

## CHAPTER XVI.

Civility of a Brâhman.—Join a kâfila.—Sir-î-âb.—Kâfila bâshî.—Brâhûî tribe.—Dasht Bî-dowlat.—Mimicry of Shahâbadin.—Sir-î-Bolan.—Kajûrî.—Vigilance.—Bîbî Nâri.—Garm-âb.—Kirta.—Road from Garm-âb.—Khûndillân.—Dangerous locality.—Good scenery.—Abundance of forage.—Plain of Dâdar.—Penible march.—Pass of Bolan.—Its advantages.—Separation of hot and cold regions.—Change in natural productions.—Dâdar.—Produce.—Halt.—Surrounding hills.—Ferocious tribes.—Extreme heat.—Fracture of soil.—Sickness.—Proceed with difficulty.—Nâri river.—Encounter.—Hindû.—Escape.—My shoes taken.—Returned.—Miss road.—Regain it.—Morning repast.—Baloch youth.—Hâjî Sheher.—Baloch soldiers.—Shâll mûlla.—Various conjectures.—Zîârat.—Tirkârî products.—Kâfila.—Bâgh.—Scarcity of water.—Tombs of Mastapha Khân, &c.—Afghân conspiracy.—The saint beheaded.—His character.—Departure from Bâgh.—Character of country.—Reflections.—Sweet bājara.—Dangers of Dasht Bédârî.—Progress.—False alarm.—Rojân.—Castles, &c.—Formerly subject to Kalât.—Jâgan.—Kâsim Shâh.—Charitable offerings.—Shikârpûr.—Its renown for wealth.—Its rise.—Flourishing state under Durânî rule.—Its decline.—Its former influence.—Supplied the funds for Afghân wars.—Construction.—Buildings.—Defences.—Bazar.—Fruits and vegetables.—Canals and irrigation.—Trade.—Inhabitants.—Revenue.—Governor.—Lakkî.—Insecurity.—Boldness of robbers.—Coinage and weights.—Importance of Shikârpûr to the Dûrânîs.

A LARGE kâfila arrived from Kândahâr, of a multifarious description, and I was allowed to join it. During my abode at Shâll I had received





many attentions, from a respectable and wealthy Brâhman of Bikkanîr, named Rúghlâll. Learning I was about to leave, he invited me to his house in the evening; and after asking me if I could teach him to make gold, to plate copper with silver, and to cure diseases of the eye, he provided me with what I needed much, a suit of cotton clothing, and a supply of flour and roghan for my journey. My Mússulmân friends found a kid-skin, into which they placed my provisions, and slinging it over my shoulders, I followed the kâfila, which had preceded me.

As soon as I joined it one of the camel-drivers, finding that I was going to Shikârpûr, took my load and put it on one of his animals, so I walked unencumbered. The first march, of five or six miles, brought us to Sir-í-âb, beneath a small detached hill at the extremity of the valley, where we halted, near the source of a rivulet of fine water, which gives a name to the locality. There was some tilled land here, but no inhabitants. To our right was the high mountain Chel Tan, and where it terminated to the south, we descried the small pass, or lak, as here called, leading to Mastúng, so famed for its fruits. To our left were alike hills, and in front, the Dasht Bí-dowlat, over which the high road to Shikârpûr passes. The director, or bâshí of the kâfila, was named Baloch Khân, and the camel-driver who had befriended me by lightening me of my





burden, proved to be in his employ. This led to Baloch Khân inviting me to join his party, which of course was very agreeable to me, and I at once became easy in the kâfila. We were here joined by a pastoral tribe of Bráhuís, who were proceeding to the warmer countries below the pass. They mustered above three hundred firelocks; and as the journey from hence to Dádar was esteemed perilous, their company was acceptable.

Early in the morning, having filled the masaks, or skins, with water, we left Sir-í-âb, and skirting the eastern base of the small hill we had halted under, we then struck across the bleak, sterile plain of Bí-dowlat. We occupied the entire day in the transit, and by evening gained the entrance into the Bolan hills, and having crossed a very slight ascent, we decended gradually into a darra, or valley, where we halted. There was no water here, but our people had provided against the want. We were this night highly amused by a witty fellow, called Shahábadín, who personated one of the Atchak Zai, and proffered to diclose where ōbō, or water, could be found. He imitated the tone and expressions of the savages exactly, and extorted loud peals of laughter from his auditors. I had got over the first march to Sir-í-âb pretty well, but the long one of this day proved too much for me, although the road had been good, and I experienced a renewal, in some degree, of my former pains.





On the following morning, our course led us along the valley, which had a continual but gradual and easy descent. To march was toilsome, as the bed of the valley was filled by small stones and pebbles. From it we gained another valley, with which it communicated; and here, after a short distance, we came upon a variety of springs, the water of which gushed from the rocks to the right, and formed a stream. Some of the springs discharged large volumes of water, which released themselves with a considerable noise. This spot is called Sir-í-Bolan; and the sources are those of the rivulet, which has fixed its name upon the pass. We did not halt here, but proceeded until we reached Kajúrí, a spot so called from a solitary date-tree, which arose opposite to us in graceful majesty,—an emblem of our approach to more genial climes. Our road was throughout this march along the same darra, and over the same kind of pebbly surface. We had seen no inhabitants, but occasional tracks across the hills seemed to indicate their existence near. During the night the sentinels were particularly alert, keeping up an incessant discharge of matchlocks, and shouting “Hai! Kábadár! Hai! Kábadár!”

Our next march continued through the darra, and we lost the Bolan rivulet, while to the left the country became more open. The road also became less stony, as we reached Bíbí Nání, where we found





another rivulet, which, I was told, came from the hills of Kalât. This place is a shrine of some repute, and has some curious legends connected with it. The hills here yield fuller's earth, or some analogous substance. The road winds through the low hills at this point, and enters the extensive plain of Kirta. The river flowed to our left, and crossing the plain we halted at Garm-âb (warm spring), or the sources of the third river we meet with in the Bolan pass. About half a mile to our left, or to the north, was the small village of Kirta, inhabited by Baloches, subjects of Kalât, but at the mercy of the predatory hill tribes. Many of the women came to procure water from the springs, which, as their name implies, are tepid, and in the pools formed by them are myriads of small fishes. The houses of Kirta were constructed of mud and stones; and amongst them was a square tower. There is some land cultivated, principally with rice, and there might be much more, were there any security.

Our Bráhuí companions were desirous that the kâfila should have halted at Kirta for a day, but this was not acceded to, although the march we had in front was through the most critical part of the pass. The kâfila therefore proceeded without them.

Leaving Garm-âb, we came upon a large marsh, with a muddy bottom, and much choked up with reeds and flags. It is formed by the waters of Garm-âb, and from it issues the clear stream, which hence, to the termination of the pass, was to be our





attendant. This marsh immediately precedes the entrance into a series of defiles, and is not, I believe, to be avoided by beasts of burden, who with difficulty wade through it. Pedestrians, like myself, leave it to the right, and follow a slender path winding around the enclosing hills. In this march we had continually to cross and recross the river, whose bed was generally occupied with large boulders, and occasionally with flags. The water was delightfully transparent. During the early part of the day the darra was more or less open, or not so contracted as to be termed, justly, a defile, but on approaching a spot called Khúndilân the hills on either side closed upon each other, and the narrow passage between them was entirely filled by the water. Previous to arrival here the kâfila was condensed, and the armed and mounted men formed in a body, it being judged fit to move with caution and be prepared, in a part of the pass which, of all others, seemed to be the most dreaded. Within the defile there was a large cavern in the hills to the right, and under it a pool, said to be unfathomable;—there was evidence of great depth of water in the limpid and azure-tinged water. The scenery was here sufficiently good; indeed, throughout this day's march the natural features of the several localities were interesting. Emerging from the defile, we traversed a fine open space, favourable for encampment, with the river to the right, and also winding to the front. Crossing it, we again





passed through defiles into another and lengthened darra, but wide and open ;—and this traversed, other defiles led us into a more spacious valley, where there was an abundance of coarse grass. It may be observed, that there is throughout this journey more or less forage, particularly from Khúndil-lán ; there is also a good quantity of cultivable soil ; and, from the admirable command of water, it is obvious that, were the country secure, great quantities of rice might be grown. As it is, exposed to perpetual depredations, no one dares to settle in the valley, or cultivate its soil. Neither is adequate advantage taken of its plentiful pastures, for no one ventures to graze them. From this last valley, which has an appellation I forget, derived from its herbage, a short passage cleared us of the pass altogether, and brought us into the plain of Dádar. The broken ground here was covered with stunted trees and brushwood, and we had finally to cross the river, which flowed to the right hand. Passing a few old tombs and shrines, we at length halted on the borders of a canal of irrigation, with the town of Dádar and its date-groves in sight, some two or three miles distant.

I could have enjoyed this march under other circumstances, but what with its length, and the ill condition I was in, it proved a pénible one to me. The constant crossing of the river, and the necessity of tramping so often barefooted, nearly exhausted me, and my feet at the close of the journey were.





## 338 PASS OF BOLAN—ITS ADVANTAGES.

sorely blistered. It was in vain I strove to keep company with the *kâfila*; and before reaching *Khúndillán*,—behind it as usual,—two or three shots, fired from the hills, caused me to raise my eyes, when I perceived three or four men. They were, however, too far off to give me trouble, and I saw that they were moving from, and not towards me.

The magnificent pass of the Bolan may be said to be, throughout its extent, perfectly level, the gradual ascent of the upper portion of it, and the slight *kotal*, or pass, if deserving the name, by which the *Dasht-Bí-dowlat* is gained, scarcely forming exceptions.

It is interesting on many accounts: being, with the *Múlloh* pass, far to the south, the only route of this level character intersecting the great chain of mountains, defining, on the east, the low countries of *Kach Gandáva* and the valley of the *Indus*; while westward, it supports the elevated regions of *Kalât* and *Sahárawân*. There are many other passes over the chain, but all of them from the east have a steep and difficult ascent, and conduct to the brink of the plateau, or table-lands. Such are the passes of *Takárí* and *Nághow*, between the Bolan and *Múlloh* routes, and there are others to the north of the Bolan. This pass is no less important, as occurring in the direct line of communication between *Sind* and the neighbouring countries with *Kándahár* and *Khorasân*. It also constitutes, in this





direction, the boundary between the Sard Sél and Garm Sél, or the cold and hot countries. The natives here affirm, that all below the pass is Hind, and that all above it is Khorasân. This distinction is in great measure warranted, not only because the pass separates very different races from each other, speaking various dialects, but that it marks the line of a complete change of climate, and natural productions. As we near Dádar we behold the âkh, or milky euphorbia;—no plant is more uniformly found at the verge of the two zones: belonging to the warmer one, it stands as a sentinel, overlooking the frontier, over which apparently it may not step.

Our next march was merely a change of ground, and brought us within a mile of the town of Dádar. I was unable to visit it, but it appeared to be walled in, and of some extent, containing many tolerable looking houses. The Hindús of the bazar resorted to the kâfila to traffic. The neighbourhood was well cultivated; the soil, besides being naturally good, is well watered by numerous canals, large and small. Many hamlets are sprinkled over it; and the produce, besides grain, consists of sugar-cane, and the indigo plant. There are two fazls, or harvests, the vernal and hibernál. The town is held by the Khân of Kalât, and the governor is generally one of his household slaves.

We halted near Dádar for two days. Transit-fees were levied from the kâfila; after which our





company, augmented by Baloch traders, started for Bâgh.

The hills in this part of the country describe a vast semicircle, the principal ranges to the west, before noticed, stretching away to the south, and ending only on the shores of the ocean. Immediately to the north, and north-east of Dâdar, are other hills, enclosing the valley of Sîbî, and the abodes of Khâkâs, Kadjaks, Shîlânchîs, Bárrú Zais, Marrîs, and other mingled Afghân and Baloch tribes: while to the east extend a succession of ranges, the southern termination of the great Súlímân chain running parallel to and west of the Indus. On the side bordering on Dâdar and Kachî, they are inhabited by savage tribes, whose predatory habits render them a great annoyance to the inhabitants of the plains, as they frequently issue from their fastnesses in overpowering numbers, and plunder the villages. On the opposite side they look down upon Sanghar, Dêra Ghâzî Khân, and the Kalât chiefs' districts of Hârand and Dâjil. The heat at Dâdar is singularly oppressive, and the unburnt bricks of the old tombs are pointed out as having become of a red hue in the fervent rays of the sun.

At a little distance from Dâdar a line of jabbal, or low hills, or rather a fracture in the surface, extends from east to west across the country, and separates the particular valley of Dâdar from the great plain of Kach Gandâva. The road throughout this fissure is level, but the broken mass assumes





a variety of fantastic shapes, and may have a breadth of three or four miles. Where it ends, the hard level plain begins.

I had scarcely commenced the march from Dádar when I was seized with vomiting, occasioned I knew not by what, unless by the water, which here has a bad repute. It was night when we marched, both to avoid the heat of the day, and that the manzil, or place of intended halt, was distant. The kâfila soon passed me; and helpless, I laid myself on the ground, and awaited morning. I was fearful of losing the road. At the dawn of day I arose, and continued my way. I passed through the fracture just noted, and had reached the plain beyond, when my disorder drove me to seek the shade of some low hills to the right of the road. Here two or three horsemen of the kâfila, who had stayed behind, came to me. They kindled a fire, their object being to smoke chirss. They encouraged me to proceed, telling me I should find the kâfila at a village, the trees of which were visible in the far distance. I strove to do so, but was soon redriven from the road; and this time, the bank of a dry water-course afforded me shade. At length, with my strength somewhat renewed, I again followed the road, and by evening, approached the village of Hírí.

Here was a river, the Nárí, to which I hastened to appease my thirst; and on crossing a ravine to regain the road a ruffian assailed me with a drawn





sword, and ordered me to accompany him. Clearing the ravine, he examined my postín, and the kid-skin bag containing the remnant of my flour, which I chanced to have with me this day. Much parley ensued, he insisting I should follow him, and I objecting to do so. I told him, if he was a robber, as his weapon made him superior, to take what he wanted; to this he replied by putting his forefinger between his teeth, and shaking his head, signifying, I presume, that he was not one. I was unable to prevail upon the fellow to depart; when a Hindú suddenly made his appearance. Neither I nor my oppressor had before seen this man; an angel could not, however, have more seasonably interposed. The Baloch, still unwilling to relinquish me, said I was a thief, but the Hindú would not admit it; and asking me if I belonged to the kâfila, told me it was on the other side of the village. On hearing this, and that I had friends near, the fellow relaxed, and I and the Hindú passed over to the other side of the ravine. The Hindú separated from me, and I made for the road, when the Baloch, looking and seeing me alone, called me to return, and as an inducement plied me with stones. Having the ravine between us, and desecring three or four men in a cultivated field adjacent, I paid no farther attention than to return him his missiles, and the abusive epithets he liberally bestowed with them.

I next went to the men in the field, and told





them the Baloch striking across the plain was a robber. My tattered garments were again explored; and certainly had I possessed anything worth plunder it would have been taken. As it was, the elder of the men remarked, "What could be plundered from you?" and in the same breath asked me to exchange my shoes for a pair of *châp-las*, an uncouth kind of sandal. I refused, although the shoes were old, and absolutely worn out, as they had become convenient to my feet; yet my refusal was of no avail, and the shoes were taken from me; the men asserting that I gave them of my free-will, and I, that they were forcibly seized. It was promised that a youth should conduct me to the *kâfila*, which was said to be two cosses distant. The good Hindû, it seemed, had told me it was here to disentangle me from the Baloch. May his righteous purpose excuse the untruth. The old man, however, on putting the shoes on his feet, said they were not worth exchanging, and returned them. He then placed his fingers upon his eyes, and swore that he was a *Mússulmân*, and no thief. He invited me to pass the night at his house, by way of atonement, and assured me of good entertainment. I might have trusted myself with him, as this application of the fingers to the eyes is equivalent to a most solemn oath, but it was my object to gain the *kâfila*. I therefore declined, and the road being pointed out to me, I struck into it.





Night coming on, I repaired to some old sepulchres, or *ziárats*, on the road-side, to await the rising of the moon, the better to find my way. By moonlight I proceeded, but it was soon manifest that I had missed the road, and, ignorant of its direction, I thought it best to tarry until morn, so I wrapped myself in my *postín* and went to sleep.

At daybreak I observed, not far off, a man of respectable appearance, of whom I inquired the road, stating that I had gone astray. He lamented that a *Mússulmán*, for such he supposed me, should have been compelled to sleep on the plain, and leaving his own path, he guided me into mine. In a short time I made a village, situated on the *Nári* river. The river occupied a wide bed, and the banks on either side were high. I descended into the bed, and under shelter of the near bank I passed the village unobserved. Beyond it, I took my frugal breakfast, soaking my scraps of bread in the waters of the stream.

Here I was accosted by a youth, who also wanted to exchange shoes. He had himself a new pair, and perfectly sound. The exchange would have been to his prejudice, as I pointed out to him, yet I could not afford to part with my old and easy ones. He did not, however, insist. I was hardly yet aware that a *Baloch* generally prefaces robbery by proposing exchange, or by begging some article, as the plunderer of the *Afghân* tribes









the first time I had been taken for one of these Tartars.

In the town of Shâll, notwithstanding my own affirmations, confirmed by many of the inhabitants, that I was a Farang, or European, several believed that I was an Uzbek. The mûlla, or priest, who officiated in the masjît, where I was lodged, one day informed a large company, with an air of great self-satisfaction that I was a Turk. He nodded his head, and winked his eyes, as if his superior penetration had discovered an important secret. Another individual seriously annoyed me by persisting that I was a kârîgar. This term I had heard in Dáman and the Panjab used to denote a bull. It was to no purpose that I contended I was a "mirdem," or man, and no kârîgar, or, as I understood it, bull. The individual in question would have it that I was one, or at least a kârîgar. A better acquaintance with languages taught me that the word was employed in Persian to express an adept, or expert person, in which sense, no doubt, the man intended it. At the same place a woman daily visited me, always bringing some trifling present of fruit, sweetmeat, &c., and craving my blessing. I could not surmise why she thought me qualified for the task, until I heard her one day tell another woman that I was the "dívâneh," or idiot, from Mastúg.

Continuing my route through the jangal, I came upon a deserted and ruinous castle, and then upon





a village to the left of the road. It was dark when I reached a cluster of villages and date-groves, which I was so certain was Bâgh that I did not inquire, and satisfied that I should find the kâfila in the morning, I retired for the night to a zîarat, and quietly reposed.

It turned out, however, that I was mistaken, and when I arose at daybreak, I found that the place was called Tirkârî, and that Bâgh was a good coss farther on. The greater part of this distance traced the river-bank. The country here was populous, and well cultivated. The soil is fertile, yielding sugar-cane amongst its produce; júwârî and bájara here, as throughout the province, are the principal objects of the agriculturist. The preference shown to them would seem to show, that they require little moisture, and that experience has proved them to be adapted to the soil and climate. They subsist both man and animal, and are grown in such quantities as to be largely exported. In favourable seasons, or when the supply of rain has been sufficient, the returns are said to be excessive. Other kinds of grain, as wheat and barley, are raised, forming the spring crops, and the Jet cultivators, or zamíndárs, are allowed to be very skilful.

I found the kâfila at Bâgh, between the town and river, and in a grove of mimosas.

Bâgh is one of the most considerable towns of Kachî, although containing not more than six to eight hundred houses. It formerly was in a more





flourishing condition, and many Hindú soukárs, or bankers, resided at it. They have removed to Kotrá, where they think themselves more secure under the government of a petty dependent chief than under that of the weak paramount authority of Kalât, administered by a household slave. The bazar is still respectable, as the site of the place preserves it from total decay. It has the monopoly of the trade in sulphur, derived from the mines near Sanní; and the government officers collect transit-duties from traders. I was astonished to learn, seeing the river was so considerable, that fresh water was frequently scarce at Bâgh, and that at certain seasons it was an article of sale: but I was assured that, in a short time, the channel of the stream would dry up, and water only be found in wells, dug in its bed. I was also informed, that wells made in the town or neighbourhood, yielded a fluid, too saline to be applicable to useful purposes.

Close to Bâgh are some conspicuous tombs, covering the remains of remarkable persons. Amongst them are those of Mastapha and Réhim Khân, preserved in the same monument, half-brothers, and both sons of the illustrious Nassír Khân. Mastapha Khân was renowned for his valour, and fell by the hands of his brother, Réhim Khân; the latter was slain by the sister of Mastapha Khân. Another tomb commemorates a famous politico-religious character, put to death by Shâh Zemân. The Vazír Fatí Khân,





afterwards so notorious, then a mere youth, was a disciple of this worthy, as were a great number of the young Afghân nobility. The initiated formed a conspiracy to dethrone the king, and to assassinate his minister, Waffadâr Khân, and to raise the Shâhzâda Sújah to the throne. The plot, on the eve of accomplishment, was revealed to the minister by one of the accomplices. Sarafrâz Khân, the father of Fatí Khân, expiated the crime of his son, who escaped, and many of the conspirators were seized and put to death. A party was sent to Bâgh with orders to bring in the head of the holy man, the father or patron of the dark and foul treason. This event is worthy of note, as it was the proximate cause of the convulsions which have since desolated Afghânistân. Of the character of the holy man of Bâgh there can be little doubt, although he has since death been canonized. He was a Súfí, and, with his disciples, professed himself to be a "Húsan perrast," or, "admirer of beauty."

We halted three or four days at Bâgh, and on taking our departure forded the river about half a mile below the town; nor did we afterwards see it. We made three or four marches, and reached a village on the borders of the desert belt, called the Pat of Shikárpúr, or, sometimes, the Dasht Bédári.

During our progress we passed a well-cultivated country, but the villages were mostly either in ruins





or entire and deserted by their inhabitants. It was wonderful to see the immense fields of *bájara*, in the most thriving state, and apparently mature for harvest, but not a soul to reap them, or even to claim them. The cultivators had fled before the hill marauders, who had scoured the country. As the *kâfila* slowly paced over the afflicted land a mournful interest was excited by the contemplation of the melancholy scenes around us. It was no less painful to reflect on the probable misery of the poor people forced to abandon their property and homes. Nor could such feeling repress the sentiment of contempt for the feeble government, unable to protect its subjects, for it was admitted to be powerless against the licentious banditti of the mountains.

The village we halted at after leaving *Bâgh* was peopled, so was the one on the borders of the *Pat*; the intervening country was vacant, as described. In passing the extensive fields of *bájara* the men of the *kâfila* distinguished a variety, whose stem had a saccharine taste, little inferior to that of sugar-cane. They discriminated it by inspection of the leaf, but I vainly sought to acquire the secret. They said no sugar could be extracted from it.

There is considerable danger from predatory bands in crossing the desert tract which now spread before us. Its name, "*Bédâri*," or "*vigilance*," implies as much, and truly, from the multiplied robberies and murders committed on it, it has become of





infamous notoriety. The *kâfila* *bâshî* determined to make but one march across it, and we accordingly started about sunset, with our massaks filled with water.

We were in motion the whole of the night and following day, passing in our track a tomb to the right, whose elevation renders it serviceable as a point of direction, there being apparently no beaten road. Once during the day, a cloud of dust being observed, the *kâfila* was halted, the men with matchlocks assembled, and the horsemen took up position in front; the camels were also condensed, and made to kneel. The arrangements were good, but unnecessary; the dust, being merely the effect of a whirlwind, subsided, and the journey was resumed.

Some time after passing the tomb we descried a long line of *jangal* before us. This at once denoted the termination of the desert, and our approach to the territory of Sind. We proceeded about two cosses through this *jangal*, in which some cultivated land was interspersed, and about an hour before sunset reached *Rojân*, where we halted.

There were here two castles, or rather villages, enclosed within walls. Fields of *bâjara* and cotton were around them. The water, of very indifferent taste, was procured, and in small quantity only, from a series of shallow wells, or pits, under the walls of one of the castles. The inhabitants, or the chief of the village and his clansmen, were not disposed to be very civil, and on a slight occasion





seemed anxious to pick a quarrel with the men of the *kâfila*.

I understood that Rojân was subject to Mehrâb Khân, but I apprehend my informant intended me to comprehend that it should be, as it once was. It was formerly held by Magghazzís, who were subjects of Kalât. They have been lately expelled, or, as was said, exterminated by the Jamâlis, a branch of the great Rind tribe, who have placed themselves under the sovereignty of Sind.

Our next march led us to Jágan, the road through the same kind of *jangal*, with villages and cultivation occasionally occurring. Jágan is enclosed, and has a small bazar. We here found Kâsim Shâh, the Governor of Shikárpúr. He visited the *kâfila*, cordially embraced the *bâshí*, and arranged the matter of duty in a free, gentlemanly manner.

As most of the traders, and others of the *kâfila*, were established at Shikárpúr, and as the perils of the journey were considered over, *kairáts*, or charitable offerings, were made at Jágan. The more opulent provided sheep, with which they regaled themselves and their companions.

While competent to perform ordinary marches, I was little able to get through long ones, and the unusually severe one across the Dasht Bédári had brought me into great distress. The *kâfila* marched from Jágan to Shikárpúr, but I could not pass the distance at once, and went quietly on from village to village, well treated by the peasantry, a mild and





unassuming people. In two or three days I reached the city of Shikárpúr, of which I had heard so much. I found it large and populous, but was somewhat disappointed with regard to its appearance, although reflection soon suggested that I had no reason to be so.

This city, renowned for its wealth, is particularly celebrated for its Hindú bankers and money dealers, whose connections are ramified throughout the countries of Central Asia, and of Western India. It is especially the home of these people, where their families are fixed, and where are detained those of gomastahs, or agents, located in foreign countries.

As the city is not understood to be one of great antiquity, it is possible that the influx of Hindús to it is not of very distant date, and that it was occasioned by the fluctuations of political power. As the existence of some great centre of monetary transactions, in this part of the world, was always indispensable for the facilities of the commerce carried on in it, it is not unlikely, looking at the facts within our knowledge connected with the condition of the adjacent country during the last two centuries, that Múltân preceded Shikárpúr as the great money mart, and that from it the Hindús removed, converting the insignificant village of the chace into a city of the first rate and consequence.

Shikárpúr, no doubt, attained its high rank under the Dúrání monarchy of Afghânistân, and much of the prosperity of its bankers was due to the vicious





operation of that institution, and to the errors of the Dúrání character. Many enriched themselves by loans to the ministers of state, generally careless financiers; and by acting as treasurers to nobles, who deposited with them the spoils of their provinces and governments, and who, subsequently, died without revealing the secret to their heirs.

The fall of the Dúrání empire has been accompanied by a correspondent decline at Shikárpúr, both by depriving its capitalists of one great source of their gains, and by causing an uncertain and disturbed state of affairs in the surrounding countries. This decline has, moreover, been aided by the growth of a strong power in the Panjâb, and by the consequent renovation of its trade, and commercial marts. Many of the former bankers of Shikárpúr have since established themselves in the cities of Múltán and Amratsir,—the latter, at the present day, rivalling the importance of Shikárpúr at its proudest epoch.

It is not unlikely, that the decline of Shikárpúr, and the breaking up of its monopoly, may be ultimately favourable to the regions around; for its influence, pushed beyond its legitimate exercise, was, it may be suspected, injurious on the whole. It was so grasping, that not only by accommodating the various governments did it anticipate their revenues, but it seriously depressed agriculture by absorbing, in return for advances, the produce of the soil. In fact, the unlimited command of capital possessed by the





Shikárpúris placed at their disposal the entire resources of the state, and of the country, with the profits of foreign and domestic trade. All were poor but themselves; and their wealth was noxious to the general community, and unhallowed, as all wealth must be, acquired from the necessities and impoverishment of others.

To the curious in Dúrání history, it may be pointed out, that from Shikárpúr were supplied the funds which set on foot those successive inroads into, and invasions of the neighbouring countries, which are recorded in every page of it; until the monarchs lost their credit, and the restless nobles, no longer occupied in foreign expeditions, directed their ambition against each other and the throne, nor terminated the fatal strife until they had involved it and themselves in ruin,—a frightful, but natural result of the system of waste at home, and of rapine abroad, which had characterized the short-lived monarchy.

As a city, Shikárpúr is indifferently constructed. The bazar is extensive, with the principal parts rudely covered, so as to exclude or moderate the heat, which is extremely powerful. As usual in Indian cities, there is the inconvenience of narrow and confined streets; nor is too much attention paid to cleanliness. It would seem, indeed, that filth and wealth were inseparable.

Amongst the public edifices there are none commanding attention. Two or three masjits only





might invite notice, without repaying it. Some of the residences of the opulent Hindús are large and massive buildings, presenting on the exterior an imposing but dull appearance, from their huge brick walls.

The city was once surrounded with mud walls, but can no longer be considered other than an open place, its dilapidated defences having been allowed to crumble into decay. The Afghâns affect to despise fortresses; and it may be observed, in all important cities once under their government, that the bulwarks have been neglected. No inducement could make Ahmed Shâh order a trench to be fashioned under the walls of his capital, Kândahâr. The monarch proudly remarked that the ditch of Delhí was that of Ahmed Shâhí (Kândahâr).

The bazar of Shikárpúr is exceedingly well supplied, the neighbouring country being abundantly fertile, and productive in all kinds of grain and provisions, while it has a fish-market, plentifully stocked from the Indus. There are numerous gardens in the vicinity, yielding the ordinary Indian fruits, as mangoes, shâh-túts, or long mulberries, plantains, figs, sweet limes, melons, and dates; to which may be added, sugar-cane, (here eaten as a fruit,) both of the white and red varieties. There is also no scarcity of common vegetables, the egg-plant, fenu-greek, spinach, radishes, turnips, carrots, onions, &c.

About a mile, or little more, from the city, is a cut, or canal, from the Indus, but it appears to be only occasionally filled with water; for, on one





occasion I had to wade through it, and a few days after found it so dry that I could scarcely have imagined there had ever been water in it. For the constant supply of the city, there are numerous wells within and without its limits, and the water is believed to be good and wholesome. For the irrigation of the cultivated lands, wells are also in general use, and require to be dug, of no great depth.

Formerly, the trade of Shikárpúr was much more considerable than at present, and it was very much visited by kâfilas. The bazar still exhibits great activity, and there are many fabrics still industriously carried on of cotton, the produce of the country. Its lúnghís are next esteemed to those of Pesháwer.

While the inhabitants are principally Hindús, its long dependence upon the Afghâns has led to the location at it of a great number of mixed and various Afghân families. There are also many Baloch and Bráhuí residents, but few or no Sindians, whom no attraction could allure to settle in an Afghân city. The character of the Máhomedan population is not good; the men are reputed ignorant and crafty, contentious and cowardly. The Hindús are, as Hindús everywhere else, intent upon gain by any manner or means; and the females of their community are universally affirmed to be licentious and lewd.

Under the Dúránis, Shikárpúr had its governor,





dependent, I believe, on the superior one of Dera Ghází Khán. Its revenue, including that of the contiguous district, was rated at eight lákhs of rupees; at present, about two lákhs and a half can only be obtained by extortion, loudly complained of. Of this two thirds belong to the Amirs of Haidarabád, and the remaining third to the Amír of Khairpúr. The governor is deputed from Haidarabád; and was now, as before noted, Kâsim Shâh, a son of Mír Ismael Shâh—generally employed by his masters in their negotiations with the Afghâns and British. Kâsim Shâh was, by great odds, the best of his family, and was deservedly held in the highest esteem by those over whom he was placed.

Shikárpúr is sixteen cosses distant from the island fort of Bakkar in the Indus, and twenty-one cosses from Lârkhana. About four cosses from it, on the road to Bakkar, is the once considerable town of Lakkí, which, populous and flourishing under the Afghâns, is said to have contributed one lákhs of rupees as annual revenue.

It appears as if it had been suddenly deserted, the houses yet being entire and habitable; and now affords shelter merely to marauders. In the same direction, and on the bank of the Indus, opposite to Bakkar, is Sakkar, once a large town, and alike in ruins. This tract, with the fortress in the river, was held by the Dúránís; while Rohrí, a large town





on the eastern bank, was belonging to the chief of Khairpúr.

The occupation of Shikárpúr and district by the Sindians would seem to have been followed by an instantaneous decline in the prosperity of both. The towns in the neighbourhood were deserted, and the outcast population became robbers. I found matters in such a state that the inhabitants of Shikárpúr scarcely ventured without the walls with impunity, being frequently on such occasions robbed; although, to prevent such disorders, patrols of horse circumambulated the city during the day. On the banks of the canal I have mentioned, as about a mile from the city, are some Hindú fáquíř establishments, with some full-grown pípal-trees. To the spot the Hindús frequently repair for amusement, and always on their days of festival. One of the holidays occurred during my stay, and drew forth an amazing concourse of people. The spectacle was pleasing, and even impressive. Strange to say, notwithstanding the crowds and the publicity of the day, there were Hindús plundered between the city and canal; yet Shikárpúr is not the only eastern city offering the anomaly of danger without and security within its walls.

Shikárpúr has, or had the privilege of coining; and the rupee is a very good one, nearly or quite equal in value to the sicca rupee of India; it has





also its peculiar weights and measures, and enjoyed under the Dúránís many immunities. It has probably passed the zenith of its prosperity, and may, possibly, experience a farther decline; yet its favourable situation, in the midst of a rich country, will preserve it from total decay; and, although it may cease to be the great money-mart of Central Asia, it will long linger in existence as a market for the surrounding countries.

To the Dúrání sovereigns its possession was of the highest importance, as from it they overawed Sind, and enforced the unwillingly rendered tribute of its chiefs. It may be observed, that the recent operations beyond the Indus have induced arrangements by which the city and adjacent territory are likely to be permanently placed under British authority.





## CHAPTER XVII.

Odd appearance.—Sakkar.—Bakkar.—Rohri.—Khairpúr.—Its insalubrity.—Division of country.—Introduction to Ghúlám Rasúl Khân.—His mission.—His attendants.—Bounty of Múlla Háfiz.—Departure from Khairpúr.—Dúbar.—Intricacy of road.—Súltánpúr.—Saiyad's rebuke.—Mattéí.—Extensive view.—Masjít companions, and society.—Conversation.—Supper.—Pitah Sheher.—Masjít repast.—Fáquir.—Mírpúr.—Sindí woman.—Hospitable villagers.—Suspicious men.—Khairpúr.—Sabzal Kot.—Evil guides.—Fázilpúr.—Meeting with Ráhmát Khân.—Peasantry of Sind.—Villages and masjíts.—Administration of country.—Hindús.—Saiyads.—Pírs.—Faquírs.—Takías.

I STAYED two or three days only at Shikárpúr, and determined to recross the Indus, and enter Northern Sind, with the intention of ultimately proceeding to Lahore, the capital of Máhárájá Ranjít Singh. My postín, many years old, was so full of rents, and so rotten, that I was every day occupied two or three hours in repairing it, and the variously coloured threads employed gave it a singular and ludicrous appearance. To add to the unseemliness of my habiliments, the dress bestowed upon me by the Bráhman at Sháll was fairly in tatters, and my shoes were absolutely falling from my feet.

I therefore passed through Lakkí, and reached



the deserted town of Sakkar, on the banks of the river. I passed the night at a masjít, where only one man, the múlla, attended, to pray. He brought me a supper of bread and dhál, and sat in conversation with me some time, giving his ruler, Mír Sohráb, but an indifferent character.

In the morning I went to the river, and found a boat ready to cross, into which I stepped, when a Hindú asked me for a pais, the passage fee. I observed, I was a Hâjí, and had no pais, but he insisted I should give one. I had none, and rose as if to leave the boat, when he desired me to sit, and I passed over to Rohrí.

On a rocky island opposite to this town is the fortress of Bakkar, once held by the Dúránís, at this time subject to Mír Sohráb. Notwithstanding its imposing appearance, with its large extent of wall, and its indented battlements, it is of no consequence as a defensive erection in modern warfare, being entirely commanded by the heights and detached hills on either bank of the river, at Sakkur and at Rohrí. There are a multitude of Máhome-dan tombs and shrines in this neighbourhood, many of them splendidly covered with painted tiles. One, eminently superb, stands on a small islet between the town of Rohrí and the larger island of Bakkar. The effect of the landscape is wonderfully increased by the beautiful stream, and the immense groves of date-trees, which fringe its banks. Every traveller will be delighted with the scenery of this favoured





spot, and its attractions allured me to linger in it two days, and to leave it with regret.

The town of Rohrí is seated on the bank of the river, immediately opposite to Bakkar, and the houses have an antique and venerable appearance in the distance. The interior of the town is comparatively mean, and the bazar, while well enough supplied with provisions, is very rudely composed. There is a peculiar rupee current here, and certain weights are in use, superior to the ordinary ones of Sind. Rohrí is an ancient site, no doubt succeeding Alor, the capital of Upper Sind at the period of the Máhomedan invasion, and whose remains are still known and pointed out near it.

From Rohrí the road leads through a wilderness of date-groves and gardens for above three miles, when, a little open country passed, I reached the small and pleasant village of Bâh, and thence another six miles brought me to Khaírpúr. This place, originally a cantonment, has gradually increased in importance, until it has become the capital and residence of Mír Sohráb, the chief, or, as he is called, the Mír of Upper Sind. It appears, on approaching it, a vast assemblage of trees, none of the houses being observable, and consists, in fact, of houses and huts intermingled with groves and gardens in a remarkably confused manner. The bazars abound with foreign and native produce, and British manufactures are freely met with. The commerce of the place is extensive, and the Hindús are wont





to remark, that if the town were seated on the river gold might be gathered by handfuls. In the very centre of the bazars is the palace of Mír Sohráb. It occupies a large space, and is surrounded with castellated walls. From the exterior the only prominent object is the cupola of the masjít, decorated with green and yellow painted tiles. Khairpúr is a filthy place, and is esteemed unhealthy; which, looking at the stagnant marshes around it, and the extreme heat, need not be wondered at. The same causes, however, impart a beautiful verdure to its groves of mangoe, mimosa, and other trees. The water drank by the inhabitants has alike a bad repute; but the Mír has a well within his walls, so much esteemed, that his relatives at Haidarabád are frequently supplied from it. Mír Sohráb's territory extends southernly for a considerable distance, or forty cosses; and on the western side of the Indus he has a slip of land of about twenty cosses. He also has a third share of the revenue of Shikárpúr. He has given portions of his country to his sons, the eldest Mír Rústam, the second Mír Mobárák. Mír Sohráb is very old and infirm, and unpopular, from his tyranny and oppression. His son, Mír Rústam, although dissipated, is less disliked. Related to the Mírs of Haidarabád, he consults with them on matters of general and foreign policy, but they do not interfere in the administration of his country. His minister is Fatí Máhomed Ghorí, an aged and avaricious man.





When at Khairpúr passing by the house of Fatí Máhomed, at the eastern extremity of the town, my appearance, certainly singular enough, induced a party of men occupying a kind of shed, to make themselves more merry at my expense than I was pleased with, and I spoke sharply to them. I did not comprehend all they said, but knew that they called me a madman, as perhaps they supposed me to be. I was strolling in an adjacent mimosa grove, when one of the party accosted me and asked whether I was not a Feringhí. I said yes, and he invited me to return with him, as a mistake had occurred. He explained to me, that his master was Ghúlám Rasúl Khân, a Dáoudpútra, and vakíl, or envoy, from Baháwalpúr. We went back together; and the vakíl was told I was not a madman but a Feringhí; on which he apologized, and I observed that it was possible I might be both. While we were conversing, one Gúl Máhomed, a companion in my journey from Quetta to Shikárpúr, whose business had led him to Khairpúr, came to call upon Fatí Máhomed. He was profuse in expressions of joy at seeing me again, and entered into such exaggerated details of my consequence, as to make a deep impression on the mind of the Baháwalpúr envoy, who would not be satisfied unless I consented to stay with him, while he informed me that he expected his dismissal in a few days, when he would conduct me to his village near the Sind frontier, and provide me with clothing and other





necessaries. Ghúlám Rasúl had been deputed to treat for the restoration of Kot Sabzal, now the frontier town of Upper Sind, but which had been wrested from Bahâwalpúr during the rule of Sâdat Khân, father of the present khân. The plea of original right was set up by Mír Sohráb, and Ghúlám Rasúl, I presume, was entrusted with the commission of establishing the claims of Bahâwalpúr rather from the circumstance of his local knowledge, as he resided within twenty cosses from Kot Sabzal, than from his high condition or diplomatic ability. He was, nevertheless, a Dáoudpútra, of the same tribe as his prince, held a small jághír, and as respectable as khâns in Bahâwalpúr generally are.

He was scarcely above twenty years age, but very creditably corpulent, whether from natural bias or from indolence and good-nature. His attendants were about twelve in number, and a more supine or dirty set of men could not be imagined. Most of them were Szayads, and besides eating their meals and smoking tobacco, did little but drink bang and intoxicate themselves. They were called soldiers, yet there were but two crazy matchlocks amongst the whole of them; and one of these was sold when I was with them. Ghúlám Rasúl was, however, as correct in conduct as mild and unoffensive in manner, and, as a mark of his station in life, one of his filthy attendants was his falconer. The vakíl was the only one of the party even tolerably clad, in white raiments, and he appeared to have only the suit he





wore, for when it was necessary to wash it he was obliged to sit wrapt up in a kamlah. His people endeavoured to convince me that he was a great man at home, and prayed me not to estimate him by his appearance abroad.

The party, being guests of Fatí Máhoméd, the minister of Mír Rústam Khán, were provided with their meals from his kitchen; but they were so scantily supplied that I was glad an acquaintance I chanced to make relieved me from the necessity of trespassing upon them in this particular. Múlla Háfíz, in charge of Fatí Máhoméd's masjít, became friendly with me, and brought me daily my food in his brass vessels, although it gave him the trouble of scouring them after I had used them.

I had remained above a month at Khairpúr; and, seeing no indication of movement on the part of Ghúlám Rasúl, determined to proceed without him. He was sorry I should go; but I was in so sad a plight as to clothing that I was compelled to go somewhere, under the hope of being better equipped. I therefore took leave of him one evening, when seven of his retinue were lying in so confirmed a state of stupefaction from their daily potations that they could not be aroused to receive my adieus.

I reached a small village, where I passed the night; and the next day, halting a while at Bâh, again entered Rohrí, where I learned as much as





I could of the road I had to traverse, and acquired the names of the villages I should meet with.

Conscious of my singular appearance, I felt ashamed to confess myself to be a Feringhí, and resolved, when accosted by any one, if asked whether I was a Patán, or this, or that, to say yes; and, if asked directly who I was, to reply that I was a Mogal, as I had discovered that appellation was vaguely applied, and might be assumed by any one with a fair complexion.

I made a small march from Rohrí, and the next day reached Dúbar, a hamlet with a rivulet flowing near it; there was an ancient masjít, and two or three Hindú shops. The jangal had become very close, and abounded with wild hogs, though adjoining the hamlet there was much pasture land. Dúbar was eight cosses from Rohrí. I there inquired the road to Súltânpúr, which, I was told, was fourteen cosses distant. The roads in this part of Sind are nothing but foot-paths, and are so continually crossed and recrossed by others that it is next to impossible for a stranger to know the one he ought to follow. I was continually losing my way, and, although I never failed to reach some village, and to be well received, it was five or six days before I found myself at Súltânpúr. The country was covered with the most intricate jangal, affording, however, subsistence in its grass to numerous herds of buffaloes. Súltânpúr was a large straggling village, surrounded with much cul-





tivated land; while fine groves of trees, mimosas, bérns, and pípals, were interspersed amongst the houses, and adorned the environs. The bazar was small, but neat, and abundantly supplied. I repaired to the principal masjít, placed on a mound, and seating myself with my back to the wall, extended my feet towards the west, or in the direction of the kabla. A saiyad rebuked me for so doing, and the officiating múlla asked him why it was improper, as I was not sleeping, but sitting. The saiyad explained, and related a tale of some unfortunate person, whose feet were nailed to the ground for placing them in a position like mine. Another individual, on my observing that I was going home, asked whether to the Feringhí country? I said that I was a Mogal, and he made no farther remark. I passed the night at Súltânpúr; and the saiyad who had taught me to be careful as to my feet, living in the apartments belonging to the masjít, furnished me with an ample supper.

I had now to inquire for Mattéli, said to be eight cosses from Súltânpúr, and was two or three days before I found my way to it, being constantly straying from the road, yet invariably well treated at the villages I accidentally fell in with. Throughout this part of the country the jangal is burned when new lands are to be brought under cultivation; and now on every side were seen huge columns of ascending smoke. Mattéli is a small town, seated on an eminence, at the foot





of which was a large expanse of water. In the neighbourhood are groves of enormous pípal trees. Its site and the character of its scenery is attractive, while its houses have a picturesque and ancient aspect. The bazar contains many Hindú shops, and the banyas have a darramsâla. That the locality has pretensions to antiquity, is shown by numerous remains of former buildings. From the summit of the mound a most extensive view is obtained of the surrounding country, presenting an immense mass of dense jangal, the positions of the several villages being marked by the clumps of taller trees, towering above the ordinary level. My next stage was Mírpúr, ten cosses distant, and it was pointed out to me by the inhabitants.

I took up my quarters at the masjít, and found there an aged but respectable-looking man, like myself, a masâfar, or stranger, who called himself a saiyad. At the period of the fourth prayers he was asked to join in them, but declined, affirming that he did not know the characters of the people, or of the múlla, behind whom he should stand. These reasons were admitted; not that they were good, but from courtesy. I was not asked to pray, as it was said I was a fáquí, and fáquírs are allowed to be graceless. We were afterwards joined by another masâfar, also a well-dressed old man, who gave out that he was a mír, and going to Múltán. Connected with the masjít were apartments, one inhabited by the person appointed





to take charge of the building, and others for the use of travellers and strangers. In one of them we were seated, the péshkidmat, or servitor of the masjít making an excellent fire; and the interval between the fourth and fifth, or last prayers, was spent in much amusing conversation.

It must be conceded, that three impostors were this night trespassing on the charity of the good people of Mattéli. The silver-haired sinner, who avowed himself a saiyad, was no more one than I was; the man of Múltân was too ignorant to be considered a mír; and certainly I had as little pretensions to be thought a Patán fáquí. Our saiyad, however, talked most, and in the Hindústâní dialect, better, perhaps, understood by myself than by his other auditors. He repeated some most egregious falsehoods, and gave an account of his travels in a country beyond Thibet, where beggars were fed on golden plates. He then, with reference to me, descanted on fáquírs, and described the several classes; to a class never possessing wealth, he, naturally enough, referred me. The péshkidmat was lost in wonder at these narrations, and often exclaimed on the singularity of having three persons from countries so distant assembled together, and seemed to be very proud of being honoured with their company. The saiyad, who, of course, came from no ordinary place, asserted that he was from a country beyond Chín, or China. His language betrayed him, and his





frequent mention of Delhí satisfied me as to where he belonged.

When the fifth prayers were concluded, and good Mússulmâns take their supper, we, the strangers, were thought of; and the péshkidmat, to whose duty the office belongs, brought in plenty of bread and sâgh, or vegetables boiled with roghan, and seasoned—a very general accompaniment to bread in Sind—the vegetables being spinach, or métí, (fenugreek.) My companions, to support their quality, and, perhaps, expecting something better, pretended to be unable to sup unless on meat; and the bread and sâgh was given to me, and I made a very good meal of it. Nothing more costly was produced, and the saiyad and mír were finally obliged to put up with bread alone, complaining loudly of the inhospitality of the people of Mattélí. When they departed in the morning one of the villagers observed, that the saiyad was a kímíia-ghar, or alchemist; and my having been satisfied with sâgh was so well taken, that breakfast was brought for me before I left.

On the road to Mírpúr I could find my way no better than before; and on one occasion falling in with a stream of water, which I could not cross, I was entirely put out of the direction, and after much wandering, found a person who put me into the road for Pítah Sheher. It was evening when I arrived, and I was shown to the masjít, where





it seemed that visitors were rare, therefore my reception was the more cordial.

Many people assembled at prayers, and I was asked to join, but I replied, that I had not fit clothes. The remark was made, that it was a pity a Mússulmán should be prevented from saying his prayers for want of clothes. After prayers, the company partook of a common repast in the masjít, and I understood it was the usual practice. The múlla was a portly and superior person; he spoke to me in Persian, as I said I was a Mogal. One of his scholars, reading the Korân, surmised that I was a Feringhí, but his suspicion did not communicate to the rest, or they were indifferent. Alúâ, or a preparation of flour, roghan, and sugar, had been provided for the party, and I need not add, that the múlla was careful to regale me. Pítah Sheher was a large bazar village, and the vicinity more open than the rest of the country I had seen, and extensively cultivated. The inhabitants appeared respectable, and in easy circumstances. Besides grain, I had occasionally observed cotton-fields on my route, but here were many plots of sugar-cane. Mírpúr was still four cosses distant, and the interval I found wholly occupied by villages and cultivation. My postín was so oddly considered, and drew upon me so much attention, that I was detained at every village I came to. At one, a person accosted me as a Hâjí;





and, as I did not deny the character, he invited me to his house. He was himself, as he told me, a fáquir, but a wealthy one, as he possessed land, and was master of thirty cows. I stayed with him two days; and on parting he presented me with a stick to keep off dogs, which are numerous and fierce in all the villages. I had never been annoyed by these animals; but now that I had a stick in my hand, was twice bitten in the leg at the first village I came to; I therefore threw aside the unlucky weapon.

I next reached Mírpúr, a considerable town, with a mud fortlet, and an abundance of gardens, particularly well stocked with mango and plantain-trees; around spread a most luxuriant cultivation of sugar-cane. I merely passed through this town, inquiring the road to Khairpúr, four cosses distant. The jangal had now become drier, and there were many cotton-fields. As I travelled from village to village I always experienced the same good treatment, though I could not avoid being noticed. At one, a man asked me if I was a robber, not exactly meaning what he said, and I replied, that he was one himself. A female standing by, invited me to her house, and when there told me to sit down while she prepared some bread and broiled fish for me. She was the handsomest woman I had seen in Sind, and very smartly attired. The women of Sind dress gaily, in bodices worked over with variously coloured silks in many patterns, into





which they frequently insert pieces of looking-glass. My pretty hostess wore a red silk bodice, tastefully decorated in this manner, which set off her fine form to great advantage. So agreeable a companion detained me the greater part of the day, although I was not conversant enough with the country dialect to hold much profitable conversation, yet I understood that she had desires unaccomplished, and that she languished to become a mother. I moved on to another village and passed the night, and started in the morning at break of day. I soon came to a hamlet, where the people would insist upon my staying and taking wat with them. This wat is made of wheat boiled in milk, and seasoned with salt or sugar, and is the nâster, or morning meal, of the peasantry in Sind, eaten as soon as they rise. Some sixteen or seventeen brass basins of this preparation were set before me, besides two or three bowls of buttermilk, every house in the hamlet having furnished one. I laughed, as did the villagers, and to avoid offending, sipped a little from each, and, commending their hospitality, departed. I next encountered two men, of mistrustful aspect, who seemed to hesitate whether they should interrupt me or not. At length one of them said to the other, There is no telling how such people are inspired; and returning, for they had passed me, they craved my blessing. I gave it in due form, and breathed on them, when they went





satisfied away. I also met a fáquí, who asked where I came from. I said Kândahár, and he observed, why tell an untruth? I returned some careless answer, and he left me.

Khairpúr I found to be a good sized bazar town, and, like Mírpúr, encircled by numerous gardens, and richly cultivated lands. Sabzal Kot was now ten cosses distant. The intervening space showed more jangal and fewer villages, while there was more pasture and marshes. When I reached Sabzal Kot, observing it to be a walled town, I entered by one gate, and walking through the bazar, went out by the other. I understood that the town had declined in consequence; still it exhibited some activity in its trade. Being a frontier town, there is a small garrison, and three guns are mounted on the ramparts. Without the town walls was a small castle, in which resided Pír Baksh, the governor. My object now was to gain Fázilpúr, the gharrí, or castle, in charge of my former Baháwalpúr friend, Ráhmát Khán; and I hoped, that if fortunate enough to find him there, I should be able to remedy my want of clothing. I learned that I had yet six cosses to travel.

On the road, which led through a thick jangal, I met two women, of whom I asked if I was on the right path, and they told me they were going my way. I accompanied them, and as we walked along they invited me to come to their





village. Before we reached it my fair friends began to suspect they might be taxed with having brought a strange man home with them, and coming to a path diverging from the road, they desired me to follow it, as it led to Fázilpúr. I was simple enough to follow their directions, and after a long journey, found that the path terminated in the jangal, and that the women had purposely sent me astray to get rid of me. I had nothing to do but to retrace my steps, or to strike at once into the jangal, towards the point in which I supposed Fázilpúr to lie, and though it was evening I took the latter course, and it was night before I came to a village, where was a neat compact masjít, in which I was accommodated; and though the hour was unseasonable, I was provided by the mulla with a good supper. Fázilpúr was only distant two cosses, therefore I was in no haste to depart the next day, and did not leave until the afternoon. When I descried the lofty towers of the castle some misgivings naturally arose in my mind, and I thought on the chances of meeting my Rohilla friend, and of the awkward trim in which I should appear before him. However, the time did not admit of scruples being entertained, and I walked up to the gate, where I found Ráhmát Khân sitting on a takht, or mud sofa, with a circle of his dependents around him. He immediatly recognized me, rose and embraced me, and in the society of old ac-





quaintance I spent a happy evening, relating where I had been, and what I had seen, with the many adventures which had befallen me.

In this journey through northern Sind, I could not avoid being impressed with favourable opinions of the peasantry. Everywhere they seemed to be a contented, orderly, and hospitable race. Their fertile and productive soil afforded them, at slight labour, the simple necessities of life in abundance; and notwithstanding they complained of an oppressive government, their condition was very respectable. Their villages were composed of mud houses, and huts of reeds, but the climate required no more substantial structures. The mas-jíts were in all of them the better buildings, and were well tended, the people being, while simple in manners, equally devout as Mússul-máns. Each of them was provided with a múlla, and other attendants; and at this time of the year, it being their winter season, warm water was prepared for the ablutions of those who attended prayers. On the other hand, the administration of the country was very defective, and the ill-paid hirelings of the chiefs scattered over it practised every kind of petty extortion and insult; not perhaps that they were authorized to do so, but because they were not looked after. The Hindús, who, as in the neighbouring countries, carry on, nearly exclusively, the trade, led a far from enviable life, unless, indeed, their gains





compensated for the contumely with which they were treated, for throughout Sind a Hindú cannot pass from one village to another without paying a fee to some Máhomedan for his protection. Saiyads are held in the greatest veneration, and many of them lead most licentious lives. It is often remarked, that a saiyad may commit any crime with impunity. The higher families amongst them, however, preserve so inviolate the sanctity of their houses that they will not allow them to be entered by their neighbours, or by any who are not, like themselves, reputed to be descendants of the Prophet. Sind also swarms with pírs, or spiritual guides of the higher class ; and as they, in common with saiyads and fáquírs, enjoy grants of land, and frequently whole villages, much of the revenue of the country is diverted to their support. The number of resident fáquírs subsisting upon the charity of the community is also very remarkable in Sind ; no village is without them, and in towns they abound. Their residences, generally huts or sheds, are distinguished by a lofty pole, surmounted by a flag, and secured with ropes, in the manner of a flag-staff. There are kept chillams for the smoking of tobacco, and chirs, and utensils for the preparation of bang. Several fáquírs usually dwell together, and have charge of the tomb of some eminent predecessor, or saiyad. They invoke Imám Hussén as their patron saint, and their





takías are the rendezvous of the lax and dissipated, who, unfortunately, are so numerous that they would excite a contemptible idea of the state of manners and society, did not one revert to the sober demeanour of the agricultural population.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

Improvement in my affairs.—Fázilpúr Gharri.—Inundations.—  
Their increase.—Reasons of.—Wish to leave.—Objections.—  
Nautch girl.—Departure.—Chúta Ahmedpúr.—Kází's greeting.  
—Costume.—Pass for a Mogal.—Peasantry.—Rámazân.—  
Fáqír.—Noshára.—Súltânpúr.—Máchi.—Agreeable Even-  
ing.—Reasonable entertainment.—Mistaken for a Pír Zâda.—  
Town with Hindú pagoda.—Country.—Khânpúr.—Indigo.—  
Expanse of water.—Salâm Khân.—Channí Khân-dí-Got.—  
Ramkallí.—Mogal-dí-Sheher.—The two Uches.—Ancient re-  
mains.—Sieges of Uch.—Gárra river.—Canal.—Pír Jelâlpúr.  
—Sújah Kot.—Change in aspect of country.—Bazars, &c. of  
Sújah Kot.—Múltân.—Citadel.—Commerce and manufactures.  
—Ruins.—Tombs.—Shrine of Shams Tabrézí.—Tradition.—  
Gardens and fruits.—Population.—Attacks by Ranjít Singh.—  
Capture and assault.—Consequences.—Sohand Mall.—Adminis-  
tration.—Departure from Múltân.—Masjít.—Encounter.—  
Wells.—Danger of road.—Seek shelter from rain.—Queer  
companion.—Familiar hostess.—Disagreeable company.—In  
risk of being misled.—Error discovered.—Custom of peasantry.  
—Idle menaces.—Reflection.—Beautiful river scenery.—  
Kamâlia.—Scene of Alexander's exploits.—Conjectures on  
Kamâlia.—The Ptolemæan march.—Saiyad-wála.—Luxuriant  
country.—Bér-trees.—Nákot.—Níazpúr.—Respectable Sîkhs.  
—Fine view of the Râví valley.—Noh Kot.—Arrival at Lahore.  
—General Allard.—Splendour of his establishments.—His  
subsequent decease.

I WAS soon enabled to exchange my old garments  
for new ones, and the ground, as a place of rest





at night, for a *khât*, with becoming coverlets, the luxury of which I had not known for many months. *Ráhmat Khân* was very anxious to improve my lean condition, and as he was somewhat of an epicure, it would have been my own fault had I not benefited by the good things from his kitchen.

*Fázilpúr*, though originally a very substantially-constructed *gharri*, of kiln-burnt bricks, is falling into decay; and the *khân* of *Bahâwalpúr* abandoned a project for repairing it on the score of expense, even after materials had been brought to it for the purpose. It is said, that there was formerly a considerable town here,—of which the present *gharri* may be a memorial,—and that the wells belonging to it, three hundred and sixty in number, are yet to be seen in the *jangals*. It is certain that brick wells occur; and it is not improbable that the country we now behold covered with swamps and *jangals* was once free from them, and smiling with cultivation.

East of *Fázilpúr* is, in all seasons, a large deposit of water, and during the periodical inundations of the *Indus* it becomes, with its dependent small hamlet, isolated. These inundations have sensibly increased latterly in this quarter; and I was told that at certain times the country is so completely under water that the communication with *Khânpúr* is, or might be, carried on with boats. *Khânpúr* from the bank of the *Indus* is fifty-seven *cosses*. On the western bank of the river, in the





parallel of Ladkhâna, there has, in like manner, been a manifest increase in the inundations. The tract, assigned in jāghír to the great Chándí tribe, had been so unproductive from a deficiency of water that the inhabitants were distressed, and complained. Recently, however, the inundations have extended to it, and it is confessed that the cause for complaint has been removed. It may not be necessary to suppose a general increase in the water of the river, as the changes, of course, to which it is constantly liable, will account for these partial variations in the quantity of water discharged upon particular localities, whether they be due to the resumption of forsaken channels, or to the formation of new ones.

About a month passed with my good friends at Fázilpúr had so entirely set me up, that I grew impatient to prosecute my journey to Lahore, computed to be two hundred and forty cosses distant. Ráhmât Khân was urgent that I should await the return of a party he had despatched to Déra Ghází Khân, with a barât, or order for money, on the authorities there, being ashamed, as he said, that I should leave him without money in my pocket. I protested both against the necessity for intruding on his bounty in such manner, and against the delay which the uncertain arrival of his messengers might occasion. I have elsewhere mentioned that Ráhmât Khân was straitened in his means, and that his expenses greatly exceeded his income. Chance





now put him in possession of a few rupees; and I might have been allowed to depart had not a nautch girl appeared in the neighbourhood, and the killadár could not resist the temptation of the amusement afforded by the exhibition of her talents. She was accordingly sent for to Fázilpúr, and the diversions of an evening emptied his purse. Two or three days afterwards he contrived to procure four rupees from the Hindús of the hamlet, I only consented to receive two of them; and taking farewell of him and his companions, with the regret we experience when parting with friends, I made for Chúta Ahmedpúr, distant five cosses. Ráhmat Khân had given me a guide, and a letter to his party stationed at Bara Ahmedpúr, though I told him I should not revisit that place, having no desire to encounter again either the Bakhshí or the ague.

We arrived in the evening at Chúta Ahmedpúr, two villages amid the jangal having been passed on the road. I was led to the house of the killadár, who was a native of India, and commander of the regiment quartered there. He civilly received me; and I found sitting with him the dancing-girl who had figured at Fázilpúr. She asked if I had been pleased with her display, and I said I had been delighted. The kází of the town hearing of my arrival, sent to pray I would visit him. I went, and found a very corpulent old gentleman, seated on a chahárpâhí, on which he bade me also sit. I was scarcely in position, when he remarked to the people





about him, that I was a Kâfr; upon which I arose and asked, if he had called me to insult me. He assured me to the contrary; but not choosing to be refuted, repeated, in confirmation of his dictum, a verse from the Korân. I did not oppose such grave authority; and, after conversing some time, we all parted very amicably; for notwithstanding his conviction that I was an infidel, I found that he did not intend to give offence; and he lamented that the killadâr had anticipated him in the gratification of making me the evening's guest.

In the morning my guide returned to Fázilpûr, and I proceeded alone towards Noshâra, twelve cosses distant. I was now decently clad in white cotton raiments, made in the Rohilla fashion, had a white turban on my head, and a kammar-band around my waist, while I carried a double châddar, or sheet, over my shoulders, which served to cover me at night. I felt that I had every right to call myself a Mogal, which did not seem to be doubted; and I moreover discovered that I was treated respectfully both on that account, and that my clothes were new and finer in texture than those worn by the peasantry. Every person I met inquired who I was, and where I was going; and my hands were often examined, when concluding they had not been employed in laborious toil, it would be affirmed that I was "mallúk," or of quality. At one village a Hindú placed himself under my charge, and avoided the payment of a fee for his protection.





It was easy to see that the peasantry were an in-offensive people, and I was pleased to observe that they were unoppressed, like their brethren in Sind, with the presence of disorderly fáquírs, and of shoals of rapacious government officers. A general feeling of security and content prevailed, in which the stranger participates, and he moves cheerfully forward, conscious that he is roving in a well-regulated land. It was also gratifying to hear the inhabitants speak affectionately of their ruler, although as pious Mússulmâns they lamented his dependence upon the Síkhs.

It was now the month of Rámazân, the great Máhomedan fast, which was rigidly observed. I was, however, guilty of nonconformity, justifying myself on the grounds that I was travelling, and would atone when I reached the end of my journey. Such excuses were usually admitted; but sometimes it would be remarked, that Mogals and Patáns were irreligious. On one occasion, when I had gone to a house to procure breakfast, an itinerant fáquíř, resting himself, was lavish in the epithet of Kâfr, and asserted that no Patán ever kept fast or repeated prayers. In spite of his denunciations the people prepared bread for me. It was only in the morning that I had to encounter scruples of this nature, as in the evening meals are prepared as at other times.

Noshára was a small bazar town, situated on an eminence, with a deep ravine on the east. It had





a very large house, the residence of the kârdâr, or administrator of the khân. Numerous villages had occurred between it and Ahmedpûr, and the jangal abounded with grass, becoming as I advanced more sandy. Beyond Noshâra, I had heard at Fâzilpûr, that there was more or less danger for six or seven cosses, and it was confirmed to me now, but as I had still two or three hours of day light I determined to proceed, although cautioned not to go alone by people in huts on the opposite side of the ravine just noted. The road was good, and a little after sunset I reached the village of Sûltân-pûr, where I inquired for the mächî's, or dhai's house, which was pointed out to me. It proved to be a respectable dwelling, and I was very politely welcomed. The master provided me with a chahârpâhî, and brought the chillam, entering freely into conversation. The females were occupied in their domestic offices; and amongst them was a most engaging young girl, of sixteen or seventeen years of age—already, I found, a mother. After a bountiful repast we all retired into another apartment, where we formed a circle around a blazing fire and passed a comfortable evening in discoursing on all kinds of topics. My host, as I told him I was from Herât, inquired when Kâmrân would come and chastise the Sîkhs, and I replied, in due time. This question I had often put to me; and I discovered there was a current belief that the prince of Herât was to be the avenger of Islâm. The





beautiful young wife had her place by the fire-side, unconscious, perhaps, of her charms, or the admiration she was calculated to excite; and I could not help recalling to memory, as I ventured to look towards her, Dryden's lines—

—— A blooming eastern bride  
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.

In this apartment the family also slept; and so simple were their manners, or so little ceremony was observed with me, that my *chahárpâhí* was introduced and placed amongst them. In the morning, when I bade all of them farewell, I had only to pay four pais for my entertainment; to which I added, as a present, two pais to purchase *linna*, to colour my host's beard, observing that he dyed it of a red colour. He was quite delighted, and made me promise to visit him again when I returned, as I had informed him it was probable I should. I here was again informed that the road was dangerous, and therefore when I had gained it, it being little distant from the village, I sat beneath a tree in the hope that company would pass. As none came I grew impatient, and went on alone. I at length reached a hamlet, consisting of four or five peasants' houses and a *masjít*, contiguous to the roadside, with a well. The women came and embraced my feet, supposing me to be a *pírzâda* who had some time before honoured them with his presence. I strove, in vain, to disabuse





them, and they regaled me with a repast of bread, butter, and buttermilk. A young Albino boy was shown me, as being of my colour; and one of the good wives asked me when her son, who had gone on pilgrimage, would return.

From this hamlet I arrived at a small, but better-constructed town, the houses being built with kiln-burnt bricks. It was said to be midway between Chûta Ahmedpûr and Khânpûr, or twenty cosses from each. It was remarkable for having a Hindû pagoda near it. Hence to Khânpûr I passed on with the same facility, always well received, and generally not permitted to pay for my entertainment. The country was throughout populous, and the land near the villages well irrigated and cultivated. The desert of Jessalmîr to the south frequently impinged on the line of road; and as the soil was drier the jangal was in consequence very slight, and the trees and shrubs of diminutive growth. Around Khânpûr villages were very numerous, the face of the country open, and the lands wholly in a state of cultivation. I have before observed that Khanpûr is a commercial town; and that it has long been so seems evidenced by the fact that one of the gates of Shikârpûr is called the Khânpûr gate; it is probable, indeed, that it may have been once of greater importance, its name signifying the Khân's City, and that it may have declined since the creation of Bahâwalpûr.

From Khânpûr to Allahabâd, a distance of twenty





cosses, there is light jangal with a sandy soil; good villages constantly occur, and the inhabitants use, generally, bread made of rice-flour. In this part of the country indigo is largely prepared, and I often passed the cemented vats and tanks used in its manufacture. I apprehend the article is not costly, but being cheap and plentiful, it supplies principally the markets of the countries beyond the Indus, and is even carried to Bokhára. I did not exactly follow the high road, but skirted a large expanse of water to the north of it nearly the whole way; its surface was covered with wild fowl, and fish were caught in vast numbers in it, while there were excellent pastures near the margin. I understood that in course of time the water would disappear, whence I inferred that it was but the residue of inundations from the Panjáb rivers.

On arrival at Allahabád I paid my respects to my former and esteemed friend, Salám Khân, and remained two days under his hospitable roof. He was kind and obliging as before, and I might have stayed a longer time with him without intruding, but I deemed it right not to indulge too much on the road, now that I was hearty and able to make my way without inconvenience.

I therefore proceeded towards Uch, distant fourteen or fifteen cosses, traversing the central portion of the Khân of Bahâwalpúr's territory. Beyond a small rivulet, which defines on the east the plain of Allahabád, a transit of four cosses,





through a dry, sandy, tamarisk jangal, brought me to the small, but apparently commercial town of Channí Khân-dí-Got, and thence other four or five cosses conducted me to Ramkallí, where I passed the night at the máchí's house. This was evidently an old site. There are the remains of large kiln-burnt brick buildings, and the vestiges of an extensive mud fortress. The latter is said to have been destroyed by the great Bahâwal Khân, grandfather of the present ruler. Tradition affirms the antiquity, and the former opulence of Ramkallí; now it may have about a dozen inhabited houses, with a solitary Hindú shop. The locality is very agreeable, and embellished with straggling evidences of its old date-groves.

From Ramkallí, three cosses led me to the towns of Uch, embosomed in an immense assemblage of date-groves. Immediately preceding them was a small hamlet, called Mogal-dí-Sheher, or the Mogal City, worthy of note, as corroborating the testimony of Ferishta, that a colony of Mogals, having been chased from many places in Sind, were anciently permitted to settle here.

There are now two Uches contiguously seated. The eastern one is small, but contains a celebrated zíarat, a large, handsome, and old Máhomedan structure, to which many pilgrims repair. The western Uch is called Pír-ka-Uch, (the pír's Uch,) its revenue being enjoyed by a Pír Nassiradín, who resides there, and is acknowledged to be an un-





doubted descendant of one of the twelve Imâms. There are now no walls to this town, but the ruinous gates are standing. The bazar is covered over, but uncouthly, with rafters and matting, to exclude the heat. It is extensive, and well supplied; and I could not but notice the unusual number of confectioners' shops.

In the neighbourhood of the present towns are the most extensive ruins of the ancient cities, their predecessors, intermingled with a prodigious quantity of date-trees and venerable pîpals. Many of the buildings are so entire that a little pains would make them habitable. They are built of kiln-burnt bricks, and in the best style of Indian architecture. Very many old wells are seen, some of which are still worked. With pretensions to remote antiquity, Uch flourished exceedingly under the Mâhomedan sovereigns of India, and must have been a place of great strength, as it endured several memorable sieges. In 622 or 623 of the Hejra the emperor Altamsh made himself master of it, after a siege of two months and twenty days. Twenty years afterwards, it was invested by an army of Mogals, and at a later period it was the vulnerable point by which Taimûr opened to his arms the passage to India.

Leaving, with a mournful and interesting regret, the antique remains and sacred groves of Uch, I directed my course to the river Garra, eight cosses from it, and crossing at a ferry, came, two or three





cosses farther on, to a large cut, or arm, probably derived from it. I might have been perplexed as to the mode of crossing it, but, fortunately, I saw a person, before I reached it, strip himself of his clothing, and, placing it on his head, pass to the opposite side. I had therefore only to imitate him, and waded through the stream, some fifty or sixty yards in breadth, with the water of uniform depth, and up to my mouth, which I was compelled to keep closed. The water was tepid, whence I inferred that it was a canal I was crossing. About a coss beyond it I reached the small town of Pír Jelâlpúr, which contains the shrine of a Mússulmán saint, a handsome building, covered with painted and lacquered tiles, and adorned with minarets and a cupola. The bazar was a good one, and in the neighbourhood of the town were decayed brick buildings, proving that the site was formerly of importance.

From Pír Jelâlpúr, a distance of eighteen cosses brought me to Sújah Kot, the country having been a little diversified as to character. For eight cosses beyond Jelâlpúr the jangal was sandy; it then afforded pasture for four or five cosses, and for the remainder of the road there was a great proportion of cultivated land. The nature of the jangal had also changed after passing the Gárra river; the tamarisk no longer predominated, as in the Bahâwalpúr country, or was seen only in trees of large growth, near villages, while over the





surface of the soil it was replaced by lighter trees, the karíta, the bér, and the kikker, or dwarf mimosa.

Sújah Kot, or Sújahbád, is a considerable fortified town, and its lofty battlements, irregularly built, have a picturesque appearance. It has a very excellent bazar, and is the seat of some cotton manufactures, besides being famous for its turners in wood. There is a small garrison, and a few guns are mounted on the walls. Near it are several good gardens, particularly one bearing the name of Mozafar Khán. The town stands in a highly cultivated tract, and for two or three cosses to the south there were immense fields of sugar-cane. The cotton-plant is also abundantly grown.

From Sújah Kot the road leads through an arid jangally country for twenty cosses to Múltán, villages occasionally occurring. This city appears advantageously seen in the distance, but loses its effect on our near approach to it. It cannot be less than three miles in circumference, and is walled in. Its bazars are large, but inconveniently narrow, and, I thought, did not exhibit that bustle or activity which might be expected in a place of much reputed commerce. The citadel, if not a place of extreme strength, is one on which more attention seems to have been bestowed than is usual, and is more regular than any fortress I have seen, not constructed by European engineers. It is well secured by a deep trench, neatly faced with masonry; and the defences





of the gateway, which is approached by a draw-bridge, are rather elaborate. The casualties of the siege it endured have not been made good by the Sîkhs, consequently it has become much dilapidated since that period. It can scarcely be said to have a garrison, a weak party of soldiers being merely stationed as guards at the entrance. Within the citadel are the only buildings of the city worth seeing,—the battered palace of the late khân, and the Máhomedan shrine of Bahâwal Hâk. The latter, with its lofty gúmat, or cupola, is the principal ornament of the place.

Múltân is said to have decreased in trade since it fell into the hands of the Sîkhs, yet its bazars continued well and reasonably supplied with all articles of traffic and consumption. There are still numerous bankers, and manufactures of silk and cotton goods. Its fabrics of shawls and lúnghís are deservedly esteemed, and its brocades and tissues compete with those of Bahâwalpúr. It still supplies a portion of its fabrics to the Lohání merchants of Afghânistân, and has an extensive foreign trade with the regions west of the Indus.

The ruins around the city spread over a large space; and there is an amazing number of old Músulmán graves, tombs, masjíts, and shrines; and as all of them are held sacred, they would seem to justify the popular belief that one lákh, or one hundred thousand saints, lie interred within the hallowed vicinity. Many of these are substantial edifices, and





if not held to establish the saintly pretensions of the city, may be accepted as testimonies of its prosperity, under the sway of the Máhomedan dynasties of India. North of the town is the magnificent and well-preserved shrine of Shams Tábrézí, of whose memory the inhabitants are now proud, though, if tradition be correct, their ancestors flayed him when he was living. To this martyr's malediction is imputed the excessive heat of Múltân, the sun, in consequence thereof, being supposed to be nearer the city than to any other spot in the world. Shams, in his agony, is said to have called upon the bright luminary to avenge him, claiming a relationship, permitted by his name, which in Arabic signifies the sun. The powerful orb obligingly descended from his sphere, and approached the ill-fated city.

The gardens of Múltân are abundant, and well stocked with fruit-trees, as mangoes, oranges, citrons, limes, &c. Its date-groves also yield much fruit, and vegetables are grown in great plenty. The inundations of the Râví river extend to the city, but it is three miles distant, and has what is called a bandar, or port, in this instance expressive of a boat station; whence there is communication with the Indus, and, consequently, with the sea.

The area enclosed within the walls being compactly built over, the city may be supposed to contain not less than eight or nine thousand houses, or from forty to forty-five thousand souls. At the pe-





riod of its capture by the Síkhs it was held by Mozafar Khân, of the inferior branch of the Sadú Zai, Dúrání tribe, with the assumed title of nawáb. Ranjit Singh had made two unsuccessful attempts upon it, but had been compelled to retire, after devastating the country. The third time the Síkhi chief approached, Mozafar Khân was willing to have averted destruction by accepting the terms proposed to him, but his followers were not consenting. Ranjit Singh made a feint of attacking Khânghar, a fortress some twenty cosses distant; into which the deluded nawáb threw the better part of his troops. Ranjit Singh immediately counter-marched, and invested the capital. The defence was most obstinate, and the attack threatened to end, like former ones, in failure, when an adventurer, named Jones, in the Síkhi service, took charge of the batteries, advanced them close to the citadel, and breached it. On the assault Mozafar Khân lost at once his life and sovereignty; and his daughter, celebrated for her beauty, her chastity, and her piety, fell over a heap of Síkhs, she had herself slain, as is asserted. A young son of Mozafar Khân was saved, and carried to Lahore, and—now a remarkably handsome youth—is in high favour with the Máharájá. At present a Bráhmaṇ, Sohānd Mall, resides at Múltān, as governor for Ranjit Singh, with the title of Súbahdár; and his jurisdiction is extensive, comprising the southern parts of the Síkhi kingdom from the Satlej to the Indus. He has at his com-





mand a force of eight hundred Síkhs, under Gandar Singh, besides the garrisons sprinkled over the country. He is a popular ruler, and many anecdotes are related of his liberality and indulgence, even on matters connected with religion. The Síkhs authority over the conquered provinces held by the Súbahdár being firmly established, the administration is mild, owing partly, perhaps, to his personal character, and two Síkhs are located at every village and hamlet on the part of the government. The peasantry make over a third of the produce of their lands: neither do they complain.

Having stayed two or three days at Múltân, I took the road to Lahore, and crossed an extensive plain, stretching from the city to the north. From this side the city is best seen; and it clearly stands on a mound, which while in it I was scarcely aware of. East of the road a large mud fortress is observable in the distance, and nearer a building, to which my curiosity led me. I found it a masjít, deserted, but in good preservation. It being noon, to avoid the heat, I seated myself therein, and strove, with needle and thread, to repair some deficiency in my garments. Thus engaged, a man, armed with sword and shield, suddenly stood over me. I had not heard him enter, and was a little taken by surprise; however, I calmly gave him a Salám alíkam, which he returned, and asked what I was about. I replied, that he could himself see what I was about. He then inquired where I was going; and telling him, he





asked if I was not afraid of the Kattí. I said that I was not, and he retired. I finished the job I had in hand, and after some time regained the high road. Forty cosses from Múltân is Kot Kamália; and throughout the distance the villages are few and wide apart; but there are many wells in the jangal, where the cultivator or owner of cattle fixes his abode, and where the traveller may obtain liberty to pass the night. I was frequently entreated to await companions, but travelled alone and escaped molestation, though on one occasion I had nearly essayed an adventure. I had reached a well, with a farmhouse adjoining, early in the day, and, as rain came on, decided to pass the night there; a Hindú belonging to another well, who had alike sought shelter from the shower, having arranged with the people to prepare bread for my supper. I said that I was a Mogal going to Lahore. We were joined by a short thick-set person, of singularly queer countenance, who affirmed that he was on his way from Lahore to Múltân. He also notified his intention to remain the night. In a little time I was sent for into the house, as it turned out, because the mistress wished to see a Mogal; and I was shown into an apartment where the lady, a tall masculine woman, was stretched on her bed, an old dhái, or nurse, being also in the room. Some conversation passed between them, with a good deal of laughing, which I pretended not to understand, and which I presumed would not have occurred in the husband's





presence. However, I left them, and again in the evening was called into the house to eat my supper. I bought some milk to eat with my bread, and thinking of the other stranger without, sent him a bowl of it. I was, on retiring, provided with a *chahárpâhí*, and the stranger stretched himself on the ground beside it. In the morning I was about to start, when he said that he would accompany me to Lahore, but I reminded him that he was going to Múltân; he urged that he had changed his mind, and would return to Lahore. I observed, that he might do as he pleased, but that he should not go with me. He employed many arguments, but in vain; and finding that I did not move, he left the enclosure. I allowed two or three hours to pass over, and, supposing I had fairly got rid of him, I also left, and had scarcely gained the road when he appeared from behind a bush. I told him he should not accompany me, but he still kept by my side. After a short distance the path divided, and I was doubtful which direction to take. My impressions led me to follow that to the right, but the fellow persisted that the one to the left was the road to Lahore. I had great doubts, but, supposing he knew better than I did, I took his counsel. We reached a well, where the owner seeing my companion, asked him why he had not gone to Múltân. I instantly inquired if the road was that of Lahore, and was answered, no. I bestowed two or three curses on the fellow for misleading me, and returned; but he





was not to be shaken off, and protested that the other road was a long and dreary one, while this that he was showing was a cheerful one, and led by wells and villages all the way. On reaching the correct road I still found myself followed by him. I did not fear him, as he was unarmed; and it being the custom of the peasantry here to go from place to place with axes in their hands, and lop branches of trees as they pass along the road, to dry for fuel, there were abundance of stout sticks strewed on all sides, from which I selected one, and walked on without heeding him. At length, satisfied that I was intangible, he returned, uttering idle menaces that he would be after me, and I saw no more of him. It did not suggest itself to me at the time, but I have since conjectured this man must have been a thag, and but for the owner of the well he might have gained his ends. In so imminent danger may an individual unconsciously be placed, and by so slight an accident may he be preserved.

Before reaching Kamâlia the Râvî river is crossed at a ferry; and I was directed along a path immediately tracing its bank for some distance, which was very agreeable. The margins of the stream are fringed with groves of date-trees, in which numerous wells are found, shaded by pîpals. The opposite bank being embellished in like manner, the scenery up and down the river is fine and attractive. A tract of low sand hills and scanty jangal precedes Kamâlia, a small town with bazar.