

CHAP. II.

PETER the GREAT invades the northern provinces of PERSIA. PERSIA threatened by the TURKS. CASBIN takes up arms against the AFGHANS. MAGHMUD massacres the PERSIAN lords. Arrival of the TURKISH envoy. NAZR ULLA's excursions. Distress of ISFAHAN.

1722. **M**AGHMUD was not the only formidable enemy, that appeared in arms against the crown of PERSIA. PETER the GREAT being convinced that commerce is the only source of riches, and consequently the basis of the splendor of a state, designed to open a communication between the CASPIAN and EUXINE seas, by joining the VOLGA and the DON^a; as he had already opened a safe communication by a canal, between the VOLGA and the NEVA, which communicates with the BAL-TIC. By this means he had rendered ST. PETERSBURG, on the side of EUROPE, what ASTRACHAN was on the side of ASIA. As he was sensible, that the commerce of ASIA could not be conveniently carried on but by the CASPIAN sea, he ordered a chart of it to be made; he likewise sent prince BECKAWITZ^b into TARTARY, where he was barbarously murdered. The cruelty with which the OUSBEGS massacred a whole caravan coming from CHINA in 1721, having revived the memory of this unhappy catastrophe, and also of the outrages committed by the LESGEES against the RUSSIAN merchants at the taking of SHAMAKIE^c; the RUSSIAN monarch was induced to send an ambassador into PERSIA. This minister was commissioned to make his complaints to SHAH HUSSEIN, if this prince was still upon the throne; and if he no longer reigned, to insist upon the usurper's giving satisfaction for the behaviour of the LESGEES, the OUSBEGS, and his other allies.

It is probable, that the real motive of the embassy was to examine the situation of the affairs of that kingdom, of which the RUSSIAN court had received but imperfect accounts. MAGHMUD, to whom the RUSSIAN minister addressed himself, made answer, "That he was desirous of living upon good terms with the CZAR, whom fame had represented as a wise and warlike prince; but as the people he complained of were neither his allies nor subjects, he could not prescribe laws to them, nor be accountable for their conduct. He therefore recommended to him, to provide for the security of his caravans by strong convoys, unless he chose to enter into an alliance with those nations through whose territories they were to pass."

THE CZAR was not satisfied with this answer. The opportunity was favourable to make himself master of the western shore of the CASPIAN; he therefore assembled in the neighbourhood of ASTRACHAN, an army of thirty thousand men, composed of those veterans who had served in the war against SWEDEN: these were joined by a body of TARTARS, COSSACKS, and KHALMUCKS. The 29th of JULY, he embarked on the CASPIAN, and anchored the 4th of AUGUST at the mouth of the river of TERKI, on the frontiers of DAGHESTAN. From thence a lieutenant was dispatched to

^a See Vol. I. p. 65.
See page 146.

^b See his history, Vol. I. chap. 29. p. 126.

^c By the LESGEES.

to TARKU, with orders to deliver to ALDI GHERAI, one of the princes of the LES-^{1722.}GEES, a manifesto, in which, according to the ordinary stile of such writings, the CZAR pretended, "That it was not any ambitious view of enlarging his dominions that brought him thither; but a design to rescue the king of PERSIA, and his loyal subjects, from the tyranny of the AFGHANS; and to chastise those rebels, for the disorders and excesses which they had committed against the RUSSIANS: he concluded with threatening severe punishments against those who should persist in their rebellion." These manifestos were also sent to DERBEND, SHAMAKIE, and BAKU.

DURING these transactions, a brigadier, who had been detached with a body of six thousand horse to take possession of ANDREOF, was attacked by five thousand of the inhabitants of that place; but he gave them so warm a reception, that he drove them back into the town, which was soon abandoned to pillage. The tenth of AUGUST the fleet landed the infantry at AHRAHIN near SULACK, where they threw up some entrenchments to cover themselves: here the SHAMKALL ALDI GHERAI, the lords of GORSKI and AXAN, and the sultan of a district, whose name was MAHOMMED, were presented to the CZAR: ALDI GHERAI received the RUSSIANS into TARKU. The end of the month the army resumed their march, passed the rivers MANAS, AHCHY, and BOYNAK, and encamped on the borders of NITZI. The SULTAN MAHOMMED opposed their march with a body of ten thousand men; but after a sharp encounter, his troops were put to flight.

THE first of SEPTEMBER the army encamped on the banks of the BUHAN, where they received intelligence, that the inhabitants of BAKU earnestly desired the protection of the CZAR against the insults of the LESGEES, who had vexed them with inroads for two years. As the army drew near to DERBEND^a, the governor marched out of the town, followed by the principal inhabitants, and presented the keys to the RUSSIAN monarch, who was received with the sound of a numerous artillery, and the acclamations of the people. Passing through the town, he encamped at a small distance from the walls, on the south side. The situation of this place, I have already observed, constitutes it the gate into ASIA. After this conquest, he resolved to return home: having therefore confirmed the governor^b in his office, and left a garrison of two thousand RUSSIANS in the citadel, he ordered part of his troops to march back: of these, some were re-imbarked, and others went by land to ASTRACHAN; those remaining being sufficient to extend his conquest the next year: he arrived himself in that city by sea the middle of OCTOBER.

WHILE the RUSSIANS were making themselves masters of the northern provinces of PERSIA, this unhappy empire saw a new storm impending toward the west. The port having been informed by SHAH HUSSEIN's own ambassador, of the extremity to which his master was reduced, thought of reaping some advantage by his misfortunes. The opportunity was favourable, as she was secured against her ancient enemy by the treaty of PASSAROWITZ^c. The spirit of faction, which generally pre-

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^a DERBEND, in the PERSIAN language, signifies a strong fortification; as in TURKISH, DEMIR CAPI, by which name they call this place, is a gate of iron.
^b The city is considered as distinct from the citadel, in the latter a RUSSIAN officer commanded.
^c Concluded the 21st of JULY 1718, with the emperor CHARLES VI.

1722. cedes the subversion of monarchies, had diffused itself from ISFAHAN into the western provinces; so that the TURKS had all reason to expect that they might extend their conquest with a rapid progress. Things being thus situated, the PERSIAN minister was ordered to depart from CONSTANTINOPLE in the month of APRIL; and the grand vizir turned his whole attention to improve these favourable circumstances to the advantage of the OTTOMAN empire. Such were the different motions of these powers to the end of this year.

1723. We shall now see what was transacting in the center of PERSIA, during the course of the ensuing year. The city of CASBIN had no reason to be pleased with the change of government; for AMAN OLA was hardly master of the place, when his insatiable avarice prompted him to treat the inhabitants with all the rigor which MAGHMUD generally shewed to conquered cities. These extortions, and the unbridled licentiousness of the soldiery, soon alienated the minds of the people. The yoke growing more intolerable every day, the leading men among them assembled privately, to consult on the means of delivering themselves from this oppressive tyranny. It was resolved that part of the inhabitants should attack the royal palace at an hour appointed, while the rest were to fall sword in hand upon the AFGHANS dispersed in different quarters of the town; and to prevent their signal causing any alarm, it was agreed to strike the first blow at the sound of the horn, which they make use of a little after sun-set, to give the people notice that the baths are ready.

THE eighth of JANUARY was the day fixed for putting their design in execution. The conspirators had made all the necessary dispositions, and were waiting for the critical moment for taking their full revenge; when some suspicious appearances determined them to anticipate the time. In the afternoon, they observed that the AFGHANS abandoned some of their posts, and took possession of others; and were assembling in a body, in a manner which seemed to express the fear of danger. Upon this the conspirators took to their arms with great precipitation, and, without waiting for any other signal, fell upon the enemy on every side with the utmost fury.

AMAN OLA, alarmed at the report of muskets, mounted on horseback, and went to the great square, whither the common danger had brought most of the AFGHANS. Both parties were animated with the spirit of hatred and revenge, and the victory was for some time dubious. AMAN OLA, though wounded in the right shoulder by a musket ball, maintained the combat, and encouraged his troops; but seeing them in danger of being overpowered by numbers, he was at length obliged to retreat to the palace, where not thinking himself secure, he went through the gardens by a private way, and got out of the reach of the enemy. The AFGHANS lost sixteen hundred men in this action; their flight was so precipitate, that they left all their baggage and treasure behind them, and their slaves recovered their liberty.

THIS melancholy news no sooner reached the ear of MAGHMUD, by an express messenger from AMAN OLA; than this prince resolved upon an expedient, to prevent

vent an insurrection in ISFAHAN. He ordered the cannon to be fired, giving out ^{1723.} that his general had taken TÄHMÄS MYRZA prisoner; and to confirm this report, illuminations and other publick rejoicings were made, which served as a pretext to double the guards, and to hinder any stranger from entering the city. This piece of policy could not be exerted upon a more proper occasion; for as the absence of AMAN OLA with his detachment had considerably weakened the army, there was room to apprehend, that the people of ISFAHAN might attempt to follow the example of the inhabitants of CASBIN.

THE uneasiness which this affair had created in the mind of MAGHMUD, was in some measure removed, by the return of the detachment under AMAN OLA. But how different was their appearance! When they set out upon the expedition, their numbers, their spirit, their intrepid countenance seemed to promise new victories; but the excessive cold, against which they were not provided, and the wounds which numbers of them had received, rendered them objects of compassion rather than of fear. The misery and hardships they had endured, destroyed many of them on the road, and the remainder were as harassed by their march, as dispirited by their defeat.

UPON leaving CASBIN, ASHREFF took the road to KANDAHAR with three hundred horse. He apprehended that this insurrection might be followed by a general revolt; and was moreover desirous of freeing himself from the danger, to which the jealousy of MAGHMUD continually exposed him; so that this little army, by no means appeared the same, as that which had left ISFAHAN two months before.

THE insurrection of CASBIN made such an impression on MAGHMUD, that he thought himself in great danger in the midst of a numerous and disaffected multitude, with only a handful of soldiers about him. The ordinary suggestion of his cruel mind under these circumstances was that of murder; for by putting one part of them to death, he hoped to remain more absolute master of the other. To prevent this barbarous expedient from causing the very insurrection which he apprehended, he determined to begin with those, whose credit, rank, or birth, might enable them to form or support a faction. With this design, the same day that AMAN OLA arrived, he invited the ministers, lords, and other PERSIAN chiefs, to a public entertainment. They came without any mistrust, to the number of three hundred; but as soon as they were seated, his guard fell upon them with their sabres, and murdered them.

AMONG these victims to infernal policy, were the great chancellor of the empire, the governor of ISFAHAN and his younger brother, both of them brothers of MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, prince of GEORGIA; the KHAN of COKHILAN, the grand master of the artillery, and most of the principal persons of note belonging to the court of HUSSEIN. The ATHEMAT DOULET was spared, in consideration of his brother's having facilitated the escape of the AFGHANS at the affair of CASBIN. The horror of this cruel execution, was increased by the circumstances attending the murder of a boy of twelve years of age. He was son to ROSTAM MYRZA prince of GEORGIA, and as he had been adopted by an AFGHAN, he fled for shelter during
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1723. the massacre to the officers of that nation, whose protection he implored with tears; but neither his tender years, nor the sollicitations of the officers could save him: he was torn from them and butchered.

THE bodies of those that were massacred, were exposed on the MEIDAN before the palace. To prevent their posterity from revenging this cruel action, MAGHMUD gave orders likewise for all their children to be murdered. The impious manner in which he relieved his dastardly fears of these boys, was yet more shocking. Two hundred young persons of the first nobility of PERSIA and GEORGIA, were led together from the academy where they were educated, to an open field; and being there permitted to run for their lives, the AFGHANS galloped after them, and enjoyed the horrible sport of chasing them like savage beasts, till they were all slaughtered. MAGHMUD, whose design was to secure the throne by the total extirpation of the nobility, to colour so flagitious a conduct, pretended that these young lords had formed a conspiracy against his life. His barbarous policy did not stop here: he had picked out of SHAH HUSSEIN's guards, and other PERSIAN troops, near three thousand men, and took them into his pay. These he assembled in an area within the palace, under the pretence of giving them an extraordinary allowance of PLEO; and while they were eating it, a body of troops, which had been posted there for that purpose, fell upon them, and cut them to pieces, before they had time to recover themselves.

MAGHMUD now imagined he might, without any disguise, securely destroy such as were objects of jealousy. Accordingly he gave general orders to his soldiers, to put every one to the sword, who had at any time received pay from the exchequer, either by way of salary, or pension. As the enquiry was committed to the soldiers, who were constituted in a great measure the judges of the sentence which they were to execute, the intentions of their chief were extremely well answered; for during fifteen days which this massacre lasted, the despondency of the people arrived to such a pitch, that one might see a single man leading three or four PERSIANS to execution. It was impossible to render such a series of barbarities excusable. MAGHMUD pretended that he had been informed the inhabitants of ISFAHAN, after the example of those of CASBIN, intended to rise up in arms, and to massacre all the AFGHANS. It is even believed, that he spared the lives of some PERSIANS of distinction, to give his conduct the air of justice, as if these had disclosed to him this pretended conspiracy.

THE third day of this tragedy, OSMAN AGA, whom the BASHA of BAGDAT had dispatched into PERSIA by order of the grand signior, arrived at ISFAHAN. A detachment of two hundred men was assigned for his guard, with orders not to suffer any one to come into the palace where he was lodged. The subject of his commission is not known: MAGHMUD suspected from the discourse he had with him, that he was a spy, who, under the sanction of the law of nations, was come to pry into the state of affairs. This prince, who was naturally of a proud and violent temper, would have paid but little regard to this law, if his ministers had not represented the inconveniencies which might attend the violation of it. He was therefore prevailed on, not only to dissemble his resentment, but also to permit that this TURKISH minister, in company with some AFGHANS who were appointed to watch him, should see SHAH HUSSEIN.

THE TURKS not knowing what was transacting at ISFAHAN, had sent to this unfortunate prince. Eighteen days after his arrival, this minister was ordered to depart. He had reason enough to think, that his presence had been disagreeable; for they searched him and his baggage twice at the city gates; and three miles from thence, upon visiting some chests which had not been opened in the town, two young PERSIAN women were dragged out of them, and stabbed upon the spot; some slaves of the same nation, who were disguised in a TURKISH dress, thinking to escape among the AGA's retinue, were served in the same manner.

In the mean time MAGHMUD used every endeavour to weaken the PERSIAN inhabitants of ISFAHAN. The blood which he had spilt, was not sufficient to remove his anxiety. He ordered a proclamation to be made, that whoever was inclined to quit the town, should be at liberty to retire; except a certain number of young PERSIANS whom he had chosen, in order to train them up to the manners and discipline of his own nation. In consequence of which, all those who were able to bear arms, and had not complied with the tacit orders implied in that permission, were secretly put to death.

THE few inhabitants that were left in the city could give him no further umbrage; he therefore applied his thoughts to those in the open country. Encouraged by the insurrection at CASBIN, many of these were in arms against the AFGHANS; especially the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN, who continued to signalize themselves, and even killed several of MAGHMUD's soldiers at the very gates of the town, from whence they also carried off some pieces of cannon. The probable effect of such an example, was not the only circumstance that disturbed the usurper. The provisions which he had caused to be brought into ISFAHAN were almost consumed; and as the insurrection of the open country hindered a fresh supply, his army was in danger of being famished in their turn.

To remedy these inconveniences, MAGHMUD gave orders to NAZR ULLA to take the field with a detachment of three thousand men. This general was repulsed at several little towns; however, he took some by storm, and obliged others to surrender; among other places KOOMSHA, a city situated fifteen leagues south of ISFAHAN, submitted to him. The supply he had raised in a country ruined by their late invasion, was not sufficient to maintain the AFGHAN army for any length of time: MAGHMUD therefore gave NAZR ULLA a reinforcement of a thousand men, with orders to make an incursion into the northern parts of IRAC AGEMI. This general set out accordingly the 4th of APRIL: the better to surprize the enemy, he directed his march through the deserts to the southward, and appeared suddenly in the neighbourhood of HAMADAN. The KHAN who was governor of that country marched out at the head of three thousand men to give him battle: but his troops being too raw to stand the fire of the enemy, were put to flight: the AFGHANS then made three attempts to take the city by storm.

WE have already observed, that these people had neither patience nor skill to carry on a regular siege; so that a single wall retarded their progress. NAZR ULLA being discouraged at the loss he had sustained in endeavouring to take the place,

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1723. contented himself with ravaging the country. As things were situated, there was nothing difficult in this undertaking. The terror occasioned by his sudden incursion, and the apprehensions which the people had entertained of the cruelty of the AFGHANS, were so great, that wherever he turned his arms, he found the towns and villages deserted. It is mentioned as a matter of astonishment, that during the whole course of this expedition, none but the keeper of the king's studs in KHOU-SISTAN, and the KHAN of HAMADAN, had the courage to oppose the rebels. The former indeed was most successful, with the two thousand men, who were appointed to guard the king's horses, he attacked a party of the rebels, and carried off a considerable number of camels loaded with plunder.

THE AFGHANS having pillaged at discretion, NAZR ULLA led them towards DERGHEZIN, a town situate within three days journey of HAMADAN, on the side of CASBIN. This town, and its neighbourhood, are inhabited by people of the same sect as the AFGHANS. It was the policy of ABAS I. to transport the inhabitants of conquered places from one country to another, with the view not only to prevent any danger from their disaffection, but likewise of depopulating the frontiers exposed to an enemy. This prince had removed these people from KOURDISTAN, to the territories of HAMADAN, about DERGHEZIN; where, according to their original custom, they lived the greatest part of the year in tents. This conformity of manners and religion, first gave the notion to NAZR ULLA of inviting them to ISFAHAN: he managed the affair so dexterously, that he persuaded their chiefs to agree to this migration. It is probable these might prefer the houses of the capital to their cottages and tents; but there was soon reason to think, that this change was not agreed to with the unanimous consent of the people, for numbers of them, biassed by their affection for their own habitations, deserted, and returned home again.

WHILE NAZR ULLA was ravaging this part of PERSTIA, MAGHMUD did not act more humanely towards the people of ISFAHAN, not sparing even the foreigners, as the ENGLISH factors there experienced; for besides a considerable sum in money, he took a large value in cloths and stuffs. The DUTCH EAST-INDIA company's factors were treated more severely: the merchants of that nation had sold, during the famine, a great quantity of bad sugar at an excessive high price; and as the extravagant dearness of every kind of provision had stripped even the wealthy of the greatest part of their money, the DUTCH laid out their whole capital, in purchasing at a very low rate the most valuable moveables and commodities in the city, as stuffs, silks, furs, jewels, &c. They were at length obliged to refund; for MAGHMUD ordered their standard^a to be beaten down; and compelled them to discover where they had concealed their wealth. They had found the means of remitting some part of their treasure at different times to BENDER ABASSI, yet the sum said to be extorted from them upon this occasion amounted to near four hundred thousand crowns^b.

THE INDIANS, whom commercial views had induced to settle in ISFAHAN, were also taxed at the rate of twenty-seven thousand tomans^c. After this MAGHMUD made a fresh

^a A kind of ensign or banner, like that used on board of ships, which the consuls of EUROPEAN nations put up before their houses. ^b One hundred thousand pounds. ^c Sixty-seven thousand five hundred pounds.

a fresh attack upon the ARMENIANS of JULFA. We have already mentioned that¹⁷²³ they gave a bond payable at the termination of the siege, and that nine of their chiefs had been arrested as sureties for the engagement, which still amounted to fifty thousand tomans. Whether it was thro' design or inability, these people had failed payment; but MAGHMUD sent for the principal of them, and caused the heads of three of the sureties to be cut off, among these was their CALENTAR or civil magistrate. After extorting some money from the rest through the terror of this execution, he at length permitted them to return home.

C H A P. III.

ZEBERDEST KHAN takes GHIEZ. The inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN surrender by capitulation. NAZR ULLA returns with provisions. A new colony of AFGHANS arrives from KANDAHAR. The VALI of GEORGIA deposed. NAZR ULLA is sent into FAR-SISTAN. MAGHMUD takes GHULPAIGAN. TÆHMAS's army defeated. Fate of LUFT ALI KHAN.*

IN the mean time MAGHMUD carried on the war with great vigor against the several towns situated in the neighbourhood of ISFAHAN; for this purpose he employed ZEBERDEST KHAN. This person had been taken prisoner by the AFGHANS twenty years before, and passed from the state of slavery, to one of the principal posts in their army; he now maintained the reputation of bravery, by which he had made his fortune. Without amusing himself, as his predecessor had done, in ravaging the open country, or in plundering a few defenceless towns, towards the beginning of MAY he laid siege to GHIEZ, a fortress before which the AFGHANS had miscarried more than once. This place was situated within three leagues of ISFAHAN, upon an eminence which commands the country, and was esteemed very strong. The KHAN summoned the garrison to surrender; and upon the governor's refusal, he sent some PERSEES to break open the gates with their hatchets: but the reception his men met, convinced him of the necessity of proceeding with greater precaution; and he resolved to undermine the walls, and open a subterraneous passage into the town. The work was directed by a PERSEE, whose profession was to dig wells: when it was completed, he ordered a detachment to make their way through it sword in hand. The besieged, astonished to see the enemy start up from under ground, a thing of which they had no conception, no longer resisted: most of them were put to the sword, and their wives and children carried into slavery. This conquest proved of great service to the AFGHANS, for it not only secured the neighbouring villages, but likewise engaged the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN to submit to their government.

WE have already seen, how the inhabitants of this town maintained the reputation, which they had acquired by the advantages gained over MAGHMUD and AMANOLA; and their example served to keep up the spirit of resistance in other neighbouring

* This is a town near CASHAN.

1722. ing towns. Hitherto they had been deaf to every proposal, but their present circumstances rendered them more docile: they considered that TÄHMÄS, whose name was hardly any longer mentioned, was not in a capacity to send them assistance; that the taking of GHIEZ enabled the enemy to blockade them more conveniently; and as it was now impossible for them to support an independency, they should expose themselves to inevitable miseries to no purpose, if they held out any longer. These reflections inclined them to acquiesce to the solicitations of ZEBERDEST KHAN, who demanded their surrender; but they were deterred by their apprehensions of MAGHMUD's resentment of the death of his brother and other relations, with the several damages they had done him. The KHAN however dissipated their fears, by offering that the capitulation should be signed by the principal officers of the army, who were to engage their honor for the strict execution of it. On these conditions they submitted to the yoke of the usurper; but MAGHMUD soon justified their suspicions: he could as little forgive the prejudices they had done him, as their having endeavoured to persuade the inhabitants of ISFAHAN to deliver themselves by a general insurrection from the yoke under which they groaned. His intention was to engage them in some step, which would justify his breaking the capitulation, and serve as a pretext to his vengeance. For this purpose he employed several persons, who feigned a detestation of himself and his government, and persuaded them to revolt. These people were too wise or too virtuous to be caught in this snare; and being as religious observers of the oath they had taken to him, as of the allegiance they had sworn to their lawful sovereign, they seized those emissaries, and sent them to ISFAHAN in irons, desiring MAGHMUD to inflict what punishment he pleased upon them. This mark of fidelity at length reconciled the treacherous usurper.

THE return of NAZR ULLA, after an excursion of three months, afforded no less pleasure to MAGHMUD, than the reduction of those two places. The apprehension he had been under, that the city would be depopulated by a second famine, was entirely removed when he saw this general arrive safe in ISFAHAN, with a great number of camels loaden with provisions and booty; also with many thousand DERGHEZINS, who might be considered as a new colony, not subject to be suspected, and entirely agreeable to the AFGHANS.

TOWARDS the end of JUNE appeared a second colony; this was a caravan of several thousand camels, which arrived from KANDAHAR; in consequence of the prudent measures which MAGHMUD took, at the very beginning of his reign. After the defeat of MOULA MOUSSA by MYRZA ISMAEL, by which a great treasure was plundered, he sent MAHOMMED NISCHAN, his grand master of the ceremonies, into that country with a fresh supply of money, to make new levies. This AFGHAN prince had observed, that his soldiers deserted in whole companies and returned home, purely from the desire of seeing their wives and children; he therefore entrusted this officer with eight thousand camels, to bring the families of those AFGHANS who were already in the army, as likewise of those whom he should enlist into the service. This precaution, together with his fame of having ascended the throne of PERSIA, rendered this caravan much more considerable than was expected.

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MAGHMUD now distributed part of the deserted houses and lands to the ^{AF-1723} GHANS and DERGHEZINS^a lately arrived; and finding that these colonies were not sufficient to re-people the town, he raised a new fund, and put it into the hands of MAHOMMED NISCHAN, with orders to employ it in raising fifteen thousand ^{of} more, and to bring them from KANDAHAR with their families.

In the mean time SHAH TÆHMAS continued at TAVRIS, contriving means to recover his dominions; but gave no demonstration of a capacity equal ^{to} the part he had to act. His conduct was indeed but a natural consequence of ^{the} manner in which he had been educated. According to the custom established by ABAS the GREAT, he had not been permitted to go ^{out} of the seraglio, till the very day he was named successor to the throne. This prince, tho' famed for his wisdom and valor, by an effect of his jealousy, committed the education of the princes of the blood to eunuchs, whose principal care was to keep them in ignorance. TÆHMAS came so rude and unpolished out of their hands, that he was obliged to rely upon the information and fidelity of his servants. This slavish method of education was productive of another inconveniency, for he was hardly released from the seraglio, when his favourite passions began to predominate. Thinking himself no longer accountable for his conduct, he abandoned himself to his pleasures, which neither reason nor experience had instructed him how to regulate. If to pursue the true objects of pleasure, as agreeable to the character of a prince, can only be the effect of wise instructions; what could be expected from this heir of the PERSIAN diadem?

He had already made one false step in discharging his army at CASBIN; and now he made another no less injurious to his interest. Soon after he was declared king, he sent a messenger to VACHTANGA, VALI of GEORGIA, with orders to repair forthwith to TAVRIS, and pay him homage. A resentment of this prince's behaviour in refusing to march to the succour of ISFAHAN, occasioned this summons to be couched in terms, which only served to irritate a person who was naturally haughty, and very little inclined to obedience. The VALI provoked at this treatment, despised the orders. He had already attempted to subject his territories to RUSSIA; and ^b now foreseeing danger from the disaffection which the people shewed to him, he wrote to CONSTANTINOPLE, offering to pay the PORTE annually twenty-four purses^c, by way of tribute, on condition she would maintain him in the possession of his government, and confirm the privileges which the kings of PERSIA had granted to the princes his predecessors, as well as to the nation in general.

THE VALI had not time to execute his project; for in MARCH following TÆHMAS deposed him, and nominated in his place, MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, prince of CAKET, who was also descended from the ancient kings of GEORGIA. The new VALI presented himself before TEFFLIS soon after, in order to take possession of his government; but not having a force sufficient to contend with VACHTANGA, who, contrary to the advice of the grandes of the nation, had given arms to the people; he was obliged to return to his principality. As soon as he arrived there, he assembled all ^{to} military people in his government, and entered into a treaty with his

^a St. ^{Sp} is called DARGUZZIS.

^b Towards the end of FEBRUARY.

^c Garouches

or purses, each of five hundred dollars of four shillings value, is two thousand four hundred pounds.

1723. neighbours the LESGEEES, who supplied him with a body of seven thousand men; the junction of these forces augmented his army so considerably, that on the 8th of MAY he appeared again before TEFFLIS.

VACHTANGA foreseeing this storm, had already concerted his measures. The inhabitants began to treat him publickly as a rebel, he therefore quitted the town privately the preceding night, and carried with him his family, and the great treasure which he had amassed during the course of a long reign. This haughty GEORGIAN now felt the punishment of his pride and disobedience, though very short of the dreadful mischiefs they had occasioned. Having wandered from place to place as a fugitive, in AUGUST 1725 he took refuge in ST. PETERSBURG; where, for reasons of state, and the connection he had with the RUSSIAN court, he found a safe asylum. The new VALI no longer meeting with a competitor, made his entrance into TEFFLIS. The grandees, and the inhabitants in general, were convinced of their former error, and received him with great demonstrations of joy; but he had not been long there, when he taxed them with fifty thousand tomans*.

In this interval the AFGHAN army was augmented by a body of six thousand DERGHEZINS, with a considerable number of TURKISH adventurers, whom MAGHMUD had taken into his pay, as well as by the recruits arrived from KANDAHAR. This prince was now in a capacity to undertake an enterprize of some moment, but apprehending that his absence might occasion troubles in his capital, he resolved to entrust the execution of his designs to the experience of NAZR ULLA. Thus the army was again divided into two bodies: this general having the most numerous under his command, received the SULTAN's orders to fall upon the province of FARSISTAN.

MAGMUD was of too active a genius to be long idle: leaving a sufficient garrison in ISFAHAN, he led the remainder of his troops against GHULPAIGAN, a town situated in a plain westward of CASHAN. The inhabitants of this place were strongly attached to TÆHMAS's party, and had neglected no precaution necessary to enable them to hold out a long siege. MAGHMUD caused his cannon to be fired against the walls, and then with his usual impetuosity commanded his troops to storm the town in three different places. The PERSIANS defended themselves with great resolution, but not without abandoning some of the works which they had thrown up.

THINGS were in this situation, when MAGHMUD received intelligence, that a new enemy had started up against him. The success which TÆHMAS had in reducing TEFFLIS to his obedience, raised the courage of that prince; and he appointed FENDOUN, KHAN of the KOURDS, to command his troops; and ordered the VALI's of LORISTAN and ARABIA, with the KHAN of COHKILAN to join that general with all the forces of their respective governments, giving him directions to march to ISFAHAN, and attack the usurper. FENDOUN KHAN was prevented from drawing any succours from those provinces, by the motion of the OTTOMAN armies; who having invaded GEORGIA, as we shall have occasion to mention more particularly, became masters of that country, and threatened the frontiers of PERSIA on every side. This general

* An hundred twenty-five thousand pounds.

general however having eight thousand men under his command, all choice troops, 1723. which TÆHMAS had assembled in the neighbourhood of TAVRIS, he might have rendered some service; but preferring plunder, he pillaged the quarter of the city where the ARMENIANS reside, under a pretence that these people favoured his master's enemies; and adding imposture to this act of villainy, he sent the heads of some of those who had been murdered on this occasion to the SHAH, as if they belonged to the AFGHANS killed in battle: the fraud indeed was easily discovered, as the heads of several ARMENIAN priests were known by the tonsure.

A GENERAL, so little a friend to justice, seemed to promise no great success towards retrieving the affairs of the fugitive king; however he determined to attack the enemy. He knew that MAGHMUD had marched out of ISFAHAN with only ten thousand men; and presumed with good reason that this army, already harrassed with the cold and continual rains, would not be able to withstand the joint attack of his troops, and that of the inhabitants of GHULPAIGAN. Flattered with this notion, he marched against the AFGHANS, but was soon put to flight, with the loss of two thousand of his forces. He then retired to his own country, whither he invited the TURKS, who, on condition of his fealty to them, left him in possession of his government.

TÆHMAS was thus punished for entrusting the command of his troops to a man, who had no military abilities; and whose fidelity he ought to have suspected, since he could not be ignorant that the KOURDS are of the same sect as the TURKS their neighbours. This event was followed with the loss of MACON. These new rebels having entered that place by surprise, put the garrison to the sword, and made themselves masters of that fortress, which in those countries is esteemed impregnable. The loss of this battle was also attended with that of GHULPAIGAN. Some of the inhabitants endeavoured to throw themselves into a fort contiguous to the town, but MAGHMUD cut most of them to pieces: the remainder no sooner beheld a barbed elephant brought against their walls in order to make a breach, than they submitted to the conqueror.

THE SULTAN having thus routed an army, taken a town, and obliged a fortress to surrender, returned triumphant to ISFAHAN. He then intrusted the command of his troops to ZERBERDEST KHAN, who soon after made himself master of HONSAR, a large town situate within five days journey north-west of the capital. Towards the end of DECEMBER this general marched against CASHAN, whose inhabitants, contrary to the allegiance they had sworn when AMAN OLA was upon his march towards CASBIN, had taken up arms in favour of SHAH TÆHMAS.

LUFT ALI KHAN, famous for the defeat he gave the rebels before KHERMAN, and afterwards for his disgrace at a time when he might have saved the empire, was not included in the massacre of the nobles already mentioned. MAGHMUD was desirous of gaining him over to his interest; and tho' this faithful subject had always avoided entering into any engagements prejudicial to his lawful sovereign; yet the SULTAN, hoping to win him, continued to load him with favours. LUFT ALI KHAN being thus esteemed and respected at court, might have spent his days in ease and tranquillity;

1723. lity; but his loyalty would not permit him to be passive: he thought it his duty to serve TÆHMAS his lawful sovereign. With this view he waited a favourable opportunity, and made his escape from ISFAHAN, designing to join the SHAH in TAVRIS.

THE flight of LUFT ALI KHAN, flung the AFGHANS into fresh apprehensions. They could not forget that this general, after the victory he had obtained over them, was just upon the point of crushing them in their own country. They knew that he was acquainted with their weak condition; and should he put himself at the head of an army, which his reputation might enable him to collect, it was hard to say what would be the consequence. MAGHMUD caused diligent search to be made for him, and promised considerable rewards to those who should discover him. They had not yet finished their enquiries, when the unfortunate LUFT ALI KHAN appeared in sight: for the people of BEN ISFAHAN having discovered him in their town, brought him to the usurper. MAGHMUD no sooner approached him, than forgetting his own dignity, he fell upon him like a mad-man, and hewed him in pieces with his sabre. How greatly the tyrant stood in fear of the virtues of this illustrious general, appeared by this barbarous and unprincely action; as well as by the privileges and favours, with which he rewarded the zeal and affection of the inhabitants of BEN ISFAHAN.

C H A P. IV.

The TURKS send an army into GEORGIA. The CZAR subdues GHILAN. Uneasiness of the OTTOMAN PORTE at the progress of the RUSSIANS. TÆHMAS sends an ambassador to the PORTE. ISMAEL BEG is sent ambassador to the court of RUSSIA, and concludes a treaty with the CZAR.

DURING these transactions in the interior parts of the PERSIAN dominions; in the month of OCTOBER the preceding year, the OTTOMAN court dispatched NISLI MAHOMMED AGA, as envoy to PETER the GREAT. As he passed through CRIM TARTARY, the KHAN informed him of the circumstances of this monarch's expedition into PERSIA. He took the road to ASTRACHAN, where he expected to meet the emperor^a; but hearing that this prince was set out for MOSCO, he changed his rout. NISLI MAHOMMED AGA had received a strict charge to make all possible expedition; but as soon as he arrived on the RUSSIAN territories, he was detained by the officer who commanded on that frontier, under a pretence that he could not permit him to proceed any further, without express orders from his court. This difficulty, which seemed to arise from too scrupulous an exactness in the officer, was not removed till the CZAR received news from NEPLEUOFF his resident at CONSTANTINOPLE. This monarch being then informed of the dispositions of the PORTE, commissioned one of his officers to receive the TURKISH envoy upon the frontier, and to conduct him to court.

NISLI MAHOMMED AGA then proceeded on his journey, and arrived at MOSCO, where he made his public entry the sixth of FEBRUARY. Some days after he was conducted

^a We use the word EMPEROR and CZAR in common; the former is most proper, tho' the latter is most familiar.

conducted to the audience of the CZAR, with the honours due to his character: he delivered his credentials, and begged that commissaries might be nominated to treat with him, concerning the affairs committed to his charge. The GRAND SIGNIOR's letter to the CZAR was conceived in very strong, tho' moderate terms: the OTTOMAN emperor intimated to him, that he had carried his resentment to a sufficient length against the LESGEEs; and, that as these people were SUNNIS, and consequently under his protection, he could not be an idle spectator, in seeing them reduced under the dominion of any christian prince. This was understood to signify, that if RUSSIA intended to preserve the peace inviolate, she must give up TARKU and DERBEND, and demolish the fort of SANTA CRUZ.

THE AGA explained himself fully upon the subject to baron SHAFIROFF, vice-chancellor of RUSSIA, and solicited strongly for a quick dispatch; but the CZAR, being informed from CONSTANTINOPLE that the TURKS were as desirous as himself to avoid coming to a rupture, deferred giving an answer.

WHILE the TURKISH envoy endeavoured to discover the motive of this affected delay, HAHDGEE DAOUD BEG, chief of SHAMAKIE, being alarmed to see DERBEND in the hands of a prince, who had taken up arms with a view to chastise him for his misdemeanors, sent a messenger to CONSTANTINOPLE, offering to put himself under the protection of the GRAND SIGNIOR. As this proposal facilitated the views which the TURKS had upon GEORGIA, it was received with great satisfaction; and the HAHDGEE was assured by the GRAND SIGNIOR, that to discharge the duties which his office of IMAN^a imposed upon him, he would soon rescue him from the yoke of the christians, and be revenged of the GEORGIANS, who had encouraged the enemy to enter their country. After which he nominated the HAHDGEE, KHAN of DERBEND, and in this quality he sent him the standards and horses tails, with which BASHA's of the first rank are honoured in TURKEY.

THIS event confirmed the PORTE in the resolution of engaging the CZAR to abandon his conquests. In order the more easily to persuade him to it, the GRAND SIGNIOR published a manifesto, declaring, that as DERBEND formerly constituted a part of his empire, and as the protection which he owed to musselmen in general, obliged him to assist the LESGEEs against the enterprizes of christian powers; he could no longer continue the peace with RUSSIA, unless the CZAR would withdraw his troops from DAGHESTAN, and particularly from DERBEND; which he could so much the less forsake, as there was still a mosque which was formerly built by the PORTE.

THE last reason was so much the more plausible, as the crafty MAHOMMED has forbid his followers to give up, either by capitulation or treaty, any of those towns where such temples have been raised. This manifesto was hardly sent into RUSSIA, and distributed among the foreign ministers at CONSTANTINOPLE, when the PORTE received letters, by which VACHTANGA offered, under the conditions already mentioned, to acknowledge the TURKISH sovereignty.

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^a Chief and defender of the law, and sovereign of the people who profess it.

1723. THE GRAND SIGNIOR, inclined to make advantage of these different proposals, gave orders to his BASHA's of the provinces in ASIA, to join all the troops of their respective governments to those of the BASHA of ERZERÖUM, who was named general in chief^a of the army designed against GEORGIA. And in order to provide against the enterprizes of the RUSSIANS, the garrisons were reinforced, and the magazines of the frontier towns filled with provisions. But the real designs of the PORTE were against PERSIA: this is manifest from her refusing the offer which the KHAN of CRIM TARTARY made to lay siege to ASTRACHAN, in order to obstruct the progress of the RUSSIANS on the side of PERSIA.

PETER the GREAT was in the same disposition, in this respect, as the PORTE, and was making the same military preparations. He gave orders for putting DERBEND into a state of defence, and for rendering the troops compleat. He then assembled an army on the frontiers of DAGHESTAN, under pretence that the LESGEEs threatened to make an irruption into the kingdom of ASTRACHAN.

IN the mean time he continued to amuse the TURKISH envoy, and insinuated to this minister, that the interest of both courts was to agree concerning the conquests they were to make in PERSIA; that this was the way to avoid any obstacles that might arise on either side; and that acting thus in concert, they might settle the government of that monarchy, in the manner most agreeable to their respective interests. And joining menaces to persuasion, he dispatched NISLI MAHOMMED AGA with an answer to this effect: that it was not his intention to make the least infringement in the peace, which he had concluded with the PORTE: but if she should attempt to oppose his views, he would take proper measures to cross the designs which the GRAND SIGNIOR might have against the countries situate between the two seas^b. At the same time he gave orders to transport the artillery, with ammunition and provisions, for taking the field; and leaving MOSCO, he returned the beginning of MARCH for ST. PETERSBURG.

IT is evident that the CZAR's proposals were equally advantageous to both empires: of this the PORTE was convinced, but it was difficult to put them in execution. The RUSSIANS and TURKS had in some measure declared war against PERSIA, one by invading DAGHESTAN, and the other by marching an army into GEORGIA; and it seemed by no means consistent for TÆHMAS to commit his interest to neighbours who were stripping him of his dominions.

THE PORTE had still greater obstacles to surmount. As soon as MAGHMUD was become master of ISFAHAN, he enjoined the inhabitants, upon pain of death, to break off all epistolary correspondence, and by the different precautions which he had taken on this occasion, the success of the siege had been kept a secret. Upon the return of OSMAN AGA from ISFAHAN, the COURT of CONSTANTINOPLE was informed that this prince had obliged SHAH HUSSEIN to resign his capital and his diadem. This great event had occasioned new deliberations. MAGHMUD seemed possessed of the qualifications and fortune of those conquerors, who in former ages had re-
vaged

^a SERASKIER.^b CASPIAN and BLACK SEAS.

vaged ASIA. The TURKISH ministers however were not so much afraid of his power, as embarrassed by his being of the sect of the SUNNIS as well as themselves. They concluded that their troops would refuse to fight against a prince, who, by the destruction of the PERSIAN empire, appeared as a hero of their religion. This difficulty increased, as they were to enter into an alliance with a christian power, not only to share between them the different provinces of a monarchy ceded by the abdication of SHAH HUSSEIN to MAGHMUD, but likewise to dethrone him, and to substitute in his stead TÆHMAS, a prince of the sect of ALI. Yet it seemed prudent to put a stop to the progress of a man, whose ambitious enterprizes already threatened the empire; and there was no possibility of effecting this with any security to the frontier, but by accepting the CZAR's proposal.

THE PORTE was thus in suspense between the fear of MAGHMUD's future success, and the hope of reaping some advantage from the situation to which he had reduced the kingdom of PERSIA. The CZAR, who had prolonged the negotiation with the TURKISH minister upon the same principle, gave orders that he should be conducted to the frontier by very slow journeys; so that he did not reach CONSTANTINOPLE till the end of MAY. As soon as he arrived, he assured the GRAND SIGNIOR, that the CZAR had no other intention than to support a good understanding with his highness; adding, that this prince had sent full powers to his resident, to act in concert with the PORTE, that no umbrage might be taken on either side.

IN the beginning of MARCH, GHILAN submitted to the RUSSIAN troops. About the same time IBRAHIM, BASHA of ERZEROUM, was joined by the BEGLERBEGS of DIARBECKIR, TREBESONDE, and several others, who formed an army of forty thousand men. The BASHA put himself at the head of them, and sent a messenger to MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, VALI of GEORGIA, demanding the delivery of the city and castle of TEFFLIS. The VALI wanted neither courage nor experience; but he had very few troops, and the taxes which he had imposed, alienated the affections of the people from him, in the very beginning of his reign. Under these circumstances he submitted to the OTTOMAN dominion, on condition that the SERASKIER would confirm him in his principality. The TURKISH deputy promised him this upon oath, and returned to give an account of his negotiation.

AGREEABLE to this convention, the TURKS marched to the walls of TEFFLIS the 12th of JUNE. MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN met the SERASKIER with a numerous retinue, and delivered the keys of the town and castle to him in due form. The TURKISH general received the VALI with great demonstrations of benevolence, and as a mark of honour gave him a vest lin'd with sable; but as soon as he took possession of the fortress, he ordered him to be arrested, verifying a GEORGIAN proverb. "To trust an OTTOMAN, is to lean upon a wave". The deposed KHAN found means a few days after to escape from prison; and retired into his principality of CAKET. In the mean time the PORTE nominated BACCAR, VACHTANGA's eldest son, for his successor:

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* TURKISH honour has had a reputation in past times; but most modern writers mention it as an imaginary thing.

1723. successor : but this prince was so averse to the new government, that a few months after his investiture he went out of TEFFLIS, under pretence of diverting himself a hunting, and voluntarily retired from a place, where he enjoyed only the empty title of sovereign.

IN the mean time the SERASKIER, encouraged by the reduction of TEFFLIS, cast his eye upon GANJA, and marched his army the autumn following, in order to lay siege to it. He made himself master of the suburb of the ARMENIANS; but the garrison and inhabitants of the town recovering from their surprize, attacked him in his camp. The TURKS being pressed hard on every side, abandoned their artillery and baggage, and fled with the utmost precipitation. They lost on this occasion three thousand men, and the SERASKIER, disheartened by this disgrace, retired with the shattered remains of his army to his government of ERZEROU.

THE reduction of GEORGIA made the TURKS amends for the uneasiness occasioned by the RUSSIANS taking possession of GHILAN. The courts of ST. PETERSBURG and CONSTANTINOPLE seemed now to triumph successively at the expence of the fugitive king of PERSIA. As their jealousy of each other increased with their success, they took such measures as they judged most convenient for their mutual security. The CZAR marched fresh troops towards SHIRVAN; and the GRAND SIGNIOR put AZOFF, and the other towns on the RUSSIAN frontiers, in a posture of defence.

TÆHMAS SHAH being thus oppressed on all sides, resolved to try his success in negotiation. With this view he confirmed the credentials which his father had given ISMAEL BEG, as ambassador to the court of ST. PETERSBURG; and nominated another for that of CONSTANTINOPLE. Both these ministers set out at the same time: the person appointed for the OTTOMAN PORTE was detained at CARS; but he dispatched two of his retinue in a secret manner to notify the subject of his embassy. These deputies took the opportunity of the GRAND SIGNIOR's coming out of the mosque at the feast of BEIRAM, to present their memorial to him. They were then introduced to the GRAND SIGNIOR and the musti, to whom they delivered their dispatches; the result of which was, that in OCTOBER following the PERSIAN ambassador was permitted to come to CONSTANTINOPLE. His commission was, to request the assistance of the TURKS against the AFGHAN rebels. The grand vizir being informed that an ambassador had been sent into RUSSIA upon the same errand, not only evaded a definitive answer, but reproached TÆHMAS for making such application to a christian power. This behaviour was in some measure owing to the reception which had been given at CONSTANTINOPLE, some months before, to the envoy of MIR MAGHMUD. The politics of the court at this time induced them to humour the affection which the people shewed to the AFGHANS; as if this step would prevent the establishment of TÆHMAS, and give them an opportunity to pursue the projects which they had formed, in consequence of the reduction of GEORGIA.

ISMAEL BEG, whom TÆHMAS had nominated as ambassador-plenipotentiary to the court of RUSSIA, was more successful. He arrived at ST. PETERSBURG the second of SEPTEMBER; and the CZAR, whose active genius was impatient of delay, fixed
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the fifth for the audience. This ceremony was performed before the senate, after 1723. the following manner: The ambassador, with his retinue, left their robes at the hall-door. He made his entrance, holding his master's letter up in his hand, which, after he had made his harangue, he presented to the CZAR. This prince gave it to his chancellor, who laid it upon the table, desiring the ambassador to draw nearer to the throne; which having done, upon his knees, he kissed the hem of the CZAR's garment, and afterwards his hand: at the same time the CZAR inquired after the king's health. The PERSIAN minister applying this to SHAH HUSSEIN, and believing he was dead, made no reply, but shed tears. The chancellor then informed the ambassador, that his majesty's ministers would answer the letter which he had brought; upon which he withdrew to the hall, where he left his retinue.

Soon after arrived news of the surrender of BAKU. The necessity of preserving a communication by land with GHILAN, had determined the CZAR to make himself master of that coast; in consequence of which, he had given orders to major-general MATUSKIN to embark with three thousand men at ASTRACHAN, and the 28th of JULY they arrived at BAKU. The general immediately wrote to the commanding officer, "That as the inhabitants had sued the preceding year for the protection of the emperor his master, tho' his majesty then shewed some repugnance to accept of their allegiance, yet in consideration of the friendship subsisting between him and the king of PERSIA, and through compassion for themselves, he had resolved to send a body of troops, with ammunition and provisions; therefore they ought to render themselves worthy of this favour by a ready submission, if they were willing to be considered as loyal subjects, and good citizens."

IN passing through ASTRACHAN, ISMAEL BEG had left a letter, which was now delivered, exhorting the inhabitants of BAKU to a submission; but the governor answered, that he could not admit foreign troops into the town, without the express orders of SHAH TÄHMAS. As he persisted in this resolution, general MATUSKIN began to cannonade the town, and employed the two galliots, which he had brought with him for that purpose, in bombarding it. The garrison of BAKU was numerous, and the commandant seemed determined to make an obstinate defence; but on the 7th of AUGUST he demanded to capitulate, and sent a deputation of the principal inhabitants to acquaint the general that he would surrender up the town.

THIS conquest created no difficulty in the negotiation with which ISMAEL BEG was charged. He was well acquainted with the melancholy situation of his master's affairs, and knew that he could not obtain any succours upon better conditions: he took no notice of the hostilities which he had in some measure authorized by his letter, but solicited the CZAR's ministers in so strong a manner, that they signed a treaty of alliance with him, the 23d of SEPTEMBER, on the following conditions:

- I. That the CZAR should pacify the troubles of PERSIA, drive out the AFGHANS, and re-establish the government.

1723. II. That TÆHMAS, as lawful sovereign of that kingdom, should yield in perpetuity to the RUSSIAN monarchy, the towns and dependancies of DERBEND and BAKU, with the provinces of GHILAN, MAZANDERAN, and ASTRABAD.

III. That he should furnish, at the prices stipulated in this public act, camels and provisions for the RUSSIAN troops.

IV. That hereafter there should be full liberty of commerce between both nations.

V. In fine, that this alliance should be mutually defensive.



PART

P A R T IX.

T H E

REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

TREATY CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE

EMPEROR OF RUSSIA, AND

TÆHMAS SHAH IN 1723,

TO THE

DEATH OF MIR MAGHMUD IN 1725.

C H A P. I.

AMAN OLA pretends to share the diadem. Surrender of CASHAN. Death and character of NAZR ULLA. ZEBERDEST KHAN takes SHIRASS. MAGHMUD loses great part of his army in COKHILAN. Conduct of TÆHMAS. The TURKS take ERIVAN. The ARMENIANS invite the TURRS. TAVRIS taken, and HAMADAN besieged.

WHILE TÆHMAS was thus engaged by his minister to yield up all the western and southern coast of the CASPIAN sea, with the rich provinces which compose it, MAGHMUD was in danger of being stripped of the sovereignty by the very man who had most contributed to his conquests. We have already mentioned that AMAN OLA followed him in this expedition as a confederate, and not as a subject. This general disdaining the superiority which the partner of his victories had acquired over him, dissimbled his resentment in hopes of indemnifying himself by the wealth which he expected to draw from CASBIN. It is pretended that MAGHMUD consented to his being declared sovereign of that city, and its district; but the bad success this general met with in that expedition irritated him so much, that he was hardly recovered of his wounds, when he insisted boldly

1723.

1723. ON MAGHMUD's sharing with him the treasure and sovereignty annexed to the PERSIAN diadem, agreeable to the compact which he said they had entered into upon their setting out from KANDAHAR.

REGAL power, divided between two persons, is absolutely inconsistent, even in a limited monarchy; and consequently impracticable in despotic governments: and as to the treasures, they were necessary to the support of the state. MAGHMUD therefore could not agree to these proposals; it was his interest however to carry it fair with an experienced general, who had brought a considerable body of troops obedient only to his orders. This circumstance seemed to presage the downfall of their usurped power. MAGHMUD amused him with different promises; till AMAN OLA perceiving that he was trifled with, resolved to keep no further measures. One of SHAH HUSSEIN's daughters, whom MAGHMUD had given him in marriage, contributed to inflame his temper, which was naturally fierce. She reminded him of the perfidy and ambition, of the avarice and cruelty of MAGHMUD; she made him also sensible of the danger to which his life was exposed, if he did not immediately remove out of the power of the tyrant; and at length prevailed on him to join his forces to those of TATHMAS SHAH, in order to drive away the usurper, and divide his spoil between them.

WITH this intent, towards the end of DECEMBER, AMAN OLA left ISFAHAN. As soon as he was out of the gates, he put the royal plume upon his turban^a; and, in order to deceive MAGHMUD, he took the road to KANDAHAR. MAGHMUD did not venture to oppose his march; he was afraid of increasing the number of his enemies; and perhaps was not sorry, though at the expence of part of his army, to be disengaged from a man who had the presumption to declare himself his competitor. But as soon as he heard that this general had altered his rout, he was so affected with a sense of the danger that might ensue, that he set out immediately in pursuit of him with what forces he could collect, ordering the rest of his army to follow him with all possible expedition; and in four days he came up with him.

IT was presumed, that AMAN OLA would not venture himself again into the power of a man, to whom he had given such occasion of offence, but rather decide the quarrel by the sword. Instances of caprice and inconstancy are very frequent among the eastern warriors: as soon as they came in fight, they ran and embraced each other. Whether the remembrance of past friendship stifled all reproaches, and made them sensible of their mutual interest; or that AMAN OLA did not depend on the fidelity of his troops, to measure his strength with that of the young conqueror; these marks of affection were followed by a reconciliation; and AMAN OLA was won once more by MAGHMUD's promises.

THIS prince artfully soothed the ruling passion of his disgusted friend, and made him the compliment of his own horse: they embraced each other, and renewed their former oaths on the points of their naked sabres. MAGHMUD sent him back to IS-

FAHAN,

^a This circumstance seems difficult to reconcile, if he put it on the right side, the same plume on the left side is worn by those who do not pretend to the sovereignty.

FAHAN, escorted by a body of horse : with orders to the governor of the city to pay 1723 him all the deference he could desire, except granting him his full liberty.

MAGHMUD having thus prevented the danger of AMAN OLA's resentment, obliged the troops belonging to that general to swear allegiance to him, and had the judgment to incorporate them with his own. He then joined the forces under ZEBERDEST KHAN, who had lately raised his reputation by a new conquest. Having blockaded CASHAN, the inhabitants intimidated by the taking of GHULPAIGAN and HONSAR, surrendered by capitulation. The KHAN shewing a religious regard to his promise, there was no plundering nor disorder in the town ; yet things were so critically circumstanced that he afterwards massacred a considerable number of those fit to bear arms, in order to secure a conquest, which he had not otherwise sufficient force to garrison.

AFTER this barbarous policy MAGHMUD joined the victorious army ; the news he had received from FARSISSAN, having brought him thither. NAZR ULLA, who had been intrusted with the reduction of that province, made himself master of all the towns and villages in his way, without meeting with any resistance ; the terror of his name having induced them to make a ready submission. Thus he arrived in the neighbourhood of SHIRASS without shedding any blood, but here his fortune changed. In the first attack at the siege of this place, he was wounded by a musket-ball, which put an end to his life. The loss of this general, who had the highest reputation as a soldier, plunged his army into the greatest grief. Of this they gave the most melancholy tokens, by the bloody funeral rites with which they honoured his memory. After the whole army had marched round his body, with colours trailing on the ground, they obliged their slaves and prisoners to perform the same ceremony, and then sacrificed them at his feet ; according to the barbarous superstition WHICH THEY HAD LEARNT OF THE INDIANS^a. They killed also the finest of his horses, the flesh of which, agreeably to the custom of the AFGHANS, was divided among the soldiers, as a funeral entertainment.

NAZR ULLA was in stature very tall, but ill-shaped. The custom he had contracted of keeping one of his eyes shut, procured him the name of the one-eyed lord^b, by which he was often distinguished. The incursions and robberies in which he had been exercised from his youth, had formed him early to military exercise, in which he acquired great reputation, and was esteemed by his own people as a consummate general. His great prudence, and the series of success attending it, made him suspected of having learnt the magic art, ascribed to the INDIANS. It was perhaps this prejudice that created an extraordinary confidence in his soldiers, who thought him invincible.

HE was fond of the ARMENIANS, whom he took openly under his protection, and in general of a mild and humane temper, behaving towards those who submitted to him, with a strict regard to his word, and with a certain clemency, to which the other chiefs were entire strangers. All nations reverence virtue, tho' it is not always attended

^a See Part XIV. chap. III.

^b KIOR SULTAN.

1723. attended with success, nor always the object of vulgar attention. Humanity in a soldier, whose duty calls him into scenes of blood, is an illustrious quality. The good inclinations of this AFGHAN, gained him honour even after death: for MAGHMUD erected a stately monument to him, near the burying-place of the ARMENIANS. The AFGHANS looked upon him as a saint, and expressed a high veneration for his memory. This was the more extraordinary, as they could not plead ignorance that he was a worshipper of fire; since there were two priests hired by the sultan, who kept the sacred flame near his tomb.

1724. ZEBERDEST KHAN was now appointed to succeed the deceased general, and for this purpose MAGHMUD returned with the army to ISFAHAN, where he arrived towards the end of MARCH. As he entered the city, he was struck with surprize and admiration, at an extraordinary event. A woman disguised in man's apparel, seeing his troops upon their march, rode up to them in full gallop, and falling sword in hand upon the first that fell in her way, who little expected such a female visiter, it is said, she killed about twenty before she was seized. This woman was a native of GEORGIA, and possessed the military disposition of that nation in so eminent a degree, that she had resolved to revenge the death of her husband, who was slain at the bridge of ABASABAD, when ISFAHAN was taken. For this purpose, she committed the care of her effects, and her two children, to her brother; and regarding neither the rigor of the season, nor the length of the journey, she set out from GEORGIA in a secret manner, in man's dress, well armed and equipped. She was brought before MAGHMUD covered with wounds: upon being informed of her sex, he admired her resolution, and gave orders that she should be treated with all the care and attention, which the greatness of her courage deserved^a.

THE news of NAZR ULLA's death, induced some of the cities and towns of FAR-SISTAN, which had submitted, to take up arms again, as if this single event secured them from any further danger. ZEBERDEST KHAN had therefore some difficulty to join his army, whom he found desirous of revenging the death of their late general. The glory of succeeding a man so much regretted, was a new subject of emulation to him; and indeed he omitted nothing that might contribute to the success of this new enterprize.

THE KHAN of the province remained in SHIRASS: he was a man unpractised in the military art, but loyal and honest; and from a consciousness that he was not possessed of skill sufficient to extricate himself out of such a difficulty, he had by presents and promises engaged MIR BAGHIR, brother of ABDALLAH, VALI OF ARABIA, to come to his assistance. This prince, who was esteemed a very good general, repaired to SHIRASS with as many of his people as were disposed to follow him; and took upon him the command of the town under the KHAN. The walls were in a good condition; the parts most exposed being covered with intrenchments. Frequent sallies from the town had almost induced the AFGHANS to despair; when the

KHAN

^a Military courage is a virtue much in esteem in the east, among people who live by the sword; but women are no where more defenceless than in ASIA. This story, if it is true, seems to be a stronger instance of female resentment than that of the SPANISH lady, who, after causing one who had been false to her as a lover, to be murdered, dug up his body, in order to enjoy the pleasure of tearing his heart in pieces with her teeth.

KHAN was so ill advised as to check the ardour of the garrison, by not permitting them to stir any more from the walls : this was the fault which had occasioned the misfortunes of ISFAHAN.

THIS step was soon followed by the inconveniencies naturally attending it. The spirit of the troops abated ; a scarcity of provisions ensued ; and the soldiers thought only of making their escape, to prevent being starved. The enemy being sensible of the advantage of such a desertion, favoured it, by granting a free passage. The scarcity increasing, MIR BAGHIR undertook to save the town, by making a vigorous sally : accordingly he marched out at the head of six thousand men, who surprized and passed through the besieging army. Soon after, he endeavoured to re-enter the town with a convoy, but was opposed by a body of troops, who tho' inferior in number, attacked him with such resolution, that his army was put to flight. This brave ARABIAN, whose character was the reverse of his brother's who occasioned the loss of ISFAHAN, stood his ground with only two hundred men, who, imitating his example, died like him, fighting gloriously to the last gasp.

THE cutting off so necessary and considerable a supply, was not the only advantage which the AFGHANS reaped from this victory. The country was ravaged, and the neighbouring towns kept so much on their guard, that the scarcity had been as great in their camp as at SHIRASS. ZEBERDEST KHAN was upon the point of raising the siege, when the taking of this convoy enabled him to wait at his leisure, till the enemy, overcome by famine, would be obliged to implore his mercy. He was not deceived in his expectations ; for SHIRASS was soon reduced to a very melancholy situation, numbers of the inhabitants dying with famine.

ON the 13th of APRIL the KHAN of FARSISTAN sent his brother to treat with the enemy. This resolution was followed by an easy and imprudent security ; for the AFGHANS perceiving that the besieged had neglected their posts, detained the deputy, and made a general assault. The PERSIANS, surprized and disconcerted, made very little resistance ; insomuch that the AFGHANS put every one they found in arms to the sword. The massacre being over, the conquerors plundered with their ordinary licentiousness. One remarkable incident is recorded of the punishment of covetousness : some of the soldiers having found in the house of a private man a considerable quantity of corn, which he had concealed in prejudice to the other inhabitants, they tied him to a stake in his granary, where he died with hunger ; revenging the death of many, whom this wretch had sacrificed to his avarice. Thus one of the most celebrated cities of the east was taken and sacked, after a blockade of near eight months : the AFGHANS not being able to reduce it otherwise than by famine. They lost before it two thousand of the troops of their own nation, and a considerable number of DERGHEZINS. The number of PERSIANS who died by the sword, was not so great as that which perished by famine.

ZEBERDEST KHAN exacted no more of the inhabitants by way of tribute, than what they annually paid to the kings of PERSIA. He then ordered them to collect provisions from the neighbouring countries, that he might send a supply to ISFAHAN, where it was greatly wanted. He had hardly settled the government of the

1724. city, when he ordered HUSSEIN AGA, one of the officers of MAGHMUD's household, with four hundred men, to make an incursion into the southern part of the province. This detachment penetrated without any obstacle as far as LAR, the capital of LARISTAN, a province formerly governed by its own kings. HUSSEIN AGA plundered the city with his small body of men, but the castle held out, and refused to capitulate. The AFGHAN commander then pushed on as far as BENDER ABASSI^a. This was the second time during the war that this city was exposed: in JANUARY 1722 it was pillaged, by four thousand BALOUCHES; but upon their attempting to break into the fortresses, where the ENGLISH and DUTCH companies had their counting-houses, they were repulsed with considerable loss.

THE AFGHANS now succeeded still worse. Upon the first report of their march, most of the inhabitants retired with their valuable effects; and the EUROPEANS prepared to give them a warm reception. The AFGHANS therefore thought proper to accept a supply of provisions, without making any hostile attempt. The greatest part of this detachment died by the malignity of the air, and the bad quality of the water, insomuch that they were reduced within two months to a very small number, who rejoined the army without making any accession to their riches by the plunder of this city.

THE surrender of SHIRASS having reached ISFAHAN, the AFGHANS were animated with fresh ardour; and MAGHMUD resolved to lead them himself to new conquests. Accordingly he set out in JUNE with an intent of subduing COKHILAN, a country situate within ten days journey of the capital, towards BASSORA^b. His army was near thirty thousand men; and he had reason to hope for success; but the event did not answer the expectation. His troops were not only harrassed by the ARABS who inhabit the neighbouring country, but also distressed for want of provisions; whilst the air had such pernicious effects on them, that he did not bring half his men back to ISFAHAN. His disaster would have been still greater, if CASSIN KHAN, a PERSIAN, who was possessed of a government in those quarters, had not given him all the assistance in his power.

MAGHMUD was at length obliged to compound with the ARABS to return into PERSIA, on condition of being furnished with provisions; but these people perceiving his inability to withstand them, broke their word, and harrassed his army to the greatest degree. Thus was the formidable MAGHMUD by too great confidence, and the efforts of these roving people, reduced to the utmost straits. He was so shocked at his losses, that he made his entrance into ISFAHAN without those honours which it had been customary to pay him on the like occasions. His army being thus discouraged, prudence suggested to him the expedient of distributing fifty thousand tomans^c among his troops, to indemnify them for the loss of their baggage; and he employed them the rest of the summer in repairing this accident, as far as the melancholy situation of his affairs admitted.

IN

^a GOMEROON.
twenty-five thousand pounds.

^b This is part of CHUSISTAN, whose capital is AMOVS.

^c An hundred

IN the state of weakness and despondency, to which MAGHMUD was reduced, 1724. TÆHMAS might have entertained great hopes of recovering the diadem; but this prince was entangled in inextricable difficulties. Forgetting that his imprudent resentments had the preceding year occasioned the revolt of TEFFLIS, he loaded the ARMENIANS with excessive taxes, which were levied with the utmost rigor. So severe a proceeding, contrary to his natural disposition, alienated the affections of these people in the very beginning; and things were soon carried to an extremity. Necessity being without law, he entered some of their principal towns by force, and plundered them, especially such as refused to obey the orders he had sent them to join his troops, tho' by law they were exempt from all military service.

THE ARMENIANS of CAPAN and CHIAVAN finding they were treated as enemies, took up arms. TÆHMAS, who seemed to exert his resolution only where prudence was wanting, intended to reduce them by force; but they gave him so warm a reception, that he became more circumspect, and determined at length to enter into a treaty with them. Thus he gained by gentle measures, what he could not obtain by force; and those people returned to their duty, and gave the greatest proofs of their fidelity. But it was not in the nature of things, that TÆHMAS should recover his dominions at this time.

IN the mean while, the TURKS were jealous of the advantages secured to the CZAR by the treaty of ST. PETERSBURG, and endeavoured to counterbalance them by their conquests. With this view, they provided for the security of GEORGIA; built a new fortress near TEFFLIS; and assembled different bodies of troops on the frontiers of the PERSIAN dominions. ABDALLAH, BASHA of VAN^a, entered this province the beginning of the year, and having reinforced the garrisons of the several towns in GEORGIA, he marched with thirty-five thousand men, against MAMOMMED KOULI KHAN, who was at the head of a body of troops near TEFFLIS. He soon put the KHAN to flight, and in FEBRUARY he penetrated into ADERBEITZAN, and laid siege to KHQI, which held out two months, and was then taken by storm, and plundered.

ARIFIE ACHMED, BASHA of DIARBEEKIR, whom the PORTE had nominated SERASKIER, now projected a more important expedition. This general passed the ARAS the end of JUNE, and entered the province of ERIVAN with an army of thirty thousand men. In order to intimidate the inhabitants, he treated them with great cruelty: the towns and villages upon his march, were entirely sacked; and he made slaves of above twenty thousand persons of both sexes. After these barbarous hostilities, in the middle of the same month he arrived before ERIVAN.

THIS city, the capital of ARMENIA, is distant about six leagues from mount ARARAT^b. In 1635 it was situated a mile from the spot where it now stands; for SHAH SEFFIE having taken it from the TURKS, made choice of the present situation.

E c 2

The

^a His surname was KOUPROUL OGLOU, or the son of KOUPROLI. This family is descended from the grand vizir KOUPROLI MAHOMMED BASHA, who was the son of a country parson in the neighbourhood of BELGRADE in ALBANIA. This is almost the only family in TURKEY that has a proper name.

^b I have already had occasion to mention, that according to the tradition of the ARMENIANS the ark rested on this mountain.

1724. The castle in which the KHAN resides, is built on a steep rock, inaccessible towards the west; and on the other sides it is defended by a triple wall of brick. At the foot of this rock runs the river ZENGUI, which descends from the lake SEVAN^a, and mixes its waters three leagues lower with the ARASS. The town is encompassed by a double wall, and abounds more in gardens and vineyards than houses. The adjacent country is a large fertile plain, terminated by the mountains, of which ARARAT makes a part; and the whole forms a most delightful prospect. This advantage, however, is counterbalanced by great inconveniencies. The water and fruits are very unwholesome; the country is subject to frequent earthquakes; their winters, notwithstanding their latitude, are long and severe; and they have excessive heats in summer. During the months of JULY and AUGUST, most of the inhabitants leave their houses, and retreat to breathe a more temperate air in the mountains. It is computed, that in the heat of summer there are often twenty thousand tents in their neighbourhood; for not only the KOURDS travel thus far northwards, but likewise the people from the extremity of CALDÆA, come hither with their flocks.

THE OTTOMAN army had a numerous artillery, with which they soon made a breach in the walls. The SERASKIER then attempted to storm the town, and his troops behaved with great courage, but they were as bravely repulsed by the garrison. They met with the same reception at three general assaults; and the air being in some measure infected with the number of dead bodies; the TURKISH general desired a truce of three days, in order to bury the dead.

IN the interim, the BASHA of CUTAYA joined the army. This determined the SERASKIER to try his fortune once more, and the 10th of SEPTEMBER he ordered the fourth general assault; but with so little success, that he suffered more on this occasion than in any of the former attacks. The TURKS having lost near twenty thousand men by the sword, and the unwholesomeness of the air, were quite discouraged. Their bombs indeed had reduced great part of the town into ruins; but the PERSIANS as well as the ARMENIANS, actuated by the double motive of rage and self-preservation, still shewed the same courage and resolution. The besiegers, almost exhausted with the fatigue of so long a siege, threatened openly to retire; when the arrival of a reinforcement of fresh troops from EGYPT, changed the scene. SARI MUSTAFA, BASHA of ERZEROU, also brought a considerable reinforcement with him towards the end of the month; so that the murmurings of the soldiers began to cease, and they resolved to bring this enterprize to a happy conclusion.

THE KHAN, who commanded the town, was intimidated at the sight of such large reinforcements. The garrison was already in distress for provisions; and a great number of the soldiers and inhabitants had perished with hunger, sickness, or the sword. They expected no succours from TÆHMAS, and were reduced, for want of lead, to new cast the few balls that were remaining, and those which they found in the breaches and ditches, by putting a pea in them; an expedient which might conceal their want of this kind of ammunition; but diminished the weight of the ball, and consequently did less execution. These circumstances, and the pressing soli-

^a This lake is about seventy miles distant northward of the city.

solicitations of his brother, whom the TURKS had taken prisoner near the ARAS, de-1724-termined the KHAN to enter into a capitulation.

THE first of OCTOBER he sent deputies to the TURKISH camp, and after some difficulties it was agreed, that the governor and the garrison should be safely conducted with all their effects to the frontiers of KARABAGH^a: that the inhabitants of the castle, and those who had retired thither during the siege, but had no share in defending the town should quit it, and retire to the old ERIVAN: that none of them should be molested, either in their persons or effects: and that the town, the castle, with the artillery, and ammunitions, should be immediately surrendered to the GRAND SIGNIOR. These articles were punctually executed, and the BASHA of KARAHISSAR conducted the garrison to the frontier, from whence the KHAN proceeded to AHR, where TÆHMAS then resided.

DURING this interval, the troops under the command of the BASHA of VAN, were not idle. This general having defeated MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, and taken the fortrefs of KHOI, as mentioned, formed a design upon TAVRIS. As he had not troops sufficient to attempt a place of that importance, he acquainted the court; and the BASHAS of CARAMENIA and ALEPPO, with some others were ordered to join his army.

TOWARDS the beginning of AUGUST, he received a deputation from the ARME-
NIANS of NACSIVAN^b. The inhabitants despairing of succours from the PERSIANS, and afraid of the cruelties of the TURKS, recommended the conquest of their country to the BASHA. Upon this he ordered the chiefs^c of KOURDISTAN to march thither with twelve thousand men, and to these he joined a detachment of a thousand TURKS, commanded by IBRAHIM AGA. These troops no sooner appeared in the province, than the ARMENIANS took up arms, and drove the PERSIANS from NACSIVAN and ORDOUBAD^d; insomuch that the greatest part of ARMENIA MAJOR was reduced under the TURKISH yoke.

IN the mean while, the BASHA of VAN marched with an army of twenty-five thousand men to TAVRIS. Tho' a great part of this town had been destroyed by the earthquake, already mentioned, it was still one of the finest cities in the east; but it had neither walls nor artillery, so that like antient SPARTA, its only bulwark consisted in the number and strength of its inhabitants. The TURKS, crowding upon one another, made themselves masters of a whole quarter of the town, when the inhabitants flocking from all parts, barricadoed the streets by which the enemy had entered; and their communication with the main body of the army being cut off, four thousand of their men were surrounded, and cut in pieces.

THE BASHA after making several attacks in vain, began to waver in his resolution, when his spies informed him, that the inhabitants were preparing to attack him the
next

^a A district south of the ARAS, full of inaccessible mountains. DE Lisle has a place called CARACHAN.

^b NACSIVAN signifies the first made. The ARMENIANS pretend it was the first city that was built after the deluge.

^c BEGS.

^d This place is noted for its trade in silken and other manufactures.

1724 next night in his intrenchments. Finding the valor of his troops unequal to his design, he ordered fires to be made in his camp as usual; and the 21st of SEPTEMBER in the night he marched off silently, leaving his tents standing, the better to deceive the enemy. Some hours afterwards the inhabitants came out of the city, to the number of twenty thousand: finding that the TURKISH army was retired, they followed them till the next day at noon, but could not come up with them. In revenge they massacred not only all the stragglers that fell in their way, but likewise the sick and wounded, which the enemy had been obliged to leave to their discretion.

THE OTTOMAN army, considerably reduced, retired to TASSOU, a town situate within twenty leagues of TAVRIS, on the north bank of the lake CHAHI. Here the TURKISH general added to his disgrace, by attempting to be revenged of the PERSIANS for the gallant defence they had made. Tho' the neighbouring villages had submitted without making any resistance, yet he carried the women and children with him as slaves, and put the men to the sword. The inhabitants of TAVRIS were so provoked at this cruelty, that they took the resolution of pursuing him, and preventing his retreat. The BASHA having notice of their approach, marched out at the head of eight thousand men; most of these were killed in the engagement, and he retired to KHOI with the few who saved themselves by flight.

THESE were not the only armies which the TURKS had in PERSIA. HASSAN, BASHA OF BAGDAT, and ACHMED his son, BASHA OF BASSORA entered this country with the troops belonging to their respective governments, and laid siege to HAMADAN. TÆHMAS, encouraged by what had passed before TAVRIS, sent part of his troops under the command of FLAGELLA KHAN, one of his principal officers, to the relief of this town. But the success did not answer his expectations: his general was defeated, and put to flight.

THE OTTOMAN army being thus free, continued the operations of the siege without interruption. In the mean time the enemy defended themselves with the same resolution; and it was now two months since the opening of the trenches, when a GERMAN renegade sprung a mine, of which he had the direction. The effect determined the fate of the besieged. The TURKS mounted the breach with loud shouts, and carried all before them: a slaughter of the inhabitants ensued, till some of the TURKISH generals, moved by a sense of humanity, facilitated the escape of great numbers, by giving them a passage out of one of the gates of the town.

THE taking of ERIVAN and HAMADAN, and the repulse of the BASHA OF VAN, concluded the campaign on the side of the TURKS. The army under the SERASKIER, together with the remaining forces of the BASHA OF VAN, were reduced to forty thousand men, including the garrison of GEORGIA. The troops of EGYPT and the KOURDS separated, and took up their winter quarters in ERIVAN, NACSIYAN, and ORDOUBAD. Those of BAGDAT and BASSORA, retired to their own country, after leaving a sufficient garrison in HAMADAN.

C H A P. II.

Rejoicings at CONSTANTINOPLE. The PORTE is dissatisfied with the conduct of PETER the GREAT. The conferences renewed by the mediation of the FRENCH minister to the OTTOMAN PORTE. Conclusion of the treaty between the CZAR and the PORTE. Articles of that treaty.

THE TURKS having extended their conquests thus far, the minds of the people, 1724. already uneasy concerning the success of the war, were quieted. The public rejoicings lasted nine days, and were scarce finished, when they were ordered to be renewed. MAHOMMED KOULI KHAN, who thirsted for revenge, passed the KURA near GORI, and laid siege to the fort by which that little city is defended. He was carrying on the attack with great vigor, when REGEZ, BASHA of TEFFLIS, marched with six thousand men to the relief of the place: this, together with the defection of the principal GEORGIANS, who were gained by the PORTE, obliged the KHAN to retire with great precipitation. The TURKS came up with him as he was passing the river, where he lost a thousand of his men, and then retired with his troops into the mountains.

THE FRENCH ambassador* thought proper to distinguish himself, upon the occasion of these rejoicings, for the accomplishment of one of the articles of the treaty, concluded by the mediation of the court of FRANCE. To explain this, we must trace matters somewhat higher.

THE PORTE being informed of the success of ISMAEL BEG, the PERSIAN ambassador at the court of ST. PETERSBURG, pushed on her conquests in PERSIA without reserve. Whether the CZAR slighted her resentment, on account of this treaty; but it was scarce concluded, when he sent copies of it to his resident NEPLUEOFF, without any instructions to him or to the FRENCH ambassador; at the same time, he made it public in all the courts of EUROPE. This caused a great surprize at CONSTANTINOPLE, for neither the ambassador, nor the RUSSIAN resident, expected such an event. They were confounded, whilst their enemies laid hold of these circumstances to decry their conduct. This was not difficult to effect, for the TURKISH commissaries having opened the conference in the beginning of JANUARY this year, with bitter reproaches, declared in the name of the GRAND SIGNIOR, that such a prince as TÆHMAS, wandering from place to place, without succour or support, could not with any validity consent to the dismembering of his dominions; therefore such engagements were void: that the GRAND SIGNIOR would not suffer any foreign power to extend his dominion in PERSIA: consequently, that the only method to preserve the peace subsisting between the two empires, was to relinquish all pretensions derived from this treaty, and likewise to abandon the conquests made on the borders of the CASPIAN sea.

AFTER

* The marquis of BONNAC.

1724. AFTER so explicit a declaration, the TURKISH commissaries broke off the conferences abruptly. It was thought the PORTE would declare war against the CZAR, and send the RUSSIAN resident to the castle of the seven towers. This minister having no instructions, refused to yield to the solicitations of the FRENCH ambassador, to enter into a negotiation; which served to increase the disgust of the TURKISH ministers; so that the storm seemed to be gathering, when the ambassador ventured to take the consequence of negotiating upon himself.

WITH this view he entered into a conference with the ministers of the PORTE, in which he reconciled all matters so well, that they were soon agreed upon almost every article^a. The grand vizir, who secretly pressed the conclusion of this affair, found it very difficult to bring the divan into his sentiments; especially as the point was to enter into an alliance with a christian power, in order to share the dominions of a MAHOMMEDAN prince. There was no time to lose: they must either conclude the treaty entered upon with RUSSIA, or stop the progress of that power, by declaring war against her. IBRAHIM, the grand vizir, laid this before the divan, which he convened in the name of the emperor his master. After very warm debates, the divan declared for the continuation of the peace: upon which, the FRENCH ambassador dispatched monsieur D'ALION^b, a relation of his to the court of RUSSIA, with the preliminaries of the treaty.

THE first article in his commission was, that SHAH TÆHMAS should be obliged to send a solemn embassy to CONSTANTINOPLE, to beg of the GRAND SIGNIOR that he would set limits to his conquests, and consent, as far as was consistent with the glory and interests of his highness, to the execution of the treaty concluded the year before at ST. PETERSBURG. The others contained a project of accommodation, in regard to the limits of the conquests made, or which were to be made in PERSIA, by either of these contracting powers.

THESE preliminaries having been agreed to, the RUSSIAN resident received new instructions, and the 19th of MAY the conferences were renewed. The vizir had made it an established rule, to live in peace with the christian powers, deeming it necessary to his own security. How favourable soever his disposition might have been, there were great obstacles to surmount, before they could come to a conclusion of the treaty. DAGHESTAN, and part of SHIRVAN, inhabited by MAHOMMEDANS of the sect of the SUNNIS, were to continue under the dominion of the CZAR, who required that the PORTE should acknowledge TÆHMAS as king of PERSIA: that she should join her forces to those of RUSSIA, in order to put this prince in possession of the throne: and lastly, engage to receive neither proposals nor ministers from MAGHMUD, or any other usurper. These articles were contrary to their religion, which the MAHOMMEDANS consider as the basis and primum mobile of political government.

Part

^a This relation being made by a FRENCHMAN belonging to the ambassador's ministry, we must allow for some partialities as to the abilities of his master.

^b This person was minister at the court of ST. PETERSBURG, for some time after the marquiss DE CHETARDIE.

PART of these difficulties were removed in a long conference, which the grand vizir had the 5th of JULY with the FRENCH ambassador; and the general conferences being renewed, the several articles of the treaty were agreed to. They were six in number, preceded by a preamble, setting forth in a summary way, the cession which SHAH TÆHMAS made to the CZAR, of the provinces situated on the borders of the CASPIAN SEA.

THE first article determines, that the barrier betwixt RUSSIA and TARTARY shall be regulated by a line, to begin within twenty-two leagues of the CASPIAN SEA on the confines of DAGHESTAN, to pass within the like distance of DERBEND, and afterwards within seven leagues of the coast, including SHAMAKIE, and from thence directly to the conflux of the KURA and ARAS. It is likewise stipulated, that the contracting parties shall nominate commissaries, and if necessary desire the mediation of the court of FRANCE with regard to the regulation of those limits. That either party shall be free to erect forts upon their own territories, on condition of giving notice thereof to each other, and of building them at the distance of three leagues at least from their frontier.

THE second agrees, that SHAMAKIE, the capital of SHIRVAN, shall not be fortified, nor receive a TURKISH garrison; and that if some unforeseen accident, such as a revolt, should oblige this monarch to send any troops thither, they shall acquaint the RUSSIAN officers before they pass the KURA, and retire from thence as soon as the troubles are appeased. The GRAND SIGNIOR promises, that his armies shall not pass this river in any part of GEORGIA, without giving notice of the reasons of such motion to the officers appointed by the CZAR, on the coast of the CASPIAN SEA.

THE third establishes the barrier which is to separate TURKEY from PERSIA. This line commences where the other finishes, that is, at the conflux of the KURA and ARAS; it passes within three miles of the walls of ARDEVILLE towards TAVRIS, and from thence to HAMADAN, which city, together with the territory belonging to it, falls to the GRAND SIGNIOR's share; after which it turns off towards KHERMANSHA, the new conquest of this monarch, where it terminates.

By the fourth, the CZAR promises the GRAND SIGNIOR, to employ his mediation, that the provinces assigned him in the preceding article, shall be voluntarily surrendered to him, or recovered for him, by a joint effort. This article concludes with a reciprocal guaranty of the provinces of PERSIA, which these monarchs adjudge to themselves, declaring that if SHAH TÆHMAS refuses to agree to the treaty, they will jointly endeavour to conquer the respective places assigned to each; after which, the rest of the kingdom shall be entirely given up, without any foreign dependance, into the hands of SHAH TÆHMAS.

IN the fifth, the GRAND SIGNIOR engages, as soon as the places assigned him by the third article shall be voluntarily delivered up, to acknowledge TÆHMAS as king of PERSIA; to give him full security of his restoration, and afford him all proper assistance: that in case the usurpers should by any hostility reduce him to the ne-

cessity of declaring war against them, he will join his forces to those of RUSSIA, in order to place this prince on the throne of his ancestors.

THE sixth article declares, that if TÆHMAS should attempt to act in opposition to this treaty, the contracting powers, after having made themselves masters of the provinces assigned to them, shall appease the disturbances of PERSIA, and restore this kingdom to the PERSIAN most deserving of it, towards whom they shall conduct themselves as they have done towards the kings his predecessors. That they shall not in any manner interfere in the government of his dominions, but jointly take every measure necessary for his tranquillity, without listening to any proposal on the part of MIR MAGHMUD.

THIS treaty was signed the eighth of JULY, and the ratification of the CZAR being arrived, the exchange was solemnly made some days after in the apartment of the grand vizir. The peace being thus confirmed, the KHAN of the CRIM TARTARS, and the generals of the OTTOMAN troops, who were on the frontier of the UKRAIN, received orders to retire, the one to CRIM TARTARY, and the other towards the DANUBE.

1725. IN the mean time, TÆHMAS was at ARDEVILLE. The ambassador whom he had lately sent to the OTTOMAN PORTE, was arrested at ERZEROUM: at first they treated him in a manner suitable to his character^a, but soon after he was confined as a close prisoner in the castle, and his effects were confiscated.

THE unhappy SHAH TÆHMAS saw his country thus torn from him: the PERSIAN monarchy was become a prey. He soon learnt the tenor of the treaty concluded between the RUSSIANS and the TURKS; and the passive conduct of his minister IS-MAEL BEG^b; all which gave him great offence: in his circumstances what less was to be expected? He immediately ordered the CZAR's resident to withdraw from his court: but this mark of resentment did not hinder the RUSSIAN monarch from ordering his ambassador-extraordinary to continue his journey, though he was oblig'd to return home without taking his leave of that prince. It is presumed that PETER the GREAT would have been contented with GHILAN only, could he have thus prevented the progress of the TURKS, being much more sincere than the TURKS, with regard to the restoration of TÆHMAS to his dominions.

^a Sixty dollars a day were ordered for his maintenance.

^b He remained at ASTRACHAN, and was there still in 1744, and had a guard appointed him, with a daily allowance from the court, not chusing to trust himself again in PERSIA.

C H A P. III.

MAGHMUD raises new troops. A caravan arrives from KANDAHAR. He lays siege to YEZD. ASHREFF returns, and is favoured by the AFGHANS. Uneasiness of MAGHMUD upon that account. He undertakes a religious penance: murders HUSSEIN's children and relations. Great voluptuousness of HUSSEIN. MAGHMUD falls into a delirium. ASHREFF elected king. Death and character of MAGHMUD.

WHILST this partition of the PERSIAN dominions was negotiating, MAGHMUD was employed in repairing the breach, which the expedition of COH-KILAN had made in his troops. With this view, he enlisted a great number of DERGHEZINS: he also levied some new companies of TURKS; and knowing the importance of concealing his weakness, he not only renewed the prohibition of corresponding by letters, but also made it death for any stranger that should attempt to leave the town*.

THINGS were thus situated, when the caravan which he expected, arrived at ISFAHAN. It was not near so numerous as that of the preceding year; owing, in a great measure to the complaints of some of the AFGHANS, who on their return to KANDAHAR, accused their sovereign of avarice, and a partial neglect of those who had performed the bravest actions. MAGHMUD, however, perceiving he had now as strong an army as that which had raised him to the throne, was ambitious of effacing the memory of his late disgrace.

AFTER some time, he resolved to lay siege to YEZD, which he had in vain endeavoured to take upon his march to ISFAHAN. The inhabitants of this city had lately routed a reinforcement of two thousand men, who were coming to him from KANDAHAR. The necessity of securing a communication with that province, as well as the desire of retrieving the reputation of his arms, engaged him to turn the greatest part of his forces that way.

TOWARDS the end of DECEMBER, he set out upon this expedition, with an army of eighteen thousand men. Such a number of troops, together with a considerable train of artillery, which he carried with him, and the correspondence he had with the PERSEES, who inhabit a particular quarter of the town, seemed to render him confident of success; but providence had otherwise ordained. The inhabitants of YEZD having discovered the treachery of their fellow-citizens, put them to the sword, laid the country waste for several leagues round, destroying, or carrying off every thing that might be of any service to the enemy. After this they prepared to defend themselves.

THIS precaution obliged MAGHMUD to push on the siege with the utmost vigor. His artillery was scarce mounted in battery, when he ordered a general assault. The AFGHANS attacked the town on every side with great bravery, in confidence of the engagements with the PERSEES; but they were received with so much resolution

* This and such like proceedings confined the merchants during these troubles.

1725. and courage, that they were soon convinced there was no dependance to be made on any assistance from that quarter.

THIS assault was followed by several others, which proved equally unsuccessful. In the mean time the severity of the season very much distressed the AFGHANS; they were also straitened for provisions; which reduced them to the necessity of raising the siege a second time, or of weakening the army considerably, by sending out large detachments in search of provisions. MAGHMUD determined upon the latter; but he had soon reason to repent his choice. The garrison being increased by a number of people who had fled for shelter from the open country; finding the AFGHANS weakened, fell suddenly upon their principal quarters, and confounded them by so brisk and unexpected an attack, put several parties of them to flight, and killed near three thousand men, before the main body of the army could be assembled. MAGHMUD himself was in danger of being surrounded, and obliged to abandon his baggage and artillery, and save himself by flight.

THE uneasiness occasioned by this new disgrace, was augmented by the mutinous disposition of the army. The soldiers declared without reserve, that their defeat was a consequence of their change of manners; that they were upon the brink of being ruined by that very effeminacy and luxury, which had destroyed their enemies; that MAGHMUD was already a PERSIAN in his apparel, and luxurious diet; but still more so by the excessive number of concubines with which he had filled his harram; adding, that no further hopes of success remained, so long as they were governed by a chief, who, not satisfied with adopting the manners of the conquered, affected likewise to espouse their sentiments in matters of religion. This last reproach was owing to some words which MAGHMUD let drop, perhaps with a design to shew his resentment to the TURKS, or to render himself more agreeable to the PERSIANS.

MEAN while the danger increased by the impunity of these murmurings. ASHREFF being arrived with the last caravan from KANDAHAR; the army, who had been always extremely fond of him, now behaved in such a manner, as plainly shewed they thought him the fittest to reign. He had retreated only to avoid the jealous eye of MAGHMUD; and the esteem and affection which the AFGHAN army expressed for him, had been the chief inducement to his return. While he remained in KANDAHAR he lived entirely in the country, in pursuit of rural pleasures, and his own domestic affairs; but such tranquillity was not his lot; he seemed born to move in a higher, tho' less happy sphere. During his absence, the soldiers expressed a great desire for his return: the principal officers likewise considered the dangers to which the army would be exposed, if MAGHMUD, who had but indifferent health, should die without male issue capable of holding the reins of government. Thus, in some measure, they obliged this prince to recall ASHREFF, in order to declare him his successor to the empire.

ASHREFF having quitted his solitude, MAGHMUD was obliged to dissemble his jealousy, and entertained him for some days with all the appearances of the most tender friendship; but he was no sooner informed of the murmurings of the troops, than

than he ordered ASHREEF to lodge in the palace, where he was strictly guarded. This prudent step checked the soldiers; but did not make the sultan easy in his mind. The disgrace he lately met with in CONKILAN, and before YEZD, had weakened his power and authority, insomuch that he began to be in as great fear of the mutiny of his troops, as of the revolt of the PERSIANS.

1725.

To extricate himself in this situation, required more steadiness and virtue than MAGHMUD was master of. This prince, who had been so bold in projecting, and so brave in executing, was frightened at the thought of a danger to which he had not been accustomed. Under these circumstances, he tried to obtain from heaven that light and assistance, which he no longer expected from those who had been the followers of his fortune. A design of this nature, however commendable in itself, seemed in his condition to argue the troubled state and weakness of his mind, rather than a sense of religion. With this intent he undertook to perform the spiritual exercises^a, which the INDIAN MAHOMMEDANS, who are more addicted to them than those of other countries, have introduced into KANDAHAR. This superstitious practice is observed, by shutting themselves up for fourteen or fifteen days in a place where no light enters, and the only nourishment they take, is a little bread and water at sun-set. During this retreat, they employ their time in repeating incessantly, with a strong guttural voice, the word *HO*, by which they denote one of the attributes of the deity. These continual cries, and the agitations of the body with which they are attended, naturally un hinge the whole frame. When by fasting and darkness the brain is dis temper'd, they fancy they see spectres and hear voices. Thus they take pains to confirm the very dis temper of mind which puts them on such trials; and presume to pry into the secrets of providence, from an opinion, that during this penance, the devil is compelled by the agency of a superior power, to let them into the knowledge of futurity.

SUCH was the painful exercise which MAGHMUD undertook in JANUARY this year. For this purpose he chose a subterraneous vault, where he continued the usual time. When he came forth, he was so pale, and emaciated, that they hardly knew him. But this was not the worst effect of his devotion: solitude, often dangerous to a melancholy turn of thought, had, under the circumstances of his inquietude, and the strangeness of the penance, impaired his reason. He became restless and suspicious; often starting, as if the very persons most attached to his interest, designed to destroy him. He was in one of these fits, when it was rumoured in ISFAHAN, that SEFFIE MYRZA, a son of SHAH HUSSEIN, had found means to make his escape from the seraglio, and was retired towards TURKEY. Whether the PERSIANS spread this alarm in order to intimidate the tyrant, or himself caused it to be reported; he made it a pretext to cover a new scene of the most execrable barbarity.

AMIDST all his cruelties, MAGHMUD had not hitherto imbrued his hands in the blood of his antient sovereigns. Many princes of the royal family were confined with SHAH HUSSEIN in the seraglio, as the sad companions of his captivity: among whom were several brothers, three uncles, and seven nephews of that unfortunate monarch.

THE

^a They call it the *RIADHIAT*.

1725.

THE tyrant's heart being now rent with anxiety for the support of his declining power, regardless of his more declining health, and approach to eternity, he resolved to sacrifice all the royal family, except HUSSEIN SHAH. The seventh of FEBRUARY was the day appointed for the execution of his bloody purpose. These victims to cruelty were assembled in the palace-yard with their hands tied behind their backs. The tyrant, attended only by a few of his most intimate confidants, began this horrid butchery with his sabre. There were only two sons of SHAH HUSSEIN remaining, when this unfortunate prince hearing their cries, found means to come to the place of slaughter. These princes, the eldest of whom was only five years of age, flung themselves into the arms of their father. Nothing but the tenderness of a parent could have supported this prince at the sight of so sad a spectacle: he bathed his children with his tears, and put himself in the way to receive the fatal stroke. MAGHMUD, now drunk with slaughter, stepped forwards to murder these royal infants, tho' sheltered in their father's bosom: the SHAH stretched out his arm, and received the blow. Here the horrid scene was ended: at the sight of blood gushing from the wound of a king, and a man of whom the tyrant had been used to think with some reverence, heaven stopped his murdering hand. As these children were yet of so tender an age, and incapable of giving umbrage, he determined to leave them to their parent, now oppressed with such an accumulated load of misfortunes.

IT is not agreed what number of princes were murdered on this occasion, but they are reckoned above an hundred. It is easy to reconcile their being yet more numerous, if we attend to the circumstances of eastern courts. Few men have carried their voluptuousness, however permitted by a particular faith, farther than SHAH HUSSEIN. The year 1701, was called in PERSIA the year of virgins^a. This prince then ordered a search to be made through the whole extent of his dominions, for all the young virgins of distinguished beauty: and the commissioners appointed for this enquiry, brought all those whom they thought worthy of the harram. The governors of the provinces, knowing their master's predominant passion, paid their courts in the most prevailing manner, even till the siege of ISFAHAN, by sending him the finest girls in their province. This strong passion, or rather appetite for the sex, was sufficient to render the royal family extremely numerous; insomuch that in the space of a month, thirty cradles had been once carried into the seraglio. Besides, this monarch being more humane than any of his predecessors, put none of the princes of the royal blood to death^b. All those princes, excepting TÆHMAS and the two children already mentioned, perished on that day.

THIS bloody execution, instead of dispelling the fears of MAGHMUD, only contributed to increase the terrors with which he was tormented. His mind was perpetually agitated with the most frightful ideas; and the remorse of this last act of barbarity gave him no repose. His intellects, which had been so much weakened by the austerity of his spiritual exercise, appeared to be yet more impaired; and besides this, he had an insupportable pain in his bowels.

THE

^a KISVERAN.^b It was common in later times to kill them all, insomuch that I never heard that NADIR SHAH had any children alive, except his two sons RIZA KOULI MYRZA and NESR ALI MYRZA, who were born long before he was made king.

THE most skilful physicians of the court, after endeavouring in vain to restore him to his senses, had recourse to a religious remedy. In cases of the like nature, the ARMENIANS had been wont to engage their priests to read over the head of the patient, what they call the red gospel^a. This custom was received not only by those christians, but also by the greatest part of the MAHOMMEDANS of the country, who together with the ARMENIANS affirmed, that several PERSIANS affected with the same degree of madness of MAGHMUD, had been cured by this means; and they resolved to try the efficacy of it. In the beginning of APRIL, the clergy of JULFA being dressed in their sacerdotal habits, with wax tapers lighted, went in solemn procession to the palace^b, where they were received with great respect. They passed thro' the apartment between two rows of courtiers and guards, whose modest countenance, and profound silence, expressed such a reverence for these priests, as could hardly be expected from persons of their religion. After the ceremony was performed, the clergy retired in the same order to JULFA, attended by a great number of the lords of the court.

IN one of the lucid intervals of his disorder, MAGHMUD having been informed of the relief which the ARMENIANS had endeavoured to give him, he sent them two thousand tomans in specie^c, and as much in effects, promising to restore the remainder of what he had exacted from them, if he recovered his health. He did the same in regard to the DUTCH and the INDIANS: a sense of the danger he was in, having excited some sentiments of piety in his breast, he recommended himself also to the prayers of those different people. After some hours of ease, he relapsed into a more terrible condition: his body was covered with leprosy, his flesh rotted, and seemed to fall from his bones.

SUCH was the frightful condition of MAGHMUD, when news was brought that SHAH TÆHMAS had advanced at the head of a body of troops, and defeated a party of AFGHANS near KOOM, as they were marching towards CASBIN, under the command of their general SEIDAL. It was not merely the desire of taking advantage of the present conjuncture, that drew the PERSIAN army so near to ISFAHAN. Since the beginning of MAGHMUD's illness, ASHREFF had been no longer watched with the same strictness; so that he found means to enter into a correspondence with TÆHMAS. As soon as he found that things were ripe for his purpose, he acquainted him that now was the time to ascend the throne of his ancestors; that he needed only to advance towards ISFAHAN, where every thing was in confusion by the sickness of MAGHMUD; that upon the first rumour of his approach, his friends would join him in a body; and that this step would induce part of the rebels to return to their duty, and put it out of the power of the rest to withstand him.

ASHREFF had imparted this design to the PERSIAN lords, who had been spared at the time of the massacre, with a design to ensnare them; and it was by their inter-
vention.

^a Probably some passage relating to the miracles of our Saviour. Exorcising without the immediate use of the scriptures, it is pretended, is common in PORTUGAL.

^b The late king of PORTUGAL, at different times, caused the several bodies of the clergy in and about LISBON, to walk in procession thro' his chamber; and a book was published, giving an account of the manner and ceremonies of each fraternity. Whether the king's life was protracted by any miraculous interposition, is a point about which the ROMISH clergy will be most ready to determine.

^c Five thousand pounds.

1725. vention that this correspondence was carried on. Accordingly they wrote to acquaint TÆHMAS, that the only condition ASHREFF insisted upon for himself, and his party, was, that their lives, their liberty, and their effects should be sacred: thus the treaty met with no difficulty. TÆHMAS sent him a deed^a, in which he engaged under the most sacred oaths, to observe his word inviolably: after which, he advanced as far as KOOM, where meeting with a body of AFGHANS commanded by SEIDAL, he put them to flight.

THIS new disgrace greatly alarmed the rebels. So many defeats began to weaken that reputation for bravery and success, in which their security chiefly consisted; it behoved them to stop the progress of a prince, who, taking advantage of their present situation, threatened to drive them from ISFAHAN; but the confusion occasioned by MAGHMUD's illness, was an insuperable obstacle to the execution of any military projects. These circumstances renewed their former inclinations of revolting; and their whole discourse turned on the necessity of chusing another master.

AMAN OLA, tho' considered as prime-minister and generalissimo of the sultan, being actuated by resentment, became the most active of all the conspirators. He was hardly returned to ISFAHAN, when he perceived that he was strictly watched; which affronted him so extremely, that when MAGHMUD returned from his expedition into COHKILAN, he obstinately refused to pay him the compliment of meeting him. That which confirmed his opinion of being an object of jealousy, excited his revenge also: it was not long before this time, that he was insulted to a great degree. He went out upon a common occasion, with a numerous retinue, to perform his devotions at his brother's tomb: MAGHMUD, apprehensive lest he should escape a second time, sent one of his officers, with orders to pierce with his lance the horse on which the general was mounted^b.

AMAN OLA was too proud to forgive such an affront. As soon as he returned, he took the opportunity of killing several fine horses belonging to MAGHMUD's stables; infomuch that this prince was obliged to come himself in person to appease him. At this interview, they seemed to be again reconciled. The general however meditated the SULTAN's destruction, and it was impossible for him to find a better opportunity. His opinion determined the generality of the AFGHANS; and the army agreed on the necessity of chusing a new sovereign. This choice, according to nearness of blood, should have fallen on HUSSEIN KHAN, brother of MAGHMUD, who was at that time in KANDAHAR, and commanded in the name of the sultan: but affairs were too critically circumstanced, to wait till his arrival from so distant a country, had the army been disposed to it. ASHREFF was the most beloved, and was now chosen with an unanimous consent.

THE moment this election was proclaimed, the troops ran to their arms, in order to take the new king out of custody. The ABDOLLEES, who guarded him, disputed the entrance for some time, but at length yielded.

ASHREFF

^a This is called NACHLATHEMA, probably resembling the anathema of the HEBREWS.

^b This seems to be a capricious action, yet such as the genius of the people, and the temper of MAGHMUD renders credible.

ASHREFF, being at liberty, was proclaimed king of PERSIA, by the AFGHANS, 1725, on the 22d of APRIL. This prince, under the specious pretence of revenging the death of his father MIR ABDALLAH, would not accept the ensigns of royalty, till they brought him the head of their late sultan. The miserable MAGHMUD, who had very few hours to live, according to nature, suffered the execution of his sentence, without knowing the additional misfortune into which he was fallen ^a.

THUS perished, at the early age of twenty-seven years, this destroyer of one of the fairest monarchies of ASIA, leaving the world a sad monument of human misery in the character of a prince and a conqueror. Nature had refused him those external advantages, by which great men are sometimes distinguished. He was middle-sized and clumsy; his neck was so short, that his head seemed to grow to his shoulders; he had a broad face, a flat nose, and his beard was thin, and of a red colour; his looks were wild, and his countenance austere and disagreeable; his eyes, which were blue, and a little squinting, were generally down-cast, like a man absorbed in deep thought.

HE had made it a rule from his earliest youth, to supply by habit and custom his natural unsuitness for bodily exercises: in this he succeeded so well, that very few excelled him either in horsemanship, or in the use of the lance. He applied himself to military exercises; and that he might not lose his dexterity in wielding the sabre, he often caused sheep to be brought to him with their feet tied, and after they had been hung up he cut off their heads at a blow ^b.

To these talents, which were common to the generality of his countrymen, he joined some virtues more worthy of a sovereign. Tho' his soldiers in their discontent were carried away by their prejudices, and reproached him with an immoderate love of women, he was very chaste; and is reported to have had only one wife, to whom he was ever constant. He slept little; and in his campaigns suffered hardships with great indifference. He was so vigilant, as often to visit the centinels in the night, not only in the field, but also in ISFAHAN. In labour he was indefatigable, in danger intrepid; and what is properly the characteristic of the man of honour, more than of the conqueror, he was a strict observer of his word towards those for whom he ever professed a friendship: he shewed a great regard for AMAN-OLA upon that account, even when he was convinced that this general was contriving his ruin.

THESE qualities procured him respect, but he was too much feared to be beloved. His soldiers accused him of a severity in military discipline; they charged him also with avarice, and that he had deprived them of the booty for which they had bravely

^a It is said that such a horrid frenzy had seized him, that he tore his own body with his teeth; that this rage continued upon him for seven days, and he was just ready to expire with the wounds which he had given himself, when they put an end to his life. The jesuits and ecclesiastics, who have had the greatest share in collecting this account, might aggravate this part of the story; but as Providence does, I believe, interpose sometimes to punish such murderers, we may suppose that he was marked out as an example of divine vengeance. ^b He is represented also so strong, as to cut the body of a sheep in two at a stroke; but these stories are generally exaggerated.

1725. bravely encountered the greatest dangers; but above all they could not forgive his having said in the first emotions of his resentment, after the defeat of YEZD, that he wished they were as great beggars as when they first came into PERSIA, that they might fight as bravely as they did then. They could perhaps with more reason have reproached him with want of conduct, which was the chief cause of his mis-carrying. To this might be added his cruelty to his enemies; his want of fortitude under his disgraces; and if success had not in some measure justified his enter-prize of conquering ISFAHAN, it would have appeared rash and extravagant.

SUCH was the man, whom posterity will hardly number among the eastern heroes, tho' the blood he spilt, and the mischiefs he created, will give him a rank among the ravagers of the earth. That inconsiderate temerity, which constituted the chief part of his character, was fit only for making conquests; to secure them, other qualifications were necessary, which he did not possess. He sat only two years and a half on the throne of PERSIA: but this short time was too long for his reputation as a conqueror, and he died very seasonably for the interest of the AFGHANS.

P A R T X.

T H E

REVOLUTIONS OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

ACCESSION OF ASHREFF TO THE
THRONE OF PERSIA IN 1725.

TILL THE

PEACE CONCLUDED BETWEEN THIS PRINCE AND THE
TURKS IN 1727.

C H A P. I.

Character of ASHREFF: his hypocrisy and artful behaviour to SHAH HUSSEIN. The princes of the blood, who had been murdered, buried at KOOM. ASHREFF punishes the conspirators who placed him on the throne. His behaviour towards the mother of MAGHMUD. His cruelty to his own brother. He endeavours to render himself popular.

THE qualifications wanting in MAGHMUD, were united in the person of ASH- 1725.
REF, who was justly considered as the properest person to possess the throne. He was naturally sober, courageous, active, and vigilant. He had been inured to hardships from his earliest life; and having acquired the accomplishments of a statesman, he had learnt at the same time the art of dissimulation, and affected being moderate and upright: among the eastern warriors he also passed for a consummate general. Upon the whole, it may be said, that in ASHREFF were joined the valour and military virtues of MIR MAGHMUD, to the moderation and cunning of MIR VAIS.

THE resistance which the partisans of ASHREFF met with at the royal palace, served as a pretext for this new sultan to remove some of his enemies. The very same day

1725. he caused the guards of the late sultan to be put to the sword; and the ministers and intimate confidants of that prince underwent the same fate.

THE KOULAR AGASSI^a, named ALMAS, was too much attached to MAGHMUD's interest to imagine he should be excepted out of the number of the proscribed; therefore he endeavoured to save himself by flight. He was overtaken, and brought back to ISFAHAN, where they put him to the rack, in hopes of obliging him to discover the treasures which he was supposed to have concealed. The unfortunate ALMAS bore the torture with great obstinacy; but as soon as the executioners left him, he slew his wife, and then stabbed himself, to avoid the repetition of such unworthy and cruel treatment.

OF all the officers whom MAGHMUD favoured with his confidence, none had done so much honour to his choice as ALMAS. He never used the ascendant which he had over his master, to any other purpose, than to soften the ferocity of his natural disposition, and divert him from barbarous resolutions. He had a soul generous, compassionate, and liberal, of which he gave repeated instances: far from endeavouring to accumulate riches, he even refused to accept of presents, though this method of acquiring wealth is authorized by the practice of ASIA. The EUROPEANS considered him as their protector; and joined the AFGHANS and the PERSIANS in bewailing his death. Even ASHREFF himself was moved at it, or affected to appear so, in order to avoid the censure, which the fate of a man so generally esteemed must have thrown upon him in the beginning of his reign.

THE first impressions in disfavour of ASHREFF, were in some measure effaced by his subsequent conduct. He had hardly received the ensigns of royalty, when he waited on SHAH HUSSEIN, and expatiating on the ill consequences of MAGHMUD's ambition, pressed him to re-ascend the throne, which none but himself could lawfully fill. The monarch, naturally of a timid disposition, was rendered more circumspect by his present situation, and quickly saw into the artifice of this new TIBERIUS. He therefore made answer, "That he had too deep a respect for the decrees of Providence, which had obliged him to abdicate the supreme power, to accept of such offers, though suggested by an unexampled generosity; that since he had descended from the throne of his ancestors, heaven had opened his eyes in regard to the vanity of human grandeur; and therefore he now preferred the sweets of an obscure retreat, to the splendor of his former condition, in which he had always experienced an alloy of bitterness and sorrow." He took this occasion however to complain of the little regard which MAGHMUD shewed to his personal wants, and of the great cruelty exercised towards his family; then begging the new sultan to be kinder to him, he invited him, after the example of his predecessor, to marry one of the princesses his daughters.

SHAH HUSSEIN having thus solicited his enemy to possess his throne, without hesitation granted him a formal act of abdication. ASHREFF then took the title of king, and to convince SHAH HUSSEIN of the regard he paid to his representations, he allowed him fifty tomans^b a week for his household; whereas, in the former reign

^a Chief of the slaves.

^b An hundred twenty-five pounds.

reign, no more had been paid monthly. He likewise gave him the direction of the buildings, which were carrying on within the inclosure of the palace; and after repudiating his wife, he married one of the princesses his daughters, whom MAGHMUD had left in the harram, together with other females of the royal blood.

1725.

To render the memory of his predecessor odious, as well as to alleviate the affliction of the unfortunate HUSSEIN, ASHREFF caused the dead bodies of the princes, who were still left above ground in the court where they had been massacred, to be put into coffins, and conveyed at his own expence^a, with funeral pomp to KOOM, the ancient burying place of the PERSIAN kings. With this melancholy caravan, he sent some rich carpets to decorate the mausoleums, and a thousand tomans to be distributed among the dervisees, and poor of the place. The caravan was received at the gates of the palace by great numbers of people, who attended the procession, with all the tokens of the deepest sorrow, to the further end of the suburbs; after which, it was conveyed under an escort of AFGHANS to KOOM, where the scene of lamentation was again renewed.

THE officer who commanded at KOOM, deposited the bodies in the mosque, and shewed a great regard to the AFGHAN commander, who had attended the convoy; but in compliance with the PERSIAN custom of abusing the messengers of bad news, a GEORGIAN of the company was very ill treated^b.

ASHREFF had not been eight days upon the throne, when he shewed by a bold stroke of politics, that he looked upon his authority as perfectly established. He ordered those who were concerned in the conspiracy which placed him on the throne, to be arrested; and affecting the appearance of justice in preference to gratitude, he confiscated all their estates, put some of them to death, and imprisoned the rest. Thus under the colour of justice, this prince endeavoured to establish his own security; but he had also a further aim. By this blow, he removed several of the principal officers, whose turbulent and enterprising spirit rendered them objects of jealousy; he likewise filled his coffers with the riches which the conspirators had acquired since the taking of ISFAHAN.

THE proud AMAN OLA, who had pretended to share the throne with MAGHMUD, was among the number of those who perished; the consideration of his daring intrepidity, as well as of his riches, hastened his fate. He had been generalissimo and prime minister of the usurper, and these employments afforded him an opportunity of glutting his avarice; so that his treasures were hardly inferior to those of the crown. This will not appear improbable, if it be considered that the very presents which he received at his entering upon the ministry, amounted to nine thousand tomans^c, and that he obtained the confiscated estates of most of the PERSIAN lords who had been massacred under the last reign.

AN

^a They were carried on camels.

^b Some accounts say his eyes were cut out, which seems to be so unjust and barbarous an action, as hardly to be credible, since this person was in no degree faulty.

^c Twenty-two thousand five hundred pounds.

1725. AN INDIAN of CABUL, formerly governor of the late sultan, and afterwards raised to the dignity of high priest^a, was, next to AMAN OLA, the richest man at court. By his prudence, and the strength of his genius, he passed for a second ZOROASTER among the credulous vulgar, who attributed the greatest part of the success of the war to his sorcery. The respect which MAGHMUD paid him, increased his credit; for this prince did nothing without his advice, continuing to behave towards him in the same respectful manner as when he was under his tuition: he always advanced half way to meet him, with his arms crossed on his breast; he then kissed his hands, and never attempted to take his place till this INDIAN was first seated.

FROM these circumstances, there was no reason to believe that the MIANGI was concerned in the conspiracy; he was not indeed suspected of any such design; but his great possessions, so much out of character for a priest, rendered him guilty. ASHREFF however went no farther than the confiscating of his estate; he even promised to send him back by the first opportunity to KANDAHAR, with as much money as he should have occasion for, to spend the remainder of his days in quiet.

THE reputation which ZEBERDEST KHAN had acquired by the siege of SHIRASS, and his prudent conduct in the government of that city, which had been conferred on him by MAGHMUD, exempted him also in some degree from the fate of the rest. His person however was seized, and his goods confiscated: but the sultan being sensible of his moderation and military abilities, sent him soon after to his government, with a liberty of taking twenty thousand tomans^b out of his own confiscated estate.

THIS general was the only one that had his liberty restored to him; and of all the persons of note either in the army or at court, none but SEIDAL, the same whom SHAH TÄHMAS had lately routed, and MAHOMMED NISCHAN, grand master of the ceremonies, remained unmolested, either in their persons or effects. The latter had always been upon terms of friendship with ASHREFF, and was the chief person who solicited his return from KANDAHAR.

MAGHMUD's mother had stooped to marry a simple officer of the guards, and could not be prevailed upon to quit her own country, till her nephew ASHREFF was upon the point of setting out for ISFAHAN. The desire of seeing her son in all the splendor of his regal power, then determined her to undertake the journey. The PERSIANS, so much accustomed to pomp and shew, were greatly surprized to see the widow of the famous MIR VAIS, and the mother of their sovereign, mounted on one of the camels of the caravan, and entering the capital of a kingdom, subject to her son, without attendants.

THE entreaties which this lady had used, to prevail on ASHREFF to return into PERSIA, were not the only marks of her affection towards him; it was chiefly at her solicitation that MAGAMUD spared his life. Gratitude for benefits received seldom

^a The person whom the TURKI call MUFTI, and the PERSIANS MULLAH BASHI, the AFGHANS nominate MIANGI.

^b Fifty thousand pounds.

feldom makes such deep impressions, as to prevent our resentments, when those benefits cease. On the contrary, among men of base minds, it adds a poignancy to real or imaginary injuries. No sooner was ASHREFF seated on the throne, than he caused this lady to be confined a whole night in the palace-yard, where the dead bodies of the princes, massacred by her son, still lay above ground. It was presumed this punishment was inflicted for her having refused to solicit his releasement. He did not however intend to carry his resentment farther: for after this wanton penance, he treated her with kindness, and in a manner suitable to her rank, promising to send her with a considerable treasure to KANDAHAR.

THE severity, which ASHREFF shewed to his younger brother, was much greater. This prince, being apprehensive that according to the custom of PERSIA he should be confined in the seraglio, tried to make his escape to KANDAHAR. Being taken, he was deprived of his sight, and then shut up in the very place to which he had shewn so great an aversion. A son of MAGHMUD, yet in his cradle, was treated in the same manner; and as the mother, who was then pregnant, survived the sultan her husband only eight days, it was presumed that this princess was poisoned by the orders of the new king.

SUCH a series of cruelty did not alienate the minds of the people. They looked upon the misfortune of those princes, with the massacre of the guards, ministers, and favourites of MAGHMUD, as an act of prudence, authorized by custom: whilst the justice which appeared in punishing the conspirators, made his conduct pass for an act of generosity. Thus the new sultan secured his power, and took possession of almost all the riches that had been amassed in the pillaging of ISFAHAN, without forfeiting his reputation for moderation and equity.

ASHREFF was indeed ambitious of the affection, not only of the people of his own country, but likewise of the PERSIANS. For this purpose, immediately upon his accession to the throne, he distributed money among his soldiers; and established so exact a discipline, that the shops were all kept open by his orders, from the very evening of MAGHMUD's death.

HE imposed no new tax, neither on the natives nor foreigners, but contented himself with causing the sums which MAGHMUD had restored during his illness, to be brought back to the exchequer; pretending, that as this prince was then delirious, such donations were not valid.

C H A P. II.

ASHREFF endeavours to obtain the acknowledgment of his sovereignty in KANDAHAR. He forms a design of seizing the person of SHAH TÆHMAS^a, takes KOOM, and massacres the PERSIAN lords, who had disclosed his designs upon TÆHMAS.

1725. **A**SHREFF having thus settled affairs in the capital, began to establish his authority in the more distant parts of the empire. His first care was to obtain an acknowledgment of his sovereignty in the kingdom of KANDAHAR. With this view, he privately sent several officers with orders to join all his party in the country, in order to excite some disturbance, by means of which they might seize or destroy HUSSEIN KHAN, the brother of the late usurper MAGHMUD. What steps those emissaries took on this occasion, are not known; but it is certain that the attempt proved abortive.

THE new king did not succeed better in a scheme of greater importance. He had hardly passed from the prison to the throne, when he availed himself of the correspondence into which he had entered with SHAH TÆHMAS, to make a vigorous effort to seize the person of this prince his competitor. He could not impose on the father by an offer of the diadem, but he sent a magnificent embassy to the son, making almost the same proposals. The deputies had orders to explain to TÆHMAS what had passed relating to this subject; to persuade him that their master persisted in these sentiments; and that he desired a place might be appointed for an interview, to regulate their respective interests, so that they might jointly engage in such measures as were most suitable to re-establish peace and good order in the empire. These deputies were charged with a present for TÆHMAS, of ten beautiful horses richly caparisoned, like those which the kings of PERSIA usually ride.

AT the same time, the artful ASHREFF dispatched circular letters to every place which acknowledged the authority of TÆHMAS, to notify his pacific measures to the commanding officers, and to assure them that the AFGHANS would commit no act of hostility before this interview.

WHILE the ambassadors were upon the road, TÆHMAS not knowing of the death of MAGHMUD, was advanced as far as CASHAN. Here he met with SEIDAL, who flattering himself with the hopes of revenge, had marched with a more numerous body of forces than he had with him at his former defeat. These two armies attacked each other with great vigor; but fortune having declared a second time against the AFGHANS, they were compelled to give way, and at length were totally routed.

ASHREFF however determined to pursue his political schemes. The PERSIAN lords, already mentioned, ventured to write jointly to TÆHMAS, informing him of the

^a TÆHMAS is called SHAH and prince indifferently; he had taken the name of SHAH as already mentioned, tho' his regal authority can hardly be said to have been established.

the death of the usurper, and of what had passed since that time at ISFAHAN. And 1725. as they were apprehensive, that the real motive of the proposed interview was to draw this prince into a snare, they recommended to him to be upon his guard. Unluckily for TÆHMAS, and yet more for his adherents, the bearer of this letter was stopped by some of the AFGHANS that were retreating after the engagement, and carried before SEIDAL; this general seized the dispatches, and upon his arrival at ISFAHAN delivered the messenger, together with the letters found upon him, into the hands of ASHREFF.

IN the mean while the deputies returned with an answer, that TÆHMAS, who had retired towards CASBIN, had chosen the plains of VARAMEH^a, for the interview. ASHREFF set out immediately with a body of twelve thousand men; and arrived first at the place of assignation. TÆHMAS was advancing^b, without any mistrust, with no more than three thousand men; when he received advice, that ASHREFF was followed by a much greater number of troops than they had mutually agreed to take for their escort. This intelligence opened TÆHMAS's eyes, but the desire of being revenged of their perfidy, and the confidence he had acquired by his late victories, tempted him to try the fortune of a battle.

THE troops he had with him were of two different sorts, PERSIANS^c and KHAJARS. The latter, who were the most numerous, insisted, that in consideration of their great services, the prince would promise, that in case of success, the ATHEMAT DOULET should be always chosen from their body. The KEZELBACHS opposed such an innovation. The dispute, which seemed to be very ill-timed, divided this little army into two opposite factions. TÆHMAS perceiving that his authority was too feeble to quash the disturbance, resolved to retreat; but his curiosity prevailing over fear, he kept only a thousand men with him, and ordered AMUR ASLAN KHAN^d, one of his general officers, to march with the other two thousand, to reconnoitre the AFGHANS. This general had soon demonstrative proofs of what he was sent to discover: the AFGHANS having already passed the limits agreed upon, were in full march; and the number and disposition of their troops plainly shewed that their design was to surround the SHAH. The KHAN immediately dispatched some horsemen to acquaint this prince, that nothing but a speedy flight could save him from the treachery of the enemy.

THE advice arrived at the very interval that ASHREFF had detached a body of two thousand five hundred men, with orders to make a winding, and cut off the prince's retreat. TÆHMAS perceiving this danger, abandoned his troops, and fled to TÆHIRAN, attended only by two hundred men. AMUR ASLAN KHAN, who was soon hemmed in by the AFGHANS, put himself in a posture of defence. The engagement, was obstinate, but this brave general, after twice repulsing his enemies, gave way to numbers; he was in the utmost danger of being crushed, when the approach of night preserved him, and as many of his soldiers as could save themselves by flight, and

^a This place is called KOOM and TÆHIRAN.
year.

^c KEZELBACHS.

pillaged in RESHD in 1748. Vol. I.

^b This was in the beginning of AUGUST this

^d This was the man by whose orders the BRITISH factory was

1725. and the favour of the neighbouring mountains. In a few days he arrived at TÆHIRAN.

TÆHMAS, who had retired thither, being apprehensive lest the enemy should follow him, continued his march with great expedition into MAZANDERAN. The ruggedness of the mountains, which surround this province, has often rendered it the assylum of the PERSIAN kings: here this prince took shelter, followed by his general AMUR ASLAN KHAN, and those whose horses could bear the fatigue of so precipitate a march. The prudence of this conduct was soon proved by the event. ASHREFF, being persuaded that TÆHMAS was still at TÆHIRAN, resolved to surprize him before he could have time to remove from thence. With this intent, he compelled the peasants to serve him as guides, and soon appeared with his army before the walls of the town. Upon discovering that TÆHMAS was fled, he ordered his troops to attack the place; but the besieged behaved so well, that he was obliged to abandon his enterprize.

BEING greatly irritated at his disappointment, and the laborious march he had made in vain, ASHREFF directed his course southward towards SAVA, which surrendered by capitulation. He afterwards marched to KOOM, a city of great importance, and before which he must in all probability have miscarried, had the inhabitants been prepared for his reception; but the want of provision obliged them to capitulate, after a siege of eight days. The sultan more politic than his predecessor, observed the conditions of his treaties very strictly. By the reduction of KOOM, he became master of twenty pieces of cannon, and three elephants: he also found some treasure belonging to TÆHMAS, together with the wife, and part of the court of this prince. However, his fortune here did not compensate for the failure of his plot; and he returned to ISFAHAN vexed at his disappointment, and not less uneasy at the accounts he received of the new enterprizes of the OTTOMAN court.

THE apprehension of being charged with cruelty, which had rendered the memory of his predecessor so odious, was the only motive which had induced the sultan to spare the lives of the authors of the letter already mentioned; and though this had been intercepted, it was presumed that others of the same nature might have raised a suspicion of his designs. However, he now thought it essential to his preservation to exterminate this remnant of the nobility, from an apprehension that he should ever be subject to their treasonable correspondency. Accordingly he assembled them at his country-palace of FERHABAD, under pretence of a hunting-match; and having convicted them of holding a correspondence with his enemies, he condemned them to be beheaded; which sentence was executed upon the spot.

C H A P. III.

Death of PETER the GREAT. Deplorable state of the PERSIAN monarchy. The TURKS take TAVRIS and GANJA. ACHMED BASHA takes possession of LORISTAN. Division among the BACTIARIS. The VALI of LORISTAN makes an incursion into the territory of BAGDAT.

THE conquests which the TURKS had made the preceding year, and the indolence into which the RUSSIANS seemed to have fallen, with respect to PERSIA, gave the former a superiority, at which their new allies began to take umbrage. The inconveniencies which the PORTE apprehended in waging war against the AFGHANS, on account of their being SUNNIS, and the very name of the emperor of RUSSIA, kept them in the resolution of adhering to their engagements, when they received notice of the death of that monarch. General ROMANZOFF^a, envoy extraordinary of RUSSIA for the ratification of the treaty, and commissary for regulating the limits in PERSIA, was sensible of the difficulties which this accident would create in the execution of his commission. However, he kept his own counsel, and endeavoured to persuade the TURKS, that the empress CATHARINE had adopted such measures, as would prevent the death of his much lamented master from making any alteration in the system of affairs in the RUSSIAN empire.

1723.

THE grand vizir pretended to be convinced of the truth of what he said; and declared that the intention of the GRAND SIGNIOR was to conform exactly to the engagements, which he had entered into with the deceased monarch; and therefore, he would immediately dispatch the commissaries, who were to regulate the limits upon the spot. Nevertheless, under the pretence of putting the PORTE in possession of the provinces, which were fallen to her share by the partition treaty, the vizir had no other view than to extend the frontiers of the OTTOMAN empire. For this purpose, he made extraordinary preparations, that the armies which were to act against PERSIA, might be in a condition of making new conquests.

THIS distressed monarchy was thus a prey to several different enemies at one and the same time. The PORTE had stripped her of GEORGIA, of almost all ARMENIA, and part of ADERBEITZAN. The CZAR was master of all the western coast of the CASPIAN, except SHAMAKIE^b, which was in the hands of the LESGEES. KHORASAN, KHERMAN, KANDAHAR, and the governments of ISFAHAN and SHIRASS, were in the power of the AFGHANS or their associates. The authority of SHAH TÄHMAS was acknowledged only in MAZANDERAN, ASTRABAD, and some few places of IRAC AGEMI. The rest of the provinces which had not openly revolted, either despised the orders of this prince, or formed independent armies, which attacked indiscriminately the RUSSIANS, the TURKS, and the AFGHANS.

THESE troubles soon reached some of the provinces lately conquered by the TURKS. The sovereign^c of the LESGEES, who had put himself under the protection of the PORTE, shook off this new yoke, and attacked HAHDGEE DAUD, who held

H h 2

SHA-

^a I am not sure that he was at this time a general, though he was so afterwards.
flood a few leagues inland.

^c OUSMAI.

^b This city