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A
TRANSLATION
OF THE
SĒIR MUTAQHARIN;
OR,

VIEW OF MODERN TIMES,
BEING AN
HISTORY OF INDIA,

From the Year 1118 to the Year 1195, (*this Year answers to the Christian Year*
1781-82) of the Hidjrah,

CONTAINING IN GENERAL,
THE REIGNS of the SEVEN LAST EMPERORS of HINDOSTAN;

And in Particular,

AN ACCOUNT of the ENGLISH WARS in BENGAL,

With a circumstantial detail of the Rise and Fall of the Families of
SERADJ-ED-DŌWLAH, and SHUDJAH-ED-DŌWLAH,

THE LAST SOVEREIGNS OF BENGAL AND OWD:

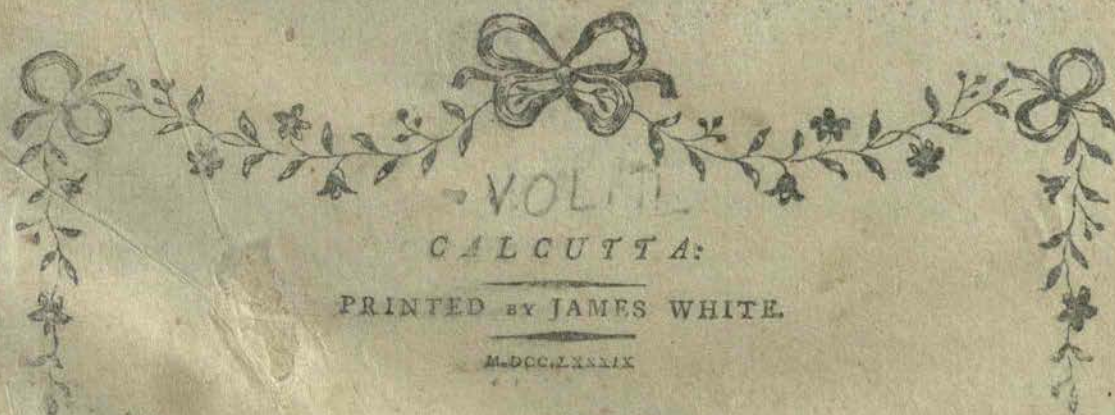
To which the Author has added,

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT AND PO-
LICY IN THOSE COUNTRIES, DOWN TO THE YEAR 1783.

The whole Written in Persian by

SEID-GHOLAM-HOSSEIN-KHAN,

An Indian Nobleman of high rank, who wrote both as an Actor and Spectator.



CALCUTTA:

PRINTED BY JAMES WHITE.

M.DCC.LXXXIX

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THIS HISTORY OF INDIA,
By MIR-GHOLAM-HOSSEIN-KHAN,
IS HUMBLY INSCRIBED,
TO THE HONORABLE
WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.
TWO YEARS AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM BENGAL,
BY THE TRANSLATOR,
HIS EVER OBLIGED,
RESPECTFUL SERVANT;
NOTA-MANUS.

Nothing with page.

Forſan et hæc olim meminiffe juvabit. — VIRGIL.



*Copy of a Letter supposed to have been lost in the Hinchinbrooke, in the Year
1785, as it has never been answered.*

*To the Honorable WARREN HASTINGS, Esq. late Governor General of the
British Dominions in the East Indies.*

(a) Lucknow, 15th February, 1785.

HONORABLE SIR,

IT is to-day five years since I have had the honor to speak to you; nor has it been in my power to see you these two years. Your time is too important, honorable Sir, to be engrossed, even for a moment, by any thing short of some material business on my part; but, yet I have been enjoying you all this while: I have been enjoying you, honorable Sir, in that reverential awe and that high admiration you have impressed all Hindostan with; in that love of their's which the Natives have more than once forcibly expressed for your person, and to which you are the only European that ever had any access: So that whenever in letters from London, or in public papers, I chanced to observe that the best qualified judges in Europe had at last closed with the high opinion entertained of your talents in India, I exulted in that universal approbation, as if Lord Stairs's (1) excellent traits had reflected some lustre upon even me. Gone are now our joys, honorable Sir——you are quitting us——this piece of intelligence to which you seemed to have prepared our minds, has shaken my whole frame, as if it were some sudden unexpected stroke; (2) to no purpose do I search for solace in roving from

(a) Lucknow, at nine hundred miles from Calcutta, is the Capital of the A8d, and I arrived there just as the Governor had quitted it to return to Bengal.

(1) In one of these traits where that deep-thinking nobleman examines critically the state of his nation, and of course that of all Europe, he says, that the English arms have been unsuccessful every where, except in India, where they have triumphed: a singularity which he ascribes to the talents of the Chatham of the East (and that is his expression).

(2) The Governor had already sent his Comfort to England.



seat to seat, and from garden to garden: *Post equitem sedet atra Cura* —
Nothing is green for me now in those once pleasing spots: they are become
so many dreary deserts; nor am I ever sensible of my being gone in or
come out, but when I am put in mind of it by my people.

To no purpose is it to repeat to myself, that the English are but so many
strangers to me, and that yourself, after all, are but one of those strangers.
Soon my heart recoils at the sacrilegious argument; and a recollection partly
pleasing, and partly painful, never fails to inform me internally, that after an in-
tercourse of five and twenty years, those strangers are become my only country-
men; that yourself, honorable Sir, are my oldest acquaintance amongst those
countrymen, and, moreover, my partial and munificent patron; and that, if
instead of shining in the world as the Chatham of the East, it had been your
fate to have moved only in an humble station, you would have been my
bosom-friend.

It has been a standing rule hitherto with me, honorable Sir, never to take
a personal leave of my friends. But many are the alterations occasioned in
me by your departure; and it is not without a sense of jealousy, I see Colonel
Martine (3) hurrying down to bid you his last farewell. Twice have I attempt-
ed to return to Europe, and twice have I been obliged to come back after hav-
ing lost every thing; so that ten years ago, I had sat myself down with a reso-
lution to listen to the voice of Providence, and to end my days in India: But
India is become a dreary waste for me now; and I am now preparing to quit
it for the third time, were it but to get rid of that emptiness which every where
surrounds me.

(3) Colonel Martine is one of those French, who driven to despair by the misery and famine that desolated Pondicherry in 1760, threw themselves amongst the English. He has ever been with them since that day; and although constantly employed in desperate affairs, (so says the Historian *Orme*, one of the best informed, as well as one of the most eloquent men that ever wrote history), he has never been wounded. Colonel Martine is a man desirous of all kinds of knowledge; and, although he is at the head of a large fortune, which he owes only to his industry, he works whole days together at all the arts that concern Watch-making and Gun-smith-work, with as much bodily labor, as if he had his bread to earn by it. As an architect, (and he is every thing) he has built himself at Lucknow a strong elegant house, that has neither Beams nor Cupola, and is so contrived that a single man might defend it against multitudes.



I have known your person, honorable Sir, these five and twenty years: the life of dispute and contention to which you have been doomed this long while, cannot have altered the original sensibility of your heart: receive then, honorable Sir, an offering worthy of it: this letter, this artless disorderly letter, has been in many a spot bedewed by the tear of affection, and more than once interrupted by the sob of regret, and the scream of deep-felt woe.

May that Providence, that has overshadowed you in many an awful occasion, continue to watch over your person in your intended journey; and when, after a long series of years gloriously spent, your last hour shall have come, may you depart with recollection enough to remember, that you have been an ornament to your nation, a benefactor to your country, and a resource to an infinity of distressed.

I am, with an everlasting attachment,

Honorable Sir,

Your ever obliged, respectful Servant;

NOTA-MANUS.

THE

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE public has been already informed at the latter end of the preface that the Italian or rather the Scottish Alphabet has been made use in this work to write the oriental names; but as some objections have been made to so general a definition, it has been thought proper to give here the particulars of it.

ALL the vowels are to be pronounced in the Italian or Scottish way; but as there are numberless places where the sound of the English *oo* is preceded by an *o*, and three such *os* might look strange and would infallibly mislead the Reader, the figure 8 that is the Greek *ς* has been used to signify the sound intended by the double *o*. It is thus the word Seradj-ed-do'slah is written, or thus Seradj-ed-do'ulah, the Acute Accent or the double dots *ˆ* marking the letter on which the Emphasis is to fall, and the voice to be raised: however the work having been printed by several Printers, this has been disregarded by some, who have adhered to the usual spelling; so that the double *o* is often seen where there ought to be a Greek *ς*.

qh. and also *kh* answer exactly to the Scottish *ch* is *Cariarach, Glenorchi*: that is, that compound letter is to be pronounced like a strong *h* or aspiration fetched from the throat.

Gh. is to be sounded every where as the Scottish *Gh* in Daughter, and even more gutturally; although in the word *Djaghir* and some others in use amongst the English, it has been thought proper to follow the ordinary spelling, and of course to suffer its retaining the sound of the English *gh.* in *Moningham*.

THE English *j* in *jaylor* has been put after a *D*, because that same *I* in number of places bears in this work the same sound as the small *i* in initials. It is for that reason that we write *Djaafer-qhan*.

THE



THE words Ráo and Ráy are often written with two dots upon the first vowel to denote the elevation of the voice, and also to distinguish those and some other similar words, in two syllables. In general the Acute Accent, or the two dots upon a letter denote its being to be pronounced distinctly from the preceding vowel. The word Vezir, has been in some places Vizier &c; nor have my endeavours been able to wean the Printer from that practice and some others.

BUT Printers have been guilty of an infinity of alterations both through chance and though wilfulness; let it be a standing rule then that all the vowels of a name are to be founded each distinctly and in the Scottish manner.

Contents of this First Volume, in Eight Sections.

Civil wars that follow Aoreng-zib's demise. Babadyr Shah, Emperor. Djehandar Shah, Emperor. Origin of the Syks, an order of mendicants who turn Soldiers, and found a monarchy. Ferob-Syur Emperor. the two Séyd-Brothers, absolute disposers of the Empire. Mahmed-Shah, Emperor. Origion of the Marhattas Empire and Royal family. Invasion of Hindostan by Nadyr-Shah, alias Tahm-Asp-Celi qhan; Ahmed-Shah, Emperor. Blinded by his Vizir. irruption and origin of the Durranies, alias Addalies. Civil Wars. Alemghir second, Emperor, blinded. Aliverdj-qhan, Viceroy of Bengal becomes independent. Founds a new dynasty in Bengal; which ends in Seradj-ed-Dowla.

Contents of the First Section.

The Emperor Aorengzib after a long reign departs this life aged ninety-two years having divided his dominions between his children. Civil Wars. Azem Shah ascends the throne. Solian Máazzem, his eldest son ascends the throne. Battle of Agra between the two brothers, wherethe second brother dies fighting valiantly. The elder brother acknowledged Empero under the title of Babadyr-Shah, proves very scrupulous in his word, but very feeble

in



in his administration. Dies suddenly. Civil Wars between his children. Civil War again, Muazzeddin, the elder brother unexpectedly victorious, ascends the throne under the title of Dje-handar-Shah, wants to promote to a Vicerealty the brother of a dance girl, his mistress. is opposed by his Vezir is a very curious sarcastical speech. A rival to the Empire arises in Bengal: it is Feroh-Syur whose party is espoused by two Séyd brothers, Viceroys of two provinces. The Emperor sends his son to fight his Rival by whom the young prince is defeated. the Emperor himself defeated, flies for his life, is arrested by his Vezir, and strangled by his competitor. Feroh-Syur Emperor. Feroh-Syur's sanguinary executions, his mean character. Jealousies between the Emperor and the two Brothers. Singular speech of one of them in full audience. The younger appointed Viceroy of all the Decans. Religious troubles in Ahmed-Abad Gsdjrat and in the capital. Account and origin of the Sycks, an order of mendicants founded by Nanec-Shah, their Patriarch. They turn warriors and commit horrible ravages. Dásd-qhan-Péni, a famous Afghan general opposes the new viceroy in Decan and is slain in the middle of his victory. his Radjpet Consort refuses to live, opens her own belly with his poniard, dexterously extracts a child which she tenderly recommends to the by standers, and dies unconcernedly. Death and admirable character of the old Vezir Affed qhan, Vezir to Aorengzib. Feroh-Syur'y, who had strangled that Minister's son, now humbles himself before him, and sends him by a person of importance a very singular message, to which the dying man returns a very curious answer, which proves Prophetic.



P R O P O S A L S
For PUBLISHING by SUBSCRIPTION,
IN THREE VOLUMES QUARTO, EACH CONTAINING ABOUT THREE HUNDRED & FIFTY PAGES,
[PRICE, SIXTY-FOUR SICCA RUPEES]
A TRANSLATION OF THE,
SĒIR MUTAQHERIN;
OR,
VIEW OF MODERN TIMES,
BEING AN
HISTORY OF INDIA,
FROM THE YEAR 1118, TO THE YEAR 1194, OF THE HEDJRAH;
CONTAINING, IN GENERAL,
THE REIGNS OF THE SEVEN LAST EMPERORS OF HINDOSTAN,
AND IN PARTICULAR,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE ENGLISH WARS IN BENGAL;
WITH A CIRCUMSTANTIAL DETAIL OF THE RISE AND FALL OF THE FAMILIES OF
SERADJ-ED-DÖWLAH, AND SHUDJAH-ED-DÖWLAH,
THE LAST SOVEREIGNS OF BENGAL AND OWD;
*To which the Author has added, a critical Examination of the English Government and Policy in those
Countries, as far down as the Year 1783:*
THE WHOLE WRITTEN IN PERSIAN,
By SEID-GHOLAM-HOSSĒINKHAN,
An INDIAN NOBLEMAN of high Rank, who wrote both as ACTOR and SPECTATOR.

THIS HISTORY, although dedicated to Governor Hastings, was not addressed to him in London (it was intended to regale him with the surprise of it) but to a Correspondent, eminent in the mercantile line, who was informed that it had been hurried thither in the rough state in which it was, merely to afford some timely assistance to that great man, by elucidating upon so competent and so unconcerned evidence as our historian, several articles that went far

A. 2.

towards



towards clearing the Governor's Character: these were; "the high opinion conceived by the natives of his talents for Government; and "the attachment they bore to his person; the falsehood of the Rohillah nation's having been extirpated, or even intended for extirpation: the just grounds on which Shudjah-ed-doulah went to war with them: the erroneous opinion conceived by some persons, of the treasure in the hands of the Princess at Feizbad, which they fancied to be private property, whereas it was public property, deposited as such by that Prince himself at a particular conjuncture, which our author points out with its date and motive: the opinion of the natives on Nandecomar's death; and "their detestation of the persecution undergone by the Governor "from General Clavering and his party."---All those points, with some more, were to be set in a strong light by this publication:---But in the rough state in which it had been hurried to England, it unavoidably wanted much correction in the distribution and divisions of the subject, in the punctuation of the sense, and in the style: all which defects required the inspection of a reviewer before it could be sent to the press.---Unfortunately, the person to whose judgement and care the whole had been submitted (and this was no less than an eminent historian in a nation that has now taken the lead of all Europe, after having been for several centuries shockingly defective in that branch of literature) unfortunately, I say, that gentleman proved to be deaf, and upon his death-bed: so that my correspondent, unable to spare any time himself for the inspection of this work, was obliged to lay it by, until a person properly qualified might be found out, and, of course, until fresh instructions should come



come from India. But such an incident being likely to take up a whole year more, and the original intent of the publication being totally marred and already defeated, there remained no other resource than that of supplicating the British public in Bengal, instead of addressing the British public in London.---This alteration was followed by another: instead of applying the profits of this publication to the benefit of the little sum I had placed in the English funds, for the education of my children sent to England, I thought it full as proper to transfer them to the benefit of the British insolvent debtors in Bengal.

Not that I am unaware of the censure passed upon the exclusiveness of that disposition: but there were strong motives for it---In a sojourn of more than thirty years in India, and in particular in Bengal, I have obliged, assisted, relieved, an infinity of Indians and other Asiatics, made the fortune of some, and have never met with any other return than perfect indifference or the blackest ingratitude.---The case is very different with the British: taken up by them after a ship-wreck, I have been assisted and relieved with so much generosity, that at last a small competency was put in my way; and the only return I ever made for such important benefits, amounts to one or two advices conveyed to government, and some small trifling relief afforded to five or six individuals wrecked or distressed; a merit too diminutive certainly to be set to account in the line of return.---In restricting, therefore, to British insolvent debtors only, the benefits of this publication, I am conscious of acting with great propriety; nor is this any new thought: the worthy Captain Thornhill, whose probity and benevolence are universally



fally known, will, I hope, aver, that having so early as the year 1774, dedicated a yearly sum of a thousand Rupees to a charitable society at the head of which he was, I broke my connections with it, on their objecting to my restricting the donation to British insolvent debtors only, against the spirit of the institution.

Unluckily for me, (and my regrets fall entirely upon the use I intend now to make of the work) this publication has unavoidably lost by delays and *contretemps*, the only merit it could pretend to, which was NOVELTY.---It is now superseded and totally eclipsed by a Gentleman well known in the literary world, and in the line of translation in particular, who, by publishing his General History of India (a work greatly superior to this in arrangement and perspicuity of subject, as well as elegance of style) has very nearly rendered this slender performance superfluous and nugatory. However, as I cannot divest myself totally of all regard for twenty-four folio quires of paper, that have cost me so much money, and so much bodily labour; and as I fancy that the generality of that gentleman's plan cannot have admitted an infinity of facts and details peculiar to this performance; I cannot help flattering myself that this humble offering of a well meaning individual will still find grace with the public.

Although this address be possibly too long already, vain I am to add two short articles more.---A year ago I intended to print the first Volume at my own expence, and to submit that trial to an indulgent public; but the copy sent to England by triplicate, having cost me more than two thousand rupees; and my little competency (now greatly impaired by misfortunes and bankruptcies, as

well



well as by a variety of infidelities, that have at last forced me to look out for some livelihood in Calcutta) being unable to furnish the great expence required by this publication, I have thought it expedient to supplicate the public on that head, rather than to give any trouble to a gentleman skilled in Persian, who had in 1786 generously offered his patronage, for the purpose of getting it printed here by subscription.

All, or by much the greatest part of the persons spoken of in this History, were to have a plate in their proper places; and plates were also to be occasionally inserted, of fortresses, palaces, buildings, arms, ceremonies, &c. &c. but all that is become impossible, or nearly so: the five hundred miniatures sent for that purpose to England being still there.---Nevertheless, as a few miniatures have been procured since, and others may be found amongst the curious of Calcutta, this publication may still have some plates, or rather as many as the public shall encourage.

This performance having been originally intended for European readers, was of course interspersed with a variety of notes and remarks, absolutely necessary to them; and although there is no doubt of their becoming nearly superfluous in India, yet it has been surmised that they would not prove totally unacceptable to some Indian readers, even in Bengal! and they have been therefore suffered to stand as they were.

CONDITIONS

(17)



C O N D I T I O N S .

- I. The work to be neatly printed, upon the best Patna Paper.
- II. The Subscription to be Sixty-four Rupees, a Price which, it is hoped, may appear moderate, compared to some other publications.
- III. Each Volume to be delivered to the Subscribers, as soon as finished, and to be paid for on delivery,
- IV. The Printing to be commenced, as soon as a Hundred Names shall be Subscribed.
- V. Although the Translator has divested himself of all pecuniary Views, he cannot venture on the Expence attending this Publication, but after the Subscription shall have amounted to a hundred names, so as to encourage the Printer to go on with his Work.

S U B S C R I P T I O N S W I L L B E R E C E I V E D

By Captain THORNHILL,

Mr. PHILIP DA CRUZE, in the China Bazar,

AND

By Mr. JAMES WHITE, at his Printing Office.



TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THAT the man who has not the honor to be born an Englishman, and is far from being a Persian; who never has seen England, and never had any other master in either language but him-self, should attempt to translate from the Persian into English, and moreover to appear in print, is such a strange proceeding, and borders so much upon impudence and temerity, that the least I owe to an indulgent public, and to my own character, is to submit to their pleasure some account of so unusual a transaction, that they may see themselves by what a chain of strange circumstances I have been insensibly drawn into so adventurous an undertaking. And here I am conscious that I am going to fall, (through contagion probably) into a course of irksome egotisms; but as my story is likely to give many an insight into the customs and characters of Hindostan; and I have no other way of accounting for the temerity of my translation, I humbly conceive that, on that sole account, it may find grace with many of my readers, if ever I shall have any.

ABOUT eighteen years ago, when I was master of an Eastern Library, and of a Cabinet of Eastern Curiosities*, I had conceived a design of spending my leisure hours in a variety of translations, and likewise in a reasoned catalogue of my Library, Oriental Miniatures, and Antiquities: But all that, with

(*) These had been Collecting for years together, at a time when, Governor Vansittart and Mr. Hastings excepted, I was the only European that understood a little Persian; and of course, when Persian and Indian books, miniatures, and curiosities bore their own price in common with all other objects of commerce and no more; and when likewise I was the only man that ever thought of such a collection: at such a time, the collection had cost me full four thousand Rupees; and, if a Shah-Name-Mussever, which then cost me only fifty Rupees, would now fetch a thousand or more with the other articles in proportion, I have every reason to believe, that the curious in Oriental Literature, a species of knowledge that abounds now in Calcutta, and in which several Englishmen might prove masters and teachers, would have instantly swept my Collection for two or three Lacks.



the remainder of my fortune, was sacked and plundered at Djeddâh and Mecca in 1770; and I returned to India, with an intention indeed to begin the world a-new under the patronage of my friends (the English), but with a firm resolution never to employ any money in books: I had even taken a dislike to them, I mean to Oriental books; when an event happened that reconciled me to them again. Such a narrative, I acknowledge, would figure pretty well at the end of the one thousand and one nights, but it is nevertheless true, and to my sorrow, but too true.

I HAD seen so much bad weather in my youthful days, and so often suffered both hunger and thirst in India, that whilst I was scraping together the little fortune which I since lost at Mecca, I thought it prudence to abstain from many a comfort of life, in order to lay-by the sooner a provision for a day of distress: But when I returned to India, and saw myself introduced by the national munificence, and private partiality of my English friends into a little competency, I thought it prudence, to snatch as fast as I could at those gratifications of which I had deprived myself hitherto, and at those pleasures which were now leaving me one after another. In time, I came to think it more prudent and more delicate to employ my industry and time in assembling a Seraglio of my own: this gratification, so luscious and fascinating in theory, but so irksome and cloying, as well as dangerous in practice, and which together with an Indian cabinet of curiosities, had always been a wish of my heart, was soon acquired; and whilst many of the English, who fancy I never travel without some mighty scheme in my head, thought I was actually upon the wing for some political project; I diverted myself with the ludicrous purpose for which I was really taking so many trips to Lucknow. But men on the decline of life, who after abandonning the scheme of making a collection of books, jump at once into the project of making a collection of Female Beauties, must lay their account with cutting now and then a capital figure in certain adventures, which never fail to spring-up in a house where youth and

beauty



beauty are jumbled together with old age and wrinkles. I discovered that a beloved girl of mine, was in intrigue with one of my dependants; and the consequence of that amour soon proved of a nature which self-love could not put up with, but which a sense of humanity and a high regard for the girl, would not permit me either to chastise or to suppress. At last I resolved on turning the girl out of my house with a sum of money in her hands: but upon recollection, I remembered that a dear bought experience had taught me, that money and liberty together, were the very worst presents that could be made to young women who have always lived immaured within lofty walls; and fain was I to provide for her in another manner. A *Mushatta*, that is a *Procureur*, was sent for, I mean one of those discreet, shrewd, inquisitive, old women, so common in Hindostan, where the business of finding a wife or a husband, is necessarily transacted by brockering: after rumaging the whole city of Lucknow for three months together, and rejecting a number of parties, a young man of about thirty, stout, and of a good mien, was found out at last. It was a *Mogul-Baccha*, or man of Mogul origin, and a trooper; and of course, according to the notions universally received all over Hindostan, a gentleman to all intents and purposes. Contrary to the rules of the country, an interview was managed between the young folks; and by dint of reasoning and entreaties, I prevailed upon the girl to accept him. She was repeatedly heard to say that she felt no inclination for his company, but I objected that I could not with any regard to myself keep her at home, nor with any regard to her own well-fare, entrust her person to her self. "You want then" said the girl, with an air which struck me, "You want then to turn me out of the house, and to chain me to that man"?—"Be it so" added the girl,——after a pause——"But you shall one day repent of it". Witnesses were now procured, a contract was passed, and she was married. The girl received with her own cloaths and trinkets, some small presents, and a purse of three hundred rupees; and she was carried away by her husband



band. But what is singular, she was bathed in tears, and all the women of the house were weeping likewise; and although such a circumstance is always part of the etiquette on such occasions, there was now an air of sincerity which greatly affected me.

A MONTH had not elapsed, when she found means to send me complaints, and to wish herself dead: this was her expression; and there were many others. In two months more, the girl in a dark rainy night presented herself at my door; and I was astonished to find her in my house again. I informed her that I had divested myself by a public writing of every right over her person; that she was another man's wife; and that my interfering in their quarrels, would neither do her good, nor redound to my honour: She fell a weeping, and complained that her husband, an antiphyician professed " (as are most Moguls,) passed his time in a company of non-comformists, and had besides gamed away her little dowry; so that she sometimes suffered for want of necessaries, the government being in arrears to him by full nine months. The unfortunate girl's case was truly affecting; and her tears,---and her protestations, that she would jump into a well, (and she attempted it) rather than return to him, would have melted a statue of stone, and puzzled a man of sense. At last, after three days deliberation, I hit upon a party, which I prevailed upon her to admit; for her inexperience was such, that she thought she could live securely in my house: I hired a garry or a covered coach in a distant part of the town, and sometime before day-break I had her conveyed thither in a hamper, after having, as I thought, attended to her necessities, by putting in her hands a draught of two hundred Rupees upon Benares; and provided for her safety by recommending her to an old man who had orders to see her landed in that city. I likewise contrived to get her escorted as far as one day's journey from Lucknow. We parted with tears on both sides; and she was seen safe at twelve cosses distance. Seven days after, as I was getting out of my house at day break to take an airing, I perceived



a bag close to my door; and on my ordering one of my people to see what it could be, I went to look at it myself, and the first object that caught my sight, was an arm with a mole and an elegant hand, on a small finger of which I soon recollected a ring made of hair and gold wire: There was no standing such a spectacle: I returned into the house, and my troubled imagination made me see in the hall, right before me, the girl in tears, and saying: "be it so--- but you shall repent."---

FEW weeks had elapsed after this event, when I received intelligence that Governor Hastings was going to depart for Europe: this circumstance, to which he seemed to have been preparing our hearts, (a) completed the unhinging of my mind, as if by some unexpected stroke. That Gentleman had been one of my oldest acquaintances among the English: I had conceived an affection for his person so early as twenty-five years ago; and he had proved in the sequel, the principal author of my well-being: his quitting India at a time when I was yearly losing some of my friends by their departure for Europe, or by death; and when my mind, affected by these discouraging losses, and impressed with the thoughts of that ill-fated girl, wanted some potent relief, became a calamity that overwhelmed all my faculties. Some people observed that I was talking to his picture, a picture of striking likeness, by the inimitable Zophanii. I was sensible myself that some strange alteration had taken place within me, and I was thinking how to make a diversion to so much accumulated sorrow, when my good fortune interposed.

ON my going into one of the Navvab's seats, an old woman, among other articles of sale, offered me some broken leaves of a decayed book, in which the author talked with encomiums of the English Parliament in Europe, and with some asperity of the English Government in Bengal. A Persian discourse upon English Politics! strange indeed! I took the broken leaves, and perused some of them in the Garden; and the style, as well as the matter,

(a) He had already sent his comfort two years before.



having awakened my curiosity, I seized on this opportunity to afford some relief to my wearied mind. I resolved to translate it, in order to shew the author's opinions to a couple of friends; but on translating, I found that I had in hand only some broken leaves of a second Volume, and that the first and third were wanting; and these I found at Moorshoodabad, on my soon returning to Bengal. My views by this time had been greatly enlarged by the perusal of my author; and after having lightly thought of translating some parts of his book, merely as an object of curiosity, but especially as a resource against grief and deep felt sorrow, I resolved to translate the whole of it, as a matter of honor and benefit, being then intent on sending two of my children to England, and anxious to add something to an independent fund which I wished to establish for their education. Shall I end the phrase? I translate it now as a matter of information, which it is incumbent upon me to impart to my adopted Countrymen (the English); and as a warning which I owe to their prosperity. Having lived or strolled full five and twenty years among them; being so far accustomed to their language, that I cannot, for want of practice, write any other so fluently; having been this long series of years an admirer of their language and history; and being indebted to their national munificence, as well as to their private partiality, for the little competency upon which I now subsist; the transition is but natural, (and this is but a very small merit, if any at all) from such a set of sentiments to such another, as would render me a well-wisher to their government and a friend to their prosperity: my own welfare has flowed from their's, and even now does flow from it.

THE general turn of the English individuals in India, seems to be a thorough contempt for the Indians (as a national body). It is taken to be no better than a dead stock, that may be worked upon without much consideration, and at pleasure: But beware! that national body is only motionless, but neither insensible, nor dead.---There runs throughout our author's narrative, a subterraneous vein of national resentment, which emits vapours now and

then



then, and which his occasional encomiums of the English, can neither conceal nor even palliate; and yet he is himself but a voice that has spoken among a million of others that could speak, but are silent: Nor have signs of this national fullness been wanting these sixteen years. Living myself in the center of Moorhoodabad; wearing an Hindostany dress, and making a practice in the evening to walk the streets with only a servant, either to listen to, or to mix with, any company I meet with either there or in the market place; I necessarily get a variety of information, which is often out of the power, and always out of the way, of any other European: for an example of this, I shall appeal to the testimony of Mr. William Wroughton, now Chief at Dacca, a gentleman, to whose person and abilities, no man in Bengal will object: Full fifteen days before government had received any official account of that calamitous event, I wrote him an affecting note about the ferment actually caused in the city of Moorhoodabad, by the defeat at Vargam near Poonah; and expressed a wish that government might receive an early notice of it.

I HOPE it is admitted on all hands, that small accidental stories, and unpremeditated expressions on an important event, will better point out the national turn of mind, however dormant, than any professed reasoning. The unfortunate affair at Benares with Chéyt-Sing, was repeatedly reported at Moorhoodabad with such woe-ful circumstances, as seemed to partage the whole Nation (b): numbers were deeply affected (and to be affected for an European governor, or indeed for any European at all, is a very novel matter in India) and they used to say: "Pity! a great pity! the father of the

(b) A thousand rupees had been promised by the Nabob Mubārīc-eddōūlah, to any one that would bring a certain intelligence that he had seen the governor, (for the universal and constant report was that he had disappeared). Ten Hircarras or messengers set out upon that errand; and one of them coming back in twenty three days, said that he had seen his head and right hand hanging at the gate of Bidjaigur. The Prince shed tears; and I could hear nothing through out many streets, but the words *Afsoos*, *Afsoor*, and the very words I have mentioned. If ever an European has been regretted by the Natives, it is this man. Possibly my Testimony may appear suspicious, but I protest that I speak here without any bias: I do not believe that the assertion can admit of a doubt: a general regret has pervaded all ranks, since that man's departure; and I am much mistaken, if the English themselves, among whom there was once a violent party against him, are not now pretty unanimous in praising and regretting him. As for the lesser societies, such as the French and Dutch, &c. I do not hear of a single dissenting voice.



“ Hindostanies is gone,---we shall never see such another man.” But others, and this was the majority, left the person out of the question ; and minded only the crisis. “ What ! are we not men as well as Chëyt-Sing’s People ? ” and what could prevent me from giving a flap to one or two of his chair-men ? *(the Governor’s)* they would have dropped his palenquin, as by a signal, and any man could have killed him with ease. I saw him at Barwa (c) : he had not an armed man by him : and his chairmen were but a dozen of people ; and this would have at once produced a revolution---You talk to me of the Brigade at Behrampore ; it is a name only---there are not two thousand men in it ; and a full half of them will desert on hearing of his death---well, Sir, and the other half ? well, the other half---are they not Hindostanies ? and at all events we are such multitudes here---with each a brick-bat in our hands, we would knock them down to a man.” these and the like expressions I heard at that very time in one of the best companies in Moorshoodabad.

Two days after, as a Regiment of Sépoys on it’s way to Chunar-ghur, was marching through the City at day-break, I went out, and was standing to see it pass by, the Regiment halted ; and a few men from the center ran into a dark lane, and layed hold of a hen and some roots : the people screamed. “ Do not make so much noise,” said one of the men in his Bodjpooria Idiom(e) ; “ we go to day with the Frenghees, but we are all servants (tenants) to Chëyt-Sing, and may come back to-morrow with him ; and then the question will be not about your roots, but about your wives and daughters.” The street, although the main thorough-fare, could admit but six men in front, and there had been two halts more, in which time I had opportunities of hearing

(c) Barwa is a village twenty miles south of Moorshoodabad, and Behrampore is another village at one half of that distance, where there is an army of Europeans and Natives, cantoned in the finest and healthiest barracks that any nation can boast of. They form a regular elegant town. The army consists of general in a regiment or two of Europeans, seven or eight regiments or battalions of Sepahees, and a train of Artillery, with fifteen or twenty field pieces.

(d) The Bodjpooria Idiom is that spoken by Chëyt-Sing’s people.



such suspicious words and expressions, that I resolved to write a letter to Colonel Ironside on that subject. But two days having been accidentally spent in determining upon the expediency or propriety of the letter, I thought it better to take counsel from time itself, and I went to pay my respects to that Commander, who kept me to dinner. He had a great deal of talk with me: "I find no great harm," said the Colonel, "That now and then, a Governor, with a couple of Colonels or two, should make way for others; but what gives me concern is, to hear that we are not liked in the city, and that some disaffection has crept amongst our own Sepahees." Finding the man upon the right way, I thought it better to drop my own information, as it might produce a counter order to the regiment, with some other serious inconveniencies.

WHAT has been just said, may serve for a specimen of the turn of genius of the people of Moorhoodabad at that time. Here is a specimen of the temper of the inhabitants of Benares at that critical moment: "Kill that man," said a young Mogul to Mirza-Saadet Ally, as they were both marching to Chunar-Ghur.—"Kill that man: he is only with another Frenghee in that field yonder, flying for his life; say but one word, and four of us shall go and dispatch them both, and bring you his head; and after that, march down from hence to the very gates of Calcutta. There is not one man in arms from hence to Moorhoodabad, or if there be any, on seeing the head, they will all desert to you; all the Zemindars will join you with a whistle; this day two months I will salute you Lord of Bengal—one word,—say but one word.—Has any amongst you," said the Mirza, looking to the right and left—"Has any one of you a lancet about him? No," answered a voice: "A pen-knife? a pen-knife?" replied another, "We? No to be sure. A sharp pishtcabz or poniard?" "Yes,—what for pray?" "Only to let some blood from that man instantly: Do not you see that he is in a high fever? Man, you are very ill certainly; get yourself blooded, or go to the Ganges yonder, and take

D (27)

several



“several plunges, until you are thoroughly cooled and cured: The fun in deed is sultry.”

AFTER so strange an anecdote, (and I have heard of twenty more such stories) the reader has a right to ask me my voucher, as I was not present myself. Here it is: The man himself had been an acquaintance of mine about ten years ago at Moorhoodabad, where I used to make him dine with me sometimes, giving him plenty of liquor, whereas I never drink any myself. As he was a handsome young fellow, and in high favour with some Ladies, he, when once in his cups, used not only to mention their names at length, (the very thing for which I sought his company) but he had such a knack at mimicking their particular tones of voices, and some other particulars in a day of engagement, as would have raised a horse-laugh in a dead man. As I was just landed at Benares, and examining the sculptures in a famous Gentoo chapel, in Sevaem, (the very critical spot where the tragedy had been acted but a year before, and where Saadet-Ally himself lived) the man perceived me and came down; and I found that he was in the Prince's service at a hundred rupees per month, on condition of furnishing four horsemen more at fifty rupees each. He invited me to see his lodgings, a genteel seat, full of sculptures; and, to oblige him, I carried two bottles of liqueurs. As soon as the man was a little heated, he became talkative, and informed me himself of his conversation with Mirza-Saadet-Ally, and of some very curious particulars of the then temper of the citizens of Benares, as well as of the neighbouring Zemindars.

—ON quitting my drunken Mogul, I went to a large stone Caravan-Sera, where I took up my quarters, waiting for my baggage, when in comes my old toothless broker--“*Takwar Khoob Chelaw*,” said the man for all salute, and with as emphatic a gesture and tone of voice, as if the massacre had happened but the day before. “*The Sabre has worked well*,” said again the worthless blockhead, without minding the reprimand I gave him, for his making such a mighty matter of a couple of hundred men cut down by multitudes, whilst

the



they were either preparing their meat or taking their afternoon nap, without any one of them having so much as a ball to his musquet: "And suppose they should have had," broke out the wretch in fury, "Ten Thousands would have been pouring upon them, instead of Ten Hundreds; and the whole city would have risen upon the Frenges and their adherents."

I COULD fill a volume of such and the like stories, either from my own knowledge or from hear-say. But this is not all: the man (I mean the Mogul,) had been so imprudent in his cups, as to banter Saadet upon his faintness of heart, and the latter having attempted to see the other's wife, they parted upon bad terms together; so that the man lost his horses as well as his appointment. He came to Lucknow, took service with Affef-ed-doulah, the prince of the country, fell into a course of drinking and gaming, and in one unlucky day, gamed away both his wife and horse, and that too, to a man he was jealous of; inso-much that, rather than submit to the latter for a sum of four hundred rupees, he applied to me, and I took his bond, his horse, and his wife, which remained with me a couple of months. The latter had been a famous singer and an elegant dancer at Benares; and so esteemed by her troop, that but for Saadet-Ally's interest and support, he would never been able to have carried her away. She was a woman of an agreeable person and much sense; and she not only confirmed to me the above story, but mentioned some other matters, which shew that the disaffection to the English had risen at once to a height all over the country, and amongst the principal men that frequented Saadet-Ally's court. Two months after, the man came to me wounded, and brought me three hundred and twenty rupees, and I returned him his bond, horse, and wife.

THE inference to be drawn from these sentiments of the people at large, is now known in Europe; and some persons of Bengal, to the number of eight or ten, may have at that time suspected the disaffection of the natives; but I had opportunities of knowing it several years before; when about the



year 1778, I made application to Mr. B. for his interest, as I intended to obtain the office of Provincial Fodjdar of Moorhoodabad. In enumerating some of the qualifications necessary for a man in that station, I chanced to mention an open table; and I added, that as the emoluments of such an office could not afford the expence, I would endeavour to find it in my own private purse, as a political engine of great use. I was going on with my harrangue, whilst we were walking towards the tea-table, through a dark hall, when at the word political engine, I observed the gentleman turn his head to the right, and endeavour, but in vain, to stifle a burst of laughter; the Ladies in the room prevented my descanting any more upon that new political engine. Surely a man of so much genius and knowledge, was not to be informed, that in a populous capital, the ambassador, who, being abstemious himself, can give entertainments of the finest, is always the best informed. By the same rule, an open table for a dozen of persons, and an exhibition of fine dancers once a week, ought to be two important parts of the politicks of a Fodjdar of such a city in time of war: these will attract successively all the company good or bad in the city: men naturally unbend their minds and fall off their guard in such assemblies of pleasure; and if he be an intelligent man himself, and by all means an abstemious one, and also heartily mixes in conversation, he will learn more in one week's time with an open table, than fifty harcaras or spies could tell him in six months. Mr. B. seated at the top of a towering lofty tree, could descry from a far the elephants and rhinoceroses that came to tear off some branches of the tree, and the tygers and bears that wanted to climb up to it: In the humble station in which I moved, close to the trunk, I was too low to discover any thing of those elephants and tygers, but very properly seated, however, to discover those myriads of white ants that were approaching the trunk in their covered galleries; and although I pretended to no knowledge either in politicks or in physics, I knew for certain, that if ever they devoured the bark, there was an end of the tree.



THE reader accustomed to read the accounts of India these twenty or thirty years past, will possibly wonder at my warning him against the disaffection of a nation, which, by all accounts, seems to be the tamest, and most pusillanimous set of men, on the face of the earth, and the most incapable of any manly exertion. I acknowledge the charge; but even after having admitted it in a very extensive sense, we shall still find that it cannot be an indiscriminate one: we shall find here and there exertions that would do honour to any European nation. We shall find a Hadji-Yootuf-Khan, defending Madura, with an activity and perseverance, that cost the English more blood and trouble in a few months time, than had done the whole French war in India in as many years: We shall find a Morari-Räo, breaking with fifteen Troopers through a whole regiment of European English, ranged square upon four in depth, and after the square had closed up and shut him within, we shall find him breaking out on the opposite side, himself the sixth, and escaping safe: We shall find in the Ärd province a small, pityful, mud-enclosure, defended only by twelve Radjpoots, who, refusing to surrender, wound and kill two English and fifty Sipahes, (that is twenty times more in proportion, than had cost the great and decisive battle of Plassey and Bactar,) support assaults and reduced to six, are taken wounded and fighting.

NOR are these, so solitary facts, as we are apt to imagine: to my wonder and amazement I find that they are only some loose links of a chain that seemed once to bind the whole nation at large. The perusal of the present history has necessarily altered my private ideas of the Indians; a foreign yoke and a long peace may have enervated, and emasculated them; and the equal and steady, though light pressure, of the English grasp may keep their necks bowed to the ground: but this history evinces, that they have been very lately quite another set of men from what they appear to be now. What shall we say of a man that tells his friend, "get upon my Horse, and fly: I will stand alone at

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“ the door of your tent and fight myself out against these armed men that are
“ coming for you : I will be cut down at last undoubtedly ; but you shall
“ gain half an hour’s distance ; and this will save you, farewell”---the man
does as he says, and is cut down ; but his friend distances his pursuers and
escapes unhurt. What shall we say of a woman, a delicate Princess of the impe-
rial blood, who possibly had never heard the report of a musquet ? her quar-
ters, somewhat asunder from the main army, are attacked by a superior
force : the troops placed for her guard are going to be over powered ; in
that critical, trying moment, this delicate Princess, turns out an heroine at
once ; she flings away her mask and veil, gets upon a war-Elephant, pushes
on to the enemies, kills and wounds people to the right and left with her ar-
rows, and repeatedly cries aloud : “ If you behave like women I declare to
“ you that women shall behave like men.”

Look yonder at that inactive, incapable, effeminate *Coran-Writer* : he is at
this moment mightily taken up with admiring flights of pigeons ; and he has
been admiring them these twenty years past some thousands of times.
Would you suspect him to day to be the self-identical man, who con-
trived and executed that heroic retreat of his, through the middle
of ten thousand men that had broken into his house, and were actually firing at
him from the top of the walls ? he contrives and executes that retreat through
a whole army, himself the sixteenth : he executes it, like a rough determined
Grenadier, killing and wounding five or six men to the right and left : fifty
times turning about upon his pursuers, and fifty times pushing forward only
to gain some respite, in order to turn about again fifty times more : his num-
bers at last are reduced to six men, spent with the exertions of the retreat and
the fatigue of the way, he is going to be over powered : “ Prince, cries a
“ young man of twenty two, your life is destined to procure a subsistence to
“ thousands and ten thousands ; but mine is only that of an individual : Run
“ forwards and gain a couple of hundred yards : I undertake mean while to
“ bring our pursuers to a stand.”---This young man does as he says, and is
overpowered.



overpowered and cut down ; but mean while the Prince distances his pursuers, and escapes himself the fifth. This Prince is no other than Shah-Aalum himself, the reigning Emperor of Hindostan.

BUT all this, however, seems to be greatly inferior to Aly-Verdy-Khan's retreat from Midnapore to Catwa, for the space of seven days, through a miry country, under incessant showers of rain, with no bed for any man in the army but the bare ground, no covering but the Canopy of heaven, and no food but field-grass and tree leaves. History records but two retreats to my remembrance : that of the ten thousand, which implies contradictions and improbabilities without number, and bears evident marks of being a romance, like the life of Cyrus ; and the other, that of Marechal de Bellisle from Prague. Both the one and the other were conducted over a mountainous tract of Land ; and both armies were never overtaken, but partially. Bellisle in particular had stolen a march on the enemy, and was never attacked, but by his light Cavalry. But Aly-Verdi-Khan's retreat was over a flat ground, and over boundless plains, under a perpetual series of engagements, and under all the disadvantages which we have just mentioned, and which may be seen at length in our author.

THE Indians then have been a more dangerous nation than they seem to be now : They may be in a slumber ; but they may awake, and they deserve a more watchful eye than the English Government seems to think ; our author says, a more winning deportment, and a more careffing hand, than seems to be the genius and turn of mind of their conquerors.

AFTER having taken so much liberty with the public, as to differ from it on the opinion that ought to be entertained of the Indians ; and presumed so far upon the patience of my readers, as to have talked so much of myself, it may be expected I should say something of my author ; his matter is certainly novel, there being no other history extant on that subject in any language ; and as such, it cannot fail to please, at a time when all Britain is intent upon the



the transactions in the East: he will, however, be found to speak for himself abundantly: he speaks of himself, of his family, of his connections, of his own private concerns, in so many places of his history, that he has, without designing it, delineated the features of his own mind: he appears almost every where, a sensible, well informed, grave, sincere man: his style is free enough from those blemishes which would give offence in Europe, and which characterise all Eastern productions: I mean metaphors and allegories without end, and antitheses without number, with a greater attention to the jingling of a cadenced prose, than to the clearness of the sense, or the accuracy of the diction. He performs exactly enough the promise made in his preface, of his intending to recount in a plain unornamented style; and he appears, in general to be an honest man, and a zealous patriot; but should any rigorous reader take offence at some defects which are to be seen in his history, and which ought to be attributed rather to the writer's education, country, and age, his severity would be infallibly disarmed on perusing the following passage, which I shall transcribe whole.

After having recounted the unjust death of two illustrious brothers, inhumanly hacked to pieces by Seradj-ed-döwlah's orders, and in his presence, he goes on in these words: " The innocent blood spilled on that occasion, proved to be as fertile as that of Siävosh of old: It produced a series of events that proved fatal to that power and dominion, which Aly-Verdi-Khan had been rearing with so much labour, and with so much toil: It lighted up a blind fire, which commenced emitting smoke soon after these two murders had been perpetrated; and, which breaking out in flames at last, destroyed, in its progress, all that numerous family; and extending its ravages far and wide, consumed every thing in those once happy regions of Bengal, and prostrated and overwhelmed totally those rich provinces, which it has reduced to a heap of ashes and yet smoking coals: It verified that tremendous sentence, once revealed to the Prince of Messengers: *So shalt thou have done, and so shalt thou receive.*"

ATEE



“ AFTER that unhappy transaction, Aly-verdi-khan returned to his capital,
“ and his son-in-law, Säyd-ahmed-qhan, took the road of Pooraniah; but the
“ latter was uneasy in his mind, and thoughtful, at what he had seen and heard
“ lately; and as this had put an end to all the confidence which he had hi-
“ therto reposed in his uncle and the nephew, he resolved, henceforward, to
“ spare nothing that might secure himself in his post; and it is from that ve-
“ ry time, that an avenging providence commenced providing materials
“ for it's future exertions. But, as it is the faithful historian's duty to bring
“ to light whatever he knows with certitude, I shall take the liberty to af-
“ fable such events as are come to my knowledge, and to speak of them
“ precisely as they have happened, without being biased by either envy
“ or love, and without flattering either side or party. I repose so much
“ confidence in the candor and equity of my generous readers, as to flatter
“ myself, that without suffering their minds to be darkened by the dust of
“ discontent, they shall abate in behalf of the poor man (me), something
“ of the punctilious delicacy of their taste; and that they shall overlook all
“ the blemishes of this history, in favour of it's sincerity and exactitude: I flat-
“ ter myself, I say, that they shall cover the writer with the cloak of forbear-
“ ance, should they judge the writing itself unworthy of their praise.”

After an harangue so affecting, it is difficult to judge the author with any severity: If then, I have been obliged to speak of some blemishes of his history, it is because I felt that they might disgust European readers, little accustomed to put a difference between the defects of the composition itself, and those which are incident to the writer's education, language and country; and likewise because I have been obliged to account for some slight alterations and additions into which I have been occasionally drawn, in order to adopt my narrative to the prejudices and particular taste of my readers; and it is in that view, that I shall touch upon certain observations, which seem particularly to be of the translator's province, how faulty and inadequate soever his translation may prove.



ALL the Eastern Authors, at least those I have seen, know nothing of transition, that is, of that art, which by the means of one or two phrases that took either way, connects two separate subjects, and serves as a bridge of communication to cross over from one to the other. They seem to be strangers to that art; so that the reader at every new subject, is stopped short, to be carried over by a boat. Our author, like every one of them, passes from one subject to another, with an *oo*, that is, the particle *and*: From the Afghan War, to the affairs of Bengal. But here I have some small resource against so sudden, and so abrupt a change of hands: I can say, and I have said: *Matters were not so prosperous in Bengal:— Let us now resume the affairs of Bengal:— The course of our history requires that we should revert to the affairs of the capital:— It is to be wished we could speak with as much precision of the affairs of the Decan;—* and these little additions will answer some purpose, and shall be forgiven me, I hope, by the public; but how to manage with a man, who often interrupts the narrative of public affairs, to talk of himself, of his brother, *Naky-aly-khan*, of his *Djaghir* or *Landed Estate*, of his glorious Mother, whose shadow may long remain stretched over her son, the poor man,—&c. &c. Who, after having mentioned with wonder, how Governor Hastings conceived and executed the project of sending two English armies across the whole continent of India, and was very nearly doing with Poonah, what some others had done with Moorshoodabad and Lucknow, gives a spring at once, jumps over my head, and then turns about, to tell me abruptly, *and the poor man went to Calcutta, had some interviews with the Nawab Djiladet-djaung, the valiant Governor Hushin, and spoke to him of his Djaghir*. I have no resource against such an unexpected leap; I am obliged to have recourse to some awkward addition of my own, and to bring the new subject about by some such words as these: *It was in those days of trouble and anxiety that I was obliged to repair to Calcutta; and to address the Governor upon my Djaghir. He said, he said, and he said;* are the only words the Eastern Writers make use of, to repeat a dialogue, even a most animated one;



nor were the Greeks and Latins much before them in that particular, the Poets especially, although to make us some amends probably, they never fail to inform us that their hero spoke with his mouth (a). No European reader now will bear such a repetition of the words; *he said*, and I am obliged to enliven the dialogue by intermixing it with the following expressions, so common in an European conversation: *He answered—his antagonist rejoined. No said he, with a surprise: you ought replied the other with a smile.*

MAHMED-YAR, an officer of determined courage, was sent with two thousand men to intercept a convoy of treasure: He marches over a tract of seventy-two cosses, in six and thirty hours, over-takes the convoy with only seventy men, and had defeated the escort, and seized the money, by the time his troops are joining him by scores. Our author adds, with one and the same breath, *and the Nawwab was displeased with him, and he quitted the service.* Here the narrative seems to be interrupted by some chasm; and I am obliged to fill it up by adding: “ Such an important service, instead of making his fortune, ruined him in the Prince’s mind: He took ombrage at so daring a character: A coolness ensued; and the man disgusted, quitted the service.”

Such and the like indispenfible liberties, although taken with ever so sparing a hand, shall possibly surprise those Gentlemen employed at the public offices of Calcutta, in translating Persian Letters. I acknowledge with them, that Letters connected with twenty matters actually passing in review, may bear, nay often require, such a dry, scrupulous translation, where even the turn of the phrase is obligatory; but in a narration of any length, in an history of the times, I am convinced that it could not answer; and I hope that they shall upon due consideration, indulge me with their connivance, if not favour me with their approbation.

I HAD at first translated about a hundred pages of my author, (the last part of his first volume) in that scrupulous manner; and the translation went pretty easily

(a) Ore fatus: Ore effata.



down with me on my perusing it by a couple of pages at a time, just as I translated it—but when I came to read the whole, I acknowledge I found myself tired, sick, of my performance, jaded to death, and unable to drag my attention to the twentieth page; and if this has been the case with myself, how could I pretend to engage the attention of my readers? I have been obliged therefore to set-up a method of my own: I read a few pages of the original in the evening, thought the whole of them in English a couple of hours after; and the next morning chewed the cud over, by reading and translating phrase after phrase; sometimes connecting by one or two words what seemed disjointed, and then parting what I thought confused; and not seldom pruning what appeared too European in my translation, or else paring what seemed to step aside from the text. I acknowledge, indeed, that I might have read a whole page, and after having thought it in English, might have couched it down in one and the same breath; but this would have proved to be my own style, of which the public cares little, and not the style of Seyd—Gh8lam—huffein—khan. Upon the whole then, I can assure the public that this translation, awkward, and inadequate as it shall probably come to be, is in general a faithful and a literal one.

AND here it becomes proper to inform the reader, of some other deviations from the letter of my author, to which, I have thought myself obliged. The author for instance, speaks first of Mahmed-amin, then of Saader-khan, a few pages after of Burhan-el-mulk, lastly of Burhan-el-mulk-saadet-khan; and yet it is one and the same man. At the siege of Bedjapoor by Aoreng-zib, his eldest son Soltan-müazzem, is called within the short period of six pages, Shah-aalum, then Soltan-mahommed-müazzem, then Mahommed-müazzem, then Bahadyr-shaw, then Soltan-mahommed-bahadyr-shaw, altho this prince was not complimented with the title of Bahadyr-shaw, but several years after, when he ascended the throne. Such a succession of names on

man



the same man occasions in the reader's idea, still more confusion than those titles of Earl and Duke of such and such country, cause in the English history, where you see the same title, or if you will, the same name, borne successively by noblemen that had not a foot of land in those countries, and were of different, and sometimes of inimical families. But yet, in the English history, the same man carries the same title or name, throughout a whole reign, or even farther, whereas, here the self same man passing and repassing before you, round and round, with a number of new personages, and at each time with a new mask, and in different dress; you come at last to mistake and confound the indenticity of his person (6). To remedy that confusion, which has so much puzzled me at times, I have made it a point to stick invariably to the first name under which I see a man, and to carry him under that name throughout his whole history. But even this rule, general as I have made it, has suffered some deviations, which I have thought to be unavoidable: for instance, there is no mentioning a Mirza-djeladdeen-häider, still less a Mirza-mehmedor or a Mirza-shah-cooly-khan: for the English know nothing, but of Sudjah-ed-Döulah, and nothing but of Seradj-ed döulah. Nevertheless such is my hard case, that although I have mentioned this, as an exception to my rule, I have been obliged to except upon the exception itself: I have been obliged amongst the several successive names of one and the same person, to attend to that which the English were most accustomed to; for instance, in my original, Nassyr-ed-döulah Viceroy of Decan is the name generally used: it is that known in the Decan and in Hindostan; but the English are accustomed to Nassyr-djung; Mehabet-djung, is the name generally used in Bengal.—But the English never heard but of Aly-verdy-khan.—By the same rule Alemghir is

(6) This seeming defect arises from that custom in Hindostan of managing the conversation in such a manner with a great man, as that all his titles should successively, and yet undesignedly, find a place in it: this attention is of the bon ton, and is never dispensed with amongst the natives. The English always supported by a number of brahmin speakers, and sure of being heard with attention, if not with applause, do not mind such niceties; and they content themselves with translating an English thought on so many Hindostany words.



constantly Aoreng-zib with me, Burham-el-mulk is constantly Saadet-khan; nor do I ever part with Sultan müazzem, but when himself, on ascending his throne, parts with that name to adopt that of Bahadyr-shah.

Long, very Long as is this address, I am obliged to add two remarks more: were an enlightened foreigner to read a translation of some of those excellent books published in such numbers by the English, or of the debates in Parliament, or of the protests of the house of Lords, he would be apt to believe, that the language spoken by such a nation of thinkers-born, must needs be the most regular language that ever was spoken by the mouth of man; and yet on learning it himself, he would find that this language of their's, beautiful, nervous, energetic, abundant, versatile and commodious, as it is, is nevertheless inconsequent: the grammar of such a nation is inconsequent; and their alphabet is still more inconsequent; and although the alphabet of all the nations which have adopted the Roman Letters, is more or less liable to the same imputation, yet I cannot help believing that the English alphabet is nearly intractable. I have been therefore obliged to write all the Oriental names of this history in the Italian alphabet, or if you will the Scottish alphabet, as the sound of its letters is less variable, and it requires the fewer letters for one word.

My second observation is on those numerous poetical quotations, with which our author abounds, as well as all the Oriental writers. When I compare those inimitable translations of the *Æneid*, and of the *Iliad*, made by the English, with those prose-translations published by the French; and I consider what a figure the latter never fail to cut when set against the former, I become convinced at once, that nothing but poetry ought to translate poetry; and that our author's Persian verses, ought to have been translated by English verses at least, if not by English poetry.—But here I found myself out of my depth at once: and although, sometimes an English verse or two, would drop from my pen, when I least thought of it; I found

by



by a woeful experience, that the muses would not come near me, when I was most inclined to court their company.—Over-ruled by the sense, and brow-beaten by the quantity, as well as endlessly bullied by the rhyme, I became sick of my task : I became tired of cudgelling a refractory word into its place, and of dragging a rhyme by the hair ; and I have therefore translated in prose all the verses of my author : the more so, as I was afraid of affording a handle against the genuineness of the translation, by applying for assistance to a better versificator than myself ; nor was this apprehension groundless ; for an ingenious friend having chanced to observe, that I could hardly say in two lines what the author had said in one ; furnished moreover, that I must have been assisted or corrected by some English hand.—Such a remark having given much offence to my sincerity, or if you will, to my vanity ; and being myself on the other hand, so very proud of my acquisitions in the English language, I beg leave to declare, that the awkward and uncouth gown, in which I take the liberty to come forward, and to make my respectful bow to the public, is entirely of my own cutting and stitching : Nor am I afraid, that those, to whom I have the honor to be known these many years, both in London and in Bengal, shall ever refuse their full assent to the veracity of my assertion.

Calcutta, 2d November, 1786.



MIR-GH8LAM-HOSSEIN-KHAN's PREFACE.

In the Name of the most bountiful, most forgiving God :

(1) **T**HANKS without measure, and praises founded on eternity, ought to be sprinkled over the magnificent and exalted Court of the Just One without equal, since the multifarious system of worlds, with a tongue both ideal and audible, warbles melodiously a confession of his unity in endless duration, and from primeval origin; and the many-coloured variety of ages, in all the vicissitudes of places and limits, and the interchange of night and day, indicates and pronounces on the broad diploma of his greatness, the stupendous diversity of events and revolutions: Salutations also from eternal time without beginning, to eternal time without end, are justly due to that splendid present from heaven, viz. the Chief of Prophets, and to the family and companions (2) of that noble being, the final cause of existence, and the means of connecting the sustenance in this world, and a provision for the other: To him and to them be grace and peace to the day of judgement and confection!

(1) This elegant and poetical translation, from the word *Thanks* to the word *Confection*, is of the learned and ingenious Sir William Jones, who, by correcting three words in the original Manuscript, put it in the translator's power to understand the text; and were we to conceal such an anecdote, the theft would be pointed out by the extreme difference betwixt that florid expressive language, and the dryness of the rest.

(2) The Reader accustomed to know Mahomet but only through the writings of Christian Divines, all equally ignorant of Eastern Literature, and equally rancorous, would be surpris'd to hear who were those companions, of whom the author speaks. These consisted in thirty-nine men of Mecca, who, having believed in his mission, followed him in his retreat from that city, and were therefore called Mohaljerin, or the Seceders; and in sixty others, men and women, all Christians from Medina, then called Yatreb, who, having believed in him, on his fame and reputation, were called Ansars, or the Succourers: two appellations which came to distinguish, in the sequel, all the companions of the Prophet, that is, all who at any time had fought under him, or followed his party: These, at his death, amounted to one hundred and thirty-four thousand men.

It is agreed and confessed amongst those that look on the register of time, and the vicissitudes of days and nights, that books of history, and a review of the different stations and various successions of men, are of manifold expediency, and produce an infinity of advantages, as if the inspection of the historical page afforded an insight into the phenomena of the Almighty Artist's full powers, and a glimpse into the most glorious part of the Creator's performance: It affords information likewise about the several races of mankind, and an insight into the institutions and good qualities of their principal leaders, as well as in the actions of their followers, and in the imitative motions of those that have copied those actors of so exalted a stage. On the other hand, men, by such an inspection of the meannesses of insolence, and of the turpitude of oppression, are often put upon their guard, and often reclaimed from their shameful conduct: All truths so well known to the intelligent and virtuous, and so universally admitted amongst those endowed with experience and penetration, that it would be needless to insist upon them. It is, therefore, in that view, that this most defective of mankind, and this humblest individual in the creation, namely, Ghulam-hossein, son to Hedäiet-aly-khan, grand-son to Sëid-aalim-ollah, and great-grand-son to Sëyd-fäiz-ollah, the Tebatebäite, of the race of Hassen (3), (on all whom may God's mercy rest for ever, through the merits of his Prophet, and of his Saint (4), has thought proper, in the victorious month of Sufur, of the year, 1194 of the retreat of the Pro-

(3) All over the East, it is customary to design one's self always by the third person, and by some of those words that signify the fakir, the poor, the petitioner, the feeble, &c. &c. But none but people of the highest rank dare call themselves the *last* of men in their letters. The Author's name was Mir-Ghulam-hussein-khan, and he suppresses, through modesty, the first and last words, these being his titles; and they signify, the first (*Mir*) Commander, a word, which, as well as that of *Sëid*, which signifies of Lord, is become the title of all those that are of the race of Mahomet: These two words are Arabic. The other title is that of *Khan*, which is Turkish, or Tartar; and it signifies only a Lord in India, although originally it signified what it signifies still in Turkestan or Tartary, that is, King or Lord of a Tribe.

(4) This Saint of God, is Ally, Cousin of Mahomet, who had by Fatema, the latter's Daughter, two sons, viz. Hassen, who was poisoned at Medina, by his own wife; and Hussein, who was killed in the battle of Kerbela, near Bagdad. It is from these two brothers that descend those numerous Sëids that swarm in the Mahomedan world, but especially in India, being divided in two races, the Hassenites, and the Husseinites.



phet, (on whom, as well as on his offspring, be salutation and grace for ever!) To undertake this work : his intention being to furnish to some intelligent man the means of giving the public at some distant time hereafter, an idea of the preceding reigns ; and to prevent his being stopped short, as by a chasm, on discovering that links are wanting from the chain of past events ; for it is certain, that to this day no one has thought of filling-up the chasm, by writing the history of India since Aorengzib's demise : It is then, to put such a clue in his power, that I have imposed on myself this task : trusting therefore to my personal knowledge, and to what I have been gathering from persons of eminent rank and credit, I have strung the whole together in a plain unornamented style, where my errors shall be the more excusable, as I cite perpetually my authorities ; and by God's blessing, I have entitled it *Sēir Mutaqherin* (Review of Modern Times,) as containing the whole series of events, from the year 1118, to the year 1195, since the venerable flight of the last and chief of messengers, down to the present days.



THE
SĒIR MUTAQUERIN
OR
REVIEW OF MODERN TIMES,
BEING AN
HISTORY OF INDIA
FROM THE YEAR 1118, TO THE YEAR 1194, OF THE HEDJRAH.

(1) **T**HE EMPEROR AORENG-ZIB-AALEMGHIR, after having spent so great a part of his life in conquering and bringing under controul the region of Decan, without being able to satisfy himself on that head, abandoned at last his expedition, and turned towards Shah-djehan-abad, (2) which was the capital of the Empire of the house of Bahr (3), and the glory of the cities of Hindostan: But he had no time to execute his design: He was

(1) The author has Mahmed, for Aorengzib-aalemgir or all Mahometans are supposed to have the word Mahomed for their prenomens; and the word is always understood so, if not expressed; excepted however, when a man bears the name of Mustepha, which being the Prophet's title (it signifies select) he cannot bear the usual prenomens also. *Aoreng-zib*, is pure Persian, and signifies the *Ornament of the Throne*. *Aalemgir*, is partly Persian and partly Arabic, and signifies the Conqueror: it was the Emperor's title.

(2) Shah-Djehan, father to Aoreng-zib, having added a new city to the very antient city of Dehli, called the whole Shah-djehan-abad, or Shah-djehan's Colony, and made it the principal capital of the empire: for Lahor, and still more so, Acbar-abad (alias Agra) are capitals of the empire likewise.

(3) Although Timur, (Alias Tamerlan or Tamer lang, that is Timur the lame,) is the root of the imperial house of Hindostan, however, as his posterity resided only in Turkestan or Euzbeg-Tartary; and none of them ever thought of making their home of Hindostan, but Soltan Bahr, his great-grand-son, hence the Imperial House is called the house of Bahr, as well as the Timurian family.



The Emperor
Aoreng-zib de-
parts this life.
Division of his
extensive domi-
nions.

overtaken by fate at the city of Ahmed-nagor, where, in the ninety-fourth year of his life, and the fifty-second of his reign, his venerable person was at once assailed by a variety of diseases, that reduced him so low, that he despaired of his life.—He had then in his camp, two of the Princes, his sons, Cambaqhah (4), the youngest, and most beloved, and Aazem-shah, who bore the character of a man of valor and abilities, and was fond of military glory. He sent immediately for the young Prince, gave him the viceroyalty of the kingdom of Bidjapoor, and bid him set out directly, with all the pomp and all the retinue of a king, recommending to him at the same time to pursue his journey by long stages, and to push forwards without stopping. The order bore that he should set out on a Tuesday, the seventeenth of Zilcaad, four hours before day-break (5). The intent of such precise instructions was to put early the young Prince out of the reach and pursuit of his elder brother Aazem-shah. Seven days after having taken that precaution, he ordered that same Aazem-shah, his second son, to set out for his government of Malva, four hours after sun-rise, with injunctions to make short stages of about five coffes a day (6), and to stop two days at each stage, so as to march only every third day.—In giving such an order, the Emperor made him understand, that it was to put it in his power, to prevent the disorders that might happen in that country, in case of a vacancy of the throne, and mean while, to be at hand, to avail himself of his father's demise, for taking possession of his inheritance. But the Emperor's real view was, to keep so enterprising a Prince, at some distance from him, and to prevent his availing himself so far of his enfeebled state of body,

(4) Should one take away the Greek termination *es*, and recollect that the Greeks always rendered the sound *sk* by a simple *f* or by an *x*, he would easily find Cambyfes in Cambaqhah.

(5) This minute precision about days, hours and half hours of the day or night, is owing to the author's belief in Astrology, and also to the general belief which that kind of knowledge has obtained all over Persia and Hindostan.—In general, such scrupulous reckoning of time are cut short in this translation.

(6) There are several Kinds of coffes in India: the shortest is of about two thousand two hundred geometrical paces.

48

had



as to seize and confine his person, that is, to prevent his using him just as himself had used his own father, Shah-djehan (7). But hardly had the Prince proceeded a few stages, when the Emperor fell into a state of extreme feebleness and having lent an ear to his maker's invitation, he answered it by the words; (8); "I am ready, O lord," and departed for eternity. It was on a Friday, the twentieth of the month, one Pahr, and three garrics after day-break, which answers to five astronomical hours after sun-rise.

re Zil end

THIS intelligence reached Aazem-shah in a few hours: he hastened back to the Imperial tent which he entered on a Sunday, the twenty-ninth of the same month, about one quarter of an hour before it was dark; and the next day, two hours before sun-rise, he lifted up the imperial Coffin, and carried it a few paces on his shoulders (9); after which he sent it to Aorengabad. On the morning of the eight of the next month, he ordered the imperial musick to strike-up (10); and on the following Wednesday, which was also the day of Sacrifice, (11) he ascended the throne of his ancestors, and bent his thoughts on gaining the hearts of the Nobility, and on endearing his reign

Aazem-Shah
ascends the
throne.

(7) He had confined him in the fortrefs of G8aliar, where he died of vexation and a broken heart after a confinement of Eight years.

(8) These words are arabic, *Lebeic, allaboma, lebeic,--ready, mylord, ready, or command, my lord, command.*--These words must be repeated several times about by every Mahometan before he loses his senses, and after he has made aloud his profession of faith; or they are repeated for him by the by-standers. They are also the words which the Pilgrims pronounce by thousands at a time at the foot of Mount Arefat, near Mecca, where they have been already naked these two or three days, enveloped with a winding Sheet, like men dead;

(9) The Coffin of the deceased, is always lifted up by his nearest relations, and by his friends, who relieve each other by the way, where they are also relieved by those that pass by, who all make it a point to be assisting in so meritorious a work. In advancing towards the burying ground, they cry incessantly their profession of faith which is this: *there is no God but God, and Mohammed is his messenger.* Look at the note 12th, section 15th.

(10) This music, which consists of a variety of Drums, haut-boys, and trumpets, has been a mark of sovereignty; and although it is to day usurped by all the Navvobs or Viceroy, it is still deemed a mark of sovereignty and always of command: It plays four times by day and once by night, and serves also to announce some good news to the public.

(11) This day which is deemed lucky, always falls on the tenth of the month Zilhidj. This sacrifice is repeated every year by every house keeper, not in commemoration of the Sacrifice, of Isaac, which the Arabians look down as a spurious pretention of the Jews, but in Commemoration of Ibrahim's having attempted to sacrifice his eldest son, Kmail, who is the Patriarch of the Arabic nation.



to his people. The next day, he took possession of the Imperial Treasures, invited to his Court the Nobility of the Province, and the absent Grandees of the Empire, and gave a public audience (12), his intention being to oblige every one, according to his rank or station. With that view, he confirmed Affed-khan in the high office of Vezir, and Zolficar-khan, the son of that minister, in that of Generalissimo of the forces: In a word, no one felt any difference from the change of Prince; and every one was left in the place which he held, or was advanced to that for which he was fit.

MEAN while, the news of the Emperor's illness having spread all over the Empire, every one made haste to secure himself in his post, by every means in his power. In this confusion of the times, Soltan Muäzzem, eldest son to the deceased, was then at Cab81, a city and fortress upon the frontiers of Iran (13), where he resided as Viceroy. He is the Prince who did in fact succeed his father, under the title of Bahadyr-shah. He had with him his two younger sons, Quhodjifah-ahtar, and Refi-al-cadr; whilst his elder son, Muazzedin, resided in M8ltan, of which he was the Governor; and his second son, Azim-ush-shan, the ablest of the four, and the object of his grand-father's favour, resided in Bengal, of which he was the Viceroy. It appears, that the deceased Emperor intended to leave the Empire of Hindostan to his eldest son, Soltan Muäzzem; the dominions of the Decan (13) to his second son, Aazem-shah, and the kingdom of Bidjapoor to his beloved Cambaqlish, in full hopes, that those three Princes would remain satisfied with their lot, and would promote,

(17) These Public Audiences are called *Bar-am*. The Emperor appears there at a window, raised about three feet from the ground, whereon stand his Ministers and Generals in two rows, through which the meanest Petitioner can go up to the Emperor. The Emperors of Hindostan used to give two such Audiences to their subjects in the week, and each was of two full hours; and this practice was imitated by all his Viceroys and Governors, down to Mir-casim-khan.

(12) There is no other word for Persia, all over the East, but that of Iran. Pars or Persia, is only one of its provinces.

(13) All the Countries to the South of the Nerbeda down to Cape Comorin are called Decan, or South; nor are they deemed to be in Hindostan no more than Bang or Bengala, which signifies South East; nor is O8aliar itself in Hindostan.



each on his side, the welfare of the people of God; but who is the man who has not felt the torments of ambition? — and how could so experienced a Prince flatter himself, that his sons would be free from it?

CAMBAQHSH, who governed Bidjapoor in full sovereignty, seemed satisfied with his lot, the more so, as Aazem-shah, to please his mother, had added another Province to his dominions, and given him leave to coin money, and to have the Qhotba pronounced in his own name (17): But matters were not so easy towards Hindostan: For Sultan Muäzzem, on hearing of his father's illness, had set out from Cab81, as did his second son, Azim-uss-shan, from Bengal; and both those Princes, taking what Troops and Artillery were at hand, had marched, each on his side, towards Ecber-abad, a great city, on the high road that leads to Decan. Sultan Muäzzem was on his march, when he received the news of his father's demise. Immediately he assumed the Imperial name, and ascended the throne. It was on the first Wednesday of the Month of Muharem, in the year 1119, precisely at midnight, it being the critical hour pointed out by the Astrologers, in the sign of Leo; and after that inauguration, he wrote to his brother Aazem-shah, " That if, satisfied with his lot of
" the Decan, which was a very extensive dominion, and that which their fa-
" ther had set apart for his portion, he did not meddle with the Empire of
" Hindostan, such a conduct would not fail to produce numberless benefits, and
" endless blessings." This insinuation made no impression upon Aazem-shah, who trusted to his own personal merit and prowess, and made no account of his

Sultan Muäzzem, eldest Son of Aorungzeb ascends the throne as his right.

(17) The Qhotba, or Speech, although always pronounced in the open fields, on the day of the Sacrifice, is pronounced in Mosques every Friday, and on some other particular occasions. At the end of noon-day prayers, the Official with a sword in the Scabbard, if the place had been taken by assault, and with a staff only in his hand if otherwise, turns his face towards the people, and after having read or pronounced some praises and salutations in behalf of Mahomet, and his four first successors, as well as for his companions, he recommends to the congregation to say the *Fateba*, for such and such an one, the reigning Prince, to whom may God grant a long life, &c. &c. This *Fateba*, which is the first Chapter of the Koran, and answers to the dominical prayer of the Christians, is then repeated in a low voice by the people, whilst the Official has turned again towards the altar; and the ceremony is ended by every one shaking his face and beard, and saying aloud, *Allah Ekber* i. e. God is Great. This Qhotba amounts to an oath of allegiance.



brother, to whom he answered by the well-known adage, "that is was impossible for two kings to live together upon the same throne;" and he commenced to make preparations for supporting his pretention; but which ended in nothing but what was of his own seeking:

SULTAN MU'AZZEM was already at Lahor, where, in a few days, he was joined by Muëzzeddin, his son, who, on his father's orders, had set out from M8ltan with what Troops and Artillery he could bring together on so short a warning: There he was admitted to the honor of kissing his father's feet, after which he pronounced a speech in his praise, prayed for prosperity and length of days to his reign, and then followed him to Ecber-abad. Fortune seemed to favour this inauguration: For Azim-ush-shan, who had set out from Bengal with a numerous and well-appointed army, and was then on his march to Ecber-abad, hearing of a convoy of a coror of rupees (13), (being the tribute of Bengal,) which the Divan or Intendant of that country was sending to the capital, he seized the whole of it, but kept it untouched, for his father's disposal. He also laid hold of Moqhtar-qhan, the Governor of the Province of Ecber-abad, a nobleman of importance, who had given his daughter in marriage to the Prince Bidar-baqht, and was a hearty well-wisher to the cause of Aazem-shah (19); he confined that nobleman, and having seized at the same time, the vast treasure, and that infinity of royal furniture, which had been deposited these many ages in the Imperial palace

(10) A Coror is ten times a lac, or ten times a hundred thousand. Were we to form an idea of the progress the antient Indians had made in other sciences, by the perfection to which they had carried their Arithmetick, we should conceive the highest opinion of their keenness and penetration: For the decimal way of counting, which the Europeans learned from the Arabs in the eleventh century, these last acknowledge to hold from the Indians; nor have they any other name for designing that way of cyphering but that of *Raccam-hindi*: i. e. Indian Writing, or Cyphering. On the other hand, the words, *Arribi, Nil, Paddam, &c. &c.* convey a much more precise idea to the mind, than the words *Billion* and *Trillion, &c.*

(19) *Aazem-shah* signifies, the King of glory. *Muëzzem*, signifies the glorious. *Azimush-shan*, of immense pomp; *Muëzzeddin*, the honor or the honored of the law. *Shodjshab-astar*, of lucky stars, or of a lucky fortune. *Rafi-al-Qadr* of a sublime dignity; *Vala-Dja* eminently stationed. *Aly-urbar*, of a noble disposition, *Bidar-baqht*, of a fortune always awake. *Cam-baqht*, the bestower or granter of what is wished for, The object of one's wish.



of that city, he bent his thoughts on encreasing the strength of his party, on conciliating the minds of the inferior governors and commanders, and on gaining the hearts of the nobility and people. In this he succeeded so well, that his army as well as his party, were gaining daily accessions: But he could not prevail on the Governor of the citadel of Ecber-abad, who resolutely answered, " That at a time when the Imperial throne was disputed with slaughter and enmity, between three princes of the Imperial blood, he could not, with any propriety, deliver the fortrefs to any of them, unless that one should have established his government; in which case, he knew too well what became him, both as subject and a servant, to mistake his duty." With this answer he kept his fortrefes shut up, and prepared to support a siege. The Prince thinking it inconvenient to lose any time in an affair of so much length, went on with other affairs of importance, until his father Soltan Muäzzem being arrived, he effected a junction with him; after which he made him a profound bow, prayed length of days and prosperity to his reign, and presented the precious effects and money he had had the good luck to bring together. No succour could be more welcome: for the troops which had already become clamorous for want of pay, were suffering such great hardships, that they had become dispirited; and such a timely assistance being taken for a good omen, Soltan Muäzzem, from that moment, conceived the fondest hopes on the success of his undertaking: he returned thanks to God, distributed his treasure according to the necessities of his people, and changed their past distresses into present comfort. At this very time Aazem-shah, who had only tarried a few days in the Imperial camp, to take possession of the numerous well-appointed army which he had found ready under his hand, was setting out for Ecber-abad, resolved to dispute the crown with his elder brother, whom he looked upon to be his main rival. The natural ardor of his temper being inflamed by such thoughts, he marched with so much rapidity, that



Battle of Aera
between the two
Brothers.

he left behind most of his troops, and almost the whole of his artillery: After continual marches, he arrived at the foot of the fort of G8aliar, where he established his head quarters. It was on a Monday, the eleventh of the first Rebi, in the year 1119. Seven days after he advanced towards his enemy, whom he found encamped on the plains of Djadj8, close to Eeberabad. It happened that some troops of his having advanced nearer to the enemy, had set on fire some part of Soltan Muäzzem's head quarters, and dispersed some cavalry. Aazymush-shah was himself encamped there, and the combat having grown warmer, he found himself over-powered, and he stopped short to see what Soltan Muäzzem's fortune would operate in his behalf. This Prince, who was then on a hunting party, no sooner heard of the enemy's being so near, than he flew to his son's assistance, bringing with him his eldest son Muëzzeddin, and his best generals with their troops; the combat was growing warm, when an event happened, which by turning the fortune of the day, was taken for a token of approbation from providence on his enterprise. At once there arose such a violent wind, as seemed to give the combatants an idea of the dreadful Ser-Ser that buried the whole tribe of Aad under the sands of Arabia (20); it blew on the back of Soltan-Muäzzem, and fell in the face of Aazem-shah's army. This last Prince having given the command of his left wing to his eldest son, Bidar-baqht, and that of his left, to his second son, Vala-dja, was marching to the enemy, having his youngest son, Aly-tebar, then a child, upon his elephant. But he had left Affed-khan, his Vezir, at the camp of G8aliar with a body of troops. As he was pushing forwards with ardor, Zolficar-khan his generalissimo, who had also been generalissimo under Äoreng-zib, represented to him: "That as the day was so much spent, and such a violent tempest blew right in his face; "and on the other hand great part of his troops and artillery were still at a dis-

(20) This tribe, with that of Semod or Tharmod was buried in the sands of Arabia, by a violent tempest of sand which the Arabians called Ser-Ser. Mahomet speaks of this event in the Coran.



“ tance behind, it would not be adviseable to risk a battle for a throne on
“ such disadvantageous terms: that he thought it expedient to remain satisfi-
“ fied with the advantage gained over the enemy, by having burned one of
“ his quarters, and defeated part of his cavalry; and that to-morrow, when
“ the remainder of the troops with the artillery should have come-up, it would
“ be time then, to take in hand the bridle of prosperity, and to put the foot
“ in the stirrup of success and fortune, in order to fall with one joint effort on
“ an enemy already intimidated.” This speech made a strange effect: The
Prince who had a high opinion of his own military character, and that of his
troops, and made little account of his brother and his party, having answer-
ed by some expressions that betrayed his anger and resentment, the generalis-
simo, who was known for a man of much valor and much discernment, re-
solved that since his majesty would not listen to an advice dictated by zeal and
prudence, and he chose to run head-long into his own ruin, he hoped he
would not find fault with him, if he took his leave of a cause that looked so omi-
nous: The Prince full of indignation, having rejoined by a few broken words
of bitterness and anguish, turned his face from that officer, just as fortune had
now turned her’s from himself; and Zulficar-khan, without further explana-
tion, spurred his horse, and went to join his father who had been left in the
camp of G8ahar.

AAZEM-SHAH, without minding his retreat, fell on the enemy with the
utmost fury; and the valorous on both sides being as eager as himself to shew
their prowess, a mighty slaughter was taking place on both sides: But the
wind blowing with more violence than ever, raised such clouds of dust and
sand, that the field of battle was entirely darkened, the troops were blinded;
and it became impossible to distinguish the friend from the foe. It has been
affured by several persons of character who had fought in that battle, that the
sand was so hot and so big, and it choked so effectually the mouths and eyes
of the combatants, that no one could stand such a tempest, but by turning

his

his head about; no arrow fallen from a bow could be distinguished at more than a only a few paces distance; and beyond a few paces it could be taken-up no more. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages against themselves, the troops of Aazem-shah were gaining ground; the enemy's army was in danger; and the fury both of officers and men was so great, that to this day this battle of Ecber-abad is renowned all over Hindostan for obstinacy and slaughter.

THERE was then in Aazem-shah's army, an Afghan officer, of great strength of body, and much prowess, called Munevver-khan; he was followed by five thousand men of his nation; and as he died to say that a day of battle was a wedding day for the brave, he had dressed himself in cloth of gold, and had given a similar turban to every one of his men, every one of whom was ready to shed his blood with that of the enemy. This officer having found a favourable moment, drew near Aazem-shah, and requested leave to get on horseback, in order to rush on the enemy, and shew to all the world how zealous he was for his master's cause, and how prodigal of his blood in so noble a service. The Prince answered his request, by desiring him to remain upon the elephant he had been allotted from the imperial stables (20); and the officer mortified at the refusal, pushed at the head of his troops as far as the center, where commanded Azimush-shan himself. He was opposed by Huffein-aaly-khan and some other officers of character, who were sons to the illustrious Séyd-abdollah-khan of Adjmir, better known under the appellation of Mia-khan. But the enemy pushed-on with so much violence, that most of those officers were slain together with their men; and Huffein-aaly-khan himself, having received several hideous wounds, fell senseless on the

(20) This refusal did not arise from either peevishness or impolicy; for in India every commander of consequence, and every general in chief, being seated on a throne mounted on an elephant, and preceded immediately by some large standards fixed on elephants, nothing was more common for a whole army than to turn its back the moment they perceived the general's seat empty. But the Europeans having these forty years past gained many a battle by only pointing a four pounder at the main elephant, the Indian Generals have abandoned that custom, and they now appear on horseback: Nay, they have learned to discipline their troops, and to have an artillery well served.



ground. The enemy had lost full as many men; but Munevver-khan, having exhorted the few that remained to him, pushed as far as Azimush-shan's elephant, and having then in his hands one of those spears called Belem by the Indians, he ran it with so much violence against the boards of the Prince's häodah, that it came out at the board on the opposite side; and the Prince had infallibly been killed, had he not shunned the blow, by inclining his body quite to the left. That brave man after performing such feats of prowess, fell at last among the few intrepid men that had refused to survive their heroic commander.

THIS bloody action cost the lives of an infinity of illustrious persons: The Prince Bidar-baqht, who commanded the left wing, fell dead, as did Valadja, his brother, a young prince who had never seen an action, and then drank up to the dregs the bitter potion presented him that day by the grim cup-bearer, death. It became necessary to announce these two losses to Aazem-mah, their father; and this unfortunate Prince, who tenderly loved his children, and had a particular affection for the eldest, fetched a deep sigh, and said, *that victory and life were henceforward of no use to him.* With these words he ordered his driver to carry him into the middle of the enemy's ranks, where his häodah was so thick stuck with arrows, that one would have imagined there had rained arrows that day: He was followed by a chosen body, personally attached to him, not one of whom would leave their master. The Prince careless of his own safety, but anxious about the royal child Aalytebar, had covered him with his bucler, after having made him squat in the häodah; and he himself now remained uncovered: still he was pushing-on, filling his bow incessantly: But vain were all those efforts: the day was already far spent; fortune had declared herself; and his best officers were slain, such as Terbyet-khan, Aman-ollah-khan, and Metleb-khan, with the two brothers Munevver-khan and Khan-aalem, together with the Gentoo Princes, Radja Ram-sing and Radja Dilpet, with an infinity of their troops: in one word,

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