

as of all others I had yet seen in Persia, consisted simply in carpets. These were indeed of the finest and softest kind, as well as exceedingly beautiful ; but there were neither sofas nor cushions of any kind, as used in Turkey and Arabia. The Persians of all classes and distinctions kneel, and sit back on their heels, preserving their bodies in an upright posture, and holding their hands across their girdles, or on their daggers, so that cushions are not necessary. This, however, is an attitude used by Turks and Arabs only before their superiors, and never resorted to by people of the higher classes, or those who feel at ease in society. The cross-legged mode of sitting, common to the Turks, is more easy of imitation by a stranger, and admits a greater change of position, so that lounging may be easily indulged in, and cushions are then agreeable ; but among the Persians I had never observed this practised, either in the circles of the high or low ; and it was so far fortunate, therefore, that my Arab dress admitted of my retaining Arab manners, since it would have been impossible for me to have sat in the Persian fashion longer than half an hour, without being incapacitated from rising again, from so cramped a position.

The dresses of most of the people of distinction in attendance, were those commonly worn by Persians of every description, and offered no other variety than the quality of their materials. The sleeves and bodies of their garments are even tighter than those of Europeans ; while the lower part, from the waist downward, is like an ample petticoat, open at the sides, and both undignified and ungraceful. Cashmeer shawls are wound round the waist, in which a plain and generally straight dagger is placed, and the black sheepskin cap is worn by all. An outer coat, with sleeves, and embroidered work around the edges, is used by the Khans and people in office, and this is mostly of bright scarlet broad-cloth, that being the established colour of the court-dress.

In our conversation with the Governor, his enquiries were first directed to European affairs, and afterwards to the state of the

countries through which I had passed; and his observations seemed to me more intelligent than one generally hears from Turks in similar situations, though his knowledge of geography and statistics was equally deficient.

After an hour had passed, during which caleoons were three or four times presented, and passed from one to another in the order in which we sat, refreshments were brought in. These were contained in a number of large oblong trays, which were placed before the company; so that, as they sat in three sides of a square, close to the walls of the room, the trays, when placed end to end, formed one continued table before the guests, and were conveniently accessible by every one. Their contents were chiefly fruits, in great variety and abundance, particularly pears and melons, which are nowhere in the world thought to be produced in higher perfection than at Ispahan; bread of the whitest colour and best flavour; cheese equal to English in taste, though different in appearance; salads of lettuce and other herbs; milk, cream, rice, sweetmeats, sherbet of pomegranate juice cooled by masses of ice; and other similar delicacies, completed a feast of the most agreeable kind. Water was served to the guests for washing, both before and after the meal; but coffee is not usually drunk by the Persians, either in public or in private.

Before we retired, an offer of every thing that the power of the Governor, or his city of Ispahan, could furnish us with, was publicly made, and a hope expressed that my stay would be in every respect agreeable both to my health and wishes. A guard of honour was appointed also to escort us back to our own residence at the palace; and I felt almost oppressed by the overwhelming honours thus shown to me.

We passed the evening in a walk through the gardens of our dwelling, and closed it by a supper with the Topjee Bashee and a party of his public friends.

OCT. 10th.—Horses and attendants were prepared to-day for an excursion round the royal palaces and grounds, and notice

had been sent to the keepers in attendance to be ready for our reception. Assad Ullah Khan was again appointed to be our guide, though several other Khans, with their servants, accompanied us.

Soon after leaving our own abode, we found ourselves at the Palace of the Chehel Sitoon, or Forty Pillars. The gardens around this mansion, and leading towards it, are all beautiful; the sycamores, which line the avenues, are large and ancient; the cypresses and firs, interspersed throughout the grounds, have an equally fine though different aspect; and the slender poplars, bending to the breeze, give a lightness and airiness to the thickest woods. The fountains, canals, and walks, are laid out with all the taste and regularity of the best grounds of Europe; and, in short, every thing seems to have been, in its original design, as perfect as one could have desired it. The palace itself, though inferior to the gardens amid which it stands, is still a monument of the luxury and splendour of the age in which it was erected. In front is an open portico, in which three or four rows of pillars, about six in each, support a flat roof, or canopy; the four central pillars, which are placed at the angles of a square fountain, have a device of four lions, each carved in a hard stone, for the pedestals; the pillars are all lofty, perhaps fifty feet in height, but disproportionately slender; the shaft is one solid trunk of sycamore wood, shaped octagonally round the sides, and lessening from the base upwards, till it seems to be scarcely a foot thick at the placing on of the capital. The capital rises in a square, increasing its dimensions from below like an inverted pyramid, and is filled on every side by the concave niches so peculiar to the Saracenic architecture. As these pillars have to support a roof of enormous weight, their strength is altogether insufficient; and not only do their disproportionate height and slender proportions offend the eye; but the bending of the parts of the roof between them, threatens a speedy fall. The shafts and capitals of these pillars are entirely covered with silvered

glass as mirrors,—sometimes wound round in spiral flutings; at others, laid in perpendicular plates; and in others again, enamelled over by flowers and other devices, after the manner of embossed work on polished steel. The ceiling of the roof of the portico is divided into square compartments, moulded and richly covered with azure blue and gold, in admirable devices. The back part of this portico is one entire sheet of gold and mirrors, splendid as a whole, and containing many beauties in its minute details. Every possible variety of form is given to the devices, in which the plates and smaller pieces of glass are disposed, and their partitions are frames of gold. Paintings of beautiful females, some sculptured works on marble, inscriptions of highly finished writing, both of ink on paper, and of gold on blue enamel, with a hundred other details, impossible to be remembered amid the overwhelming magnificence of so much labour and wealth, distract the attention of the observer.

The hall into which this leads, and for which this noble portico is an admirable preparation, is, if possible, still more magnificent, though its decorations are of a different character. The vast size of the room itself, the dimensions of which I should hesitate from mere memory to state, is alone sufficient to give it a noble air. The domed roof is indescribably beautiful, and the large compartments of historic paintings that decorate its walls, defective as their execution would appear to an European eye, are yet full of interest, from the portraits they contain, and the events to which they relate. Shah Abbas the Great, the distinguished founder of these kingly works, the restorer of his country, and the father of his people, is himself represented as receiving the audience of an Indian monarch, and the portraits of the most distinguished characters of his reign are pointed out by the attendants. As a banqueting room, scenes of war and state do not alone decorate its walls; but the enjoyments of the social board—women, wine, and music—have their full share in the pictured stories of the day.

We went from hence to the Royal Harem, called, from their

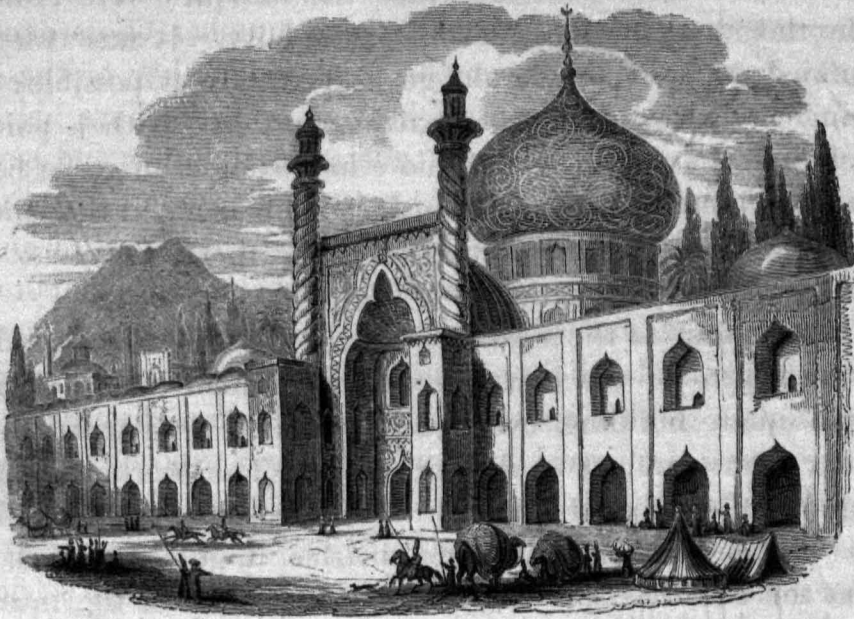
number, the Haft Dest, or Eight Divisions. The view from hence was on all sides charming; but on that where the building hung over the stream of the Zeinderood, and commanded a view of gardens, bridges, palaces, and mosques, bounded only by the distant mountains, the prospect bordered on enchantment. It would be as vain as it would be endless, to enter into a detail of all that we saw here: gardens, fountains, secluded walks, and ranges of apartments, decorated in the richest, most varied, and pleasing manner, were the prominent features of this establishment. There were no large halls of state, as in the Royal Palaces; but the rooms were suited to the comfort of smaller parties than those which swelled the pomp of the monarch in his more public banquets with men. The style of decoration in the rooms was less gorgeous; but the delicacy and harmony of colours in the painted devices, and the lighter gilding of the domes, though more effeminate in character, was scarcely less beautiful. Every one of these apartments had good fireplaces, on which the stain of the smoke still remained; many of them had hollow work on their walls, executed in the most tasteful designs, and intended, as we were told, to give an echo to the voice of the singers, and the sounds of music, and improve as well as prolong the tones of love and pleasure which once reverberated here. Verses, names, and sentences, were written on these walls in the Armenian character, and were most probably the work of such Georgian or Armenian females as had been immured here among the slaves of the royal bed: these, with many other traces of recent habitation, awakened feelings of a mixed though painful nature.

We were delighted with all that we had seen here, and went from hence to another palace, similar in design and interior de-

* On the capture of Ispahan by the Affghans, Mahmood, their chief, resided in the palace of Ferrahabad, where fifty of the best-born and most beautiful virgins of Julfa were sent to him in their richest clothes.—*Hist. of Persia*, v. i. p. 630. It is not improbable that the Armenian writing seen by me on the walls of this palace was from some of these imprisoned females.

coration to the Chehel Sitoon, and, like it, seated among the most beautiful grounds. The Hasht Behest, or Eight Paradises,—a name most appropriately given to that number of gardens, in which all that Mohammed, or the Christian author of the Apocalypse, had painted of a sensual heaven, seems to have been anticipated,—detained us for some time amid its walks and bowers. The Char-Bagh, or Four Gardens, a work of the present Governor, Hadjee Mohammed Hussan Khan, the entrance to which is imposing from the long avenues of trees which it presents to the view, also shared our admiration. We had seen, however, so much to charm and delight us, and quitted one spot with so much regret, though to visit another perhaps still more beautiful, that we were literally fatigued with pleasure, and tired of constantly beholding so much splendour and magnificence in art, mixed with every thing that is agreeable in nature.

Our excursion closed by a visit to one of the Khan's friends, with whom we supped and passed the evening, having taken the refreshments of the day at almost every palace and garden at which we had halted. When we returned home at night, my sleep was really interrupted by the confused recollections of all the overpowering magnificence which had pressed upon me, at every step that we had taken during the day.



CHAPTER XIV.

ISPAHAN—VISIT TO THE PRINCIPAL MOSQUES AND COLLEGES OF THE CITY.

OCT. 11th.—It had been my practice in all large Mohammedan cities, where it was at all likely that I should become known as a Frank from my residing or mixing with Christians there, to visit the mosques as early after my arrival as possible, while I was yet a stranger; but here I was prevented from so doing, as I had scarcely set my foot in the city, before I had become in some respects a public character. As I could not, on this account, now go safely as a Mohammedan into these hallowed sanctuaries, I ventured to express to the Khan, who had been my guide to all the other places, my desire of visiting them as a mere observer. Some scruples were raised, not on his own account, but on those of the Moollahs,

who are considered a highly bigoted race, and more particularly as to-day was the sabbath on which the mosques were crowded both by them and the most devout of the laity. It was at length determined on, that we should go as privately as possible; and changing my dress for one of extreme poverty, with a pointed Dervish cap on my head, a staff, and a long chaplet of green beads, which I had brought with me from Jerusalem, made at the mosque of Omar, on the site of Solomon's Temple there, I set out with Ismael on this holy excursion.

We went first to the small mosque of Lootf Ali Khan, which is in the centre of the east side of the Maidan Shah. This is simply a square building, over which is raised a flattened dome, without pillars, arched vaults, or aisles. The workmanship is throughout of the best kind, both in the masonry and embellishments. Large blocks of Tabreez marble, highly polished, are used at the entrance, and along the surbasement of the interior. The gilding, enamel, and painting of the walls, and the ceiling of the dome within, is equal to any of the halls of the palaces that we had seen; and, small as it is, there is a great neatness and beauty in the whole. The exterior front, the portals, and arch of the door, and the outer surface of the dome, are all coated with painted and enamelled tiles, in which azure blue is the prevailing colour; and the inscriptions, with which the building is crowded within and without, are chiefly in Cufic and in Arabic.

From the mosque of Lootf Ali Shah, as this personage is sometimes called, from his having assumed the title of sovereignty during his lifetime, we went to the great mosque, at the southern end of the Maidan, which is dignified with the peculiar name of the Mesjid Shah, or Royal Mosque. The lofty gate which forms the outer entrance to this, and faces the centre of the public square, has on each side of it a minaret, with open galleries at the top; but though in any other situation these would be considered large, they look diminutive here, from the noble size and elevation of the gateway, which they guard. This gateway leads to an inner

court, in which are fountains for ablutions, and large circular vases of close-grained stone, filled with water, for drinking. These last ring like metal at the stroke of the nail, and are finely sculptured over with devices and inscriptions in bold relief. The outer pair of folding doors, which are scarcely less than sixty or seventy feet in height, and of a proportionate breadth, are cased with silver, and covered also with inscriptions, holy sentences, and characteristic ornaments in relief; and at the cistern, which meets the passenger on entering it, are silver cups fastened by silver chains to the marble, all of the most finished workmanship.

Around the court of the mosque are close vaults, for the devotions of the infirm or delicate, during the winter, as the temple itself is almost an open building. The ground plan of the whole, as seen from an elevated station without, is far from being regular; yet the want of uniformity is not apparent to the eye, either on entering or being within the building; and this has been as ably effected by the architect here, as at the Egyptian temple of Philœ on the Cataracts of the Nile, at the principal entrance to Geraza in the Decapolis, and at Palmyra, where one of the finest gateways has been so constructed as to harmonize diverging lines; and in the whole of these, irregularity has been made to appear regular, by the skill of the builder.

Nothing can surpass the rich yet solemn state of the interior of this royal mosque. Pavements and surbasements, of the fine diaphonous marble of Tabreez, cabled mouldings of arches, finely carved pilasters, and other portions of the same material, give an appearance of simple and solid beauty to the foundations of the edifice; while the lofty domes and spacious aisles have a grandeur not to be surpassed; and the rich decorations of the walls and roofs of every part, present one blaze of laboured magnificence, which would be too splendid, but for the architectural majesty of the edifice it adorns.

Around the mosque, on three of its sides, and communicating with it by separate passages, are colleges for the studies of the

learned, and the education of youth. In these are courts, with fountains, shaded by the finest trees, as well as flower-gardens, fruits, and all that could render retirement at once cheerful, yet undisturbed, and favourable to literary pursuits. We remained in this mosque for a considerable time, praying and counting our beads. As we ran through the ninety and nine appellations of the deity, some of the Moollahs expounded, in Persian, certain Arabic verses of the Koran. They spoke from an elevated oratory, ascended to by flights of marble steps, each entire flight of one solid block; and with several of these we exchanged the salute of peace, while Ismael strove to draw them into a conversation on some of the higher points of doctrine; but as they saw that our practices were those of the Soonnee sect, whom they very cordially hate, they all proudly shunned us, which left us as undisturbed as we could have wished.

The mosque was crowded at noon with worshippers, perhaps to the number of two thousand; some of whom offered up their prayers alone and almost in silence, while others ranged themselves behind Imams, or leaders, and gave their devotions all the public solemnity of union. The beautiful parable of the Publican could not receive a more striking illustration than from the scene before us; and the gorgeous splendour of the dome, beneath which it was witnessed, added powerfully to its effect.

Some of the mosques at Cairo are exceedingly fine, and preserve perhaps some of the best specimens of the Saracenic architecture that exist. The mosque of Omar, which stands on the site of the old Jewish temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, has a noble aspect from without. That at Damascus, which was formerly a Christian cathedral, is beautiful, from its long avenues of Corinthian columns of marble. The court of the great mosque at Aleppo is perhaps nowhere surpassed; and some of these at Diarbekr and Bagdad have parts worthy of admiration. But, taken altogether, I have never yet seen, nor ever expect again to see, any Mohammedan temple so truly magnificent in all its parts, as

this Royal Mosque of Ispahan. When quitting it, indeed, with this impression, and without the prospect of my ever entering it again, there was a feeling of melancholy present to my mind, which it required all the aid of new scenes and new ideas to dissipate.

The other mosques, which we visited in the course of the day, were too inferior to this, to merit a description immediately after it. Some derived their chief beauty from their size ; others were small, but exceedingly neat ; and on all, a degree of labour and expense had been bestowed, which proved both the former wealth of the place, and the attachment of the people of Persia to splendid temples of worship.

We returned in time, after a long and fatiguing round, to say our evening prayers in the Mesjid Shah. The crowd was not now so numerous as at noon ; and the proud Moollahs, with their aspiring pupils, bearded elders, and a few Fakeers, made up the assembly. The grave and hollow tones which reverberated through the lengthened aisles, and were re-echoed by the lofty domes,—the dim twilight, as the shades of darkness fast approached,—and the silent passing by of barefooted devotees, who were but faintly seen, and not heard, though their loose robes brushed us as they glided along,—were all striking features of a scene that inspired mixed sensations of awe and admiration, and almost fixed one to the spot, in that meditative mood, which the mourning children of affliction mistake for philosophy, but which the lover of more cheerful joys would shun as the bane of happiness.

OCT. 12th.—We had not yet seen the fine colleges of the learned, which were among the most splendid establishments of Shah Abbas the Great, nor visited any of the learned men of the day ; and as we were still detained at Ispahan for an opportunity to depart with a caravan, this duty was fixed on for our morning excursion.

We first went to one of the smallest of these Medresses, as they are called, and now almost the only one in Ispahan in which

there are any students, except those of the regular priesthood. It was an exceedingly neat establishment, consisting of ranges of chambers around the interior of an open square court, like the arrangement of a caravansera, but of a better kind. The court itself was laid out in fountains and canals, bordered by avenues of trees, and divided by beds of flowers. In this court, stood the tomb of 'Tekeca Mir Abul-Cassim Fendereski, an Arab of great learning and celebrity, and the translator of Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek philosophers, into his own tongue. The tomb itself was of plain marble, simply inscribed in Arabic characters on a small tablet at the head; a spreading tree overshadowed it by its branches; and leaning against its trunk, which overhung the tomb, was a small framed and glazed tablet, on which was beautifully written, on paper, an Arabic ode, in praise of the deceased, in a style of great eloquence; but the author of which had also followed the fate of the learned subject of his eulogy.

We reposed beside this tomb for half an hour, and listened to the moralizing strains of the Dervish Ismael, who urged every thing he either heard, or felt, or saw, or even imagined, in support of his favourite maxim, that Pleasure was the only Good; and that we should therefore eat and drink, since to-morrow we die; and if he was eloquent on ordinary occasions, he was additionally so on the one that now presented him with so fine an illustration of that which he called the folly of human wisdom. A young student of about eighteen, who saluted us as he passed, and who, from our manner of returning it, joined us where we sat, aided the sententious declamations of the Dervish by some fine quotations from the very writer whose ashes we had come to venerate; and we found, from a prolonged conversation with this lad, that, young as he was, he was deeply versed in the doctrines of Soofeeism, and was fast verging into that scepticism, which is almost the constant result, in these countries, of premature and self-directed studies of a metaphysical cast.

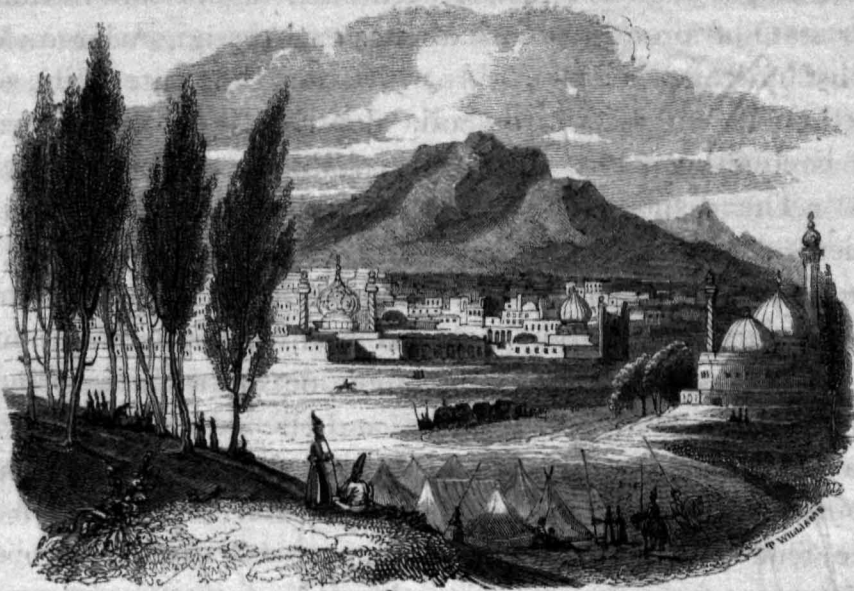
From hence we went to the more splendid Medressé of Ahmed

Shah : a noble work in its original state, but now almost abandoned, as there were only some inferior Moollahs who occupy a few of the numerous chambers around its stately courts. The outer gateway of this spacious edifice, which fronts a long range of gardens, is closed by large folding-doors, which, like those of the royal mosque, are coated over with sheets of silver, on which, devices and inscriptions are executed in relief. The interior court is laid out in fountains, canals, and gardens, in which large spreading trees yield an agreeable shade, and beds of flowers give the appearance of a constant spring. The ranges of chambers below, as well as those in the galleries above, are conveniently adapted for the retirement of study, and have each of them the proper offices attached behind, for the comfort of those who may inhabit them.

As Assad Ullah Khan was still our guide, and we rode with a large retinue of servants, our appearance commanded respect ; and indeed we every where met with it. Even here we were invited into the neat apartment of a Moollah, and served with sweetmeats and caleons by his own hands. This man, as we were assured after our visit, was one of the most learned in Ispahan ; though in a conversation which was introduced on the subject of the demonstrative sciences of astronomy and mathematics, as well as the less certain ones of chemistry and medicine, he hardly seemed to be aware that these branches of learning were better understood in Europe than in Persia. His geographical knowledge did not even extend to the relative positions of the countries forming the boundaries of his own. In astronomy, the motions of the heavenly bodies were not at all familiar to him, though he knew the effect popularly ascribed to the conjunctions of the stars and planets. Chemistry and medicine were in no way connected with his studies ; and his notions of both, were those of a man who had neither heard nor thought on the subject in his lifetime. But in polemical divinity, the distinctive features of Soonneeism and Sheeahism, and in the doctrines of the Soofees, he was

more proficient. He could recite some of the verses of Saadi, whom he called his favourite poet, though he confessed at the same time his disrelish for the other distinguished ones of his country. Of Arabic literature he was entirely ignorant; and the best historians of his own country were unknown to him, since I mentioned the names of several, with the titles of their works, as popularly known among Oriental scholars of the west, of which he had not even heard. The claim of this man to be considered as one of the most learned of the day, and the ornament of the colleges of Ispahan, might have been sufficiently well-founded; but if this were admitted, as it was here without a scruple, the condition of useful learning in Persia must be deplorably low and degraded. The Moollah Hadjee Mir Mohammed Hossein was however kind, subserviently humble, and easily polite in his manners; and there was neither pride nor affectation apparent in his behaviour.

We spent a considerable time with this man, examining some specimens of fine Persian writing, of which he had an extensive and beautiful collection, chiefly made up of detached sentences and chapters of the Koran. We were served here with a noon repast of fruits and sweetmeats, before we were conducted over the college; and this, with a ride in the garden, into which its outer front opened, consumed nearly the whole of the day; so that we did not return home until sunset, where a scene of more animating joys was prepared for us,—and a night of turbulent delight, with all the accessories of wine and appropriate music, which are nowhere enjoyed with more zest than in this country, where they are strictly forbidden, succeeded to a day of calm and tranquil pleasure.



CHAPTER XV.

ISPAHAN—PALACE OF OUR RESIDENCE—PAINTINGS—GARDENS—
DISTANT VIEW OF THE CITY.

OCT. 13th.—WE had been hitherto so occupied in our excursions round the city, and the sight of all that has been so hastily and imperfectly described, that the splendid palace of our own residence had not yet been half gone over, and the more modern establishment for the present royal family attached to it had altogether escaped our attention. The first of these was one of the earliest residences of Shah Abbas the Great, and that to which he is said to have been most attached through life. It is called Talar Tuweelah, from its extensive stables for one thousand horses near it. Its large hall of audience, which fronts a fine garden, has been already described. Its noble dimensions,

and the splendour of its decorations, were in no way inferior to those of the Chehel Sitoon, and other buildings in the Hasht Behest; and though of equal, or even older date, it was in a much higher state of preservation than either of these. A large closed room led off from one end of this, which, as it was entered by small latticed doors, and afterwards solid double ones, was most probably a banqueting room of the King, when retired with his females. The domed roof of this was particularly beautiful;—the pictured subjects were appropriate to retired pleasures, the stained glass windows gave a rich and mellowed light, and there were balconies, or galleries, ascended to by steps, as if for musicians, or singers. My own room communicated with the principal hall by three sets of double-doors, and opened on the other side into a high walled court, perfectly secluded even from the highest point of view without. This was also said to have been one of the female apartments, which appeared extremely probable, from its comparatively small size, the style of its decorations, and the manner of its communication, by double-doors, with the hall on one side, and by an equal number of the same kind with the garden and court on the other. The walls of this, from the floor to the roof, were of raised gold-work, on a blue ground, and the lower recesses were executed in the same way, with devices of flowers, trees, birds, &c. In the upper recesses, which were separated from the lower by a rich broad frieze of gold ground, with flowers, were a succession of historical paintings. In these, females were always the heroines of the story: sometimes they appeared in the chase—at others, in the act of being sold as slaves—love and intrigue were depicted in some—and in one, the sight of a female bathing in a stream had checked the speed of an amorous prince, who gazed on her with intense desire. The story of Baharam Gour, or Baharam the Fifth, and his fair favourite, fills the last compartment near the door, and is perfectly understood by even the children of the country. This monarch, whose reign has ended nearly fourteen hundred years, has been pronounced to be

one of the best sovereigns that ever ruled Persia ; the happiness of subjects being his sole object, during the whole of his reign. His favourite amusement, in hours of relaxation from public duties, was the chase ; and in the indulgence of this passion, indeed, he lost his life.

Sir John Malcolm, in his visit to one of this monarch's hunting seats, heard almost exactly the same story of his skill as an archer, as was related to me by a domestic who explained the painting of the subject on the walls here.* The king is represented sitting in a chair, while his horse is held by an attendant ; and his banished favourite is seen bearing on her shoulders a large black cow, and with it ascending a flight of ten steps leading to an apartment above. The doors of this pictured room were securely made, neatly panelled, and the grain of the sycamore wood of the country imitated on a varnished ground by waves of gold. The windows over the doors leading to the garden were among the most beautiful of any that I had seen in Ispahan ; they were of a pointed arched form, richly covered in small hollow work of the most ingenious patterns, and the harmony of colours in the extremely minute pieces of glass which filled these intervals was perfection itself. As the doors below were double, so were these windows ; the hollow between the inner and the outer ones occupying all the thickness of the wall, from three to four feet. The outer windows were now spread over with paper, yet, even in this state, the rich effect of the light was inconceivably fine.

Behind the suite of apartments connected with the great hall, were other courts and gardens, filled with canals and fountains, and surrounded by buildings fit in every sense to form the abodes of luxurious and powerful sovereigns ; in all of which, labour and wealth had been lavished, as if neither seemed of any value or account. Large squares, with open troughs for horses around them,

* Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. i. p. 119

and closed stalls within, extensive kitchens, and other domestic offices, were attached to these; and, within all, was a spacious court, of nearly a thousand feet square, with empty fountains, broken pedestals, portions of a fine stone pavement that covered the whole, a range of noble buildings round the sides, and a square pile of more costly ones, in the centre, all now deserted and in ruins. This, we were told, was once a royal harem, in which were immured upwards of three hundred of the most beautiful Georgian girls, besides wives and slaves of other countries and the magnificence of the establishment, the richness of its gilded arches, domes, and walls, induced us to credit all that could be said of it in its original perfection.*

One of the oldest and best accounts of Ispahan, soon after the period of Shah Abbas's government, is given by Sir Thomas Herbert, an English traveller, who visited it in 1627, and parts of whose description are so curious as to be worth transcribing, especially as his book is not now so easy of access to the general reader. He says:—

‘The imperial city of Spahawn is in thirty-two degrees thirty-nine minutes north; is seated in the kingdom of Parthia, in a fair plain and pleasant horizon. It is by some called Spaan, and by others Spahan and Hispahan, as their several dialects concurred.

‘It is a city of as great extent as fame, and as ancient as famous, and no less proud than ancient. At this time triumphing over those once more royal cities, Babylon, Ninive, Shushan, Ecbatan, Persopolis, Arsacia, and Nabarca.

‘This city was in her Infancy called Dura; (but whether, in that Dura, where the great Assyrian monarch, Nebuchadnezzar, erected his golden colosse, I know it not :) but this is known, that it was called by the ancient Greeks Hecatompylos, from its hundred gates, for Hecatompolis was meant by the Cretan isle, which had so many cities.

‘The boasting Persians named her, for her bigness, Half the World; and this greatness of hers was long ago, for these Scythopersæ know her no longer, then called Spawhawn, which has no signification. To say truth, she is beautiful and ancient: her circuit may be nine miles, and in that the better half is gardens.

‘The city is round, like Paris; its circuit, I have said, about nine English miles; her inhabitants, 300,000 souls, at most. The chief ornaments of the city are the Mydan, or great market; the Hummums, or hot-houses; the mosques, the King's palaces, and the gardens.

‘The Mydan is in the heart of the city, and, to say truth, all the bravery, concourse, wealth, and trade, are comprised in her. It is built quadrangular, though of unequal angles: from north to south, is seven hundred and seventy-five of my paces; from east to west, two hundred, but, accounting the aisle to the north issuing, is at least a thousand.

‘It is built in form of our Royal Exchange, with four aisles and a court within, called the

The palace erected for the present monarch, Futteh Ali Shah, was the work of a builder named Aga Bozoorg, who was himself our guide over it. It has not been completed more than four years, and was altogether done at the expense of the present Governor of the city, Hadjee Mohammed Hoosein Khan, as a tribute to his sovereign. It is said to be by far the best palace of his own in all the country, and far superior to any of the royal residences at Teheraun, Tabreez, Kermanshah, or Shiraz; for, though all the remains of departed grandeur here are the property of the King, it is the fashion of this country for the reigning sovereign not to

Hippodrome, so called from their running with horses there. It is stored with all merchandises, chiefly drugs; and to this place daily resort most nations, as English, Dutch, Portuguese, Arabians, Turks, Jews, Armenians, Muscovites, and Indians.

The Hummums here are round, spacious, and costly; one of which, built by this king, cost fifteen thousand pounds sterling, ere it was finished. They are much given to bathing, and it is most of their physic. The men go in the afternoon, the women at morning, and guided by the eunuchs.

The mosques, or churches, are large and handsome: that at the west side of the Mydan is most beautiful. It is round, built with good white marble, five yards high from the sole; the rest is dried bricks, covered over with posies of Arabic, and like work.

The King's prime house is within the Mydan, yet no way entrenching farther than the other houses: it is two stories high, gilded and wrought in antique works and posies, to the outward view; within, the rooms are covered with rich carpets, the roof embossed and wrought with gold and blue, terraced above.

Before his door lie unmounted forty-three demicannons, one-and-thirty are brass, the rest of iron, and are culverins. These were brought from Ormus, or Babylon.

At the north end of the Mydan are eight or nine rooms, like chapels, hung with lamps, which, being many and clear, give a dainty splendour. Higher, sometimes, the King repairs, and when he is away, the people are admitted.

The gardens fall in the next place to be spoken of; and in this, the city enjoys many, both large and delightful. I will content myself to speak of one, by which you may conjecture of the rest.

It is at the south-west end of the city, to which you pass through a street of two miles length, and better, both sides planted with Chenor trees.

The garden is called Nazar-i-areeb; it is a thousand paces from north to south, and seven hundred broad. It hath varieties of fruits and pleasant trees, and is watered with a stream cut through the Coronian mountain, and is forcibly brought hither. The first walk is set with pipes of lead and brass, through which the water is urged, and gives variety of pleasure.

From the entrance to the farther end, is one continued open alley, divided into nine

inhabit any palace of his ancestors; so that excellent edifices are thus neglected and destroyed, to erect inferior ones on their site.

This palace, which is in the general style of the plainest of the old ones here, is furnished with spacious courts, fountains, canals, gardens, and trees. With such fine models immediately before their eyes, the builders have succeeded in completing a tolerable imitation of the more ancient works. It is only less costly, less gorgeous, and less overpowering in splendour. The apartments are laid out on nearly the same plan, and are adorned in a very similar way. Some few paintings of Georgian youths, of both

ascents, each mounting higher by a foot than the other: the space betwixt each ascent is smooth and pleasant. In the midst is a fair tank, or pond of water, of twelve equal angles, and rows set with pipes to spout the water.

‘At the entrance is a little, but well-built house of pleasure, the lower rooms adorned with crystal water, immured with tanks of rich white marble.

‘The chambers above are enriched with pictures, representing sports, hawking, fishing, archery, wrestling, &c.: other places in use very richly overlaid with gold and azure.

‘But that which is of most commendation, is the prospect it enjoys; for, by being seated so high, it overtops and gives the excellent view of a great part of the city, which cannot be obtained elsewhere.

‘Returning to the city, you pass over a bridge, arched and supported with five-and-thirty pillars, under which is a stream of water, sometimes so broad as the Thames at London, but other sometimes near dried up; and he that looketh to it is called Prince of the River, a name and employment of great honour and benefit.

‘Abbas, the late victorious King, with whom few things were impossible, for many years past hath endeavoured to cut through many mountains, (the Coronian, being next the town,) to bring the river to Spawhawn, by the daily labour of forty thousand slaves, which of itself runs quietly fifty miles distant thence, and has performed it almost successfully, which, when it has perfection, may well compare with that old wonder, intended by vain-glorious Nero, betwixt Ostia and Avernus, now called Lycola.

‘Out of the city, behind that late described garden, is a mount rising in midst a spacious plain, which by the Persians is called Darow, and supposed that place where Darius, in imitation of his predecessor Xerxes, wept upon view of his innumerable army, so suddenly to become nothing.

‘In this city is a column, compact of several heads, of men, antelopes, bucks, goats, buffaloes, elephants, and camels: it is at the base about twenty foot in compass, and, I suppose, the height threescore. It was erected upon this occasion: when Abbas was proclaimed King, the Spawhawians would not let him enter, but charged him with the death of Mahomet, his father, and the murder of Emyrhamze, the Prince, his elder brother.

‘This nettled Abbas, and made him swear stoutly by his crown, by his father’s soul, the

sexes, are seen, with portraits of Jemsheed,* and other distinguished ancients, and of Jengiz Khan, and some other moderns. The portrait of the King himself occupies the chief place in every apartment: sometimes represented as seated on the chair or throne of state; at others, reclining in the divan, surrounded by his sons and officers of court. The portraits are all alike, and are said to be very faithful: they are executed as well as any of the older paintings of Ispahan. All these rooms being newly carpeted, the work fresh, and every thing in perfect order, there is greater pleasure in witnessing this effort of recent labour than in traversing the decayed halls of more splendid days; though almost every part of the modern works, both in the architecture and the details, bespeaks a decline of art in the country.

The present monarch has resided at Ispahan at three different periods, for a short time only; but though he admires the situation, the climate, the productions, and the former greatness of

eight refulgent orbs, the eleven hundred names of God, and the honour of his prophet Mahomet, for this rebellion he would chastise them bravely, cut off forty thousand of their heads, to raise a pillar of terror and admiration, as a ready sacrifice unto Mahomet.

‘After much ado, he conquers them, ransacks the city, kills a thousand of them, and, mindful of his oath, gives order to behead forty thousand. A lamentable cry was raised, and much entreaty used, but to small purpose. The vow of the Persians never alters, nor could he be dissuaded, till the Mufti, or sacred messenger, assures him, Mahomet by revelation told him, his oath might be dispensed with, so forty thousand were beheaded, no matter what; to which, at length, he is content to, whereupon a general massacre of all sorts of beast executed, the harmless often suffering for the nocent; and this monument of merciless mercy was reared higher than any mosque in that city, though now grown ruinous.

‘A like trophy was built by cruel Mustapha Bassaw, general for the Great Turk, Amurath the Third, who with a hundred thousand men entered Persia, and was repulsed by Sultan Tocomack, the Persian general, where, in the Caldaran plains, thirty-thousand Turks lost their lives, and only eight thousand Persians, of whose heads Mustapha made a monument for his dear-bought victory, and horror to the Persians.’ Pages 82—91.

A singular representation is given, in an engraving, of this obelisk, or monument, composed of human skulls, some parts of which remained to a period within the memory of persons still living in Ispahan; but every trace of it is now fortunately obliterated.

* Jemsheed, the Alfred of the Persians, to whom all great works are attributed, is said to have divided his subjects into four classes: the second of which, or the warriors, were called Nessereans. — *History of Persia*, p. 206. Can the Nessereah of Kerrund, and of the mountains in Syria, have any relation to these?

Ispahan, the latter of which he might have it in his power to restore by his residence here, a regard to his personal safety is said to make him prefer the bad air, bad water, and otherwise disagreeable station of Teheraun, where he has secured his treasures by strong walls,—is nearer his own tribe of the Kujurs for support, in case of rebellion,—and has behind him impenetrable forests for escape, in the event of these betraying him.* Whether these be his motives or not, such is the general opinion of his subjects here, who do not scruple to pronounce it openly, and inveigh both against his boundless avarice, his oppressive government, the corruption of his inferior agents, and his own personal cowardice.

After long waiting in vain for an occasion of departing with a caravan from hence for Shiraz, we had determined to set out on the morrow alone, and trust, as we had done before on similar occasions, to our own vigilance and union for safety.

The city of Ispahan being seated on a perfect plain, with no one eminence throughout its vast extent, we had as yet enjoyed no commanding view of it as a whole, from any one part of the numerous rides that we had taken around it. The most elevated building in the city, excepting only the domes and minarets of the mosques, was fortunately a part of the very palace we inhabited, and stood at the end of a walled passage, of about a thousand feet in length, leading directly from the court of my own apartment eastward towards the Maidan, or Great Square.

* The Kujurs are a Turkish tribe. The first son of the present King of Persia, Futuh Ali Shah, called Mahommied Wahi Mirza, was once Governor of Mushed, but has been driven out, and now lives about his father's court at Teheran, without a post. The second son, Mahomed Ali Mirza, now Governor of Kermanshah, is a high-spirited and aspiring character, and a great favourite of the nation. The third son, Abbas Mirza, Governor of Tabreez, is less enterprising and less popular; but he is the avowed favourite of the monarch, and is declared heir to his throne. The fourth son, Hassan Ali Mirza, Governor of Shiraz, is seemingly contented with his present power, and puts forth no pretensions to an extension of it. The two first of these are the offspring of the King by Georgian women: the third is by a high-born female of the Kujur tribe, and is therefore chosen to succeed the King; but the second son refuses to do him homage during the life of his father, and publicly avows his determination to dispute the empire with him, at the point of the sword, on this monarch's death.

This building is called Ali Kaupee, or Ali's Gate, from the Turkish; the lower part of it having been brought from the tomb of Imam Ali, at Nujuff. The edifice is a lofty square pile, of five stories in height, with a flat terrace on the top. As the chief builder, Aga Bozoorg, was always near, from his assisting Mr. Armstrong in his labours, and this with all the other public edifices was in his custody, we expressed a desire to ascend to the top of it, and take our evening coffee and caleoons,—a favour which was readily granted.

The eastern front of this building occupies the immediate centre of the west side of the Maidan Shah, looking directly over that extensive square, and opening into it; and its western, or back front, led, by the walled passage described, directly to our own residence. We ascended it on the inside by a narrow staircase, the steps of which had been cased with coloured tiles, and the walls and ceilings were richly painted. After passing a number of small apartments and irregular passages, we came on the third story to the noble balcony, or portico, which overlooks the Maidan, and in which the sovereigns of Persia used to sit, to receive processions, embassies, or other large assemblies, as they appeared before them in the square below.* This portico re-

* The manner in which these embassies were received and entertained, as well as the character of the reigning monarch and his court, in the time of Abbas, is so graphically described by Herbert, that a perusal of his account will give the modern reader a more accurate notion of the state of the country then, than any thing that could be presented to him. He will not fail to have observed, in a preceding extract from the same old writer, the freedom with which travellers spoke, two centuries ago, of the peculiarities in foreign manners that attracted their attention. More recent voyagers are obliged to speak less plainly: but it is questionable whether the public taste has not driven them into the opposite extreme, and whether what is gained in decorum of expression is not lost in fidelity of description. The following is Herbert's account of his entertainment in 1627.

‘At our alighting at the court-gate, an officer led us into a little place, having a pretty marble pond or tank in centre, the rest spread with silk carpets, where our ambassador and the rest stayed two hours, and then were feasted with a dish of pelo, which is rice boiled with hens, mutton, butter, almonds and turmerack: but how mean soever the diet was, the furniture was excellent, pure beaten gold, both dishes, covers, flagons, cups, and the rest.

‘Thence we were led by many Sultans, through a large, delicate, and odoriferous garden, to a house of pleasure, whose chambers both viewed the tops of Taurus and the Caspian Sea.

seembles in its general aspect that of the Chehel Sitoon, and the pillars are of the same number and description. We passed our evening here, enjoying the splendid view of the city, till night invited us to repose.

‘Into this lodge we entered; the low room was round and spacious, the ground spread with silk carpets, in the midst a marble tank full of crystalline water (an element of no small account in those torrid habitations), and round about the tank, vessels of pure gold, some filled with wine, others with sweet-smelling flowers.

‘Thence into a chamber, furnished in manner as the former, but with three times more vessels of gold, set there for pomp and observation.

‘At the end sat the Potshaugh, or great King, cross-legged, and mounted a little higher than the rest, his seat having two or three white silk shags upon the carpets.

‘His attire was very ordinary; his tulipant could not outvalue forty shillings, his coat red calico quilted with cotton, worth very little, his sword hung in a leather belt, its handle or hilt was gold; and in regard the King was so plain attired, most of the court had like apparel on for that day.

‘Yet the plate and jewels in that house argued against poverty, a merchant then there imagined it worth twenty millions of pounds.

‘So soon as our lord ambassador came to him, he by his interpreter delivered briefly the cause of his journey, which was to congratulate his victorious success against the Turk, to renew the traffic of silk, and other things to benefit the merchants, and to see Sir Robert Sherley purge himself from those imputations laid on him by Nogdibeg the King of Persia his late ambassador.

‘The King gave him a very gracious reply, and whereas he thinks it honour enough to let the great Turk’s ambassador kiss the hem of his coat, and sometimes his foot, he very nobly gave our ambassador his hand, and with it pulled him down and seated him next to him cross-legged, and calling for a cup of wine, drank to his Majesty our famous King, at which he put off his hat, and the King seeing it, put off his turban, and drank the cup off, which our ambassador pledged thankfully. And the people thought it a strange thing to see their King so complimentary, for it is a shame with them to be bare-headed.

‘The chamber wherein he was entertained, had the sides painted and gilded very beautifully, though indeed the verse may be inverted, *Materia superabat opus*, and not *materiam*.

‘Round about, with their backs to the wall, were seated fifty or sixty Beglerbegs, Sultans, and Chawns, who sit like so many statues, rather than living men. The Ganymede boys go up and downe with flagons of wine, and fill to those that covet it.

‘The day before this ceremony, the King rode to hunt the tiger, accompanied only with two hundred women, his wives and concubines; most of them were attired like courageous Amazons, with scymitar, bow, and arrows, the eunuchs riding abroad to prohibit any to come in view of them: the penalty is no less than loss of life, a dear price for novelties.

‘And though for the most part, when the King is in a progress, he has sometimes ten thousand, other times twenty thousand Cozelbashaws, or soldiers of best reckoning, yet at our being then at court, two thousand was the most then attending him.’ Pages 96—98.

There are passages in this, and indeed in the works of all old travellers, which could not now be printed; but the curious must be content to refer to these in the originals.



CHAPTER XVI.

DEPARTURE FROM ISPAHAN—AND JOURNEY BY AMMEENABAD
AND YEZDIKHAUST TO PERSEPOLIS.

OCT. 14th.—HAVING completed all our arrangements for prosecuting our journey further south, we rose early, and taking a moonlight breakfast, with the friends who had so hospitably entertained us at Ispahan, we mounted our horses for departure at day-light. The Fakeer, Zein el Abedeen, had now left us, to remain at this city; assigning as his reason, that a revival of the passion, which he had in vain performed a pilgrimage to conquer, would not suffer him to quit again the favoured abode of his mistress, who, he assured us, had taken pity on him since his return, and made him vows of eternal fidelity, though her husband still held her in bondage. The Dervish, Ismael, how-

ever, still continued attached to me; and though he was evidently averse to our setting out on the journey alone, yet he affected to bid a loud defiance to all dangers, as he buckled on his sword.

Mr. Armstrong insisted on accompanying us out of the city, and the Topjee Bashee, Assad Ullah Khan, who was prevented from doing us this intended honour, by his having an early engagement with the Governor, sent his own led horse, with his young son, Mohammed Hassan, and a number of his servants to swell our train. All this, as I had now resumed my former character of an Arab Pilgrim, I would rather have dispensed with, but there was no resisting these kind attentions.

As we quitted Ispahan, we went out through the Shiraz-gate, passing through the long avenues of the Char Bagh in our way, and having gardens on each side of us, well watered by fountains, canals, subterranean aqueducts,* and artificial cascades, the trees in most luxuriant foliage, and full-blown roses adding their perfume to this general breath of Spring, prolonged to so late a season. Crossing the bed of the Zeinderood by the fine bridge before described, we continued our course southerly, having Julfa and the mountain of the fire temple on our right; and passed through a mean but extensive burying-ground, where a party of females were uttering their lamentations over a new-made grave.†

In about an hour we had gained a line of small hills, in one of the passes through which we filled our water-skins at an enclosed spring, as we learned that there was no water on the road before

* The aqueducts of Persia are all subterranean, and contribute nothing to the architectural beauty or ornament of the country, like those of Europe.

† This is a very ancient custom. We read of the hired mourners for the dead in the Scriptures. Herodotus describes the practice as prevalent in ancient Egypt. And Herbert has the following mention of it in his day in Persia:—

‘ Their marriages have not much ceremony, polygamy is tolerable. Their burials are exactly performed by hired women, who for five hours space, scratch their ugly faces, howl bitterly, tear their false hair, swoon and counterfeit sorrow abominably: these their ejaculations

us. From this spot we enjoyed a last view of Ispahan, which from this elevated point, and during the freshness of the morning, looked indescribably beautiful.

It was here that our friends quitted us to return to the city. The grasp of my countryman was warm and cordial; and the expressions of the young Mohammed Hassan were as kind as when we parted before at the Khan of Chal Seeah; though he said he had thanked God a thousand times already, and should continue to do so all his life, for our having so unexpectedly passed ten days together, after what both had thought a final separation.

On clearing the ridge of hills, we came out on an extensive plain, on the left of which villages, gardens, and the large circular buildings for pigeons, before described, occupied a line of several miles. In the way through this, we passed some ruined buildings: and at its extremity we came to a steep road, cut up over a bed of rock, with some deserted huts at the top.

As it was now near noon, we alighted to refresh. The character of the stone composing the hills here, was different from that we had seen before, being hard, close-grained, of a chocolate-brown colour, placed in horizontal layers, of nearly equal thickness, and disposed to divide in oblong squares. The last slate we had seen was on the first low ridge of hills, where we filled our supply of water for the journey: this, too, was of a brownish colour, and disposed to divide perpendicularly, in square pillars; thus differing from the blue slate between Ispahan and Hamadan, which separated in horizontal plates.

continue till his placing in the grave, which is after they have washed him, (for they think purification in life and death is very necessary,) they perfume him, wrap him in fine linen, bid him commend them to all their friends, lay him with his head to Medina Talnabi, place him where never any was formerly buried, (because they think it an extreme injury to molest the bones of such as sleep,) place two stones writ with Arabic letters, to signify his lodging, its length and breadth, then bid farewell.' Page 168.

At this pass there was a small custom-house for taking account of the entry and departure of goods from Ispahan, but not for receiving the duties. On the right, in a plain, were seen some villages, but the general character of the prospect was dull and barren, with dry plains, and ridges of mountains perfectly bare, and of very broken and pointed summits.

When we mounted and continued our way, our course lay first south-west, and then south-south-east, but was on the whole nearly south; and after passing some walls of gardens and small villages, now deserted from want of water, we arrived about an hour and a half before sunset at the village of Mayar, which is esteemed nine fursucks from Ispahan, from whence we had been travelling ten good hours, at a quick walking pace.

This village, which is seated in a narrow defile of the plain, between bare hills, is small, and almost totally ruined, there being now only a few gardens with their occupiers there. An excellent caravansera, of a more highly-finished kind than we had yet seen in the country, on the public road, is also abandoned, and going fast to decay; but as it offered us the temporary shelter we required, we halted here for the night.

OCT. 15th.—While we were preparing to move at an early hour in the morning, the attention of the Dervish was attracted by the sight of a Persian stanza inscribed on the brick-wall of the recess in front of our chamber. Some sorrowing lover had probably written it, under the warm recollections of his mistress; and Ismael, whom it powerfully reminded of his young lover at Bagdad, was moved to a degree of feeling which I was still unable to comprehend. The Persian verse, as far as he was able to interpret it in Arabic, expressed the following lamentation:—‘When the remembrance of thee steals into my heart, like a spy in the night, tears of water first flow from my eyes; but these soon give place to tears of blood.’ After repeating the verse in Persian aloud for several times, and evidently with a high degree of admiration, and

looking alternately at the writing and at me, he exclaimed, 'Ah ! how hard it is to have one's heart divided between Philosophy and Love ! The first would make me your disciple and your follower throughout the world ; but the last—yes ! it cannot be otherwise,—that will make me abandon all my dreams of wisdom and perfection, and hasten my return to the young Elias, the moment that you embark upon the ocean for India.'—'Al Ullah,' 'It is with God,' I replied ; and the Dervish repaired with sorrow to his labours.

We departed from Mayar soon after sun-rise, and went southeasterly across a desert and gravelly plain. Our course gradually turned more to the southward, and was nearly south-south-east throughout the whole. The character of the country was exactly similar to that over which we had passed on the preceding day : flat and barren plains, bounded by ridges of bare rocky mountains, with a few deserted villages and caravanseras seen in different directions, and no water. Our whole distance was six fursucks, according to report, which we rode in about seven hours, as it was full an hour past noon when we entered Koineshae.

At the distance of a mile before we reached this place, we came on the ruins of a deserted village, where there were now only a few gardens artificially watered, several large pigeon towers like those at Ispahan, and an extensive burying-ground. The principal object visible in this last, was a large tomb, crowned by a cupola rising from amidst trees, and standing at the foot of a rocky mountain, its sacred precincts being marked by an enclosing wall. As this was close to the high road, we alighted here, under pretence of reposing for a moment in the shade ; the sun being powerfully hot in the parched plain near, and a dead calm prevailing. We found at the place a troop of Persian soldiers, who had made it their quarters as they halted on their march from Shiraz to Ispahan with public money, under escort. These were dressed in the usual costume of the country, but

they had each an English musket, with the East India Company's mark, and wore a double cross-belt, with a large black cartouch-box on the right, and a bayonet on the left side, as by English soldiers. These men at first insolently objected to our entry; but as we assured them that the only object of our journey through Persia was to visit the tombs of the venerated champions of the Faith, adding all we knew of the tomb of Imaum Hussein at Kerbela, Imaum Moosa at Bagdad, and Imaum Reza at Mushed, we were ourselves almost venerated as holy personages, and suffered without a murmur to pass on.

This sepulchre is that of Shah Reza,—a name given to one of the sons of the Imaum Moosa, whose father is said to have had three hundred wives, at different times and places, and upwards of a thousand children! No particulars were stated to us of the life or death of this branch of so holy and prolific a root; those around us being quite as ignorant as ourselves on these points. The garden in which his tomb was seated was exceedingly pretty, and contained several other buildings, for the accommodation of visitors as well as attendants. In the centre of the upper court was a large square cistern of solid masonry, filled with clear water from running streams; and on the surface of this swam a proud and favoured drake, followed by his harem of seven milk-white ducks, the only birds of the kind I had seen since leaving India, and kept here as if in token of the kind of fame which the father of the deceased enjoyed in the number of his wives and children. In another part of this court was a cistern of crystal water, in which were kept some hundreds of fish, as at Orfah, Tripoly, and other places near particularly sacred spots; and as at these, they were here suffered to procreate their species, *ad infinitum*, without any preventing cause, being never disturbed, always abundantly watered, and constantly well fed. The earliest of the divine precepts, "Increase and multiply," had been not only well observed by the family of the honoured saint, but seemed

also to be encouraged, as much as possible, in others, by the examples which struck the eye of every visitor to his tomb

The sepulchre had very little of grandeur: a large square room, ascended to by a flight of steps, and covered by a dome, contained in its centre an oblong sanctuary, arched over at the top, within which the ashes of Reza were enclosed in a smaller case. The tomb within was covered with offerings of silver candlesticks, dishes, gauze handkerchiefs, tassels, and trinkets, heaped in confusion one upon another. The brass bar-work of the outer cage was finely executed, in the close hollow fabric of a diagonal netting, the brass rods nearly an inch in diameter, and the squares between them about the same size, the whole being equal to any thing of the kind that I had ever seen in Europe or elsewhere. On the side of this work which faced the entrance, were hung two or three paltry looking-glasses, and some written tablets in Arabic: small carpets were spread over the whole, and printed cotton cloths and shawls were hung around the interior of the dome, like the trophies of our naval victories beneath the dome of St. Paul's in London. A profusion of smaller offerings, left by visitors to propitiate some vow, was suspended in all directions; but as we were unprepared for this act of piety, we departed from the shrine without leaving even a tribute behind us.

On quitting the tomb of Shah Reza, we passed through the remainder of the burying-ground in which it stands. The tombs were all Mohammedan, though some were of a very early age; and their general character was that of oblong blocks of stone, about the common size of a coffin, laid on the grave, with the inscription, chiefly in Arabic, on the upper surface. They were invariably flat, which forms a characteristic difference from the tombs of the Soonnees, whom the Shecahs accuse of heresy in making the tops of their sepulchres pointed and round.

It was amidst these tombs that we saw the rude statue of an animal, as like a lion as any thing else, but almost equally resembling any other four-footed beast. There are several similar ones

at Hamadan, Goolpyegan, and Ispahan, standing in different parts of these towns. The statue at this place was now thrown down, and lying on its side in the high road; though, from its being the only one we could hear of near the spot, it is likely to have been the same as that noted by Mr. Morier, on one of the tombs near; and thought by him to be of very great antiquity. This lion, for such it was most probably intended to represent, had a naked sword sculptured along the side that lay uppermost, and on its blade were two lengthened circles, in the form of a Roman O. Mr. Niebuhr, in his description of the gymnastic exercises at Shiraz, in the public-houses called *Surshore*, says, that the champion in these feats of strength is allowed to put a lion on his tomb; and tells a story of his mistake in this respect, on seeing lions on tombs, near that place, (p. 143). This statue was therefore probably one that decorated the grave of some such champion who had died here, and might have been of comparatively recent date, as its form was of the rudest kind, and its whole appearance that of a work from a modern Mohammedan artist.

After leaving this place, we entered the town of Komeshae by a mean gate; the place being encompassed by a wall of brick, coated with mud, of moderate height, strengthened by circular bastions, and having a dry ditch on the north side. The interior showed a series of new dwellings, raised on the ruins of older ones; and after passing through a line of roofed bazaars, we alighted at a small caravansera there.

The town of Komeshae is about the size of Goolpyegan; but more than half the buildings included within its walls, are abandoned and in ruins. Among them are seen several large edifices, probably the dwellings of governors at different times; and two mosques, a public bath, and closed bazaars, are left to testify that the former population of the town was greater than at present, there being now scarcely five hundred resident inhabitants.

We found here more general misery from want, than we had seen elsewhere; there being, first, an absolute scarcity of all the

necessaries of life; and next, an incapacity among the people to purchase what little there was, from their extreme poverty, and the high price of every thing. Though mendicants are far from numerous in those parts of Persia through which we had passed, there were not less than fifty persons, old and young, who crowded round us in the khan, soliciting for God's sake a morsel of bread to save them from starving. It was so dear, that our funds seemed hardly likely to last long enough to purchase sufficient food for ourselves and our horses as far as Shiraz; but it was impossible to shut one's heart against the claims of real want, and we therefore purchased and distributed bread among these miserable and desponding supplicants, who loaded us with blessings in return.

In the evening a caravan arrived from Pars, laden with grain, on its way to Ispahan; and though there were at least two hundred persons accompanying it, most of whom were armed, and about three hundred mules and horses, they had not been able to protect themselves from attacks on the way. The want of rain had been so universally felt over the country, that men were tempted to acts of desperation to supply the cravings of hunger. This caravan had been attacked by a party of nearly a hundred horsemen, who in a skirmish had killed two of the mule-drivers, and succeeded in carrying off about thirty laden animals, the rest escaping by closer union, when the danger of their scattered mode of travelling had been thus made apparent. This horde of robbers was said to have been Bactiari, a name given to a race of people, springing from Persians, Arabs, and Koords, who live in tents, and range the valleys in the tract between this and Shooster,—speaking a mixed dialect of all these three languages, in which the Koordish is predominant, and acknowledging only the leaders of their respective tribes. Elated by their success, they had also carried off the flocks of some of the villages in their way; as in their own parched domains their grain had failed them, and their own herds declined for want of water and pasture to subsist

on. A hundred stories were told us of small robberies committed by the distressed peasants of the villages near the road, on unwary passengers, from mere want; and every voice was raised against our proceeding alone, as we professed we intended to do: but, conceiving that there might be as much safety in our own party as in a larger one, since we had seen that numbers were not always a sure protection, and above all, since it would be impossible for us to support a long delay, and no one knew when a caravan would overtake us, I determined to go on, against the inclination of the Dervish, and the remonstrances of all who attempted to advise us.

OCT. 16th.—The scene of yesterday was again repeated, almost before it was daylight: on one hand, a crowd of supplicants for bread; on another, men accusing us of want of common prudence, and prognosticating our certain pillage or death.

When the sun rose, however, we burst through both these obstacles, and set out from Komeshæ alone. Going out of the eastern gate, and continuing for about half an hour in that direction, our road turned to the southward, and led along the foot of a high and bare range of mountains to the east. On our right we had a deep plain, bounded on the west by a similar range of hills, and about ten or twelve miles wide. It appeared to be of unusual fertility, though it was now sparingly watered by some small streams, all the other channels being perfectly dry. Along the centre of this plain was seen a line of villages and gardens, continuing for several miles to the southward, as well as some others at its western extremity; but most of these were said to have been lately abandoned, from want of water; and indeed most of those near which we passed were deserted and in ruins.

Our road over this plain lay about south-east by south, and at noon we reached the small station of Muksood Beggy. A large caravan from Shiraz, going to Ispahan, escorted by a troop of soldiers, had made their halt here, and every place of shelter was fully occupied by them. We were treated, indeed, with the

greatest insolence by the soldiery, for daring even to make an enquiry about a place either for ourselves or horses, while they occupied the station. We were therefore contented to halt for half an hour beneath the shade of a tree, near a small stream of almost stagnant water, at which, however, our horses drank, while we reposed ; after which, we again set out on our way.

Our course continued in nearly the same direction as before ; but the plain had now changed from a light fertile soil to a gravelly and barren one, scantily spread with tufts of a thick wild grass, on which a few flocks of sheep were seen feeding. Not a village now appeared throughout our way, until after about four hours travelling we arrived at a small place called Ammeenabad. It was just before our entering this that we met three men on foot, coming towards us ; and our suspicions were at first excited by seeing so small a number travelling alone. When they approached us nearer, however, Ismael leaped from his horse, and embraced one of them with all the fondness of a brother. They kissed each other on both sides of the cheek, drew aside, embraced, and kissed again for several times, before a word was spoken ; and then the first words were, 'Ya Ismael ! Ya Hassan ! Ya Ullah !' and a thousand impatient enquiries followed. This Hassan was a young man from a town in Mazanderaun, who had been known to the Dervish for many years, and had often been the companion of his pleasures in many places, but particularly at Bagdad, Moosul, and among the mountains of Koordistan. He possessed an extraordinary talent as a fine writer, and his occupation was that of executing sentences and tablets for particular purposes, and transcribing copies of the Koran. His leading passion was like that of Ismael, to roam from place to place, and enjoy every species of forbidden pleasure ; and like him, too, he could earn by his skill a sufficient sum in four months to support him in idleness and dissipation for the remaining eight of the year. Some of his best copies of the Koran were sold, as I was assured, for more than two hundred tomauns, (about 200*l.* sterling ;) but he executed

none, even in his plainest way, under fifty; so that his gains might well be considerable. He had recently been at Shiraz for three months, and intended passing the winter at Ispahan. Like the Dervish, his friend, he was poorly dressed, and travelled always on foot; for the sake, as he said, of having less cares, and being more at ease to follow any capricious inclination which might seize him on the way. His ready money he generally disposed of for an order, or letter of credit, on some one in the town to which he was going, that he might be more at peace and free from apprehension of robbery on the road. He illustrated the benefit of such a practice by an anecdote of Saadi, the great Persian poet and moralist, the sense of which was as follows:—"Saadi, journeying on the road, in possession of a small sum of money, had for his companions some wealthy merchants, who carried with them a considerable treasure. They were in continual alarm for fear of robbers, while the philosopher was perfectly at ease. The merchants, observing the tranquillity of their poor comrade, were a good deal surprised, and still more so when he offered to propose to them a certain remedy for their fears. They impatiently demanded to know it: 'Throw away,' said the moralist, 'that for which it is excited, and you will be as much at ease as I am.' They could not be prevailed on to do this; but proceeding a little further, they overtook a man asleep, in the middle of the road.—'What!' said they, rousing him from his slumber, 'do you dare to repose here, in a road beset with dangers on every side?' 'Why,' replied the stranger, 'I am perfectly at ease, for I have nothing to lose;' and turning on his side, sunk to sleep again. This was so forcible an illustration of the advice they had received, that they acknowledged the justice of the poet's maxim: 'But,' said Hassan, 'as the greater part of mankind are content to admire good advice without following it, the story does not add whether the merchants acted upon that which they both heard and saw, or not.'"

We were detained, but most agreeably, for nearly an hour on our road by this incident; and the parting of these two friends,

who had so unexpectedly met, was quite as full of feeling as their first interview.

The village of Ammeenabad, where we made our halt, is very small, and has only a few gardens, and these but recently enclosed. There is a small but neat caravansera, of an octangular shape, with all the usual accommodations for strangers, and well built; but having now no keeper of any kind, it is going fast to decay. It appears to have been at one period converted into a castle, as stone walls and circular towers were added to the original brick-work. The ruins of a larger and older khan are seen near it; and before the present one is a square reservoir, lined with stone, for water. A flight of descending steps is seen just beyond it, over the entrance to which are painted two standing lions, guarding a sun between them; having, probably, some reference to the ancient arms of Persia, a lion with the sun rising behind it, as still seen in some of the gardens and public places at Ispahan.

OCT. 17th.—Leaving Ammeenabad at sun-rise, we went south-south-east, over a barren plain, having ranges of mountains in view on all sides, but generally lower, of a whiter hue, and of less broken forms than before. This character of the country continued all the way through our morning's route, in which we saw only a few ruined and deserted khans and private dwellings, until we reached the station of Yezdikhaust, in about four hours after our setting out.

The approach to this place is marked by a domed building of yellow brick, the tomb of an Imaum Zadé, and the place on which it stands is called Ali-abad. Among the humbler graves which surround it, we noticed the rude figure of a lion, still standing in its original position over one of them, and resembling exactly the fallen one near the sepulchre of Shah Rezah, and the others noted in the large towns on our way.

From our first seeing Yezdikhaust, it appeared to us to be seated on the plain; but on drawing near, we found it to be built on a sort of high and steep-cliffed island, in the middle of a deep

ravine, which had every appearance of having been once the bed of a large river. The walls of the houses were carried up in a perpendicular line with the cliff of the mass on which they stood, and many of their tops were at least one hundred feet above the level of the dry bed below. This mass seemed to be about five hundred yards in length, and not more than a third of that in breadth, the whole of its surface being covered with buildings. To complete the isolated nature of the situation, the only passage into the town was at the south-west end, and this was over a plank, leading from a high piece of ground to the gate, which could be removed at pleasure, and thus leave a deep ditch of defence. This had been once, no doubt, a castle, judging from the appearance of the work at this point of entrance; and it then had a small town seated around its foot, the ruined and abandoned dwellings of which are still to be seen in the valley below. In the cliffs of the supposed river's bed, on each side, and opposite to the town, are a number of caverns, probably used for sheltering flocks, though sometimes also, no doubt, for human habitations. The soil of this insulated mass, as seen in its perpendicular side, is a light coloured earth, with a mixture of broken stones, and the bottom a hard rock. The soil continues nearly half-way down to the base, and I thought I could perceive the mark of a water-line along its surface, though it must have been long since any water flowed so high, at least anterior to the existence of the ruined buildings now seen in the valley below.

The number of dwellings in Yezdikhauſt does not exceed a hundred and fifty, and the inhabitants are reckoned at about six hundred. As they are within the territory of Fars, this being the first town after leaving the province of Irak, they are tributary to the government of Shiraz. The strength of their situation makes them, however, insolent, and difficult to be kept in order; and, like all lovers of freedom, they have the character of a ferocious and lawless band. Their houses present a very singular appearance, with their numerous apertures of doors and windows, and

wooden balconies hanging over the perpendicular cliffs. When we passed beneath them, they were filled with women, all unveiled,—a sight which we had not before witnessed in any part of Persia. They were, moreover, very familiar and communicative; some enquiring from whence we came; others abusing us in a loud voice as spies of the Bactiari; and most of them assuring us that we should be discovered by the soldiers in the khan.

After passing through the valley, and noting some garden lands near, with trees and cultivation in the vale to the north-east of us, all watered by a stream flowing through its centre, but now nearly dry, we arrived at a good caravansera on the opposite side, at the foot of the south-eastern cliff. It had a long Arabic inscription, painted in white on a blue tiled ground, over the door; and the khan itself appeared to be old and well-built, with a round tower, like the bastion of a castle, at one of its angles.

We found this place full of soldiers; a troop of whom, under the command of a Khan, had come thus far from Shiraz to scour the road, of the robbers by which it was infested. They had been halting in this neighbourhood for several days, and were to set out on their return to-morrow. The arrival of two strangers alone, dressed as Arabs, and both well-armed, excited such surprise among them, that even before we alighted, we were surrounded by a host of enquirers. All we could say, as to the motive of our not waiting for a caravan, seemed to them improbable; and the general conclusion was, that we were either spies of the Bactiari, from among the Arabs about Shooster, or that we were robbers on our own account, thinking to escape suspicion by the boldness of our entry here. We first remonstrated, then supplicated, for God's sake, to be left in peace, and at last were driven to defiance, which proved the only effectual mode of keeping these soldiers at a distance.

From Yezdikhaust there are two roads to Shiraz; the western one being the nearest and most direct, and the eastern, which is the longest and least frequented, going through Murgaub and by

Persepolis, which I was of course desirous of visiting. As the troop were to set out to-morrow for Shiraz, and we had already confessed ourselves destined for that place, it was concluded that we should go with them. I suffered this impression to remain undisturbed; but in our enquiries about the eastern road by Choulgistan, as we did not know it ourselves, the person who had secretly engaged to lead us into it during the night betrayed our confidence, and the impression of our being highwaymen was therefore complete. A party of the soldiers, who occupied chambers near us, were set as guards over us, to see that we did not escape; and orders were issued from their commander, to whom the matter was reported, that we should be taken into safe custody, and conveyed with them to Shiraz, to answer for ourselves. This had now become a serious affair, without any apparent remedy; for, though I believed the disclosure of my being an Englishman, and the sight of the letters and passports which Assad Ullah Khan had procured me, in case of need, from the Governor of Ispahan, would have immediately liberated us; yet I was not willing to betray too hastily, as an Englishman, my assumption of a character so venerated among them as a pilgrim from the tomb of their Prophet.

After remaining some time under arrest, I had an invitation from the Khan, or chief of the troops; and on my visit I found him at prayers. Our first exchange of salutes was friendly and cordial: and on my reproaching his people with want of hospitality, I was invited by him to sit down,—was given the place of honour,—and served with caleoons and tea. The motive of our journeying thus alone was then asked, and answered satisfactorily. I then entertained the chief with a long account of Massr, or Egypt, my supposed country, and particularly of the great assemblage of pilgrims who met there annually to proceed to Mecca, and who journeyed together without understanding any more of each other's language than their common profession of faith, 'La Illah ul Ullah, oua Mohammed el Russool Ullah.'—'There is but

one God, and Mohammed is his Messenger.' At these words, the chief bowed and kissed the earth, in which mark of respect I followed his example, and was consequently taken to be both learned and pious in an extraordinary degree. According to a very common custom among Mohammedans, a maxim was then demanded of me by the Khan for his guidance through life, when I replied, 'Open not thine heart too readily to strangers; neither let any thing remain secret between thee and thy friend.' This saying was much approved; and led to my being pressed to partake of an excellent supper, at which I was treated with the greatest consideration. On my assigning to the chief as my motive for wishing to see Persepolis, or the throne of Jemsheed, the admiration which I entertained for his memory as an illustrious character, he offered to be my escort there with all his troop, of nearly one hundred horsemen; saying, that though this route lay wide from his prescribed track, he would do it as a mark of the high respect he bore to my wisdom and my virtues. It was accordingly determined that we should set out on the morrow, by a middle path, towards Persepolis: so entirely had a well-timed display of courteous and bold behaviour changed our relative position.

OCT. 18th.—At sun-rise we quitted Yezdikhaust, in company with the whole Persian troop. No one had descended from the town into the valley that surrounds it, from fear of the soldiery; so that I could learn nothing of the deep well described there by Le Brun. We had, however, some of the excellent bread of the place brought out on the plank, or drawbridge of entrance; and found it better than any we had tasted in Persia, and fully deserving its high reputation.

About a league from Yezdikhaust, going southerly, we quitted the plain, and entered among hills, neither very rugged nor steep, but having a tolerable road over them. In about four hours we reached a narrow pass, in which was a small round tower, with loop-holes in its walls, seated on an eminence, and said to be often

occupied by robbers. There were now stationed here, by Shuker Ullah Khan, the Persian chief, who rode with us as my new friend and guide, several musketeers to guard this pass; though they were sometimes suspected of acting the part of those they were sent here to check. On the right of the road was an old castle; and between these two buildings in the valley, a spring of water and grass. When we alighted here, I was again seated on the same carpet beside the Khan, and served with his caleoons. During our conversation, I learned from him the following account of a small domed tomb opposite to us, once covered with painted tiles, like those at Ispahan, but now in ruins. 'Shah Abbas,' he said, 'being at Shiraz, wished to go from thence to Ispahan in one night, in order to effect some great purpose, and surpass even the wind in speed. The best horse of his kingdom was prepared for him, when one of his slaves expressed a wish to accompany him. The monarch looked on the slave with contempt, thinking no man among all his subjects was equal to the task he had undertaken. The slave, however, insisted on trying, determining either to succeed, or die in the attempt; and the monarch, at last, pleased with such persevering ambition, promised him one of his daughters in marriage, on the night after their arrival. They set out, and flew over hill and dale, reaching this spot about midnight, without exchanging a single word. The monarch dropping his whip, called to his follower to alight and take it up from the ground. The faithful slave did so; but in the act fell on the earth, and expired on the spot, from excessive exertion. He was accordingly buried here, and this tomb was erected to his memory: from which moment the place has been called Gombez Lala, or the Tomb of the Slave.'

We soon re-mounted, and proceeding from hence pursued a similar course. I continued to ride by the Khan's side, and to be engaged in constant conversation with him; his soldiers riding in a body behind us. The character of the country now appeared

to be much altered : instead of long plains and high ranges of broken hills, we had stony, barren, and rugged ground, with mountains of more even outline than before.

In four hours more we came to a small station called Degerdoo, containing only a few huts, enclosed by square mud walls with bastions, and a small caravansera without. The distance of these stations was said to be eight fursucks, which we had come, for the first time, in an equal number of hours, having ridden a brisk pace in a large company. There also I shared the same apartment with the chief, and was treated with the greatest respect.

OCT. 19th.—The night was at first cloudy, and threatened rain, but it afterwards cleared up : the wind, however, was high from the north-west, and after midnight it became calm. There was so hard a frost that the water in our leathern bottle was frozen in our room, and icicles were thickly clustered on it from without. We were therefore obliged to keep in large fires, for the horses, who were also all warmly clothed ; yet many of them suffered greatly from the extreme cold. By the care of the chief, however, the Dervish and myself, who shared his apartment, enjoyed every comfort.

Our next stage being a long one, we set out three hours before sun-rise, going south-south-east, over uneven ground, and at day-break we came to a ruined station called Caravansera Shah Sultan Hussan. The cold was as intense as I had ever felt it, even in a North-American winter : when we alighted, we therefore kindled large fires, which blazed around the horses and ourselves, and both the animals and men almost thrust themselves into it to procure heat. The climate of Persia is certainly in great extremes : and the story of the death of many individuals from extreme cold at Persepolis, after a feast given by Alexander, may be readily believed.

We set out again from this place when the sun rose, and went south-south-east, over more even ground, coming at last, in about two hours, on a fine plain, extending in a south-east

direction for many days' journeys, though nowhere more than ten miles wide. Beyond the south-west range of hills which bounded it, rose a high ridge of mountains, all said to be of limestone; their summits were now covered with snow. " This mountainous range is called Kooch Poostamār, and is inhabited by a tribe of Kōords, called Loor, whose tract of country is called Chal Mahar, and divides the territory of the Bactiari from that of Fars. The language of these people is different from that of the northern Kōords, and is called, like themselves, Loor. They live in tents, though the snow on their hills is said to be perpetual, even in the warmest years.

The plain in which we now rode was called Chemmen Asipass; it is one of the most fertile that is known, being watered by many streams from the foot of the hills on each side of it; and in spring and summer it is thickly covered by wandering tribes of Persians, properly called Farsee, or people of Fars. A few encampments were seen here even now; but the greater number of the people had gone with their flocks two or three days to the eastward, to a tract of country called Gurrumseer, or the warm district, to avoid the excessive cold of this region.

Our road now became extremely tortuous, as it wound along the foot of the south-western hills, which we were obliged to follow, in order to avoid the channels and streams in the centre, these being difficult to pass over even now that they were dry. The general average of our course was about south-south-east.

At noon we reached a ruined caravansera called Koosk Zer, said to have been built by Shah Abbas, and certainly wrought with more labour and expense than any preceding one that we had seen. The brick-work was faced with large blocks of stone; the dome at the entrance was tiled; and there was fine sculptured frame-work at the gate, with inner chambers, and other conveniences. It was of an octagonal form within, and was altogether a fine building, though it was now entirely abandoned.

We halted here for half an hour, and refreshed ourselves with

lebban and milk, brought from the Parsee tents. The manners of these people are like those of the Arabs; their dress, however, is perfectly Persian, with tight robes and black caps, and their language is a pure Persian also.

We went hence southerly, still on the plain, and continuing to wind along the foot of the south-western hills. On our left, to the eastward, and at the foot of the opposite range of hills, or from eight to nine miles off, we saw a circular castle, with bastions, having a small town within it, called Nizamabad. In this plain the horses of the Persian army of this part of the country are put to grass, in spring, and it is then covered with tents and flocks.

In about four hours from Koosk Zer we reached the station of Abarik, having come, as yesterday, eleven fursucks in as many hours, the fursuck being certainly about four English miles. This is a miserable place; a few poor families only living here, in a walled village, and a few empty huts are seen without. Tyranny, however, was, as usual, exercised to procure all the comforts it contained for the military chief and his train. The soldiers of Persia never pay for any thing on a journey, and are, in short, licensed robbers. I had a long conversation with the Khan, on the evil of this system, in which he frankly admitted that it was unjust. We had a shower of rain here, the wind being westerly; but in the night we were visited again with a severe frost. We were, however, well fed, well clothed, and provided with every comfort. Some of the troop were sent out to shoot pigeons for our supper; and they thought it hard service, as the practice was to select for this duty those who were not favourites, by which it was considered as a sort of punishment. I advised the chief to try the effect of a contrary system, making the duty a sort of honorary distinction, which he adopted with complete success; for on sending an order that six of the best shots of his train should go out on this service, there was a contention between the whole troop for the honour of deserving this title. I had tried the experiment often at sea, by inviting the smartest seamen in the ship

to lead the way in some duty which others had imposed as a punishment ; and I never knew any such appeal to the pride and better feelings, even of the commonest men, to fail.

OCT. 20th.—At daylight this morning, were brought in, as prisoners, by our outscouts, twenty-eight robbers, all taken from a village called Hadjeeabad, in the hills which bounded the plain of Chemmen Asipass, on the south-west, or between it and the mountains of the Chal Mahar. These people were pure Persians, and their tribe are said to be great plunderers. Among them were three with snow-white beards, and four or five not more than ten years old. They were taken in the act of depredation by an outscout party of Shuker Ullah Khan's soldiers, and brought down here on their way to Shiraz to be executed. They were all mounted on asses, and had one leg placed in a large log of wood, like a handle in the head of a wooden mallet. They were, however, very merry, and seemed quite indifferent to their fate.

We departed from hence at sunrise, and though the robbers had travelled all the previous night, they were not allowed to rest, but were taken away with us. Our course went still to the eastward of south, and the range of hills on our right now took a more easterly turn. In an hour and a half after our setting out, we ascended a pass called Kotel Mader e Doghter, or the Hill of the Mother and Daughter. Its ascent was not exceedingly difficult, though it was necessary to alight in consequence of the stony and broken state of the road. Men were here sent out on each side to reconnoitre ; and this service was again given to those in disgrace, who murmured at it as a hardship. I again proposed to the chief to try the opposite course, by selecting the bravest and best behaved of the troops for the duty. The men were flattered and pleased by the proposal, and the Khan was delighted at the success of the experiment. Our descent over this pass on the other side was exceedingly difficult : at the foot of it we entered a second plain, lying east and west, and equally fertile with the former, but of less extent.

We halted at a stream here, and refreshed with the Khan, after which we remounted, and went south-east for three full hours, when we came to the foot of another range of hills, forming the southern boundary of the plain, and going east and west. The hills were here formed of limestone and chalk, with flint imbedded. The ascent on the one side was easy, but the descent on the other was particularly difficult. The mountains here are not so bare as those in Irak Ajami, having stunted trees and brushwood on their sides. Fifty musketeers were stationed here in different parts, to protect the pass. The echo in this part of the mountains was very perfect and loud; the scenery was wild and interesting, especially the view in the valley below. This pass is called Kotel Imaum Zadé, as it leads down to the village of that name, where we did not arrive till sunset, though the distance was said to be only nine fursucks; but all our horses were completely knocked up from the fatigue of ascending and descending these two hills; and the people were also extremely fatigued, from having been obliged to cross over them on foot. The air of this place was warmer than we had found it since leaving Ispahan, arising from the closeness of the valley, and from its being on a lower level than the surrounding country. The Dervish Ismael was charmed with the change; and finding his spirits raised, attributed it to a certain virtue in the earth and water of the place, which he extolled very highly.

At midnight, a courier arrived here from Shiraz, being one of three sent on three different roads to meet the chief, Shuker Ullah Khan. He brought us an account of the Shah Zadé having heard of a large band of Bactiari, from two to three hundred, who were assembled for the purpose of attacking and plundering caravans passing through Fars; and the courier delivered an order of the Prince for Shuker Ullah Khan to bring the whole of this band of robbers to him with all speed. An answer was immediately returned to the Prince, stating the fact of all his horses and men being so worn down by fatigue, that they would not be equal

to the journey among the mountains, until they had enjoyed a day or two's repose, after which, he would fly to execute the wishes of his master. We had a long and interesting conversation on our being thus suddenly parted, and each expressed a hope of meeting again at Shiraz. Notwithstanding the new demand on his force, by the recent order of his Prince, the chief made me an offer of an escort from his party, if I wished it, for the remainder of my way, but I declined it, and determined to proceed alone.

OCT. 21st.—We were not suffered to depart from this station without first breakfasting with the Khan. He expressed his intention of going to Mecca, when he became rich enough to defray the expenses of a journey suited to his rank; and asked of me all the instructions I could give him thereon. I found this somewhat difficult, but I succeeded in satisfying him on all points, and we parted excellent friends.

The village of Imaum Zadé, so called from its containing the domed sepulchre of a certain Ismael, one of the many sons of the many Imaums of Persia, is neat and comfortable, though very small. Its situation, in a deep and narrow valley, shelters it from the keen air of Irak, and it has water and wood in constant supply. The people are more industrious than Persians usually are, and parts of the seemingly inaccessible summits of the limestone mountains on each side of the valley are cultivated and planted with gardens and vineyards. There are the remains of a fine old caravansera in ruins there, so that passengers now take shelter in the villagers' dwellings when they are few in number, and sleep without, if forming a numerous caravan. The dress of the men of Fars is similar to that worn in Irak:—but while the women of the latter envelope themselves in a large blue chequered cloth and white veil, these throw a white handkerchief over their heads, which, falling down the neck, leaves the face quite open.

It was two hours past sun-rise when we set out from Imaum Zadé, our course lying nearly south, through a narrow valley, with

steep clifly mountains on each side, on the summits of which small gardens were still seen. On each side of our path below, we saw flocks grazing; an abundance of wood, though chiefly small, and of a kind only fit for fuel, but affording a great charm after the bare country we had come through; while a beautifully clear stream meandered along the centre of the valley in the direction of our way, and numerous singing-birds, the voice of which we had not lately heard, saluted us with their early notes. The scenery was exceedingly like some parts of Lebanon, and the air was just that of a Syrian spring.

In about two hours we alighted near a mill, turned by the stream we had just passed; and refreshed ourselves by a halt, reposing both ourselves and horses on the grass turf, beneath the shade of trees. Along the banks of this stream were osiers, willows, date-trees, and briars, bearing the common blackberry of Europe; romantic rocks were seen in several points of view, and the voice of the thrush still charmed us with its rich melody.

From hence we went south-westerly, and in two hours more we reached the station of Moayn, distant from Imaum Zadé three fursucks. This village, which was large, and surrounded with gardens, was also seated in a close valley, and had an agreeable appearance. We found here a large caravan of mules from Shiraz, halting in the open air; but we took shelter ourselves in a half-ruined caravansera, not entirely abandoned.

We had already received instructions about our road to Persepolis, or Takht e Jemshedd, as we had always heard it yet called, from our friend Shuker Ullah Khan; but we enquired here for confirmation, and received the same directions.

Throughout all Persia, but more particularly here in Fars, a custom prevails of giving the salute 'Salam Alaikom,' whenever the first lighted lamp or candle is brought into the room in the evening; and this is done between servants and masters as well as between equals. As this is not practised in any other Mohammedan country, it is probably a relic of the ancient

reverence to Fire, once so prevalent here, though the form of the salute is naturally that of the present religion.

OCT. 22d.—The night was so warm that we preferred sleeping in the open air to remaining in our chambers: and here we had both musquitoes and fleas, neither of which had before annoyed us since our first entrance into Persia. We therefore slept but little; and through impatience of suffering began to prepare for setting out soon after midnight. By the time that the keeper of the khan was roused, our animals fed and saddled, and our morning cup of coffee and pipe enjoyed, the night was far advanced; and when we mounted, it was little more than an hour before daybreak. We continued our course south-westerly, along the main road to Shiraz, between lofty hills on each side; and, as we had been directed, turned off to the south-east, at the distance of about a fursuck from our first station. Our road now went south-south-east at the foot of a range of hills; and we had in view, in different directions, square masses of mountains broken into perpendicular cliffs on all sides, and looking at a distance like so many citadels. The general features of these mountains, but particularly the manner in which they were shaped into square masses above a steep-sloping base, resembled the range on which Mardin is seated in the heart of Mesopotamia.

When we had gone two fursucks from our first turning off the high road, we arrived at an old bridge, of eight or ten arches, the centre one about twenty feet in span, and thirty in height. This was a Mohammedan work, and had been often repaired both with brick and stone, but it was now falling fast to decay, though it was still passable. A rapid stream ran here in a deep bed, and bent its course south-easterly, through the great plain of Merdusht, now open before us.

We descended to repose upon its banks, where our horses found fine fresh grass, and enjoyed all the charms of rapidly running water, verdure, and shade. We were joined here by an old man of a neighbouring village, from whom we learnt that this

stream was the river Bund Ameer, which had its rise in the mountains of Komfirouze, at a distance of ten short days' journeys to the north-west, being the limits of Fars on the borders of the Bactiari. About five years since, he said, it had swelled so high in winter, that it rose over the bridge, which was full fifty feet above its present level, inundated this narrow entrance into the plain, extending from mountain to mountain on each side, and rendered the road impassable for several weeks. For the two last years, however, he added, it had been almost dry, from the general failure of the rains; and indeed it was now easily fordable in the deepest part, though the stream was still running with great force and rapidity.

On our departure from hence, we kept along its north-eastern bank, going about south-east through the plain of Merdusht, which we had now fairly entered, through its narrow opening on the north-west. We had several villages in sight, and among others Nisack and Palicon on our right, as well as some Farsee tents on our left; and when we had gone two fursucks from the bridge, we had the whole of the plain open to view before us, with the trees of Futhabad, just appearing at the distance of about two fursucks more. The *mirage* was now so strong in the line of the south-eastern horizon, or in nearly the direction of the sun from us, that the remote parts of the plain looked like a lake, with wooded islands on it. This appearance is called in Persian *Serab*, or the head or surface of water, and not *Sahrab*, or the water of the desert, as some English writers have supposed; this last word being a compound of Arabic and Persian, but the former being a purely Persian term. The Persians, indeed, having a proper name for the desert in their own language, *Choul*, do not recognize the Arabic term *Saher*, or *Zahara*, at all.

It was about noon when we reached Futhabad, where we found excellent accommodation in an upper room, immediately over the gate of entrance to the village, looking down on the place of

general assembly among the villagers, yet perfectly secure from intrusion. As I had found no opportunity since leaving Yezdikhaust, of noting our progress, from being always with the Khan Shuker Ullah, and as I was yesterday too fatigued to spare that time from rest, I profited by this occasion to preserve my recollections in writing, before they were removed by more interesting ones.

OCT. 23d.—We left Futhabad an hour before daylight, and, going through its eastern gate, went nearly north-north-east over a by-path. In half an hour we passed on our right a small village called Shemsabad, and in another half-hour we passed a second, called Zenghiabad. In less than half an hour more, having several villages in sight as the sun rose, with cultivated land, flocks, trees, and water, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, which forms the northern boundary of the plain of Merdusht. The first object we saw on the west was a small rock, on which stood two fire-altars of a peculiar form: their dimensions were five feet square at the base and three at the top, and they were five feet high. There were pillars or pilasters at the corners, and arches in the sides. In the centre of each of these, on the top, was a square basin, about eighteen inches in diameter, and six in depth, for the reception of the fire, formerly used by the disciples of Zoroaster in their worship.

About three hundred paces to the east of this was a large tablet, on which were two men on horseback, their heads meeting, and the men each holding a ring. They each tread on captives: the breast-cloths of the horses have lions on them, well executed; and inscriptions both in Greek and Sassanian are seen near.*

The tablet on which these sculptures are represented is about

* I copied what little remains of the Greek inscription on the breast of the first horse at this place, as well as the two Sassanian ones, above and below, and others again from the second horse; but as they are too mutilated and imperfect to lead to any useful result, and could only be represented by a separate engraving, they are omitted.

twelve feet high from the ground, and is extremely difficult to get at. The figures are larger than life: they are sculptured in full relief, and are well executed.

Beyond this, a few paces east, is a chief, with a globe on his head, standing, and leaning on a staff. On the right of him are several persons, apparently in Roman dresses; and, on the left, some with helmets, curled beards and hair. The lower parts of the bodies of all these, except the chief, are covered by a blank, left high in the stones; and below the whole is a concave tablet, apparently prepared for an inscription, which was never finished. The design is well executed, but its meaning is not easily discovered.

Beyond this, a few yards further on, are the tombs of the ancient Persian kings. There are three of these facing the south, and one facing the west. The entrance to them is twenty feet high from the ground, and they are nearly all alike in their design: there is, first, a square space, next an oblong one, and then a square above, forming a sort of Greek cross. The lower portion is blank. In the central portion is the door of entrance, with a closed portico of four pillars in front: the capitals have double rams' heads facing outward, and the frieze is decidedly Greek, while the door is perfectly Egyptian in every respect. The upper space has also an Egyptian design—a sort of throne, supported by pillars, with a horned head on each side, and two rows of slaves, who, with extended arms, support the middle. Above is a priest with a bow, standing before an altar of fire; and over all is the sun, or the full moon, with what I should take to be the winged globe of Egypt, but in a stiffer form. Beneath the first tomb is a bas-relief, representing a combat between two horsemen; and opposite to this is a square isolated building, also an ancient tomb. Its entrance on the north, and facing the caves, is midway up its height, or from twelve to fifteen feet from the ground: the masonry of this is excellent, and the stones large; but the whole has a very singular appearance, from the deep

niches cut on the outer surface, and from its having blank windows, of square and oblong forms, let in on three sides, of a black stone, while the edifice is of white. The roof is flat; it is still perfect, and apparently formed of large beams of stone, as in the temples of Egypt. The door was evidently a folding stone door, as used in the tombs of the Jewish kings at Jerusalem, and in the mountains of the Decapolis, judging from the large sills for the pivots, which are still seen in the upper architrave. The entrances to the cave tombs in the rocks were closed.

Between the second and third cave is a figure of a Sassanian monarch on horseback, with a Roman prisoner, supplicating him, in the act of kneeling; and the whole attitude of this supplicant is full of expression: the figures are all larger than life, are executed in high relief, and are extremely well done. Behind this is an inscription of at least one hundred lines in the Sassanian character, which might be easily copied.

Beneath the third tomb is a bas-relief, representing a combat, originally well executed, but now partly defaced. This tomb is also closed; but all the space of the portico behind the pilasters, and the whole of the space not occupied by the figures above, is covered with inscriptions of many hundred lines, in tablets, like those which I saw at the cliff of Bisitoon. Between the third and fourth cave is a bas-relief, in high preservation:—a Sassanian monarch is holding, with his queen, a ring, from which ribbons float: behind them is a soldier, with a Roman helmet, holding up one hand, while the other is placed on his sword. The drapery and dresses of this group are exceedingly well delineated.

The fourth tomb has no additional ornaments; but its front is in higher preservation than any other. They were all inaccessible to us, and could not be got at without ladders or ropes. There are many inscriptions, and some tablets smoothed away for others never cut.

This last tomb, as it stands in a separate mass of rock from the others, and faces to the west, may perhaps be the tomb of

Darius, seated as it is in a double mountain, and more inaccessible than either of the others, though its style is still the same.

We went from hence down to Persepolis, in a southerly direction, and crossed cultivated grounds and canals. In half an hour we passed over the stream of Polwar, which was now very low. It comes from seven or eight fursucks off to the north-east, and goes into the Bund Ameer, close by a small square foundation of a building, called Takht-e-Taous, where Jumsheed is said to have stopped half-way between his palace and Naksh-e-Rustan, to smoke his nargeel and drink coffee. In half an hour more, turning round a rocky point, we came to Chehel Minar, or the Forty Pillars, the only name by which Persepolis is at present known by the Persians,—and so called, because of the pillars being very numerous and resembling the minarets of mosques.