitted his palace, and lodged in tents: part of the court and of the inhabitants having followed his example, the gardens and public squares were filled with people.

THINGS were in this situation, when a new disgrace seemed already to verify the prediction. The LESGEES, unmindful of their great obligations to HUSSEIN, remembered only the oath of VACHTANGA the VALI of GEORGIA; and being informed moreover that from a strong persuasion of their not daring to break a peace, which had been granted as so high a favour, the court had taken no precaution to guard the neighbouring provinces, they were emboldened to make an irruption into SHIRVAN, under the command of SULTAN IBRAHIM, and DHOUD BEG, their chiefs.

THE pretext with which these treacherous and unquiet people covered this revolt, was the disgrace of FATEY ALI KHAN, who had been condemned, they said, because he was descended from their ancient sovereigns. They soon made themselves masters of the flat country: but their aim was above plundering villages and destroying defenceless peasants. The riches of SHAMAKIE, the capital of SHIRVAN, equally excited the ambition and the avarice of their generals; and tho' their army, which consisted only of fifteen thousand men, did not seem strong enough for the execution of such a project, yet they appeared the 15th of AUGUST before that city, in hopes that they should be favoured in their enterprize by the SUNNIS, of whom the

<sup>a</sup> The same fate happened in 1657.

<sup>b</sup> This circumstance, tho' seriously attested, the reader is at his liberty to believe: when mens minds are distemper'd with fear, they easily imagine they see spectres.

1721. the most numerous part of the inhabitants were composed. This conjecture was justified by the event. The governor, HUSSEIN KHAN, knowing how little he had to depend on the fidelity of the citizens, made no folly, lest he should be deserted by the people that followed him, or betrayed by those who staid behind in the town; therefore he determined to make as good a defence as possible within the walls. This resolution, which was the only one he could take, enabled him to repulse the attacks of the enemy for the space of twenty-five days; and perhaps the length of the siege would have tired out the LESGEEES, if the SUNNIS, who kept a correspondence with the enemy, had not found means, in spite of all the vigilance of the governor, to open one of the gates to them. The besiegers rushed in immediately, making hideous shouts; but altho' the garrison was surprized, they were not beaten. All the LESGEEES could compass that day, was to force their way to the SUNNIS quarter, where they entrenched themselves. Early the next morning they marched out in good order, intending to complete the conquest of the city. The governor made some stand against them; but perceiving that he was deserted or betrayed by his people, he endeavoured to provide for his own safety by flight. His loyalty and courage had prevented his taking this resolution in time; for the enemy having detached some cavalry, they soon brought him back to the town.

THE situation of SHAMAKIE rendered it a staple between the RUSSIANS and PERSIANS; but the great plunder of it did not satisfy the avarice of the LESGEEES: their generals were hurried by this base passion, to commit the most barbarous cruelties on the unfortunate HUSSEIN KHAN. They put him to the acutest tortures, imagining he had buried his treasure; but whether it was that this nobleman had not concealed any money, or, indifferent about his life, did not regard their fury, he made no discovery; for which reason they cut him in pieces, together with his nephew, and another of his relations, and flung their bodies to the dogs.

ABOUT four thousand inhabitants were put to the sword; and the massacre would have been greater, if many had not fled the night on which the enemy entrenched themselves in the quarters of the SUNNIS, who were all spared from the sword, as being of the same sect as the LESGEEES. These people also spared the wives and children of the SCHIAS, not through any motive of compassion, but because, according to their law, the right of conquest had made them their slaves. The SUNNIS and SCHIAS were not the only inhabitants; there was likewise a considerable number of ARMENIANS, JEWS, INDIAN idolaters, and several RUSSIAN merchants; and tho' the conquerors granted no quarters to the SCHIAS, except to those whom they made slaves, yet a sense of justice prevented their confounding these people with the enemy, and considering them as strangers, they spared the lives and liberty of these different nations, but not their property: for they stripped their habitations of every thing that was valuable. The RUSSIANS lost a great value<sup>a</sup>, which contributed to create new enemies against PERSIA, as we shall see hereafter.

So many misfortunes, upon the back of each other, completed the consternation of the divan. SHAH HUSSEIN, who had neither resolution enough to bear such a reverse

<sup>a</sup> About one hundred thousand pound. See Vol. I. p. 7. loss sustained by YEURCINOFF, a RUSSIAN merchant.



reverse of fortune, nor abilities sufficient to prevent any further ill consequences, 1721. was the first whom the weight of the burthen overcame. Being convinced that heaven had declared against him, he thought no longer of struggling with his misfortunes, but bent his whole attention to appease the divine wrath. All public diversions were forbidden; harlots were expelled the town; fastings and public prayers were ordained; and the ministers of religion appeared in the public squares and market-places, exhorting the people to avert, by a sincere repentance, the calamities impending over their heads. This conduct, if it was pious, was not politic, for it rendered the consternation general; the people in every part of the town being heard to say in a mournful voice, "CHEIK OGLOU" has finished his career; the "fatal period of his government is come; his tottering throne is going to crush us under its ruins."

IN the mean time the LESGEES, who had made themselves masters of SHAMAKIE, took possession of the rest of SHIRVAN; and knowing that the khan of ERIVAN, with forty thousand men, had orders to throw himself into GANJA, they passed the KURA, and marching forward to meet him, came to an engagement, which contributed to increase the triumph of the rebels. This army being continually harrassed, was at length put to flight; some fled towards ERIVAN, others to GANJA, where the LESGEES, after making themselves masters of his camp and equipage, besieged him.

## C H A P. II.

MIR MAGHMUD marches with fifteen thousand men, and takes the city of KHERMAN. He lays siege to YEZD, but is obliged to retire. He leads his army through deserts towards ISFAHAN. The PERSIANS oppose him. Battle of GULNABAD. The AFGHANS defeat the PERSIANS. Conduct of the VALI of ARABIA.

PERSIA thus saw herself threatened with a storm from every side, when MIR MAGHMUD, the most formidable of her enemies, disclosed his ambitious designs. The AFGHANS, disheartened by their defeat before KHERMAN, had considered themselves as utterly undone, when they heard that LUTF ALI KHAN was making preparations for the siege of KANDAHAR. The prudence and valour of this general, the number and discipline of his troops, and the quantity of ammunition and provisions with which his magazines were filled, made them conclude that their ruin was inevitable. In this situation, their whole nation were desirous of a peace, and waited only for the approach of the enemy to sue for it. But when they heard of the strange imprisonment of LUTF ALI KHAN, and the disbanding of his army, security and joy succeeded their fear: the authority of their chief, which had been in some measure destroyed by these melancholy circumstances, was again established.

\* The king, who is the son of CHEIK, a name given to the kings of PERSIA of the SEFFIE dynasty, because they were descended from CHEIK SEFFIE.

1721. THE first use which MAGHMUD made of this change, was to put himself in a condition of defence, in case the PERSIANS should determine to pursue their design. With this design he raised troops, ordered arms to be made, and filled the magazines with every thing necessary to hold out a long siege. These preparations were just completed at KANDAHAR, when they heard of the extremity to which the city of MESCHED was reduced. The news of the destruction of TAVRIS, and of the irruption of the LESGEEES, followed soon after. These different events not only banished the fears of the AFGHANS, but gave their chief an opportunity of forming new resolutions.

MAGHMUD's apprehensions being thus removed, he began to think of becoming formidable in his turn: the ideas of conquests, which his last defeat seemed to have stifled, now crowded again upon his imagination. To dispose the AFGHANS to enter into his views, he reminded them of the several circumstances that ought to dissipate every thought of danger: he observed to them, that the provinces of KANDAHAR, HERAT, SABLESTAN, MECRAN, and DAGHESTAN, had shaken off the yoke; that SEGESTAN, KHERMAN, and the greatest part of the vast country of KHORASAN had been ravaged, and SHIRVAN invaded; that the dispersion of the army which was under LUTF ALI KHAN, and the oath of the VALI of GEORGIA, rendered PERSIA entirely defenceless. He put them in mind of the advantages which he had obtained over this nation, at a time when her power was really great; and informing them of the success of the KOURDS, the OUSBEGS, and the MASCATS; he persuaded the AFGHANS into a belief, that the throne of PERSIA was ready to fall a prey to the first who would venture to seize on it.

SUCH discourses as these, accompanied with several marks of his liberality, could not but make an impression on the minds of a people, naturally inclined to war. Hence they talked of nothing but conquests; and the hopes of booty engaged fifteen thousand AFGHANS to lift themselves under his banners. He was sensible however that these forces were not answerable to the greatness of his design, and therefore applied himself to the means of increasing them.

FOR this purpose he had no occasion for long negotiations: the restless and turbulent spirit of the neighbouring people soon determined them in his favour. At the first news of an intended expedition into PERSIA, the ABDOLLEES, BALOUCHES, the inhabitants of CABUL, and the neighbouring country flocked to him; and in a very short time his army was augmented, by these adventurers of several countries and religions, near ten thousand men. Among the different chiefs who joined him, AMAN OLA brought him the most considerable reinforcement: this captain, whom some have imagined to be a prince of CABUL, was originally only a simple dervish; but, chusing a military life, was now at the head of a considerable body of troops, and joined MAGHMUD as an ally: embarking in this enterprize, upon condition of making an equal division of the fruits of their conquests. The union of their forces thus constituting an army of about twenty-five thousand fighting men, they took with them a few elephants for burthen, with a considerable number of camels; these with their drivers, the servants of the soldiers, and the domestics of the chiefs, made this army appear more formidable than it really was, but MAGHMUD never had so many

many troops under his command before. They were scarce assembled, when this <sup>1722</sup> young chief full of ardour, and big with expectation, entrusted the regency of KANDAHAR to his brother, and began his march. He crossed the deserts of SEGES-TAN with the same precaution and fatigue as he had done the preceding year; and entering KERMAN, towards the beginning of JANUARY this year, he sat down before the capital of that province.

THIS city made but a faint resistance. The PERSEES<sup>a</sup>, and the INDIANS, who were settled there, having refused to fight against an army which consisted partly of troops of their own nation, soon obliged the remainder of the inhabitants, who in other respects were not prepared for a siege, to open the gates to the enemy. When MAGHMUD was master of the town, his next point was to take the citadel: for this purpose he tried several times to carry it by assault; not having any cannon fit for a siege, this seemed to be the only way he could take it: but he met with such a warm and gallant reception from the garrison, which had been left there by LUTF ALI KHAN, that he soon began to despair of success. He was sensible of the consequences of his undertaking: he could not raise the siege without acknowledging himself defeated, at the very commencement of the campaign. Besides, how could he pretend, after miscarrying before so inconsiderable a place, to attack the capital of a vast empire? But it was yet a greater difficulty by what means to take a citadel strongly fortified, and provided with a numerous garrison. Some of the bravest of his men had thrown away their lives to no purpose; and several others, discouraged by the repulse, deserted him, and set out on their return to KANDAHAR; insomuch that if he persisted in his design, it seemed to threaten the total dispersion of his army.

WHILST MAGHMUD's mind was agitated what measures to pursue, the governor, frightened at such vigorous attacks, or apprehensive of the want of provisions, offered to treat with the besiegers. He required that the AFGHANS should raise the siege; and on his side he would pay a ransom of two thousand five hundred to-mans<sup>b</sup>. Tho' the tendency of this extraordinary capitulation was to preserve, and not to surrender the place, yet the present circumstances were such, that the proposals were received with joy; and as soon as the money was paid, the hostilities ceased.

FORTUNE having thus favoured MAGHMUD, he pursued his first design. He had lost near four thousand men in crossing the desert, and at the siege; but the present conjuncture gave him a fair occasion of reinforcing his army. Many of the inhabitants of KERMAN were PERSEES, and from the remembrance of their past grandeur, naturally inclined to espouse the cause of a prince, whom they considered as the scourge of their tyrants.

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<sup>a</sup> The PERSEES are the descendants of the ancient PERSIANS, who worshipped fire, and have preserved their religion. These people are best known in the east, and even among us, by the name of GAUR or CEBER, which in the PERSIAN language signifies an infidel or an idolater.

<sup>b</sup> Six thousand two hundred and fifty pounds.



1722. A FEW days after the capitulation, MAGHMUD marched at the head of his army towards the north, taking the road to YEZD. This city is situate about seventy leagues from KHERMAN: the country between is very sandy, and has only a few inconsiderable villages, at a great distance from each other. This circumstance shews, that the view of this prince was not to enrich himself with the spoils of the open country, in the fruitful plains of FARS<sup>a</sup>: his thoughts were engaged upon another object; and he avoided every thing that might retard the execution of his design. He knew that he should not meet on this road with any fortrefs that might stop him, or with towns where his troops might be incumbered with pillage. It was with this very intent he preferred the road through the deserts, upon his first setting out, instead of taking the ordinary rout, which was much shorter and easier.

As soon as he arrived before YEZD, he attempted to take the town by assault, attacking it with all his troops on every side, but he was on every side repulsed with loss. Being grown more circumspect by his mistakes, he resolved not to persist in the siege, the consequence of which must be extremely dangerous. He therefore continued his march; and having proceeded with all possible expedition through the plains<sup>b</sup>, which separate the city of PAHANAVENS from that of BIBEN, at length he entered the cultivated country. The people, terrified at his approach, deserted the villages and towns that lay in his way; so that nothing retarded the rapidity of his march. Some troops that seemed to have been sent rather to reconnoitre than to fight were dispersed, and he arrived within four days march of ISFAHAN; when two officers, who were deputed by the court, were conducted into his presence.

MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, then prime minister<sup>c</sup>, not knowing how to avert so sudden a storm, sent these officers to treat with him: accordingly they opened their commission, which was to offer him a sum of fifteen thousand tomans<sup>d</sup>, on condition that he would not proceed any farther, and that his troops should not commit any hostility in the territory of ISFAHAN. MAGHMUD judged from hence of the weakness and terror of the enemy, and dismissing the deputies without making any answer, advanced with his usual diligence, and pitched his camp at CULNABAD<sup>e</sup>.

It is more easy to imagine, than to describe the terror with which the king and his ministers were seized, when they heard that MAGHMUD was marching directly to ISFAHAN. They had lulled themselves into security, from a persuasion that this prince would not leave behind him unconquered so vast a tract of country; and little thought that he would open the campaign in the very center of the empire; consequently they had not made the necessary preparations to oppose him. There was neither ammunition nor provisions in ISFAHAN; and as the celerity of the march of the rebels, had not afforded time to collect the different bodies of troops, that were dispersed on the frontiers, the court was absolutely at a loss how to stem the torrent.

<sup>a</sup> FARSIKISTAN OF PERSIA, properly so called. <sup>b</sup> This country abounds in nitre. <sup>c</sup> ATHEMAT DOULET. <sup>d</sup> Thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds. <sup>e</sup> This name signifies confluence of roses. This village is three leagues from ISFAHAN.

torrent. However, as something must be done, they collected the few troops that were at hand; to these they joined the militia that was raised in a hurry in the city and the neighbourhood; and all the lords of the court, excepting those whose profession was inconsistent with arms, being ready to mount on horse-back, the army waited only the king's orders. 1722.

As this monarch was incapable of forming any resolution himself, he waited with impatience to hear what the divan would determine. In time of distress, when an union of councils is most necessary, the pusillanimity of some, and the wickedness of others, generally create perplexity. What could be expected at so corrupt a court as that of HUSSEIN SHAH? The council was divided in opinion: the prime minister gave his advice not to hazard a general action, but to intrench their army, and cover the town. "By this means," said he, "our new troops will be insensibly accustomed to see the enemy; a few skirmishes will rouse a martial spirit by degrees; if the rebels attempt to force our lines, we shall fight them to an advantage; if this measure should oblige them to continue in their camp, it will be an easy thing to starve them, by cutting off their provisions: thus the issue of the war will be protracted, and the troops dispersed in the provinces will have time to join us, and cut off the retreat of the rebels."

THIS was the opinion of the ATHEMAT DOULET. On the contrary, ABDALLA KHAN, VALI OF ARABIA, NOW AT ISFHAAN, maintained, "That it was beneath the majesty of the empire to temporize with rebels and slaves; that the grandeur of the king, and the honour of the nation were concerned to chastise their insolence. Why," said he, "should the frontiers be exposed to new invasions? The king's troops are incensed; they long for battle; the best way therefore is to make use of this first ardor of the soldiers, and to crush an infatuated youth, who by the victory of LUTF ALI KHAN, and his miscarriages at KHERMAN and YEZD, ought to have learnt the difference between soldiers and robbers."

THE advice of the ATHEMAT DOULET was certainly the most prudent and safe; but that of the ARABIAN prince suited most with the pride and revenge with which the divan was animated. PERSIA, devoted to ruin, had hardly a single advocate devoid of passion, and whose mind was free from prejudice or treachery: the latter opinion was preferred by the plurality of suffrages, and as soon as they heard that the AFGHANS were arrived at GULNABAD, the army received orders to march and fight them. MAGHMUD was not surprized at this determination; for he never dreamt that the king would submit to see his capital besieged, without trying the issue of a battle; and therefore as he knew neither the number nor valour of his enemies, he intrenched himself in his camp.

THE seventh of MARCH the PERSIAN army appeared within sight of the enemy's intrenchments. SHAH HUSSEIN having by the advice of his astrologers, fixed the eighth of that month for the engagement, there passed only some light skirmishes the first day. It was given out in the PERSIAN camp, that MAGHMUD, surprized at the number and beauty of the king's troops, proposed to make his escape with a thousand of his best horse. The PERSIAN generals spread these reports in order

1722. to encourage their soldiers; for they could not really think that this prince intended to sacrifice, by an ignominious flight, his subjects and allies to the fury of an enemy, in search of whom he had made so long and so extraordinary a march.

SUNDAY the eighth of MARCH, according to the vain prognostics of the astrologers, was to deliver the PERSIAN monarchy. The generals began early in the morning to range their troops in order of battle. On the side of the PERSIANS; the center, which seemed to be designed only for a body of reserve, was given to CHEIK ALI KHAN, a general of horse. He had under him several khans with their troops, four thousand of the king's cavalry, and the same number of his foot guards; the latter being armed with muskets and sabres: these were covered at some distance by a battery of twenty-four pieces of cannon, defended, and served by two thousand canoneers, under the command of MAHOMMED KHAN, grand master of the artillery.

THE right wing was formed by two thousand of those horsemen who are called the king's slaves<sup>b</sup>, some of whom are armed with bows and arrows, and others with fusils and pistols; there were likewise some khans, and several other lords with their attendants. This wing was under the command of ROSTRAM KHAN, the KOULAR AGASSI<sup>c</sup>, brother of VACHTANGA, VALI of GEORGIA. The VALI of ARABIA, who shared the general command of the army with the ATHEMAT DOULET, had strengthened this wing with a body of three thousand cavalry of his own nation, at the head of whom he intended to fight.

THE ATHEMAT DOULET commanded in the left wing, which was composed of the king's household; the lords belonging to the court, and the rest of the nobility. ALI MERDAN KHAN<sup>d</sup>, VALI of LORISTAN<sup>e</sup>, joined them in person with five hundred horse. Besides the forces above mentioned, there were eighteen thousand infantry of militia, raised upon this occasion in the neighbourhood of the city, who were armed with muskets. These different troops formed an army of near fifty thousand fighting men.

THERE is no agreement in the accounts of those who were at ISFAHAN during the siege, in regard to the number of soldiers in MAGHMUD's army: the most probable opinion is, that it was not above half the number of the king's troops. It consisted chiefly of cavalry; these were armed with a sabre and lance, which those people handle with equal dexterity: their defensive armour are a buckler and cuirass, made of a double fold of hard leather, and many of them carry pistols. Their whole army was divided into four unequal parts: the most numerous formed the right wing under the command of AMAN OLA. MAGHMUD was in the second division, which he placed in the center: he gave the command of the third to NASR ULLAH,

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<sup>a</sup> TOPCHI BACHI. <sup>b</sup> KULAMS. <sup>c</sup> General of the slaves. <sup>d</sup> It is affirmed that two daughters of this prince who attended him in mens cloathing in his former expeditions against the TURKS, now fought by his side. <sup>e</sup> The province of LORISTAN is a mountainous country, that formerly depended on CHUSISTAN, or the ancient SUSIANA; but having been peopled by colonies of the KOURDS, it was afterwards comprized in KOURDISTAN. BERONGIARD, a place situate near HAMADAN, is its principal fortress. We must take care not to confound this place with LARISTAN, which is on the sea coast.



a PERSEE, whom he had made one of his lieutenant generals; and the fourth, and least numerous of these bodies, were choice men of the PEHLEVANS OR NÆSSAKHCHI<sup>a</sup>. The length and celerity of MAGHMUD's march, as we have observed, did not permit him to bring any cannon with him; but he supplied this defect in some measure by a very extraordinary artillery: these are a kind of harquebuses, which carry a handful of musket balls; each of these pieces, with its stock, was mounted on a camel, which lay down at command; and from the backs of these animals, trained to this exercise, they charged and fired these arms<sup>b</sup>.

THE sun had just appeared on the horizon, when the armies began to observe each other with that curiosity, which is natural on these dreadful occasions. The PERSIAN army just come out of the capital, being composed of whatever was most brilliant at court, seemed as if it had been formed rather to make a show than to fight. The richness and variety of their arms and vestments; the beauty of their horses; the gold and precious stones with which some of their harnesses were covered, and the richness of their tents, contributed to render their camp very pompous and magnificent.

ON the other side there was a much smaller body of soldiers, disfigured with fatigue, and the scorching heat of the sun. Their cloaths were so ragged and torn, in so long a march, that they were scarce sufficient to cover them from the weather; and their horses being adorned with only leather and brass, there was nothing glittering among them but their spears and sabres.

THE two armies stood in sight of each other the greatest part of the day in mutual awe, without making any motion on either side. MAGHMUD embraced this opportunity to ride through the ranks, and encourage his soldiers. "He represented to the PERSEES, that the hour was now come, which would free them from the yoke of their tyrants; that liberty was in their own hands, if they would prove themselves worthy heirs of the valour of their ancestors." Turning to the AFGHANS and the BALOUCHES, "he exhorted them to fight with that bravery which had rendered them so often triumphant over their enemies; he reminded them of those glorious feats, and desired them to look upon the riches of ISFAHAN as the first fruit of an easy victory; a victory, without which they must inevitably perish, either by the sword in their retreat, or by hunger and thirst in the deserts."

WHILE MAGHMUD was thus endeavouring to inspire his troops with that ardor, which they stood in need of on so important an occasion, the PERSIANS were taken up in debates. Though the king had sent positive orders to fight, yet the ATHEMAT DOULET, who shared the general command with the VALI of ARABIA, insisted strongly that they should avoid coming to an engagement: "It is true," said he, "we may expect the most generous efforts of the PERSIAN valour, on an occasion  
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<sup>a</sup> The name which the AFGHANS give to their forlorn hope, which go on the most desperate actions.

<sup>b</sup> NADIR SHAH afterwards used these kind of arms with great success: they are very long, and carry a great distance.

1722. "in which the safety of the empire, and the liberty of the emperor are at stake: but what does valour avail, if it be not armed and directed by experience? Almost all our infantry, who are the principal part of our forces, are novices in the duty of a soldier; they are entire strangers to the use of the musket; and have we then any reason to expect that they will be able, to stand the shock of the enemy's cavalry, or to attack in such order as to pierce thro' their squadrons? Too much security is oftentimes the cause, that even the best concerted undertakings miscarry. Let us not despise an enemy whom fortune favours: we have four thousand pioneers with us, let these cover the army with intrenchments; and if you are absolutely determined to hazard a battle, these lines bordered with cannon and infantry will be a sure place of retreat, in case of a misfortune. But my opinion, is to wait till famine compels the enemy to attack us in our entrenchments; then our cavalry falling forth from the extremities, will take them in flank; and will meet with so much the less resistance, as they will have to deal with troops already shattered and broken by the continual fire to which they must be exposed."

THUS the ATHEMAT DOULET endeavoured to bring them over to an opinion, which differed but little from that which he had openly declared in council. The proposal was prudent, inasmuch as it left very little to hazard, and secured all the advantage that ought to be expected from their infantry, which otherwise must be useless. The officers who commanded in the center\*, struck with these reasons, had already approved the project; when the VALI of ARABIA, and the KOULAR AGASI, who were afraid lest this opinion should be followed by the rest of the principal officers, cried out, "This is no time to debate, but to fight; it would be an eternal shame to so numerous an army, in which is the flower of the nobility of the empire, to be afraid of appearing before a gang of robbers and rebel herdsmen." Saying this, they waited for no answer, but retired, and led on their squadrons against the enemy: this served as a signal to the troops, who all moved forward at the same time, and fell upon the left wing of the AFGHANS with such impetuosity, as flung them into disorder.

MAGHMUD, who observed both armies from a throne raised on the back of an elephant, was surprized at this shock, and began to think that all was lost. His alarm was caused by the VALI of ARABIA, who having made a long winding to the right at the head of a body of ARABIAN cavalry, overthrew all he met in his way, and made himself master of the camp of the AFGHANS. It is reasonable to believe, that the affair would have been soon determined in favour of the PERSIANS, if he had returned directly and charged the enemy in the rear. MAGHMUD, terrified at the danger, was preparing for flight, and had ordered the lightest of his dromedaries to be made ready for him; when a circumstance arose, that inspired him with more courageous resolutions. The ATHEMAT DOULET seeing both armies engaged, returned to his post, and charged the right wing of the enemy with as much bravery, as he had before given marks of prudence. AMAN OLA, who commanded that wing, made a feint of giving way, and retired gradually without breaking his ranks; but he had hardly let the enemy gain fifty paces upon him, when ordering his

\* The general of horse, and the general of the artillery.

his men to open their ranks, one hundred camels appeared kneeling, each of which had one of the harquebuses above-mentioned on his back. The PERSIANS astonished at this unexpected sight, and a general discharge of this little artillery being made, most of the foremost rank were killed; and the AFGHANS making loud shouts, attacked the rest, and obliged them to turn their backs. 1722.

WITHOUT giving the PERSIANS time to recover themselves, AMAN OLA pursued them up to their battery, which he came behind, and having cut the cannoneers in pieces who guarded it, he caused the cannon to be pointed against the center of the PERSIAN army, who were thus put to flight before they had fought a blow. This artful step decided the fate of the day. The VALI of LORISTAN, who had lost one off his brothers in the action, and had been also wounded himself, seeing every thing rendered desperate by the defeat of the left wing, and the flight of the center, went off directly with what soldiers he had remaining, and retired into his province. His example was followed by FERIZ OULLAH, KHAN of HAMADAN, and by ALI RIZA, KHAN of COHKILAN<sup>a</sup>, who having called off their troops, retired each to his respective province.

In the mean time, the VALI of ARABIA being master of MAGHMUD's camp, amused himself with plundering the baggage; and tho' he had observed the enemy's motion, yet instead of attacking them in the rear, as was expected, he refused the succours, that with repeated instances were demanded of him. The AFGHANS therefore had no enemy to oppose, except the KOULAR AGASI. This general endeavouring to vindicate his opinion given in council, continued to fight with redoubled courage and resolution. Determined to conquer or die, he had already cut part of the opposite wing in pieces, and pushed the remainder as far as their entrenchments, when MAGHMUD seeing the field almost clear of the enemy, advanced to take him in the rear. This motion dispersed the PERSIANS, who composed the greatest part of the troops of this gallant officer; but a body of four hundred GEORGIANS refusing to desert him in this extremity, he defended himself on all sides with the utmost intrepidity; till at length he was overpowered with numbers, and with the companions of his glorious temerity, died sword in hand. The defeat of this valiant troop completed the victory. The VALI of ARABIA loaded with MAGHMUD's treasure, and the plunder of his camp, had by this time taken the road to the town, which he entered by the opposite gate<sup>b</sup> to that<sup>c</sup> by which the army had marched out against the enemy.

SUCH was the issue of the battle of GULNABAD, in which the PERSIANS, so long accustomed to blunders in politics, took two dangerous steps; one was, to divide the command between two generals who did not agree; the other, to plant their batteries so forward, that they could not be properly supported. This last circumstance, and the sagacious conduct of AMAN OLA, gave the victory to the AFGHANS; but we may say, that the treacherous conduct of the VALI of ARABIA decided the battle<sup>d</sup>. The king's army lost fifteen thousand men; a number which will not appear

<sup>a</sup> A country situate ten days journey from ISFAHAN towards BASSORA. in the east part of ISFAHAN.

<sup>c</sup> The HAJAN in the west.

<sup>b</sup> The DER TOKCHI

<sup>d</sup> It has been much doubted, if the VALI of ARABIA was induced to act this base part, merely from the temptation of plunder, or



1722. pear exaggerated, if we consider the circumstances of the engagement. The greatest part of the troops under the command of the KOULAR AGASI, fell in the field of battle; the infantry was in a great measure exposed to the mercy of the conquerors, and the two thousand cannoneers, with their general, were all slaughtered at their post. The loss of the AFGHANS was inconsiderable; and the treasure and baggage of the PERSIAN army, was an ample recompence for the plunder which the ARABIANS had taken in their camp.

from repentment of the opposition which the ARHEMAT DOULET made to his proposals; he might be indifferent, at that time, which side obtained the victory, but his conduct afterwards proved him a traitor; nor do we find that he attempted to vindicate himself, or acknowledge that he had been guilty of an error, nor even that the natural avidity of his ARABIANS was not to be restrained.

## P A R T VII.

T H E

## REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

## BATTLE OF GULNABAD,

TO THE

ABDICATION OF SULTAN HUSSEIN, AND THE  
TAKING OF ISFAHAN.

## C H A P I.

*The king calls a council, and determines to remain in ISFAHAN. Preparations to defend the city. Orders sent to the khans of the provinces. The VALI of LORISTAN is declared generalissimo. MAGHMUD encamps at CHEERESTAN. Description of FARABAD ; the AFGHANS take possession of it, and appear before JULFA. Description of JULFA, and the situation of the ARMENIANS. The PERSIANS conduct towards them. The AFGHANS take JULFA, and exercise barbarities. Description of ISFAHAN. MAGHMUD repulsed at the bridge of SHIRASS.*

AS soon as the news arrived of the defeat of the PERSIAN army, the city of 1722. ISFAHAN was in the utmost consternation. The PERSIAN troops, who fled, from the field of battle, exaggerated the valor and conduct of the enemy, inſomuch that the inhabitants of this great city already ſtruck with a panic figured to themſelves the diſtreſſes which followed not long after, and imagined they ſaw the AFGHANS, with their drawn ſabres, practiſing all imaginable barbarities.

UNDER theſe extremities the king called a council, in which he repreſented the danger his perſon would be expoſed to, if he ſtood a ſiege in a city unprovided with neceſſaries ; and whoſe ruinous walls might prove but a feeble barrier, when defended by troops diſheartened by their late defeat. His danger had inſpired him with ſome

1722. some degree of fortitude ; and with an air of dignity, in a pathetic strain, he spoke to this effect : “ It is not entirely for the sake of my own security, that I propose to remove ; a prince, who is afraid to die with his subjects, is unworthy to rule over them : but the greatest part of the provinces still obey me : their fate is connected with mine ; for the rebel will be master of the empire, as soon as he has my person in his power.”

THE ATHEMAT DOULET confirmed the king's remarks ; adding, that it would be very imprudent to expose the king's person to the hazard of such an event ; therefore it was adviseable for his majesty to retire that very night to CASBIN, while the enemy, yet intoxicated with their victory, would take no measures to oppose his retreat ; that when the SHAH should be at full liberty, he might easily assemble an army, capable to raise the siege, and destroy the AFGHANS ; that at all events, the loss of ISFAHAN would be only the loss of one city, which MAGHMUD could not keep with so small a number of troops ; whereas, if the king should shut himself up there, the loss of ISFAHAN would draw on that of the whole monarchy.

THIS speech seemed to convince the greatest part of the assembly ; when the VALI of ARABIA, who had so basely betrayed his trust that very day, and yet, by a strange fatality, was continued in his office, stood up, and spoke to this effect : “ It is debating to a great disadvantage, just after the loss of a battle. Whilst men are affected with fear, in consequence of a recent misfortune, whatever their natural intrepidity and discernment may be, they are but ill capable of distinguishing the real magnitude of objects : even prudence loses its very nature, and betrays itself. A panic terror, caused by a trifling unforeseen accident, has snatched the victory out of our hands. Ought such an accident, which is not uncommon in war, to make us tremble before a weak and contemptible enemy ? Besides, were it presumed that their chief would lay siege to so large and so populous a city as this, he would not dare to enter it with such a contemptible gang of robbers as he has about him. What is there then to fear ? If he should be bold enough to appear before our walls, the presence of the king will encourage their defenders ; and the whole empire incensed at this attempt, will fly to the assistance of their sovereign. But if his majesty should deprive these loyal inhabitants of the opportunity of exerting that valor, which his presence inspires, such a step will not only stain his honor, but dishearten all his faithful subjects, and encourage the revolted : such a behaviour, much sooner than the force of arms, will open ISFAHAN to the conqueror ; and the rest of the empire, amazed to see a base SUNNI<sup>a</sup> on the sacred throne of the successors of ALI, will not stir in defence of their prince, because they will conclude his fate irretrievable.”

THE boldest opinion prevailed over the most prudent. SHAH HUSSEIN was ashamed to abandon his capital, and determining to defend it, nothing more was thought on, than how to make a vigorous resistance against the enemy. New levies were made ; the ruinous parts of the walls were repaired ; intrenchments were thrown up in those places that were most exposed, and especially at the head of the bridges which open a communication with the suburbs ; and every other precaution taken, that the proximity of the danger, and the inexperience of the ministers would permit.

<sup>a</sup> This ARABIAN WAS A SUNNI HIMSELF.



permit. The VALI of ARABIA was appointed governor of the town; and SHAH 1722. HUSSEIN sent messengers to the khans of the different provinces yet under his dominion, ordering them to repair with all the forces of their governments to HONSAR<sup>a</sup>, there to join the VALI of LORISTAN, whom he had declared generalissimo of his armies. Being more sensible than ever of the mistake he committed in treating the VALI of GEORGIA in so imperious a manner, the SHAH sent magnificent presents to this prince, and wrote to him in the most pressing terms to march to his assistance.

THESE regulations were prudent and suitable to the situation of affairs: but in the mean time proper care was not taken to provide for a siege. The inhabitants of the open country, flying from the cruelty of the AFGHANS, flung themselves in crowds into the city; insomuch that the public squares, the gardens, and the streets, were every day filled with this useless multitude. The king, who did not consider the difference between a common man and a soldier, not only neglected giving orders upon this subject, but seemed to forget that there were no magazines of provisions in the city: the dictates of fear suggesting to him, that his security must arise from his numbers, he forbade upon pain of death, every person in ISFAHAN, whether inhabitant or stranger, to stir from thence.

In the mean while, some ARABS who had been sent upon the scout, having brought intelligence, that the rebels had left on the field of battle, the twenty-four pieces of cannon, which they had taken in the engagement, a detachment of troops was sent to bring this artillery into the city: this they executed without any obstruction from the enemy, who continued quietly in their camp. Their inactivity was owing to the wavering disposition of MAGHMUD: he, who had hitherto shewn himself active and enterprising, now seemed astonished at his own victory. The little success he had at KHERMAN and YEZD; the vast extent of ISFAHAN, and the number of troops within its walls, gave him reason to apprehend, that the siege would be of long continuance; and that the governors of the provinces would have time to assemble, and might crush him with their joint forces; but he could not with honor, nor safety, abandon his enterprize. The return of the spies, whom he had sent into the city, removed his anxiety: by these he was informed of the great consternation into which the PERSIANS were thrown; and that if, instead of giving the enemy time to recover themselves, he had pursued them to the gates of ISFAHAN, he might have made himself master that very day of the king's throne and person. Upon this news he began his march, and plundering every place by the way, he encamped the 12th of MARCH with his whole army near CHEERESTAN, a town a little to the eastward of ISFAHAN.

THE PERSIANS finding the AFGHANS had abandoned the artillery above-mentioned, began to think they had no intention to lay siege to the town; but this motion of the enemy's army undeceived them, as to the fond expectation they had entertained, concerning the retreat of the AFGHANS. The first step they took in consequence of this discovery, was to abandon FARABAD, a country-palace three miles from ISFAHAN. SHAH HUSSEIN, who had exhausted the treasures amassed by the kings his

<sup>a</sup> This city is said to be about five leagues from ISFAHAN.

<sup>b</sup> It is hard to reconcile this conduct, otherwise than by supposing that the AFGHANS might be ignorant of the art of rendering the cannon useless, and finding them cumbersome, chose to neglect them.

1722. predecessors, to indulge his passion for building, had spared no expence to render this palace worthy of a great monarch: It was so spacious and magnificent, that he had often entertained thoughts of abandoning the capital, to make it his ordinary residence. This palace was encompassed with strong lofty walls, flanked at small distances with towers: Under the present circumstances, it ought to have been considered as a fortress which might incommode the enemy, or retard their operations; but the rebels were scarce arrived at CHEERESTAN, when orders were sent to abandon FARABAD; which was executed in so imprudent a manner, that altho' the PERSIAN garrison might have easily carried off the cannon, they contented themselves with burying them.

THIS was too gross a blunder to escape the AFGHANS: some of their squadrons who were upon the scout, hearing what had passed, marched with all expedition, and took possession of this castle and its artillery, on the 19th, without meeting with any opposition: they were soon joined by the rest of the army. MAGHMUD being now advantageously situated, and master of several pieces of cannon, determined to repair the loss of time, occasioned by his irresolution; and appeared the same day before JULFA.

THIS town is situated a mile and a half south of ISFAHAN, on the south banks of the river ZENDE ROUD<sup>a</sup>, on the side of which it is extended for almost three miles. It was founded by ABAS the GREAT, on the following occasion. The ARMENIANS having revolted against the TURKS, and submitted to this prince, he removed part of the inhabitants of ARMENIA into different provinces of PERSIA. Those of the antient JULFA, a town on the banks of the ARAS, were transported to ISFAHAN, from whence they removed, and settled in this place, to which they gave the name of their former residence. The people who had been drawn from ERIVAN, SHIRVAN<sup>b</sup>, and the lower ARMENIA, settled in the suburbs of ISFAHAN; but ABAS, desirous of improving this new colony, obliged them to remove to JULFA, together with some PERSEES of the neighbourhood of KHERMAN and YEZD; by this means, four new quarters were formed. The PERSEES were soon after obliged to retire from thence, inasmuch that of fifteen hundred families, which were at first computed in their quarter, there remained only three hundred, all composed of artificers and labouring men. The ARMENIANS being an industrious active people, applied themselves to commerce, and by their care and application this colony soon rose to a flourishing condition.

ABAS I. was too great a politician, to neglect any measure that might contribute to the welfare of such an establishment. He lent them considerable sums of money, without demanding any interest; he exempted them from all kinds of servitude; he granted them the free exercise of their religion; and in order to screen them from the jealousy and avarice of the PERSIAN officers, he allowed them a CALENTER of their own nation, to whom he assigned a place at those celebrated feasts, in which, according to the custom of remotest antiquity, the kings of PERSIA dine in public with the grandees of the realm.

SOME

<sup>a</sup> Signifies fresh river.

<sup>b</sup> Part of the antient MEDIA.

SOME of the successors of this prince followed the same maxim, and JULFA in a very little time became a considerable place. It had the appearance of a republic, founded in the midst of a foreign nation; no MAHOMMEDAN was permitted to settle there, and the rigor of the law of retaliation, caused the inhabitants to be respected even by the PERSIANS themselves. The ARMENIANS of JULFA thus encouraged by so necessary a protection, were in a thriving condition for many years; and carried on, in different parts of the world, a considerable trade, which was very useful to the state. But at length the court, forgetful of its own interests, grew tired of favouring them; and in SHAH HUSSEIN's reign, their privileges, which had suffered some diminution under his predecessors, fell into contempt. Under his government, no regard was paid to the law of retaliation. The ecclesiastics, offended at the equality which this law established between mussulmen and christians, introduced a custom, that if a PERSIAN killed an ARMENIAN, he should expiate the crime by giving a load of corn to the relations of the deceased. The ARMENIANS considered this treatment, as a mark of servitude: but they had no relief, and were equally a sport to the avarice of the great, and the insolence of the common people. While they groaned under these calamities, industry declined among them; the spirit of commerce, for which they had been so much distinguished, was in a great measure suppressed; and little more was thought of than to preserve their lives, and the property which they had already acquired.

THE ARMENIANS having been thus treated with contempt and injustice, it was feared they would cherish a resentment, which might induce them to change their masters. The PERSIANS, tho' they now stood in such need of their services, were jealous; and in this, as in many other instances, prepared the way to their own ruin, for fear of being undone. It ought naturally to have been expected that the ARMENIANS, who are brave and tenacious of their property, would have struggled hard to be delivered from a rapacious enemy: however, upon the first news of MAGHMUD's arrival, the king enjoined them to appear with their military equipage before his palace, intending, as he said, to entrust them with the guard of his person, during the absence of his household troops, who were going to march against the rebels. Flattered with this testimony of benevolence, they repaired to the place appointed in great numbers; but no sooner were they drawn up, than they were commanded to lay down their arms, and dismissed with strict orders to deliver up what arms might be still remaining among them. Tho' such a mark of distrust was sufficient to provoke a brave people; yet as soon as they knew that the AFGHANS were advancing, they desired succour, offering to maintain the PERSIAN troops at their own expence. They repeated their instances as the rebels approached; and finding that the VALI of ARABIA, who had promised to send them assistance, broke his word, they still put themselves in a posture of making as good a defence, as their situation and circumstances would permit.

THINGS were thus situated, when the AFGHANS appeared before JULFA: they attacked the place the very night they arrived, and the assault lasted two hours. In order to make the enemy believe they had regular troops, the ARMENIANS, during the engagement, called each other by PERSIAN names; and tho' they were very indifferently armed, yet they defended themselves with so much bravery, that the



1722. utmost the enemy could do, was to seize upon a little entrenchment, which had been thrown up in a hurry. Encouraged by this success, they waited for the VALI of ARABIA, designing to attack the AFGHANS in their turn; but this general soon made them sensible of the indifference he bore to the common cause. Instead of keeping his word with them, he prevented SEFFIE MYRRA<sup>a</sup>, who was marching during the attack at the head of a detachment of horse, in order to make a diversion, from proceeding any farther, representing that the king his father would not permit that the presumptive heir of the crown should expose himself to so dangerous an encounter.

THIS extraordinary proceeding, together with that of disarming the ARMENIANS, induced people to think, that it was the king's intention to sacrifice JULFA and its inhabitants to the safety of the capital. Nor is it altogether improbable, that this weak prince, through the instigation of his treacherous minister, the VALI of ARABIA, might imagine that the AFGHANS would be contented with the wealth they should find in that town, without persisting in so hazardous an enterprize as the siege of ISFAHAN. This ARABIAN prince, by religion a SUNNI, and actuated with the same ambition as his father, who thirty years before attempted to shake off the PERSIAN yoke, either held a correspondence with MAGHMUD, which is most probable; or was governed by the pernicious maxim of those generals, who, to prolong their own authority, do not chuse to terminate a war, when it is in their power to bring it to a fortunate issue.

THE ARMENIANS had not time to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the first assault, but were preparing against a second, when the besiegers taking the advantage of the obscurity of the night, went round the town, to try if a breach was practicable in their walls of earth<sup>b</sup>. A PERSEE in their service, undertook to make a hole through the wall; which having done to his purpose, an elephant was brought up to it, and by his means a part of those feeble ramparts was broke down: NAZR ULLAH, who commanded the party, took possession of the breach; and the ARMENIANS perceiving that he waited only for day-light to enter the town, deputed the chief persons among them, before the night was spent, to capitulate. The AFGHAN commander heard their proposals, as one who was sure of conquest: he obliged them to surrender at discretion, and to ransom their lives and effects, by a contribution of seventy thousand tomans<sup>c</sup>.

HARD as this condition appeared to the ARMENIANS, MAGHMUD added another more severe: he was hardly master of JULFA, when he demanded a certain number of young virgins, whom they should pick out of the most considerable families. The AFGHANS were masters of the town; and the ARMENIANS had no other resolution to take than that of submission. All the young women that could be found, who were remarkable for their beauty, and whose age exceeded nineteen, were brought before certain persons appointed for this examination: these chose fifty out of the number, and conducted them to FARABAD, adorned with their richest cloaths,

<sup>a</sup> This was HUSSEIN's second son, who, according to some accounts, was of a martial spirit, and therefore an object of jealousy among the eunuchs. He was now at liberty, otherwise the king's sons are said to have been kept close within the walls of the palace. <sup>b</sup> Those of ISFAHAN are of the same kind, as indeed are almost all the fortified places in the east. <sup>c</sup> One hundred seventy-five thousand pounds.

cloaths, and jewels, where they were presented to the conqueror. MAGHMUD kept <sup>1722</sup> part of them for his own harram, and distributed the remainder among his principal officers.

THE ARMENIANS are jealous in the highest degree of their honor, so that nothing could cut them deeper than to deliver up their daughters. The disconsolate mothers made JULFA resound with their lamentations. Some of those young maids were so shocked to see themselves abandoned to the enemies of their country, that they died with excessive grief. The AFGHANS, whose hearts could not but feel, in some measure, the distress of these young women, and whose religion by no means allows of any violence, sent those home who were most afflicted; and others were ransomed by their parents; insomuch that in a few days, there remained but a small part of them in slavery.

THE AFGHANS, humane in this respect, were inexorable in regard to the contribution. The ARMENIANS alledging that the chief part of their effects was in ISFAHAN, pretended to be absolutely incapable of paying such a sum. They offered, however, to enter into an obligation of paying it, as soon as they recovered their effects, that is, upon the taking of the city, or at the conclusion of a peace. This was making the fruits of the first success depend upon a new event. MAGHMUD appeared to be satisfied with the proposal; but as soon as he had their bond in his hands, he ordered three of the principal men among them, who had signed it, to be arrested as sureties; and pretending that his treasure was exhausted, he insisted upon their paying immediately what money they had in their hands, as part of the sum, and in consequence of this determination, he ordered their houses to be searched. The ARMENIANS, whose avarice had caused them to overshoot their mark <sup>a</sup>, began to be sensible of the folly they had committed, in endeavouring to evade the payment; but it was too late to rectify the mistake. The officers who made the search, discharged their commission with the utmost exactness; taking every valuable thing they could find, as gold, silver, jewels, moveables, rich silks, &c. insomuch that the inhabitants, except the security of their persons, experienced every act of violence and barbarity, as when a town is taken by storm.

ALL this wealth did not satisfy the avarice of the conqueror; recourse was had to tortures in order to increase it. The principal persons among the ARMENIANS were most cruelly bastinadoed, to compel them to discover the effects, which they, and their friends, were supposed to have concealed. None of them could withstand the severity of the torture, except DOMINIC JAKES KARDELANS, a man of weight and figure among his countrymen, and far advanced in years, whom all the rigor of this punishment could not oblige to discover any other person. From this man and his brothers they took twelve thousand tomans <sup>b</sup>, in ready money, and seven thousand <sup>c</sup> from SHERIMANS <sup>d</sup>; it was thought, that what they got by plunder, greatly exceeded the sum demanded: and yet it was valued at only twenty thousand tomans <sup>e</sup>, which he ordered to be struck off from the seventy thousand mentioned in the bond.

Y 2

SUCH

<sup>a</sup> See remark, Vol. I. page 80.

<sup>b</sup> Thirty thousand pounds.

<sup>c</sup> Seventeen thousand

five hundred pounds.

<sup>d</sup> These are remarkable great traders to this day.

<sup>e</sup> Fifty thousand

pounds in part of one hundred seventy-five thousand.

1722. SUCH acts of violence flung the whole town into the utmost consternation: the missionaries withdrew to ISFAHAN, each order leaving only one religious person in their house: and the bishop took the same resolution. The ARMENIANS were not ignorant, that the PERSIANS suspected them of holding a correspondence with the enemy, yet many of them had already thrown themselves into the town, and others were preparing to follow their example, when MAGHMUD ordered guards to be posted, to hinder any further desertion.

WHILE JULFA was thus a prey to the avarice and cruelty of the AFGHANS; MAGHMUD was preparing to besiege ISFAHAN. This city is distinguished, no less for the magnificence of its buildings, than for the vast tract it incloses; the circumference being ordinarily computed at twenty-four miles, including its gardens and suburbs. It is situated in a plain to the north of the ZENDEROUD, which separates it from JULFA. The source of this river is distant only three days journey: there are various accounts concerning the course of it, but it is agreed to be of very small extent. ABAS the GREAT caused a channel to be cut through the mountains, thirty leagues distant, by which means the waters of the river MAHMOUD KER were conveyed into the ZENDEROUD; which renders it as wide and deep, upon the melting of the snows in the spring, as the SEINE is in the winter at PARIS.

THE communication of the two banks of this river is supported by different bridges. The largest and finest is that of JULFA: it is three hundred and sixty geometrical paces in length, and thirteen in breadth; the two extremities of it are flanked by four round towers, with a covered gallery, which ranges on both sides, the length of the bridge; the whole decorated with the richest ornaments of PERSIAN architecture. It is joined by two causeways, made with a gentle descent to a double row of trees above three thousand paces long. This delightful alley is lined with terrasses and plane trees: it is called TOHERBAG, or four gardens, and is bordered with gardens which belong to the king. It is terminated by a large pavilion towards the town, and on the opposite side by a building, in the royal garden, called HAZAR JERIB, or thousand gardens. The town of JULFA on the one side, and the suburb of ABASABAD on the other, stretch along the ZENDEROUD. From the bridge of JULFA to the bridge ABASABAD is about a mile and a half: the last is so called from the neighbouring suburb, and serves as a communication to the western extremity of the town.

THE bridge of BARBAROUI, which is less distant than that of ABASABAD from the bridge of JULFA, is the third we meet with descending: like the latter it is lined with galleries, and is not so much inferior to it in architecture, as in length. About a mile farther, advancing eastward, is the bridge of SHIRASS, so denominated, because it is the roadway to that city; and near it is the village of CHEERESTAN. ISFAHAN was now in its highest splendor, and esteemed the largest and most magnificent in ASIA\*, with six hundred thousand inhabitants, exclusive of those crowds, who had fled hither for shelter from different parts of the open country, and were reckoned near an hundred thousand souls.

\* It is probable some cities in CHINA exceeded it.



SUCH was the importance of ISFAHAN, which MAGHMUD dared to besiege with 1722. so small an army. This young prince, who was still encamped at FARABAD, ordered entrenchments to be thrown up between the river and JULFA; and the same day he made himself master of this town, he commanded some squadrons to present themselves before the ramparts of ISFAHAN, to observe the disposition of the enemy. This detachment, supported by a considerable part of the army, began to execute their orders; but the PERSIANS, now recovered from their first panic, gave them so warm a reception, that they were obliged to retire, with some loss.

MAGHMUD then marched himself in person, intending to make a general assault. The 21st of MARCH he appeared at the head of his army, upon the banks of the ZENDEROUD; but finding the river overflowed, and the bridges strongly guarded, this action ended at the right, and in the center, in some random shots from their cannon, which were very ill served: the affair was more serious to the left; for the officer who commanded that attack, giving way designedly, drew the troops that guarded the bridge of ABASABAD after him; upon which he faced about, and brought on an engagement, in which about two hundred men on each side were slain. The PERSIANS still continued masters of the bridge; and a retreat being founded, the AFGHAN army retired to their camp, after riding and hollooming, rather than fighting, for the space of six hours.

THE besieged, who saw what passed from the tops of the terrasses, with which the houses of ISFAHAN are covered, began to alter the opinion which they had conceived of the enemy's bravery. Their spirits were raised upon reflecting, how ill this last attack had been contrived, and how weakly executed: they looked upon the slow advances of the AFGHANS after the battle of GULNABAD, and the great precaution their chief used in entrenching himself, as a certain sign of a timorous disposition; but they were soon obliged to fly again to the defence of their ramparts.

MAGHMUD being informed by his spies in the city, of the effect of his imprudent enterprize, had taken a sudden resolution to re-establish the reputation of his arms by some signal exploit. With this design his army appeared in battalia on the 23d<sup>a</sup>, and while some of his troops were sounding the river in different parts, as if they intended to ford it, the remainder fell sword in hand upon the PERSIANS who defended the bridge of SHIRASS. The AFGHANS behaved, on this occasion, with so much resolution and bravery, that the PERSIANS gave way at the very first onset. They were already masters of the bridge, and considering the confusion into which the PERSIANS were thrown, the rebels might have entered the town with them, had not ACHMED AGA, a white eunuch, and a soldier of approved valour, whom the king had now deputed governor of ISFAHAN, come up with a body of veteran troops, and renewed the engagement. He drove the AFGHANS back to the middle of the bridge; and while both parties were fighting there with equal obstinacy, some pieces of cannon, that were in battery upon the banks of the river, were pointed<sup>a</sup> at the AFGHANS, which cleared the bridge, and put the rebels to flight. ACHMED AGA pursued them as far as their entrenchments, and made a terrible slaughter.

<sup>a</sup> MARCH.

<sup>b</sup> This piece of service was performed by one JACOB, a COURLANDER, who from a cartwright, was made an officer of the artillery.

1722. slaughter. MAGHMUD had been undone, if the VALI of ARABIA had fallen upon him at the same time with his troops; but this prince now confirmed his treachery, in the esteem of those who were not infatuated; and sacrificed his reputation as a soldier, as well as the welfare of the state, to his flagitious purposes<sup>a</sup>.

## C H A P. II.

MAGHMUD sends a deputation to ISFAHAN with proposals of peace. He makes himself master of the bridge ABASABAD, and invests the city. The troops marching to the relief of the besieged are defeated. Gallant behaviour of the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN. Treacherous conduct of the VALI of ARABIA. Defeat of the KHAN of COHKILAN.

MAGHMUD was much disheartened at his disappointment in the last action; the promises of the VALI of ARABIA were now become his chief dependance; and yet what security could he have of the fidelity of a traitor? The vigorous defence made by the besieged, and the repulses he met with in his several attacks, alarmed his fears, lest his next attempt should meet with no better success. He knew, however, that ISFAHAN was destitute of provisions, and that it must fall, if he could cut off the communication with the country: but for this purpose, it was necessary to throw a bridge over the river; or to make himself master of one of those which had been so gallantly maintained by the PERSIANS. Besides, the greatness of the circumference rendered this project extremely dangerous, as the siege could not be turned into a blockade, without giving the khans of the provinces time to assemble; and the junction of any body of forces with those in the city, must render his enterprize abortive. In order to obtain a peace, the king had some time before offered him a large sum of money, with the sovereignty of KANDAHAR, and consented also, to yield up the province of HASSARAI, but refused to grant him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage. It was this refusal which determined MAGHMUD to lay siege to ISFAHAN, at a time when he was thinking how to secure an honourable retreat.

THINGS being thus circumstanced, he resolved to try what he could do by negotiation, of which his enemies had set him the example. For this purpose he deputed one of his principal officers, with a commission to offer to raise the siege, and agree to a peace, on condition that the king would give him one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with a portion of fifty thousand tomans<sup>b</sup>; and acknowledge him as sovereign, not only of KANDAHAR and KHERMAN, which he already possessed, but likewise of the province of KHORASSAN, which should be yielded to him by the same treaty.

SHAH HUSSEIN was under great perturbation what measures to pursue; but these conditions appeared very dishonourable. The manner in which the AFGHANS had hitherto

<sup>a</sup> As generalissimo he had fifty tomans, or one hundred and twenty-five pounds a day; but this was not the only motive which induced him to make a sacrifice of those whose pay he received. <sup>b</sup> One hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds.

hitherto conducted themselves, flattered him into a belief, that the governors of the provinces, and the tributary princes would have time to march to his assistance, and there was then no reason to doubt but the enemy would be crushed; he therefore rejected these proposals. 1722.

MAGHMUD being informed by the return of his deputy, of the little success of his commission, prepared to obtain by famine, what he no longer expected by force of arms. This enterprize also, was extremely delicate. The PERSIANS had by advanced posts, made a further addition to the circumference, insomuch that the AFGHANS could not divide themselves into so many bodies, as there were places to occupy, without running the risk of being beaten in separate detachments: these difficulties did not retard MAGHMUD, who secretly renewing his engagements with the VALI of ARABIA, applied himself to the execution of his project.

AFTER he had taken this resolution, he detached different bodies of troops to ravage the district of ISFAHAN. This territory contained a great number of villages, built by the orders of ABAS the GREAT, who peopled them not only with the natives of IRAC AGEMI, but likewise with several families which he transported thither from other parts of the empire. The plain is fruitful, and produces provisions sufficient to maintain both the inhabitants of the open country, and those of the capital. The AFGHANS charged with this commission, took possession of some of these villages by force, of others by cutting off the water, and many were abandoned upon their approach; insomuch that the number of those which resisted, and by tiring them out, escaped falling into their hands, was very small. The AFGHANS, according to the barbarities of the east, put most of the men to the sword, and brought off so great a number of the women and children into slavery, that upon making a distribution of them, five or six fell to the share of every private soldier. This large supply of female slaves induced them to send home the ARMENIAN girls, who were yet left in their possession.

THIS expedition served not only to cut off all forage and provisions from the city, but likewise to bring great plenty into their own camp. Their magazines being filled, they might now invest the place without being obliged to send out detachments for provisions or forage. This was of the greater moment, as MAGHMUD had waited in vain for a reinforcement from KHERMAN and KANDAHAR; however he augmented his forces by making soldiers of many of those who had followed his army as menial servants, supplying their places with prisoners whose lives he had spared.

FROM the affair of the bridge of SHIRASS, till the latter end of APRIL, that is, during the whole time they were plundering the open country, MAGHMUD amused the besieged with different negotiations; but as soon as he recruited his army, and his different detachments had joined him, he resolved to break off this kind of truce. The great object he had in view for the present, was to open a passage over the river, which a particular accident gave him a favourable opportunity of accomplishing. The head of the bridge ABASABAD was covered by an entrenchment, lined with some pieces of cannon: a detachment of GEORGIANS, to whom the defence



1722. fence of this bridge was entrusted, had obtained a supply of spirituous liquors : MAGHMUD was no sooner informed of this incident, which happened the last day of APRIL, than he detached fifteen hundred men to attack them. The GEORGIANS, as he had foreseen, were all stupified, or not able to stand, insomuch that after a small resistance they were cut to pieces. The AFGHANS having made themselves masters of this important post, secured the possession of it, by turning the artillery against the enemy. Part of the army filed off immediately over this bridge, and spread themselves round the town. Guards were placed at the principal passages, and scouts ordered to march continually from one of these posts to the other, so that ISFAHAN was that same day entirely invested.

THIS success alarmed the besieged ; they had for some time made earnest application for liberty to attack the enemy ; but now their request was changed into murmurs. They declared aloud that MAGHMUD dreading the bravery of the PERSIAN troops, which he had so lately experienced, was determined to avoid all occasions of fighting, and endeavoured to destroy them by famine : that to temporize on so pressing an occasion was betraying the common cause ; that it was no longer time to deliberate ; that their only resource was to march against the rebels, before hunger had destroyed part of the citizens, and rendered the rest unable to make use of their arms. This generous and prudent resolution, if it had been carried into execution, would in all probability have quashed their enemies, and it really was the only expedient left. The ATHEMAT DOULET and most of the grandees were of this opinion, and even the king thought so himself ; but the VALI of ARABIA had so disguised his treacherous purposes, as to have an absolute ascendant over the weak and fluctuating mind of this unhappy prince. After what passed, the advice of the VALI ought in all reason to have confirmed what might otherwise be only a strong suspicion of treason, yet he easily prevailed on HUSSEIN to temporize, in hopes of succours.

THE inhabitants of ISFAHAN now felt the dreadful effects of famine ; and all their hopes seemed to vanish. The governors of the provinces refused to serve under ALI MERDAN KHAN, VALI of LORISTAN, who, in conformity to the orders of the court, appeared at the head of ten thousand men at HONSAR, where he expected they would join him. CASSUM, KHAN of the BACTIARIANS<sup>a</sup>, appeared with twelve thousand horse, and advanced towards ISFAHAN ; but as AMAN OLA kept the field with a flying camp, he fell upon this KHAN when he was least expected. Two thousand BACTIARIANS were killed in this engagement, and the rest were dispersed and put to flight.

THE love which the VALI of LORISTAN bore to his country, gave him a quick sensibility of this misfortune ; though it was an effect of the contempt shewn to his authority. This prince had been banished for some time to KHERMAN, by the artifice of one of his brothers, who supplanted him in his command of VALI ; but as soon

<sup>a</sup> BAKTHIAR, in PERSIC, signifies happy. These are the BACTIARIANS situate west of ISFAHAN ; the ordinary residence of whose khan is said to be the town of HONSAR. These people inhabit the eastern parts of the deserts towards BAGDAT : they live mostly in tents, and are divided into two tribes, called CHAHAR-LING and EFH-LING. They pretend to have embraced christianity under CONSTANTINE the GREAT.

soon as he knew that the *AFGHANS* were marching towards the capital, he came to offer his services. His experience and valor, virtues so necessary in these circumstances, were so well known, that he was reinstated in his principality; and he justified this mark of confidence, by the bravery with which he behaved at the battle of *GULNABAD*. But not satisfied with having given this mark of fidelity, he had, since the commencement of the siege, amassed a quantity of provision, and designed to force his way with it into *ISFAHAN*. He was just upon the point of making this attempt; when his brother defeated the design, by a new piece of treachery.

THIS wretch, was ambitious of a dignity which he did not merit, and to which, as a younger brother, the order of birth gave him no right. At a time when this prince was gone upon a journey of some days, in order to make new levies, by some indirect means he obtained the command himself; and as he was now master of the convoy, and of a considerable force, without waiting his brother's return, he joined the *KHAN* of *HAMADAN*, and marched with him to the relief of *ISFAHAN*. But his perfidy, tho' it might have a mixture of virtue, was attended with a signal punishment. These two chiefs had six thousand men under their command, and expected to join the troops of *COHKILAN* upon their march; but falling in with the body of *AFGHANS* commanded by *AMAN OLA*, within three days journey of *ISFAHAN*, they were attacked before they had time to recover their surprize; near three thousand of their men were slain, and the remainder saved themselves by flight; among whom was the brother of the *VALI* of *LORISTAN*. *ALI MERDAN KHAN*, provoked at an action which defeated the chief hopes of the empire, soon after sacrificed this unnatural brother to his own resentment, and the public vengeance.

*AMAN OLA* having taken possession of this convoy, with all the baggage of the *PERSIAN* troops, was fully sensible of the great consequence of his victory; but he stained the lustre of it by his cruelty. Part of the *PERSIANS* had laid down their arms, upon promise of quarter; yet he paid no regard to his word, for he saved only those from whom he expected a considerable ransom, abandoning the rest to the inhumanity of his soldiers, who killed them in cold blood.

THREE miles from *ISFAHAN*, there is a town called *BEN ISFAHAN*<sup>a</sup>, situated on the declivity of a hill, and fortified with the addition of some art. At the foot of this place extends a plain, which several rivulets of running water contribute to render fruitful and agreeable. After the battle of *GULNABAD*, many flocked thither from the neighbouring villages, insomuch that there was a number of men capable to bear arms; and these had been extremely active in harassing the enemy. Having now received intelligence, that the *AFGHANS* were returning to their camp after their victory, much fatigued with their march, and without observing any order; they attacked them with so eager a thirst of revenging the death of their countrymen, that they put them to flight, and seized on their baggage and convoy.

*MAGHMUD* was so much provoked at this affront, which might have been attended with dangerous consequences in the present situation of his affairs; that he instantly

<sup>a</sup> IN ARABIC AS WELL AS HEBREW, SON OF *ISFAHAN*.

stantly put himself at the head of a body of cavalry, and overtook the enemy as they were returning home with their booty. Fortune however favoured this prince as little as it had done his general. These peasants gave him so warm and so resolute a reception, that after cutting part of his troops in pieces, they obliged him to turn his back, and to leave them a considerable number of prisoners, among whom were his uncle, his younger brother, and two of his cousins.

THE vexation caused by this fresh disgrace, did not affect MAGHMUD so tenderly, as his fears for the preservation of persons whom he loved, and who were so nearly related to him. As soon as he returned to his camp, he sent an officer to SHAH HUSSEIN, intreating him to interpose his authority in their behalf. Glad of an opportunity of doing an act of humanity, and still fondly expecting an accommodation, this prince immediately dispatched MIRZA RAHIM, one of the officers of his court. The AFGHANS escorted this messenger as far as BEN ISFAHAN: he made all possible expedition, but arrived too late; for at his entering the town, he saw the dead bodies of the captives: when he complained of their having acted so precipitately, in an affair of that importance, they stopped his mouth by telling him, that barbarians, who, contrary to their promise, had murdered their prisoners in cold blood, ought not to be surprized, if they should meet with such treatment in their turn, when there was no promise given. Tho' MAGHMUD might naturally have expected this event, it flung him into a kind of frenzy. He immediately ordered all the PERSIANS in his power to be massacred upon the spot; and not contented with so cruel a revenge, he forbid his men to grant any quarter hereafter to the enemy.

HIS mind was agitated for some days with the emotions of grief and revenge; but as soon as he recovered, and began to reflect seriously, he fell into a state of despondency. He had never flattered himself with the hopes of reducing ISFAHAN, but by the reputation of his arms; and when that was lost, he could hardly expect, that the VALI of ARABIA would be able to prevent the besieged from taking advantage of his disgraces, by attacking him in their turn; or else, that this treacherous general, alarmed at his ill success, would cease to favour those whom fortune seemed to have abandoned. In these embarrassing circumstances, he reinforced the guards of the bridge ABASABAD, and the other posts; and leaving only a small garrison in JULFA, he ordered the remainder of his army to return to FARABAD, as if he intended to secure his retreat.

THE fate of the empire was then in the king's hands. He might have easily forced some of those posts which were at too great a distance to be able to support each other; and if he had done that, or even made a feint towards it, there was reason to presume that the enemy would have abandoned their several stations; and instead of besieging, would have been besieged themselves. The ARMENIANS of JULFA, tho' suspected of favouring the rebels, continued faithful to their sovereign, to whom they gave exact intelligence of every thing that was passing, and signaled their zeal in a particular manner on this occasion. They gave notice to the court of the consternation which had spread itself throughout the camp of the AFGHANS; and in order to induce the PERSIANS to make a proper use of it, they offered to  
put



put the garrison of JULFA to the sword, as soon as they could see the king's troops engaged with the enemy. This was such a proposal as no one in their right senses could refuse to accept; there was the greatest probability of its succeeding; and the AFGHANS would then have been inevitably undone. If the bridge of ABASABAD had been attacked on both sides, at one and the same time, it could never have held out; whilst the detachments placed at the several posts, deprived of all hopes of succours, or even of a retreat, would have been forced one after another; and the remainder of the army, invested at FARABAD to all human appearance would have been reduced to the necessity of imploring the clemency of SHAH HUSSEIN. The least benefit they could expect from such an enterprize, must have been the opening a passage for the convoy which the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN had recovered.

THESE advantages were so evident, that the king could not help seeing them; and the troops received orders to act in consequence: but the VALI of ARABIA yet preserved the AFGHANS from their danger. This prince judging that his treacherous conduct would be discovered, if the enemy raised the siege, marched out of the town, but with a full resolution not to fight. He evaded coming to action for some days, alledging that he waited for a body of troops, which, according to his pretended advices was set out from one of the provinces, and could not be long upon their march. Having by this delay cooled the king's ardor, and given MAGHMUD time to provide for his security, he brought his army again into the city, giving this for a reason, that as the succours did not come, he did not think it prudent to hazard an action, which was to decide the fate of the empire, upon the promise of so suspected a people as the ARMENIANS of JULFA. This astonishing piece of treachery saved MAGHMUD, and a new event soon revived his hopes. The KHAN of COHKILAN, being ignorant of the defeat of the troops which were to join him, was in full march towards the capital, when he was attacked, as the others were before him, at a time he did not imagine the enemy so near; and after losing two thousand men in the engagement, he made the best of his way back to his province with eight thousand men.

### C H A P. III.

SHAH HUSSEIN *applies in vain to the VALI of GEORGIA. He declares his son TÆHMAS MYRZA his successor. TÆHMAS escapes from ISFAHAN. Famine in ISFAHAN. ACHMED AGA makes a sally, and is defeated by the treachery of the VALI of ARABIA. Death of ACHMED AGA. Treachery of MELUK MAGHMUD, governor of SEGESTAN. Surrender of ISFAHAN. Abdication of HUSSEIN. MIR MAGHMUD receives the diadem, and enters ISFAHAN.*

THUS was ISFAHAN doom'd to destruction. The affliction which this news occasioned, was increased by another piece of intelligence, received soon after it. The king depended upon the GEORGIANS as his deliverers; the valour of those people was equally known to the PERSIANS, and the AFGHANS; and there was no reason to doubt, but the enemy would raise the siege, upon the first notice of their

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march. From this persuasion, SHAH HUSSEIN wrote in the most pressing terms to VACHTANGA, immediately after the battle of GULNABAD; but this haughty prince not having strength of mind to overcome the mortification which this monarch had given him, by preventing his revenge on the LESGEES, adhered to the rash oath he had made on that occasion, and by his refusal to fight, sacrificed the whole empire.

As soon as it was known, that no assistance could be expected from the GEORGIANS; the apprehensions, which the inexperience of the rebels, and the advantages obtained over them, had in some measure suspended, revived with greater force. All hopes of success were now banished; and the minds of the people were filled with the ideas of their past misfortunes, and of those dreadful calamities which hung over their heads. It was notorious, that the governors of the provinces were fully resolved not to submit to the authority of the VALI of LORISTAN; and the defeat of the KHANS of the BACTIARIANS, of HAMADAN, and COHKILAN, was a proof that no good was to be expected, so long as they refused to unite under the same commander.

As the danger increased every day, the king thought it high time to enter into some measures, to prevent the whole royal family from being involved in one common ruin. This monarch had fourteen sons, and four daughters. Three days after the battle of GULNABAD, he had declared ABAS MYRZA the eldest, his successor to the throne, and resigned the care of the government into his hands. This young prince being of a very warm temper, and disdaining to dissimulate, began his administration with ordering the VALI of ARABIA, the first physician, and some other persons of figure, to be put to death: however they contrived to ward off the blow, by obtaining of the king to shut him up again in the seraglio; where, according to the policy of the state, he had been hitherto confined with his brothers. SEFFIE MYRZA, who followed him in order of birth, was substituted in his stead, but did not succeed better; for the courtiers judging him too weak to govern, about a month after he underwent the same fate. The third brother was not chosen, because the too scrupulous attachment which he professed to the duties of religion, seemed to disqualify him for such an office; so that TÆHMAS<sup>a</sup> MYRZA, who was next to him in order of birth, was towards the end of MAY acknowledged presumptive heir of the crown.

THE latter end of JUNE, the king resolved to send this young prince out of ISFAHAN. The desire of securing in his person a legitimate successor was not the only motive, which induced him to take this resolution, he hoped by this means, to deprive his generals of all pretence of disobedience, and that the difficulty they made to unite the forces of their respective governments, would no longer subsist, as soon as they had orders to assemble under the command of the presumptive heir of the crown. AMAN OLA, who had been sent with some forces to attack the troops which were marching to the relief of ISFAHAN, was not yet returned: his absence weakened the main body of the AFGHANS, insomuch that they could hardly supply

<sup>a</sup> This prince's right name is TÆMASHEB, which in the ancient PERSIAN language signifies most pure.

supply forces sufficient to guard the different posts, which shut up the several avenues to the town. 1722.

TÆHMAS MYRZA being determined to follow the directions of the king his father, set out from ISFAHAN the 21st of JUNE in the night, escorted by three hundred chosen horse. MAHOMMED EMIR, surnamed ASHREFF<sup>a</sup> SULTAN, son of MIR ABDALLAH, whom MAGHMUD had deprived of his throne and life in KANDAHAR, commanded the post which intercepted the communication between the town and the country, on the side of the gate TOKCHI. MAGHMUD's mother was extremely fond of this young lord, and had by her intreaties saved him more than once from the cruelty of her son. ASHREFF dissimulated the aversion he had conceived against the murderer of his father; and behaved with so much prudence and valor on every occasion, at the same time giving such demonstrations of zeal for the interest of his chief, that at length he gained his confidence, as well as the esteem of the whole army.

THIS post was the best guarded, as it was by the TOKCHI gate the city could most conveniently receive succours. TÆHMAS hoped to surprize it, and to force his way through, in order to retire to CASBIN. He advanced by the favour of the night; but could not escape the vigilance of the enemy, whom he found under arms, and ready to oppose him. Tho' the AFGHANS were inferior in number to the troops of TÆHMAS MYRZA, yet the engagement continued very obstinate and bloody, till ASHREFF, after losing several of his men, was obliged to retire to a neighbouring fort, to save the remainder of his people from the fury of the PERSIANS.

THIS event filled the besieged with some hopes: they flattered themselves that the presence of the prince would raise compassion in every breast; and that he would soon be in a condition to rescue them from the miseries in which they were involved. The AFGHANS, on the contrary, were in great consternation to hear that the heir of the diadem had escaped, and might soon return at the head of an army. MAGHMUD in particular fell into a transport of rage; the captivity of the whole royal family being the greatest advantage he had to expect from the taking of ISFAHAN. He was heard to say in the vehemence of his wrath, "that it would be to little purpose now to reduce the capital, since there would be still a prince able to dispute the throne with him." His passion prevailed over his reason so much, that though ASHREFF had behaved so gallantly, he accused him of holding a correspondence with the enemy; and condemned him to death.

So passionate and unjust a sentence however did not take place. ASHREFF appeared before an assembly of the principal officers of the army, to vindicate his innocence: he represented to them, that the post which he had guarded, was, like several others, weakened by the detachment made from the army under AMAN OLA, and consisted only of one hundred men when TÆHMAS appeared: that this prince was at the head of a much more numerous body of troops, exceedingly well mounted, and composed of several persons of distinction of the bravest soldiers about the court: that notwithstanding these circumstances, he went out of his entrenchments

to

<sup>a</sup> ASHREFF signifies most noble.



1722. to meet the prince ; but so small a number of soldiers as he had under his command, however gallantly they might behave, could not hinder the PERSIANS from forcing their way sword in hand ; and that, as a proof of his vigilance, thirty of his men were killed on the occasion. There is little room to imagine that ASHREFF was false to his trust ; for MAGHMUD having neither children nor brother of a proper age to succeed him, this young lord might be considered as his heir. The divan pronounced in his favour ; and MAGHMUD, disguising his suspicions, restored ASHREFF to his employments.

DURING this transaction in the camp of the AFGHANS, TÆHMAS MYRZA, after a forced march of twenty-four hours, reached CASHAN, he then proceeded to ROOM, and from thence to CASBIN. This young prince had so great a sensibility of the danger, in which he had left the king his father, that he spared no pains to compass his delivery : but private interest and the spirit of independency, intirely baffled an authority which had no force to support it ; so that neither his orders nor entreaties prevailed. The greatest part of the people in the neighbourhood of ISFAHAN, had been dispersed through fear ; and want of resolution now hindered them from uniting. Besides those bodies already mentioned, which found pretences to avoid coming to the assistance of the capital ; the troops of GANJA had excused themselves, alledging they were occupied in opposing the incursions of the LESGEES, who were endeavouring to take advantage of the troubles. The forces in TAVRIS had mutinied against their KHAN, lately sent them from court, and consequently refused to obey the orders of the prince : thus the king hardly received any assistance from near fifty thousand regular troops, which were quartered on those frontiers.

THE feudatory princes of the empire, being less interested than the natural subjects, in the preservation of the monarchy, shewed as little zeal on this occasion. Many considered the extremity to which their sovereign was reduced, as a proper opportunity to recover their independency. The VALI of LORISTAN, who kept still in the neighbourhood of HONSAR, seeing the impossibility of assembling an army, marched back with his troops into his own country.

THE only hopes which remained was in the SHAH SEVEN<sup>b</sup>. TÆHMAS having summoned this militia, most of their lords pretended they were not obliged to march, unless the king commanded in person ; and the small number furnished by the rest, consisted only of peasants ill kept and ill paid ; who, conceiving a dislike to military service, from the fatigues of their march, soon disbanded, and returned to their home, before they had reached the general rendezvous.

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<sup>a</sup> SHAH SOLIMAN, the predecessor and father of HUSSEIN, maintained one hundred and thirty thousand men on the frontiers, without reckoning his household troops, which were fourteen thousand men.

<sup>b</sup> The well affectioned to the king ; this is a name they give to a militia, very little different from that of the ZAIMS and INSARIOTS in TURKEY. It was established by ABAS the GREAT, and consisted of persons chosen among the nobility, to whom he gave lands, on condition of their leading a certain number of their vassals into the field, when the sovereign should have occasion for them. This body, which amounted at that time to three hundred thousand men, was the last resort in any extremity or sudden danger ; but as these employments were hereditary, and, under the late reigns, very little care had been taken to oblige the holders of these possessions to discharge their duty, they no longer looked upon them in any other light, than as legal estates. Of this a very melancholy experiment was made on the present occasion.

IN the mean while, the scarcity of provisions increased in ISFAHAN, and the besieged became desperate. The common people, as well as the grandees, plainly saw that the only way to open a passage for a convoy of provisions, was to attack the posts of the enemy. The king, yet incapable of supporting any resolution of himself, referred those who came to him to the VALI of ARABIA. This general flattered them with the hopes of the prince's return; and when their importunities obliged him to march out of the town, he came back immediately without making any attempt, under the idle pretext, that his astrologers declared that the hour was not favourable. Whether the besieged saw into his artifices, or the fear of starving prevailed over their obedience, they grew tired of these evasions; and in the beginning of JULY assembled in a tumultuous manner, demanding with loud cries that SHAH HUSSEIN should come forth, and lead them against the enemy.

THIS dastardly prince, who had shut himself up in the seraglio since the beginning of the siege, was far from yielding to such a proposal. He ordered some of his officers to let them know, that he would give his answer the next day; but the populace insisting that he should appear himself, the eunuchs dispersed them by firing some musket-shot from the palace. So extraordinary a behaviour, under such circumstances, might have occasioned a general insurrection, if ACHMED AGA, now governor of ISFAHAN, had not prevented the ill consequences of it. This gallant eunuch put himself at the head of a body of veteran troops, and joining as many of the people as offered themselves, he marched out of the town at the head of near thirty thousand men, who were soon followed by the VALI of ARABIA and his ARABS.

THE former fell with great impetuosity on one of the principal posts belonging to the enemy: the troops which guarded it were obliged to give way to numbers; and tho' part of the rebel army came immediately to their assistance, yet ACHMED AGA would have maintained his ground, if the VALI had not deserted him. Provoked at so infamous a behaviour, ACHMED could not dissemble his resentment: he ordered his men to fire on the ARABS; and sent directions also to TÆHMAS KHAN, one of his principal officers, to attack them. This division flung the troops into disorder; which the AFGHANS perceiving, charged them with new vigor, insomuch that the PERSIANS being almost hemmed in, were obliged to abandon the post, and retire under their ramparts.

THE intent of this sally was to open a passage for the convoy above-mentioned, which in all probability would have been followed with the raising of the siege. ACHMED, who had formed the project, spared no pains to render it successful; but neither his valor nor conduct could screen him from the displeasure of the king, who seemed to have so little discernment, as to shew no resentment against any but those who were faithful to him. This monarch was so infatuated by the artful discourse of the VALI of ARABIA, as to impute the misfortune entirely to ACHMED AGA: he blamed him openly for fighting in compliance with the importunity of the people, and without orders from the general: but above all, he condemned him for firing upon the ARABIANS: and refusing to give ear to what he had to alledge in proof of his innocence, much less to give him an opportunity of proving the per-

1722. fidy of the ARABIAN prince, he took the government of the city from him. The faithful ACHMED could not survive this disgrace, together with the approaching ruin of his country. Whether he took poison the night following, or grief overwhelmed him, he died a few days after; and the king too late regretted the loss of a man, whose distinguished zeal, bravery, and experience, might have saved his diadem.

THE death of ACHMED caused as much joy in the camp of the AFGHANS, as consternation in ISFAHAN. All hopes of succours were now vanished; and, to complete their misery, even the flesh of horses and other beasts of burthen was become very scarce. The besieged, thus pressed by famine, deserted in crowds; and tho' the AFGHANS massacred every PERSIAN who fell into their hands, the desertion augmented<sup>a</sup>. Whether ACHMED AGA had been the instrument of opening the eyes of the king, in regard to the VALI of ARABIA, or this monarch made an effort to change his fortune, by changing his general; he offered the command of the troops to LUTF ALI KHAN. This employment could not fall into better hands, if the choice had been made sooner; but things were reduced to the last extremity, most of the inhabitants having deserted in the manner related. A great number had perished for want, and the remainder, emaciated with hunger, had hardly strength or courage to make any desperate attempt: at length, this lord, not having the good of his country enough at heart to run the risk of falling a victim to those secret artifices which had destroyed his brother-in-law the ATHEMAT DOULET, absolutely refused the offer.

THE VALI of ARABIA was therefore left to carry on his treasonable practices; but SHAH HUSSEIN no longer expecting any succours from abroad, and despairing of the success of his people within the walls, resolved to renew the negotiation, which the enemy had opened at the beginning of the siege. He sent the KURSHI BASHI to FARABAD, with orders to offer MAGHMUD one of the princesses his daughters in marriage, with fifty thousand tomans<sup>b</sup>, and to yield to him the provinces of KHORASAN, KHERMAN, and KANDAHAR, in full sovereignty, which were the terms he had demanded. How advantageous soever these proposals appeared, MAGHMUD was too well acquainted with the situation of affairs, and rejected them with the same air of pride and disdain, as ALEXANDER once affected on a like occasion; the AFGHAN prince answered almost in the same terms as the GRECIAN hero: "The king of PERSIA," said he, offers me nothing that is in his disposal; this prince, and the princesses are already in my power; he is no longer master of those three provinces, which he offers me; the fate of the whole empire is now to be decided between us."

THINGS were thus situated, when news came that MELUK MAGHMUD, governor of SEGESTAN, was advancing to the relief of the capital. The king, touched to the heart at the arrogance of the AFGHAN chief, imagined that heaven had stirred up an avenger of his cause. These deluding hopes were augmented, when he heard that his

<sup>a</sup> About this time, father KRUSINSKI, the author of the memoirs, from whence part of this history was originally compiled, obtained leave to remove to JULFA. Two missionaries of the same order, attempted to make their escape to SHIRASS, with the FRENCH consul: one of these fathers was killed, with some other EUROPEANS. The consul was wounded on this occasion; however he escaped, with several others of his little troop.

<sup>b</sup> One hundred twenty-five thousand pounds.



his general with ten thousand men, was encamped at GULNABAD. This event flung 1722. the rebel chief once more into great inquietude. The siege had already cost him above two thousand men; and he could not pretend to be a match for this army, which was composed of regular troops, and also for the forces within the gates, who would certainly make some desperate effort to relieve themselves. Under this anxiety, he thought it more adviseable to tempt the fidelity of his new enemy, than to expose himself to the hazard of an engagement with an officer, whose valor and military skill he had already experienced.

NAZR ULLA was therefore appointed as his emissary to GULNABAD, with such magnificent presents\*, as rather betrayed the fear, than expressed the liberality of the donor. NAZR ULLA executed his commission like a man of abilities: he represented to MELUCK MAGHMUD, that the capital was reduced to the last extremity, and that the rest of the empire being attacked on every side, could not avoid its approaching ruin. He made him sensible of the uncertainty of the issue of a battle; and that the friendship of MIR MAGHMUD might, in the present circumstances, procure him advantages far superior to his expectations from HUSSEIN: he then laid before him the articles of his commission, and offered him the alliance and assistance of the AFGHANS, if he inclined to accept the sovereignty of one of the provinces of the kingdom.

THE magnificence of the presents had already dazzled the eyes of MELUCK MAGHMUD; the uncertainty of the issue of a battle also staggered him: but the ambition of reigning determined his compliance. He made KHORASAN his choice, with a view of being supported in case of need by the provinces of KANDAHAR and HERAT, which their common interest gave him sufficient reason to expect. Having therefore concluded the treaty, he set out on his march to take possession of his new dominions!

MESCHED, the capital of that country, which the policy of ABAS the GREAT had raised to so flourishing a condition, was greatly fallen from its former lustre. The ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS, who made incursions in this neighbourhood, at length took it by storm, after a few days siege; and not satisfied with stripping it of the wealth which had been hoarded there by the superstition of the PERSIANS, the inhabitants felt the utmost effects of avarice and cruelty. ISMAEL KHAN, governor of the province, unable to oppose MELUCK MAGHMUD, now took the resolution of retiring to CASBIN. Whether the ABDOLLEES and OUSBEGS had no further view than to pillage, and consequently had abandoned their conquest; or whether the thing was concerted with the AFGHAN prince, the new rebel was received in MESCHED the 20th of NOVEMBER, and the other cities of the province knowing he was a SCHIASS, made no difficulty to acknowledge him for their sovereign.

THE joy which the approach of this general had occasioned in ISFAHAN, now served only to heighten the forlorn condition to which the inhabitants were reduced.

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\* Seven horses magnificently caparisoned, saddles, bridles, a poniard enriched with diamonds, rich stuffs, and gold caalleans.

1722. The exorbitant pay of the military people had exhausted the SHAH's treasure, in so much that the next expedient was to carry all the gold and silver plate in the palace, to the mint; and when this was all gone, the king borrowed considerable sums on his jewels, of different merchants, but especially of the ENGLISH and DUTCH\*. At length, towards the latter end of SEPTEMBER, when there was neither money nor provisions left, this unfortunate prince ordered his ministers to treat for a capitulation.

MAGHMUD might at this time have regulated the conditions as he pleased; but this dangerous AFGHAN had further views. He foresaw that he could never be safe in ISFAHAN, so long as the inhabitants were greatly superior in number to his troops; for which reason he took his measures, that a considerable part of those who remained, might perish with hunger, before he signed the treaty. It is true, he might have destroyed them at once, by ordering a general assault, which, in their miserable condition, would have been the least act of cruelty; his chief officers pressed him to this for some time, giving for reason, that this action would not only facilitate the conquest of the rest of the empire, by the terror which it would spread in all parts; but moreover, that it would justify his invasion, since according to the MAHOMMEDAN law, there is no better title to a crown, than taking it by the sword. Whether he was afraid of losing part of his troops, or intended to preserve from the greedy hands of his soldiers, the riches of this so late flourishing a city, he lay still within his lines, during the last two months of the siege, amusing himself with the idea of his future grandeur; whilst the besieged flattered themselves with the hopes of an accommodation, which he never intended.

WHAT heart can reflect without horror, on the dreadful circumstances of the famine, caused by this artful conduct! In the month of AUGUST, horses, mules, and other beasts of burthen, were become so excessive dear, that none but the king, and the principal lords about him, or some of the wealthiest inhabitants, could afford to eat of them. Notwithstanding the aversion which the PERSIANS have from their religion for dogs, and some other animals, which they look upon as unclean, yet as many as they could find were consumed in a few days. The people afterwards fed on the bark of trees, leaves, and leather, which they softened with boiling water; but when this sad resource was also exhausted, they had no other support than human flesh. Never was so much of it eaten in any siege as this. What pencil can describe their hollow eyes, their trembling knees, their emaciated bodies! Death, in his ghastly form, appeared in their livid countenances, whilst they were cutting slices of human flesh to support the feeble remains of life: some were even transported by the violence of hunger, to murder their fellow citizens, or young children, to feast on their bodies. Under this lamentable necessity of perishing by famine, or of supporting themselves by means so contrary to nature, several poisoned themselves together with their whole family. The streets, the public squares, and the very gardens of the palace, were strewed with dead bodies, which no one had the heart or strength to bury. The water of the ZENDER-ROUD was so corrupted by the number of carcases thrown into it, that it was not potable;

\* The DUTCH alone lent him three hundred and forty thousand crowns.

potable; and in a less wholesome climate<sup>a</sup>, the air must have been infected to that degree, as to destroy what few inhabitants were left alive. Such was the miserable situation of this unhappy city for above two months. The ARMENIANS were received in JULFA, excepting such as had carried provisions to the enemy, contrary to the prohibition of MAGHMUD; but if any of the PERSIANS were so desperate as to go thither, they were sure to meet with death: neither age nor sex could protect them from the barbarity of the AFGHANS; the men were massacred, and the women and children thrown into wells.

THE 21<sup>st</sup> of OCTOBER, SHAH HUSSEIN, clad in mourning, went out of his palace on foot, and walked thro' the principal streets of ISFAHAN. This unfortunate monarch bewailed aloud the misfortunes of his reign, imputing them to the bad councils of his ministers; he endeavoured to comfort the multitude that surrounded him, with the hopes of their meeting with a better fate, under a new government. This speech from a prince, whose gentleness of nature was the fault which had betrayed him, and by which he was now reduced to this state of humiliation, after a reign of eight and twenty years, could not but make a sensible impression on the people, who in spite of their own misery, in the bitterness of their souls lamented the disgrace of their sovereign.

THE king having thus taken his leave of his subjects the 22<sup>d</sup> of OCTOBER, sent plenipotentiaries the day following, to sign the capitulation. By this act, he obliged himself to resign the empire to the conqueror, and to yield himself up into his hands, with the principal officers of his court. MAGHMUD, on the other side, promised that no ill treatment should be offered, either to the king, the nobility, or any of the inhabitants. This treaty being signed, the day following<sup>b</sup> MAGHMUD sent horses for the king and his court: this unfortunate prince having sacrificed five camels<sup>c</sup>, perhaps the only ones left, mounted on horse-back, in company with about three hundred persons, among whom were the VALI of ARABIA, the ATHEMAT DOULET, a brother of the VALI of LORISTAN, and the principal lords of the court. They moved on slowly, with their eyes fixed on the ground; the few inhabitants who had strength to see this mournful cavalcade, expressed their grief by a gloomy silence, which prefaged the sad effects of this melancholy event.

IT was now past noon, when two couriers arrived, to give notice to the grand master of the ceremonies of MAGHMUD's court, that the king was drawing near. These officers immediately entered MAGHMUD's tent, who to humble the PERSIANS still more, dispatched the same couriers back, with orders to the king to halt at the foot of a hill near the camp, under the pretence that MAGHMUD was asleep. Thus the unhappy HUSSEIN was treated with marks of servitude, even before he had quitted the ensigns of royalty; he tarried about half an hour at the place prescribed, and then obtaining leave to continue his march, he arrived at FARABAD, where the AFGHAN chief had his head quarters.

A a 2

The

<sup>a</sup> The air of ISFAHAN is remarkably rarified; it resembles much that of MADRID, as I was assured by a jesuit, who lived many years in both cities.

<sup>b</sup> The 23<sup>d</sup> of OCTOBER 1722, was the day on

which this catastrophe happened. <sup>c</sup> They were killed without any ceremony; it is not said for what purpose this sacrifice was ordered; that of one camel, which seems to be prescribed by the law, should have been made at MECCA, the 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding moon.



1722.

The grand master of the ceremonies introduced him into a hall, at the corner <sup>a</sup> of which MAGHMUD was seated, leaning on a cushion of cloth of gold. The king advancing towards the middle of the chamber, saluted him, saying, SELIM ALEIOM <sup>b</sup>. The AFGHAN then rose up, and returned the salute, with the same compliment; after which, the ATHEMAT DOULET conducted the king to another corner, on the left of MAGHMUD, where a place was prepared for him with the ordinary state.

THE king being seated, opened the conversation by saying: "Son, since the great sovereign of the world is no longer pleased that I should reign, and the moment is come which he has appointed for thee to ascend the throne of PERSIA, I resign the empire to thee with all my heart: I wish that thou mayst rule it in all prosperity." At the same time he took the royal plume of feathers <sup>c</sup> from his turban, and gave it to MAGHMUD's grand vizir; but this prince refusing to receive it from the vizir, the king stood up and receiving it again, fastened it himself to the usurper's turban, saying, "reign in peace;" after which he retired, and sat down. MAGHMUD continued sitting, while HUSSEIN was fixing this mark of sovereignty on his turban. Coffee and tea were afterwards served up; and the AFGHAN prince, taking these liquors, addressed himself to the king after this manner: "Such is the instability of human grandeur: GOD disposes of empires as he pleases, and takes them from one nation to give them to another: but I promise to consider you always as my own father; and I will undertake nothing for the future without your advice." After these words, HUSSEIN was invited into another apartment, which had been appointed for him; and four thousand AFGHANS were ordered to take possession of the gates of the city, together with the royal palace.

THUS the reign of the SEFFIES, after having lasted two hundred and twenty-three years, ended in the person of SHAH HUSSEIN <sup>d</sup>, the tenth successor of ISMAEL the first king, and founder of this dynasty.

<sup>a</sup> The corner is the most honourable place in ORIENTAL countries. It is also the most commodious, as it is the only one in which a person can lean on both sides on the cushions, which are placed round the walls.

<sup>b</sup> All hail: this compliment is seldom given but to people of the same persuasion in religion; it is the highest expression of respect.

<sup>c</sup> This plume of feathers is called the GIGA, and is the mark of sovereignty.

<sup>d</sup> We may with propriety say it ended, since his son TAEHMAS was too weak or too unfortunate to re-establish it.



F. Hayman inv. et del.

C. Grignion sculp.

*Hussein delivering his Diadem.*

## P A R T VIII.

## T H E

## REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

## FROM THE

ACCESSION OF MAGHMUD TO THE  
CROWN OF PERSIA IN 1722,

## TO THE

TREATY CONCLUDED BETWEEN SHAH TÆHMAS  
AND PETER THE GREAT IN 1723.

## C H A P. I.

*ASHREFF quits MAGHMUD's army. MAGHMUD ascends the throne, and receives the homage of SHAH HUSSEIN, and the grandees of PERSIA. He regulates the civil administration. TÆHMAS MYRZA takes the title of king. MAGHMUD orders new levies to be raised in KANDAHAR. He sends NAZR ULLA, with a detachment of troops, to lay siege to CASBIN. TÆHMAS retires upon the approach of the AFGHAN army. CASBIN surrenders.*

**M**AGHMUD had not yet taken his seat in the throne of PERSIA, when 1722. his fears were alarmed by a sudden event. ASHREFF remembered the danger to which he had been exposed on account of the escape of TÆHMAS MYRZA: he was apprehensive lest that very protection which had saved him, should be imputed to him as a new crime, by a prince who was upon the point of being absolute master. As soon as he received notice that SHAH HUSSEIN had submitted, he left his post, designing to retreat to KANDAHAR, under the escort of a hundred chosen horse. MAGHMUD, sensible of the consequence of such a desertion, sent NAZR ULLA in pursuit of him with five hundred horse: this general made such haste, that he overtook him at VERSENE, a village twenty leagues distant, from whence he brought him back to the camp. MAGHMUD had meditated his destruction,



1722. ction, but he was really more beloved by the soldiers, than himself: they talked openly of retiring to KANDAHAR, if any attempt should be made to take away his life. MAGHMUD therefore thought it best to forgive him, at least to dissemble his resentment.

His thoughts were now employed in regard to the ceremony of ascending the throne, which had been just resigned to him. The 27th of the month, being appointed for this solemnity, AMAN OLA posted centinels on the turrets, and other lofty edifices, to observe the motions of the people. The two kings marched out of the camp of the AFGHANS, and advanced towards the town. MAGHMUD, in order to shew himself to his new subjects, took his rout by the bridge of SHIRASS, so that he traversed the city to reach the palace.

THE procession was opened by ten officers on horseback, and about two thousand cavalry, among whom were several lords of the PERSIAN court. Next came his master of the horse, at the head of fifteen led horses magnificently caparisoned: this officer was followed by some musketeers on foot, and these by a thousand common infantry. Immediately after came the grand master of the ceremonies, in the midst of three hundred negroes dressed in scarlet cloth: these negroes had been chosen from among the slaves of ISFAHAN to compose the conqueror's guard. Forty paces from thence was MAGHMUD, mounted on a horse<sup>a</sup>, of which the VALI of ARABIA had made him a present, on the day of the abdication. The unfortunate HUSSEIN rode on his left. The princes were followed by about three hundred pages on horseback. The MUFTI<sup>b</sup>, and AMAN OLA<sup>c</sup>, whom MAGHMUD had appointed his grand vizir; MULLAH SAFFRAN<sup>d</sup>, and NAZR ULLA<sup>e</sup>, one of his generals; MOULA MOUSSA his high treasurer, and MAHOMMED AGA steward of his household, succeeded next. After these came the ATHEMAT DOULET, and the principal officers of the dethroned monarch, mixed with the crowd of AFGHAN officers. The whole procession was closed by a hundred camels, each loaded with one of the harquebuses already mentioned, preceded by a great band of musicians, and followed by near six thousand horse.

As soon as they had passed over the bridge of SHIRASS, SHAH HUSSEIN was conducted cross the gardens of the palace, to the place of his confinement. MAGHMUD seemed to think it impolitic to lead the conquer'd king in triumph: he continued his march, and soon arrived at the gates of the town. The inhabitants, notwithstanding their sorrow, felt some relief from their misery, in hopes of supporting their lives: this induced them to give some external marks of respect to their new master: They laid rich stuffs under his horses feet, and filled the air with perfumes. The guns on the camels backs were often fired, as they marched along; and in the intervals, the ten AFGHANS who walked at the head of the procession, pronounced loud imprecations against the followers of ALI.

IN

<sup>a</sup> It is said that this horse cost four thousand crowns.  
decides on points of law.

<sup>b</sup> He is also called AMAN OLA KHAN, tho' his title of KHAN has not been observ'd.  
<sup>d</sup> This was MAGHMUD's chief ecclesiastic.

<sup>e</sup> Among the AFGHANS, the judge who  
<sup>c</sup> NAZR ULLA was also deno-

minated NAZR ULLA SULTAN.

IN this order the new monarch came to the royal palace<sup>a</sup>. Having seated him-<sup>1722.</sup>self on the throne, he was saluted the second time, as king of PERSIA, by the captive HUSSEIN, who was brought here for that purpose : after which he received the oath of allegiance, of the princes, ministers, grandees, chief officers, and principal citizens. Soon after the artillery of the town and citadel proclaimed the news to the people ; and the ceremony concluded with an entertainment, which the SULTAN<sup>b</sup>, for so he was afterwards called, gave to the deputies who came in the name of all the citizens, to acknowledge his authority.

NOTWITHSTANDING this great change of fortune, MAGHMUD did not forget himself : it may be truly said, that in the beginning of his reign he ruled like a prince born to the throne. The most pressing business was to put a stop to the dreadful famine, which was still consuming the few inhabitants, he therefore gave orders for a supply of provisions ; and these were so punctually obeyed, that the very day he made his entrance, a batman<sup>c</sup> of bread cost only one crown, which the day before was hardly to be had at any price. He then applied himself to the regulation of public affairs, in which he displayed the abilities of a consummate statesman. It was equally dangerous to commit the several subordinate branches of the administration to his own officers ; or to continue them in the hands of the ministers of the late sovereign ; for he could no more expect experience from the one, than fidelity from the other. MAGHMUD was sensible of this inconvenience ; he therefore confirmed the PERSIANS in their employments, but associated with each of them a colleague of his own nation.

By this piece of policy, he not only formed ministers to his liking, but likewise prevented the jealousy and aversion, which his new subjects would have conceived, from his discarding the old ministry. He left no other post than that of lord chief justice<sup>d</sup>, entirely to an AFGHAN ; presuming that good sense and equity, were sufficient for the discharge of the duties of this office. Whatever was his motive, he had no reason to repent of his choice ; for the PERSIANS themselves were soon astonished, to see justice administered with more rectitude and integrity by a foreign nation, than it had been during the reign of their natural sovereign<sup>e</sup>. The people were screened from violence by the severest prohibitions ; and the safety of the conquerors was provided for by the strictest discipline. So prudent a conduct, insensibly diminished the consternation of the inhabitants, which was at length entirely removed, by punishing the treason of those who had been instrumental to his conquest, verifying that common observation, that we hate the traitor, tho' the treason may be convenient.

MAGHMUD ordered all those to be arrested, who contrary to the allegiance due to their sovereign, had maintained a correspondence with the AFGHANS during the siege. They were all executed as guilty of high treason ; their memory was branded with infamy ; their estates were confiscated, and their bodies exposed in the public market-place. The VALI of ARABIA, though the most criminal, was the only

<sup>a</sup> DEVLET KANE, the habitation of greatness. <sup>b</sup> SHAH HUSSEIN was also called SULTAN, which seemed to be an additional mark of honour, but SHAH is the proper title of the PERSIAN kings. This prince was frequently stiled SHAH SULTAN HUSSEIN, a writing which I have adopted. <sup>c</sup> 12  $\frac{1}{2}$  pounds ENGLISH for five shillings. <sup>d</sup> DIVAN BEGHI. <sup>e</sup> This might well be under such a reign as that of HUSSEIN, for it might be emphatically said of it, " Woe be to thee, O land, whose king is a child, and whose princes eat in the morning."

1722. only one who was not put to death. It was imagined, that MAGHMUD had made an oath never to take away his life; but perhaps he was afraid of provoking the ARABS by the death of their chief: however his villainy did not escape with impunity, for his estate was confiscated, and himself condemned to perpetual imprisonment. His hereditary principality, which was that of CHUSISTAN<sup>a</sup>, was given to one of his cousin-germans, who had served in the rebel army; and MAGHMUD engaged to put him in possession of it, as soon as the situation of his affairs would permit. The manner in which he behaved to the late ATHEMAT DOULET, was not less agreeable to the PERSIANS. This minister had the courage to put a restriction on the oath of allegiance, which he swore to the new sovereign, by begging to be excused from ever bearing arms against prince TÆHMAS. MAGHMUD carried his policy on this occasion so far, as publicly to commend the generous behaviour of that minister; and even affected to shew him a particular esteem and confidence on that very account.

The PERSIANS were not the only people who had reason to commend the beginning of the new reign. The consuls of EUROPEAN nations were confirmed in their privileges; and the missionaries obtained the free exercise of their religion in their churches in ISFAHAN and JULFA. Such appearances of equity in a prince, who had been hitherto considered as a chief of banditti, engaged part of the inhabitants to return, who had fled for shelter to the country. SHAH HUSSEIN was almost the only person in the empire, who had any occasion to complain. MAGHMUD took from him a great number of young women slaves, who composed his harram, and distributed them among his principal officers. This monarch had carried his sensuality to such a height, as to render all his subjects tributary to his pleasures: the influence of his eunuchs, which was the ruin of the empire, arose from his boundless gratifications. However, he was now reduced to the company of five of his women, and five domestics. The princes of the blood were shut up in another quarter of the palace, and guarded in the same manner as himself, by a hundred men. MAGHMUD, to all appearance, acted thus from a spirit of oeconomy; for in other respects he shewed a great regard for this prince, consulting him on every occasion, and omitting nothing in his power that might sooth his misfortunes. SHAH HUSSEIN, before his abdication, had married one of his daughters to the SEDR<sup>b</sup>: the new sultan followed this example, and gave away the eldest of the remaining princeesses in marriage to his MUFTI; and was married himself to the youngest with great solemnity. This respectful behaviour, joined to the necessity of obeying, induced the dethroned monarch at length to write a circular letter, by which he ratified his abdication, and enjoined all the people to acknowledge the victor's authority.

DURING these transactions, TÆHMAS MYRZA, who was at CASBIN, having heard of the surrender of ISFAHAN, and the cession of the crown, took the title of SHAH, and was acknowledged as such by the provinces which continued in their allegiance. This step served as a pretext to gratify the avarice of MAGHMUD; for he no sooner heard of it, than he demanded a hundred and twenty thousand tomans<sup>c</sup> of the city to

<sup>a</sup> The ancient SUSIANA. The ARABS call this province after the name of its capital AHOVAS. It borders upon the PERSIAN gulph, and the banks of the EUPHRATES.

<sup>b</sup> SEDR AL SCHERIAN, chief justice. The TURKS call this officer MUFTI, and the AFGHANS MIANGI.

<sup>c</sup> Three hundred thousand pounds.



to defray the expences of the war. At the same time he laid a tax of twenty thousand tomans<sup>a</sup> on HUSSEIN's first physician: this man had been for a long time his master's chief favourite, and was charged with having made no other use of his credit, than to hoard up immense riches, and to destroy the prime minister FATEY ALI KHAN, by an artifice, which occasioned the total subversion of the state. As these circumstances had rendered him odious to the PERSIANS, the AFGHANS made no scruple of treating him with the utmost rigour. His treasure, and the sum which the inhabitants were obliged to pay, having been carried to the coffers of the new king, the great treasurer, MOULA MOUSSAH, received orders to repair to KANDAHAR, and to employ these sums in making new levies: accordingly he set out soon after.

MAGHMUD hearing that CASBIN was one of those cities which acknowledged prince TÆHMAS, seemed to be much offended. It is pretended that his design was to yield that city and its dependencies in full sovereignty to AMAN OLA, as an equivalent for the throne and treasures of SHAH HUSSEIN; which according to their original compact, he ought to have shared with him. MAGHMUD now entrusted this general with a detachment of six thousand AFGHANS, and four thousand foreign troops. ASHREFF and NAZR ULLA joined this little army, and towards the end of NOVEMBER they marched from ISFAHAN.

TÆHMAS, presuming that the AFGHANS would not open the campaign at the end of autumn, when the weather is severe in those parts, had, by the advice of his ministers, sent his troops into quarters: he was therefore in no capacity of making head against the enemy. As soon as he heard of their approach, he withdrew to ZENGAN, and from thence to TAVRIS, in circumstances very unsuitable to the dignity of a sovereign. The cities of CASHAN, KOOM, and KIARE, which lay in the road, sent deputies to meet the AFGHANS, and to ransom themselves from pillage. AMAN OLA encamped the 20th of DECEMBER within three leagues of CASBIN; and the inhabitants sent deputies to meet, and conduct him into the city with military honours. He took up his quarters, with great part of his army, in the palace<sup>b</sup>, while the rest of the troops were lodged in the houses of the citizens.

THE joy which this news occasioned at MAGHMUD's court, was allayed by another piece of intelligence, which came soon after. MOULA MOUSSA, who was commissioned to convoy the treasure to KANDAHAR, had entered the province of SEGESTAN without any opposition; but MYRZA ISMAEL, governor of BANDA, a strong fortress in that province, having attacked him on his march, MOUSSA and his convoy were put to flight, and obliged to abandon the treasure. It is affirmed that the money amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand tomans<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Fifty thousand pounds.

<sup>b</sup> See Vol. I. pag. 156, 157.

<sup>c</sup> Three hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds, which some historians report to have been sent to SHAH TÆHMAS by ISMAEL.