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THE LAND OF THE LION AND THE SUN

(Modern Persia)

C. J. Wills.

EDITED·BY·G·T·BETTANY·M·A

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London: WARD, LOCK & CO.



SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

IN THE
LAND OF THE LION AND SUN,
OR
MODERN PERSIA.

BEING EXPERIENCES OF LIFE IN PERSIA FROM 1866 TO 1881.

ILLUSTRATED BY FULL-PAGE PLATES FROM
PHOTOGRAPHS AND FROM
NATIVE DRAWINGS.

BY
C. J. WILLS, M.D.,
LATE ONE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HER MAJESTY'S
TELEGRAPH
DEPARTMENT IN PERSIA.



THE ARMS OF PERSIA
(*from the Teheran Gazette*).

NEW EDITION.

WARD, LOCK AND Co.,
LONDON, NEW YORK, AND MELBOURNE,
1891.

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EDITORIAL NOTE.

The author of the *Land of the Lion and Sun* may claim an exceptional degree of credit for his book on one of the most interesting countries in the world; for he derived his knowledge not merely from a journey through the country, but from a sufficiently prolonged residence to make him thoroughly at home with the people, and to understand their inner life. The *Times*, on its first appearance in 1883, characterized it as probably the most amusing book of travel that had been published in recent years. The author's profession gave him access to the personality of the people to a marked extent, giving origin to many of the amusing anecdotes referred to. The verdict of the *Times* was endorsed by very many journals. *Nature* described the anecdotes as "distinguished by three cardinal virtues: they are characteristic, they are well told, and they are infinitely varied."

Since his return to England, Dr. Wills has become well known as a novelist and writer of short stories, which he has contributed to most of the leading magazines and society journals. His novels, some of which have been written in collaboration with Mr. F. C. Philips, have been widely read and highly appreciated.

The illustrations, on separate plates, appear here for the first time. They are reproduced from native drawings, and from Dr. Wills's photographs and drawings.

G. T. B.

TO

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR F. J. GOLDSMID,

C.B., K.C.S.I.,

FORMERLY DIRECTOR IN CHIEF OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT,

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE PERSIAN FRONTIER,

This Book is Dedicated,

WITH AFFECTIONATE ESTEEM, IN GRATITUDE FOR MANY KINDNESSES,

BY HIS MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

My reason for calling my book ‘The Land of the Lion and Sun’ is that the Lion and Sun are the national emblems of Persia, while the second title alone, ‘Modern Persia,’ would have suggested an exhaustive and elaborate array of matter which is beyond the scope of this work.

In a personal narrative, it is necessary to use a good many I’s; and to avoid being obscure, I fear I have been at times over minute, but I have preferred this to the risk of giving a false impression.

I have striven to describe life in Persia as I saw it, not exaggerating or softening anything, but speaking of Persia as it is. The whole narrative may be considered as a record of life in an out-of-the-way corner of the world; and the reader being left to make his own reflections, is not troubled with mine.

Usually no names are given, save of those of the dead, or public men.

The important subject of our fast-dying commerce with Persia, and the means of really opening the country, I have relegated to an Appendix.[1]

As to the spelling and transliteration of Persian words used, it is not classical, it does not pretend to be; but it will convey to the *ordinary* reader the *local* pronunciation of the colloquial; and the reader not knowing anything of Oriental languages is troubled very seldom with accents and (apparently) unpronounceable words. Thus Mūnshi is spelt

Moonshee, as that gives the exact sound: *ū* is often used to avoid the barbarous appearance of *oo*. Of course there is no C in Persian; still as, from habit, we write Calcutta and not Kalkutta, so some words, like Cah, that use has rendered common, are inserted under C and K. I think that all that is required is, that the ordinary English reader shall pronounce the words not too incorrectly; and it is only when a work is philological that accuracy in transliteration is of any real importance. With this end in view, I have tried so to spell Persian words that *by following ordinary rules*, the general reader may not be very wide of the mark. To avoid continual explanation I have added a Glossary, with a *correct* transliteration. I have to gratefully acknowledge the valuable help of Mr. Guy le Strange in correcting this Glossary, and kindly favouring me with the transliteration according to the system adopted by Johnson, in several cases in which that author has not noted words, &c.

ORIENTAL CLUB,
Hanover Square.

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IN THE LAND OF THE LION AND SUN.

CHAPTER I.
I GO TO PERSIA.

Wanted, a doctor—The Director-in-chief—Doubt and distrust—Simple advice—Am referred to 'Hadji Baba'—My kit—Saddle for riding post—Vienna—Rustchuk—Quarantine—Galatz—Kustendji—Constantinople—Turkish ladies—Stamboul—I have my hair cut—"Karagews"—Turkish coffee—A philo-Turk—Shooting party—The theatres—The Opera—Armenian theatre—Gambling-house—A Bashi-bazouk—We leave, *viâ* the Black Sea—The Russian captain—Unarmed vessels—White Crimean wine—Foreign wines in Russia—Deck passengers—Sinope—Batoum—Poti—The post-house—Difficulty in getting food—Travelling *en tröika*—Kutais—A tarantass—Apply for horses—An itching palm—We start—Tiflis—Lecoq's beer—A happy reprieve—The joys of travel—Chief of the Telegraph in Tiflis—Uniforms—Persian Consulate—Coffee and pipes—Smoking an art—Effects on the tyro—Tea—The Consul—His age—Dyeing the hair—The Opera, varied costumes at—The Tiflis ballet—Leave Tiflis—Erivan—The Pass—We lighten our load—Hotel—Washing—Nakchewan—Julfa, the frontier of Persia.

I think that there is no more painful position than

that of the young medical man. I had “passed,” and had got my qualifications. An assistant I did not wish to be, and I therefore consulted the advertisement columns of the *Lancet*, and was prepared to go anywhere, if I might see the world, and have what Americans call a good time.

At my first attempt I came on an advertisement of three appointments, under the Indian Government, in Persia; the address was the Adelphi. Off I started for the Adelphi, which I had always looked on as a neighbourhood full of mystery, and whose inhabitants were to be mistrusted. *Timeo Danaos.*

A first-floor—this looked well. I knocked, was told to enter. Two gentlemen, kneeling on the floor, looked at me in a disturbed manner. The whole room is strewn with sheets of written foolscap, and it appears that I have arrived inopportunely, as official documents are being sorted. I am asked to take a seat, having stated to the elder of the two that I am come to see the director on business.

Now I couldn’t at that time fancy a director who *knelt*—in fact, my only idea of one was the typical director of the novel, a stout, bechained man—and my astonishment was great at being quietly informed by one of the gentlemen that he was Colonel G——, and should be glad to hear anything I had to communicate. I stated my wish to obtain such an appointment as was advertised; the duties, pay, &c., were pointed out, and I came to the conclusion that it would suit me as a “pastime” till the happy day when I should have a brass plate of my own. But if my ideas of a director were lofty, my ideas of a colonel were loftier; and I said to myself, one who combines these two functions, and can be polite to a humble doctor—must be an impostor.

I was asked for my credentials. I gave them, and was told to call in the morning, but distrust had taken hold of me; I got an 'Army List,' and, not finding my chief-that-was-to-be's name in it, I, forgetting that we had then an Indian as well as an English army, came to the conclusion that he *must* be an impostor, and that I should be asked for a deposit in the morning, which was, I believed, the general way of obtaining money from the unwary.

With, I fear, a certain amount of truculent defiance, I presented myself at the appointed hour, and was told that my references were satisfactory, that a contract would be drawn up that I should have to sign, and that I should be ready to start in a fortnight; but, rather to my astonishment, no mention was made of a deposit. "I think there is nothing more," said Colonel G——.

This, I concluded, indicated the termination of the interview; and, after considerable humming and hawing, I came to the point, and blurted out that, after searching the 'Army List,' I couldn't find any Colonel G——, and that no one had ever heard of the Telegraph Department in Persia.

Instead of being annoyed, the Colonel merely asked if I knew any one at the War Office. As it happened I did. "Well, go to him, and he will tell you all about it."

Off I went to the War Office, found my friend, and, to his horror, told him that I wanted to know if the Persian Telegraph Department existed or not, and if the director was or was not a myth. He easily satisfied me, and I felt that I had been stupidly suspicious.

I then announced to my friends and relatives my

probably immediate departure for Persia. Strange to say, they declined to see it in any other light than a peculiarly elaborate and stupid joke. Instead of congratulations, I was treated as an unamiable and tiring lunatic, and from none of my friends was I able to get any information as to Persia. One man had a son in *Baghdad*! but it was no good his writing him, as it took six months to get an answer.

After a day or two I again presented myself at the office, and I had the country described to me, and various recommendations as to outfit given me, and I also was introduced to Major C——, the assistant-director. His advice was delightfully simple. "You'll be able to wear out all your old clothes; don't buy any new ones; have a 'Dayrell' bridle; get nothing but flannel shirts." Colonel G—— certainly took great trouble to explain to me all about the country, and, taking me out to lunch with him, bought me Morier's 'Hadji Baba,' saying, "When you read this you will know more of Persia and the Persians than you will if you had lived there with your eyes open for twenty years." This is going a long way; it is seventeen years since I went to Persia, and I read 'Hadji Baba' now, and still learn something new from it. As Persia was in Morier's time so it is now; and, though one sees plenty of decay, there is very little change.

Two other candidates came forward, to whom I was deputed to explain matters. They accepted the conditions, and, the deeds being prepared, we all three went to the India Office and signed a contract for three years.

On going to the Adelphi I was told that a sum of one hundred pounds had been handed to each of my two colleagues to take them to Persia. But I was glad

to seize the opportunity kindly given me by Colonel G—— of travelling with him, and he told me to meet him in Vienna on a certain day.

I had now no time to lose, and proceeded to buy my kit; what that kit was it is as well the reader should know.

I got enough ordinary clothing for three years, such as we use in England for morning or country wear, also two pairs of riding-boots; these fitted me, and were consequently useless, for I soon found that in riding long distances boots much too big are the thing, as then the foot is neither cold in winter or crippled in summer; a knife, fork, and spoon, to shut up; a revolver; a small bradawl, with the point buried in a cork, for boring holes in straps; a military saddle (hussar officer's), with wallet-holsters and a high cantle (this cantle keeps one's rugs off one's back when riding post, which is the only way of quick travelling in the country); a double-barrelled fowling-piece (nearly useless). My kit was packed in a couple of bullock-trunks, and my saddle sewn up in my rugs, which were thick and good. I also had a blanket-lined waterproof sheet.

I gave myself a week in Paris previous to my nominal start, and thence I proceeded to Vienna, to be ready to leave with Colonel G—— as soon as he arrived there.

I went to the "Golden Lamb," a very comfortable hotel which the Colonel had chosen, and beguiled my time pleasantly enough in going nightly to the theatre to hear Offenbach's operas done in German. I saw 'Bluebeard,' 'La Belle Hélène,' &c. I was a fortnight in Vienna, and I began to pick up a smattering, for, of course, the German learnt at school is useless; *my* Offenbach system I found more

effectual than the usual one of “the gardener’s wife has brought the hat of the merchant’s little boy,” &c.

A week after the Colonel’s arrival our stay in Vienna ended. We left for Basiatch (by rail twenty-seven hours); slept there, and started early in the morning for Rustchuk by steamer. There we found that passengers from up the river were in quarantine; and the letters were taken with a pair of tongs, with immense precautions, for fumigation; we were advised not to land, as we should certainly have to go to the lazaretto; and we were told that if we quietly went on to Galatz, and said nothing, we could return *the next day* as from a healthy port.

We were lucky in taking the advice, as a passenger did venture on to the lighter, and was, willy-nilly, marched off to what we learnt afterwards was a six weeks’ quarantine.

We went on to Galatz, which we reached the next day.

Galatz is like a rural Wapping, but muddier. We went to bed, to find ourselves under weigh in the morning. We soon got to Tchernavoda, which seemed a mere village. There we landed, and thence, by a very slow train indeed, to Kustendji. At this place we heard the ravages of the cholera had been very great. We slept there that night, and started at noon next day for Constantinople by steamer.

It blew hard, and we were very glad indeed to find ourselves in the Bosphorus. There the scenery became splendid; no description of mine can do justice to the castles and palaces hanging on the water’s edge; the crowded picturesque villages that were reflected in the clear blue water; the shoals of porpoises that accompanied the ship at full speed,

ploughing the water with a loud noise, and then, in their course, leaping, still continuing the race, from the water; and then entering it again amid a shower of spray. This wonderful scene continued for eighteen miles. At 5 P.M. we anchored in the Golden Horn. The scene was indescribable; all I had ever seen or read of paled before it. We were too late to land, as one cannot do so after sunset.

Next morning we went ashore in a caique, rowed by very picturesque boatmen in white kilts, passed the Custom House, and went straight to Misseri's, preceded by our baggage, borne by three porters. These "hammals" bear gigantic burdens, and as in most Eastern towns there are no carriage-roads, they are of great use, and generally form a distinct corporation.

At Misseri's the Colonel was well known, having stayed there several times before. In Constantinople, happily for me, instead of going on at once, my chief was delayed by orders from home for nearly two months; and I was enabled to see a good deal of the town.

Great was my delight to watch the Turkish ladies, their muslin yashmaks lending a fictitious delicacy to their complexions, going about in handsome carriages. Innumerable were the mysterious stories I heard after *table d'hôte* of these veiled beauties. Many a time have I gone on long expeditions into Stamboul with Mr. Ayrton, a brother of "Board of Works Ayrton," who, with a thorough knowledge of Turkey and the Turk, took me under his wing in his daily pilgrimages to the most unsavoury but interesting nooks of the Mahommedan portion of the city. We went to coffee-houses, and listened to story-tellers; we dined on savoury kabobs; and, alas! I well

remember my philo-Turk friend persuaded me to have my hair cut by a Turkish barber. It was only too well done; when the satisfied shaver handed me the glass I was as a sheep before the shearer, dumb, but with horror; my head was *pink*, so closely was it cropped, and my only consolation was the remark of my introducer to oriental life, that "in the East they generally did things thoroughly."

I saw too the Turkish Punch ("Karagews"), a most immoral puppet; and the mildest and most favourable description of him was that "his manners were none, his customs disgusting," but then my mentor said he was "very oriental"—perhaps the terms mean much the same thing.

As the coffee seemed particularly delicious in the native cafés, I, after some trouble, ascertained the real receipt for coffee *à la Turca* (not *à la Turque*), as they call it. Here it is; for each tiny cup (about a small wineglassful), a teaspoonful of coffee fresh roasted, and ground at once while hot to a fine powder in a brass hand-mill, or at times pounded in a mortar, is thrown into a small and heated saucepan; add the required quantity of boiling water. Place on the embers; when it threatens to boil over, remove; replace, and remove a second and a third time; serve. All the dregs go to the bottom. No sugar or milk used—NEVER clean the saucepan!

At these cafés long chibouques with yellow clay heads are smoked, the heads being rested on a brass tray. A ball of live charcoal is placed on the long-cut Samsoon tobacco (or if the customer be liberal, Macedonian), the stem is jasmine or cherry wood, and the grander the pipe the longer the stem; rich customers bring their own mouth-pieces, which have a long inner conical tube that fits any stem. These

mouth-pieces are of amber, and are frequently ornamented with a hoop of brilliants. The pieces of amber are two in number, and if of large size and of good colour cost two pounds, upwards to even five-and-twenty: the ordinary fashion is to separate these two pieces by a thin circle of lapis-lazuli or other stone.

The narghilé is also much used. It will be fully described as the “kalian” further on. In it is smoked the tumbaku of Persia. A few pence is charged for the whole entertainment of coffee, smoke, shelter, and music, such as it is, generally a guitar or flute-player, who is glad to play to order for a cup of coffee. The customers sit on little low stools like the French church chairs without their backs. In some of the grander cafés divans, and even chairs, are provided.

Mr. Ayrton had spent many years in Egypt. He wore a coat made by a Turkish tailor, a shawl waistcoat and a fez, and with his cropped grey hairs (it was *his* barber who operated on me) and his big chibouque with the amber mouth-piece (he had a large collection of them) with the ring of diamonds, he looked a thorough Turk, and I fancy posed and was treated as such. I remember myself thinking that the get-up was assumed for the purpose of getting a deeper insight into Turkish life. From what I know now, I merely suppose that, from his wearing the fez, he was, or had been, in Turkish employ; all government servants in Turkey have to wear it. Dr. Millengen, in whose arms Byron died, and who was an old government employé (physician to three Sultans), wore it; so did his son, who was in the Turkish Government Telegraph; and another son of his, I afterwards met in the Turkish Quarantine

Service at Teheran, told me he wore it always while in Turkey.

I was introduced to a M. la Fontaine, a most enthusiastic sportsman, and his many nephews, and by him I was given a day's cock-shooting, and there was plenty of it. As for me, I was an utter muff and cockney, or rather town-reared; but had I not a new pin-fire breechloader, and was it not my first day's real shooting? And as I really did shoot two brace, I returned a delighted but tired youth. That night will be ever memorable. I ate my first *pillaw*, with fowls boiled to rags in it, and followed by curds with thick cream on the top called "yaourt." How we all ate!

We had come from Pera, crossing in a steamer, and had to ride some twenty miles on rough little ponies to the sleeping place, and—horror of horrors!—*on Turkish saddles*. Now to the timid rider a Turkish saddle is at first a delight, for to leave it without great effort is impossible, and there is a pommel which is so high that it appears the height of folly not to cling to it; but when one's knees are in one's mouth, when one's saddle is hard as iron and cuts like a knife, when one has new and heavy shooting-boots on, and one's unmentionables have a tendency to ruck, besides having the glory of carrying a forty-guinea gun slung (oh, demon cockney gun-maker!) by a sling that slips along the barrel, and was highly recommended, with the addition of one hundred loaded cartridges distributed over the many pockets of a very new shooting-coat, in the sun, with a fur cap on—is it to be wondered at that the sufferings of the tortured Indian at the stake were child's-play to what I endured without a groan, and repeating constantly assurances of my delight and enjoyment? —and remember, reader, we went at a brisk canter

all the time.

How glad I was to lie down! How grieved I was, at 4.30 A.M. the next day, to be called, and, after a hurried wash, to start in the half dawn in my tight and heavy boots! But the firing began; I forgot the tightness of my boots, the stiffness of my back. Do you remember how stiff you felt after your *first riding lesson*, my friend? and you hadn't one hundred loaded cartridges about you, and an intermittent garotte with your knees in your mouth; and I thanked Heaven I need not sit down, for weighty reasons.

Of course I fired wildly; of course I missed continually, but it was my first day, and I never enjoyed anything so much in my life. I hobbled bravely on till there was no more daylight, but I did feel thoroughly done on getting in, and I did not enjoy my ride back the next day.

I used to try and learn Persian in my idle hours, and I soon mastered the printed character and could read fluently, but without the slightest idea of meaning. Kind Colonel G—— gave me many a lesson, but I fear that loafing in Stamboul by day and going to the French or Italian theatre in the evening had greater attractions.

I was always passionately fond of the stage, and, as we were always going *in a day or two*, I used, on the principle that I might never be able to go to the play again, to go every evening.

Of course there was only a third-rate French company, but how very good they were! The term "stick," so justly applied to many of our actors, could not be attached to any player in the little band. All were good, and all were good all round, and though

the leading man might be everything in the drama, yet he didn't object to play the lover in the little vaudeville, and played it well. An Englishman, in the event of anything so dreadful happening to him, would soon let his audience see that he was only doing it under protest.

At the Opera the prima donna was ridiculously fat, and to a man unmusical this somewhat destroys the illusion—but then the *fauteuils d'orchestre* only cost ten francs. I also went to an Armenian theatre, but it had the national characteristics, squalor and misery, and I did not repeat the visit. I failed even to see an Armenian piece (if such a thing exists), but sat out a fearful edition of 'The Chiffonier of Paris;' and I was told that all the pieces played in Constantinople (Pera) in Armenian were mere translations.

Even the delights of gaming were permitted in Pera. A few doors from Messeri's was the Café "Flam," as it was affectionately called by the Pera youth. "Café Flamand" was, I fancy, its real title. Here were played "pharaon" and roulette. I was recommended the former game, for economical reasons—it took *longer* to lose a napoleon. Nobody seemed to win at either game, but pharaon certainly "took longer." I was not tempted to make frequent visits, as I had played for some small sums at Baden-Baden a year or two before. There one was at least cheated fairly; here the robbery was open.

A few days after the New Year the Colonel told me that we should really leave for Persia by the very first opportunity. I bid farewell to all the kind friends I had made, had my photo taken in breeches, boots, and revolver at Abdullah's—a weakness every Englishman who reaches Constantinople is guilty of. It does not do to be too oriental. At Abdullah's I

purchased a fearful-looking type, marked a Bashi-bazouk, and found it out afterwards to be the portrait of a man whose acquaintance I made in Persia, the Dutch Consul in Bushire; but he made a very good type, being a big man; and he literally bristled with weapons, and seemed capable of any atrocities.

One fine afternoon, on January 5th, 1867, we were rowed on board the Russian steamer *Oleg*. We had an English-speaking captain, who was genial and communicative. My chief was confined to his cabin; and as there was nothing to read and nothing to do, I saw a good deal of the Russian. He told me that all the commanders of their mail-boats were naval officers, and that all the mail-boats could be turned into war-steamers at a few hours' notice, merely requiring the guns to be put into them: "so that, as you English don't let us have war-vessels on the Black Sea, we run a superior class of mail-boat" (built, however, on the Clyde). And a very superior boat she was.

I was told by the captain to avoid the high-priced wines, and stick to white Crimean. This was a particularly delicious light wine, like a good Sauterne; and I find, from after experience of Russian railway buffets, which far exceed anything of the sort we have in grandeur, that, as a rule, the liquor is simply fair red and white country wine, the only difference being in price and label.

In some of these labels the Muscovite imagination fairly runs riot. You see "Château d'Yquem," "Schloss Johannisberg," &c., but nobody ever seems to drink them, and they are mere table ornaments. The rich drink nothing but champagne of known and expensive brands, and bottled stout; while the

middle classes stick to “piver” (Russian beer) and vodki.

Tea, in tumblers, was continually being served, with a big slice of lemon in it. The deck passengers, among whom were many rough Circassians, all armed to the teeth, cuddled down into the nooks of the cargo, and managed to keep themselves warm as best they could. They too always were drinking tea, but they adopted a plan to economise sugar that I have noticed constantly among the Russian poor: a bit of sugar is placed in the cheek, and then the tea is swallowed in gulps; the poor fellows thus keeping up a sort of delusion that they are swallowing sweet and hot tea, though the mouth only, and not the tea, is really sweetened. There was none of the exclusiveness of the Englishman. *A* made tea, and regaled *B*, *C*, and *D*; then *B* treated the rest, and so on; when not asleep, eating, or tea-drinking, the deck people were card-playing and smoking. The short pipe was a good deal used, and passed from hand to hand, while the trader class smoked the cigarette. All the men, and most of the women, wore a sort of rough butcher-boot; and, from the state of the roads at Poti, any other foot clothing for pedestrians would have been impossible.

We lay to off Sinope on the 7th (here the Russians, our little captain took care to remind me, destroyed the Turkish fleet), but could not land passengers, a gale blowing. We changed steamers at Batoum on the 10th.

The scenery at Batoum is very fine; the sea, without a wave, of a deep blue; well-wooded hills and the Elburz range of the Caucasus covered with snows forming the horizon. So warm was it here that we lay on the beach throwing stones into the

tranquil sea.

At last we arrived at Poti, being the fifth day from Constantinople. We were put on a lighter with our baggage, and taken direct to the Custom House; thence we got on a little steamer that was to take us up the Riom river, and of this we had some twelve hours, the great part of the time being occupied in getting aground, and getting off again.

From Poti to Merand we went in a telega, *en tröika*, some sixty versts, over what was rather a track than a road, in thirteen hours.

A telega, or road-waggon, is easily described as an oblong box on wheels, and of the *severest* simplicity. The box is about five feet by three feet six inches at the top, and five feet by three feet at the bottom, with a plank in the front for the driver. There are no attempts at springs; strength and lightness are all that is aimed at; these are attained—also the maximum of discomfort. To this machine are harnessed three horses: one trots in the shafts with a yoke four feet high, the other two, in traces at either side, gallop. The harness is rope, the driver often drunk.

Travelling thus is monotonous, and after a time very painful. To the Russian officer, with his big pillow, little or no luggage, and plenty of hay, a tröika is comparatively comfortable, for he can lie stretched out, and be tolerably free from bruises, but, doing as we did, we suffered grinding torments. One telega was full of our luggage, and in the other we sat on a portmanteau of the Colonel's; at each jolt we were obliged to clutch the edge of the machine to prevent knocking one against the other, and there was no support of any kind. To people accustomed to ride on springs our sufferings would only be

apparent if they had once tried what it was to travel in this way for many hours over the roughest roads, *day and night and at full speed*, and without springs of any kind. When our hands got painfully bruised we changed sides, and bruised the other ones, for we were forced to hold on. When we were lucky enough to get a broadish telega we got some hay, and sat on it, thus resting our knees.

On our way we only saw one woman and, say, a hundred men. The country seemed to me very thinly populated after teeming England. On our arrival at the post-house at Merand we were shown a room with two plank bedsteads and a fireplace. I little thought that in Persia the post-houses hadn't even the plank bedsteads.

Neither of us could speak one word of the language; we tried French, German, Italian, Turkish, Persian—all of no avail—and we had no food. At last we obtained fire and a samovar, or Russian tea urn; the first by pantomime, the second by looking fierce and repeating the word.

We pointed to our mouths, heads were shaken (perhaps they thought we wanted a dentist); at last I had a happy thought, and, by drawing a hen and egg, and hopping about the room clucking, the postmaster's wife at last produced the required eggs; they then brought bread and sausage, the latter much decomposed.

Colonel G—— was taken ill in the night, and I feared we could not proceed. But by 8 A.M. (of the 12th) we were again on the road, and did the thirty-four versts on a good military road by noon. The 12th is with Russians New Year's Day, and we found the town of Kutais for the most part drunk and letting off its firearms.

Here our landlord informed us that there was an opportunity to buy a tarantass, which we could dispose of when we reached the Persian frontier or at Tiflis.

I was greatly delighted when the Colonel decided on purchasing this very primitive carriage. Fancy an old-fashioned open carriage to hold two, with cushions stuffed in prehistoric ages with hay, a tarpaulin apron, a huge hood provided with a leather curtain which, when dropped, plunged the traveller into black darkness, but kept the wind and rain out; a gigantic box and boot, the whole slung on a perch from four posts by thick straps, and having very small fore and very large hind wheels, a plumb-line dropped from the top of the latter being quite a foot beyond the bottom. But it kept us warm and dry, would hold all the luggage, and would in theory enable us to travel with three horses instead of six. We found out afterwards that we had to take five, when we were lucky enough to get them.

I fancy the whole machine cost one hundred and fifty roubles, or, at the then exchange, fifteen pounds. Then came a wheelwright, and he took some seven hours at the wheels. At length, about five, all was pronounced ready, and we sent our "padoroschna," or permit to take post-horses, to the postmaster for horses. Reply: "None just at present; would send them over as soon as they came in." To lose no time, we carefully filled the boot with our luggage, and my bullock-trunks were firmly roped on behind.

We took tea preparatory to our start, and laid in provisions of bread, beer, &c., with a couple of fowls; for we were told we should find nothing but black bread and hot water on the road. Still no horses.

We went to the post-house, where we found nine beasts, but were told that these were all reserved for special service. The Colonel then smelt a rat; but what were we to do? the postmaster (a major) was dining out, and no one knew where he was.

The waiter told us at length that what was wanted was a bribe; but then we could hardly believe him, for had we not conversed with the postmaster—a uniformed and decorated individual, who spoke French and smoked cigarettes with an air?

However, there was nothing else for it; the postmaster was, much against the grain, asked to breakfast; a fifteen-rouble note was put under his plate, and an hour afterwards horses were actually being put to.

In we got, having a portmanteau, a hat-box, a cocked-hat case, a sword-case, umbrellas, rugs, pillows (these last a very needful thing in Russia; travellers even by rail carry them, and they are almost a necessity) in the carriage with us; the apron was buttoned down, the curtain triced up, and, with a wrench and a creak, off we went at a hard gallop. It is not a comfortable mode of travelling, far less a luxurious one; but one does get over the ground; one is dry; and certainly, as compared with the telega, one's sufferings are less intense.

We occasionally left the tarantass to take tea at a post-house, where, ever for lack of fresh horses, we had to feed and rest our old ones. Our Kutais informant was right; nothing to be got but the samovar (or Russian urn) full of boiling water; no furniture, save two wooden bedsteads, with a slanting board at the head; the tariff for horses, and the "icon" (or religious picture) in the corner. Still, there was freedom from noise and movement, which

was a great thing. The horses seemed to be fed on nothing in particular; they were turned out in the mud to graze, and were given branches of trees, which they gnawed as a *bonne bouche*, but I saw no grain given; but these horses went, and they *were* lashed and howled at; in fact, the driving seemed very hard work indeed. We travel day and night, and never halt but to change horses. After seventy-two hours, we at length reached Tiflis.

I didn't see much of the road; in most places it was mud, and in many it seemed dangerous. Often our tarantass was repaired with nails and ropes, but we arrived unbroken at the Hôtel du Kaukase of M. Arsène Barberon.

This man kept a really comfortable house, and as it was suggested to us that this was the last civilised place, we were only too glad to make the most of it. We were given sheets to our beds as a favour and as a luxury; and we got a good dinner, with some "Lecoq" English stout, very good and strong. One never hears the name in England, and whether really English or not I don't know, but it is very *double*, and much esteemed by the Russians.

Our bedrooms unfortunately abutted on the billiard-room; and as the Russian officers, by whom the hotel was frequented, seemed to be very loth to stop play, it was difficult to sleep till, about 4 A.M., even these festive gentlemen retired.

When I came down, I found that the Colonel, an old traveller, had preceded me, and was engaged upon a pile of official letters and telegrams.

"I shall be unfortunately detained here some days."

I was overcome by a deep sense of gratitude that words cannot express; for I really was so tired and

bruised that I felt as if I had been pummelled all over; in fact, that I should have been glad to be taken to pieces and put away for a time.

Now this perhaps will be looked on as affectation, but it is not so; as one gets used to the various modes of travelling, one ceases to have any grievance, and to feel fatigue, looking on the whole matter as in the day's work; but the *first time*, it's all very well, but we none of us like it in our hearts. Of course we called it glorious, and so it was, in the sense that it was a change.

But who would care to travel from, say, London to York in an old-fashioned bathing-machine, with a companion of greater age and social position than your own, pride preventing one's grumbling, and going at a hard gallop over the worst of roads, and a good deal of loose and angular luggage with you, day and night?

My chief next day was waited on by a young man of prepossessing appearance, in a stylish uniform, the embroidered shoulder-straps of which were decorated by lightning-flashes. I was somewhat surprised to hear that this was a signalling-clerk of the Russian department.

In Russia every officer, however small, has his uniform, which is cheap, and stylish wear. I, being very young, perhaps felt a little jealous; but the Colonel assured me that, as uniform was always typical, mine would probably have silver leeches running up the red stripe of my trousers, and a gilt mustard-plaister in miniature on the collar. This contented me, and reconciled me to my position as "a plain-clothes officer." The chief of the telegraph, too, called, and we called on him; many cigarettes were smoked, and much very hot tea in tumblers

drunk.

We went also to see the Persian consul, who was very civil, and apparently a very intelligent man; he gave us coffee in the Persian manner. Small silver filagree cup-holders, the size of egg-cups, were handed round on a tray; and placed in each was a smaller vessel of china, holding about a liqueur-glassful of strong sweet black coffee, flavoured with cloves. It was not bad.

When the cups were emptied two servants advanced, one bearing the tray, the other taking with both hands the empty coffee-cups and holders, and placing them upon the tray.

Then came the water-pipe or kalian; three of these were brought in. My first inhalation provided me with a mouthful of peculiarly filthy-tasting water (I learnt afterwards that the water from the kalian is commonly used in Persia as an emetic); having, with some difficulty, got rid of this, I commenced to smoke, and to do as I had seen our host do, eject huge clouds from my nostrils. But I perceived that the other kalians were gone; I asked the Colonel if there were any etiquette as to sending the pipe away. He said—

“Oh, no; our host is an old friend. Smoke as long as it gives you pleasure.”

The consul asked me how I liked the Persian pipe. I eagerly replied that I had never smoked anything so mild and so delicious.

He was delighted, but seemed surprised at my calling it mild. The old gentleman spoke French, and said, “Du tout—*très*-fort.”

And so I found it, for I began to feel giddy. It

appears that the tobacco used was particularly choice and strong, and that, as a rule, of such tobacco only a few whiffs are ever taken. I could smoke no more, and collapsed, for the next five minutes having the awful sensations of the youth who smokes his first "real foreigner." But this feeling passed away as quickly as it came, and I was soon myself. Another pipe was brought, and then tea, *à la Russe*, with lemon.

Tea *à la Persane* consists of a very small cup, holding some two ounces; in this lump-sugar is placed, in big lumps, and if much honour is wished to be shown to the guest, when the cup is full the sugar should project from the centre of the liquid in an *island*!

The tea used is generally scented Pekoe among the rich, and made very weak. It is also always washed before it is allowed to draw. Persians do not like strong tea.

In after years, in Persia, I was somewhat intrigued to make out why my sweeper objected to sweep his carpets with tea-leaves, and it was only on pressure that I extracted the fact that "the servants always dried my strong black tea-leaves and sold them *as tea* in the bazaar."

After some chat in Persian, which Colonel G—— spoke in a masterly manner, the Colonel asked for "the pipe of departure," which, it appears, is the best way of going, as it is considered polite to ask permission to depart, and not to get up and go.

Our host was a largely-built, well-set-up man, dressed in a pair of uniform trousers, stockings (he had removed his shoes on entering the room), and a thick black frock-coat, such as the Turks wear, lined

with fur; he did not show any linen. His hair and beard were jetty black, as was his heavy moustache. He wore a black Astrachan hat, which he did not remove, and a sword. He insisted on coming to the door with us, and shook hands in the most cordial manner.

As we were on the road home the Colonel asked me if I could give a guess as to our friend's age. I said, confidently, "From forty to forty-five."

"He is probably eighty—certainly over seventy. The black hair which you see is the result of dye. The whole of the upper classes, and all townsmen, military or government employés, dye their hair; it is done usually once or twice a week, and the substances used are, first henna, then indigo. They are allowed to remain on many hours; the result is the fine black dye you see. The villagers, as a rule, use only the henna, which gives a deep purply-black to black hair, and a bright red to white."

I was also told that when in deep mourning a Persian ceases to dye at all (and, alas! at first he also ceases to wash); the result is comical in the extreme, for one sees men with beards of some foot or more in length half red or rusty black, and the rest quite white. When ill, too, he does not dye.

Afterwards I could always by this means make a pretty shrewd guess, even before asking the question, as to how long a patient had been on the sick-list, by the length of the undyed part of his beard.

The next evening we went to the opera, and saw 'Don Giovanni'; the acting and singing was fairly good, but the auditorium, though it was not by any means a gala night, was brilliant in the extreme. Circassian officers, in their long coats of white, pale

blue, black, &c., their breasts covered with the ornamental little silver boxes of niello-work that contain, or are supposed to contain, the charges for their picturesque weapons; their long straight swords, silver or silver-gilt; and the belts, that would delight South Kensington people, covered with bosses of this same niello-work; their boots, reaching in some cases to the knee, fitting like gloves at the foot, and so wrinkly down the shin as to certainly drive a West End coachman mad with jealousy. Then the hats—cylinders of shaggy sheepskins—white, gray, black, surmounted by a bit of inner cap of blue, red, scarlet, or white, elaborately embroidered in gold. And good-looking men, too; no little fellows—*all* big strapping men, who looked as if they could ride and fight, as well as come to the Tiflis Opera. Nearly all were decorated; some had many medals and orders. This decoration is overdone in the Russian Army.

With the ladies I was disappointed—the Georgians and Immeritians were in the large majority. They were heavy-jowled females, who seemed to wear a profusion of rich clothes; they had a sort of crown of velvet and gold lace, over which hung down at the back an embroidered kerchief and hideous jewelry. They never smiled—still the brilliant officers hung over their chairs; and perhaps they may have been very charming. They all had big eyes and a quantity of coarse hair. One or two blonde Russian ladies were present, and they were much dressed.

The little theatre was peculiarly decorated in a semi-oriental style, and the *coup d'œil* was really very striking. The portion of the opera which seemed to give the greatest satisfaction was the introduced ballet, which I understand was composed of Tiflis

girls; they did not dance well, but were remarkably handsome, and much applauded. This theatre has been since burnt down, and a larger one erected.

As Colonel G—— was compelled to remain here eight days I was able to go again to the Opera, and I saw ‘Masaniello’ very fairly done.

I went all over the town looking out for a souvenir, but there was nothing but silver work, which was dear, and beyond my means at that time.

We had here our first taste of the celebrated Kakheiti wine. There are two sorts, white and red—the latter is the best; it is a strong, coarse, rough wine, and has a very leathery taste. As it is kept in skins, and not casks, this is not to be wondered at. It contains a great deal of tannin, and our landlord told me if kept in casks it turned black, probably from this excess of tannin (or perhaps bad casks). It costs at the hotel a rouble a bottle.

One thing that strikes one in Russia is the peculiarly good bread. I have now been in Russia five times, and I never have tasted anywhere bread so white or so delicious. Often have I made a breakfast of it, and sent my cutlet untasted away.

We laid in a good supply; and, with some Kakheiti wine, some stout, cold fowls, and tea, we left Tiflis, knowing we should get nothing till we got to Tabriz. The tarantass had been thoroughly overhauled; and, in a heavy drizzle, off we went, well provisioned by Arsène Barberon.

After four days’ severe travelling we reached Erivan. Snow had fallen heavily, and rendered some of the defiles of the Caucasus almost impassable, in particular one called Delijan, at the head of Lake Jeukjar. There we were obliged to have seven horses

to the tarantass to pull and some men to push, in which we assisted. We had a precipice going sheer down on one side and snow twelve feet deep on the other. Our difficulties were increased by meeting three hundred camels laden with huge unpressed bags of Erivan (or Persian?) cotton, in a place where there was hardly room to pass, and it was impossible for either party to turn back. Our Cossacks, however —we had two of these gentry—by whipping the drivers, made *them* go on the outer or dangerous side, while *we* remained stationary until the camels had passed; then, amid much shouting and swearing, we did the Pass.

At four stages from Tiflis we had our luggage put on camels to be brought on to Erivan, and went on ourselves in the tarantass, with never less than five horses. The most slashing races take place on the road, as he who succeeds in presenting his padoroschna (or permit to take post-horses) first, takes as many horses as he needs; and if the roads are bad often takes all, as he wishes to be well ahead of rival travellers.

In Erivan we are in *savage* Russia—the people are the ugliest and dirtiest we have yet come across. At the so-called hotel they gave us two wooden bunks *with* mattresses—a great luxury after the post-houses *without*. Our servant, a ferocious Persian lent us by the consul at Tiflis, named Mahommed Ali, having ordered water for washing, the waiter, if the greasy ruffian could be dignified with that title, asked if it would not do in the morning.

On being sworn at in Turkish and Russian by Mahommed Ali, and afterwards beaten in the passage, water in one brass jug and one basin was brought, and the Russian stood by to pour it over our

hands—this is the cleanly mode of performing one's ablutions here. The fellow then brought a dirty towel, on which Mahommed Ali again remonstrated with him in the passage in a forcible manner; in this sort of thing Mahommed Ali is very useful.

On leaving Erivan, which was covered with snow, we reached in a day and night Nakchewan; round this place I saw cotton bushes—of course they were bare. Here we rested a night.

Going on next morning, we came to Julfa, the frontier village of a few hovels. Crossing the river Araxes, a shallow stream, we put up in the windowless telegraph office. As we saw nothing but snow since we left Tiflis, there has been little to describe in the way of scenery; as may be fancied, the cold was intense. We are now in Persia.

CHAPTER II.
POST JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL.

Preparations for the start—Costume—Chaff bed—First fall —Extra luggage—The whip—Stages and their length —Appearance of the country, and climate—First stage —Turk guides—Welcome rest—Weighing fire-wood— Meana bug—Turcomanchai—Distances—New friends —Palace of Kerrij.

At Julfa, on the Araxes—a muddy stream, when we were there, easily fordable—is the Persian frontier, and here our horse-journey was to begin. The tarantass was sold a bargain to the postmaster. A change of clothes and boots and a few flannel shirts were stuffed in the “koorjins,” or saddle-bags, made of rough carpet; boots were greased and put on, so were spurs; and I, in my innocence, at the instigation of the saddler, who I suppose wished to get rid of them, had provided myself with a pair of huge long brass ones, such as were worn by the barons of melodrama, and palmed off on me as real Mexican persuaders adapted for long journeys—these awful things the Colonel suggested I should do without, but I did not like to be shorn of any of my splendour, and I wore them. At first I spurred myself considerably when walking, but I got over this, and no doubt they added to the picturesqueness of my get-up. Fur-cap, “horsey” box-cloth pilot-jacket, with big horn buttons, cords and boots, also a huge courier’s whip and fur gloves, made, to my youthful mind, a striking picture, and I greatly appreciated myself.

At Tiflis we had provided ourselves with bags, some seven feet long and four feet wide—these bags were to be filled with chaff, of which there is an abundance, at each station. It is called “kah,” and is the ordinary horse-feed, some of it being always in the manger; at this the Persian horse persistently munches; when he has had a bellyful of it he gets his morning or evening feed—never before. This rather primitive mattress is soft, cool in summer, warm in winter, free from insects, *and there is no bed to carry*.

We each carried a small washing-basin of brass; we had also a teapot and two tin plates. I had a wonderful expanding cup which I used to fill with wine, but, before I had time to drink, it generally collapsed, so I soon flung it away. We carried a few packets of candles; and, having our chaff-bags filled, we retired early, to begin on the morrow our first day’s posting. To my companion, an old traveller, this was nothing, but I looked forward to it with mixed feelings of delight and awe.

Apparently in the dead of night—really at dawn—I saw the Colonel dressed and busy; I hurried on my clothes, bundled my few odds and ends into my saddle-bags, rolled up my rugs into a cylinder, with the waterproof one outside, swallowed as many cups of hot tea as I could hold (it was terribly cold), reluctantly put my long brass spurs away—the Colonel told me I should only find them in my way—and dragged my various impedimenta into the yard.

The fact was that, with our heavy baggage, which quite loaded one of the horses, which was to be led, we were unable to take more than one servant. To be without one when posting in Persia is extremely inconvenient. Of course, if speed is a great object, a man gets along much faster without a servant, but

then he has to do everything for himself, and to *know how to do it.*

After some three-quarters of an hour we managed to get the baggage-horse loaded with two portmanteaux, and our own beasts saddled; the koorjins, or saddle-bags, put on across the loins of the horses, and firmly secured by a strap passing from the bottom of each bag to the girths. This is most important to prevent the shaking up together of everything the saddle-bags may contain.

My "Dayrell" bridle was fitted with a common watering bit, and as the horses of Persia are accustomed to a very severe native machine, my melancholy animal, as soon as he had been lashed into a canter, bolted, and was only brought to a stop by his coming down on his nose, which he did after some quarter of a mile. Of course, with such a bit, it was quite impossible to pull him up. As usual, though we fell with a crash, no one was hurt. I struggled to my feet, but the pony lay quite still, as if injured, till the "shargird chupper," or horse-boy, on his arrival, by a few vigorous kicks caused him to get up and shake himself. The Colonel now advised me to take the native bridle used by the shargird, and with this, of course, I could easily command my pony.

Several times we had to stop to arrange the load of the pack-horse, and also to alter the contents of our saddle-bags. These should be so packed as to be of nearly exactly equal weight, as when they are not so they gradually slip round, and one's horse stops; when one finds one bag under his belly, the other on his crupper.

The ordinary chuppering kit of saddle, rugs, and bags is well suited for this kind of travelling, but we

had besides a led horse, a tin cocked-hat case, a leather hat-box, and a sword and umbrella of the Colonel's. Our shargird, after many attempts to manage differently, fixed the tin cocked-hat case to his saddle, *en croupe*, tied the leather hat-box on as a knapsack behind his shoulders, and carried the sword under the surcingle of his saddle.

We kept on at a smart canter, only stopping to fix or shift the loads of the various animals. As soon as we were a mile or two from the station the shargird ceased to lead the baggage-horse; he had been compelled to do so till then, as he would have turned back.

The cantering through the cold air was exhilarating; and now I had time to look at the country—*Persia at last!*—which I was to inhabit for three years certain. I found that the road, if such it could be called, simply consisted of a number of tracks across country, which ran along irregularly side by side, formed by the wear of strings of mules and camels; there was no road *in our sense of the term*; in fact, the judicious thing seemed to be to go as straight ahead as one could, avoiding bad bits by a curve, and keeping to the most worn portion of the track, unless it was deep in mud or water. The ponies did not require much urging, and I found it expedient to keep my big chupper whip quiet, till I had learnt how to use it with ease and effect.

This whip is provided with a short stick of hard and heavy wood, covered with leather, and having a big loop of the same, that it may hang at the wrist when not in use.

The lash is a round one of four thongs of Hamadan leather plaited, and is from four to seven feet long;

when the latter, it is reduced in actual length to about three and a half feet by plaiting the lash from the stick downwards for about two feet; it ends in a knot, and beyond this are two flat pieces of leather some six inches long, which the expert keeps flicking under the horse's nose; thus, without hurting the horse or tiring himself, letting him be aware of the punishment in store for the lazy being at hand.

The stages are from three to eight farsakhs in length, a farsakh being in the rough three and a half miles; they vary in different parts of the country, and are especially long between Teheran and Hamadan, some of the seven-farsakh stages being, in the opinion of those who have been often over them, thirty miles and more.

The average stage is, however, five farsakhs, and from one large city to another, as Tabriz to Teheran, Teheran to Ispahan, or Ispahan to Shiraz, this reckoning holds good. As a rule, a very short stage has a very bad road, a very long one a good one; but this is not invariable. The first and last stage of a long journey, too, is as a rule a very short one, as Persians like, in marching, to have the first stage a short one, that omissions may be replaced before definitely starting, and the caravan got together well outside the town. The last stage being a short one enables friends to receive them, makes it easier to put on good clothes and to brush up after the journey —in fact, to arrive in a presentable condition.

All around us were earth-hills, with quantities of loose stones on them; here and there patches of snow; in the distance, in every direction, we were surrounded by snow-covered mountains; but the sky was blue and cloudless, the air was pure and dry. As it got warmer and warmer we felt a sense of

freedom, and that a change for the better had been made from the noisy and stifling tarantass.

Our guide now began to shout “Yawash!” (gently), and “Nuffus! nuffus!” (breath), and the Colonel intimated to me that we must walk our animals to give them their second wind. This we did, and we jogged along easily till within some six miles of the post-house. Then the guide rushed to the front, the ponies did their best, and it appeared the correct thing to get them along as fast as possible. The fact was that we had very good horses, so that as we cantered up to the post-house, having done our stage of six farsakhs (twenty-one miles) in three hours, we felt that the Colonel, being burdened with a greenhorn and a lot of extra luggage, had not done badly.

And now I thought that I had fairly earned a rest and something to eat. I was hungry and rather tired, for, being determined to get no cropper, unless my beast came down as well, I had used my knees too much. Your experienced chupper merely rides by balance, to avoid tiring himself. What, then, was my disgust at seeing the Colonel order out more horses at once, and to see him set to to help with the saddling. I groaned in the spirit, and did the same; though it was with some doubt that I agreed to the proposition that “it was very lucky we got horses, and could get on at once.”

The Colonel explained to me that, in travelling “chupper” (or post), it was incumbent on the traveller *never* to stop during the day, at least when he could get horses. This is doubtless a safe rule, but a corollary should be added that, unless the country is very safe indeed, it is as well, unless very urgent, not to go on after sunset. To a neglect of this latter

rule I must put down my falling into the hands of robbers during the famine.

I now found out what it was to get a really rough and bad horse; this beast's only pace was a hard trot, and the amount of shaking was tremendous. The road was much as before, and the going was fairly good. On reaching the next stage I was heartily glad to find there were no horses, which gave us time to get some tea, and a breakfast of hard eggs and harder biscuits. It was two ere we could make a start, and I did not forget to change my steed, and profited considerably; but the shaking had been severe, and I felt very stiff and tired. I was, however, ashamed to say so, and I chimed in with my companion in his praises of the delights of posting, and the glorious freedom of travel in the East.

Though the Colonel was a good Persian scholar, he could not make much of the guides and post-house keepers, who are all Turks; and very few of them speak Persian, Turkish being the language of the country. It is not till some four stages past Tabriz that Persian is the dialect of the peasant.

The reigning family, too, affect to think and speak in Turkish with their relatives and families; but it is not the Turkish of Constantinople, but the rougher speech of Tabriz, the cause being probably that at some period of their early life they have resided at Tabriz, where nothing else but Turkish is spoken; of course, it is also their ancestral tongue.

We got safely to our third post-house, at half-past three, got fresh horses, and started. The warmth of the last two stages had ceased, and patches of snow were getting more frequent; but I felt, though sorely against the grain, that as long as the Colonel would go on I ought not to object, under penalty of being

thought a muff. Our steeds were bad; we couldn't get more than a walk out of them, and we were six hours doing the stage, which we reached chilled to the bone. I was indeed delighted to hear from the Colonel that "it was hardly worth while pushing on!" and as I scrambled into the bare and blackened room which the postmaster allotted to us, and busied myself in getting a light, I was grateful that even the Colonel's ideas of duty were satisfied. Of course, afterwards, such a day's posting came to be looked on as a joke; but sixty-eight miles, over bad roads, to a man not accustomed to the saddle, is a serious matter.

Our first care was to get the postmaster, a poor ragged fellow, to light a fire of brushwood; a fierce blaze that thoroughly warmed the room, and at the same time filled the place with smoke, was the result. Then he bethought him that the chimney was stopped up with a brick; the brick was removed, and more brushwood put on. Then he gave us a carpet on loan, brought some firewood and the scales to weigh it; the weights were big stones, the scales two baskets slung on a stick.

There were recesses some yard from the ground all round the room, which was some eight feet by twelve. The floor was earth, the walls mud, the roof big poles with branches of trees laid across them. In the recesses we stuck three candles. The walls and roof were polished black from the smoke of many fires. In the part of the room near the door were flung our saddles and luggage. No furniture of any kind; we got the bullock-trunk forward to use as a table.

The shargird chupper brought our chaff-bags filled, and laid one on either side of the fireplace as a

mattress; we laid our rugs, and put our saddle-bags for pillows. We made a big fire, borrowed a kettle, got some strong tea under weigh, enjoyed a dinner of cold fowl and biscuit; barricaded our door, which seemed merely three planks nailed together, and lay down to sleep like tops. The naib, or postmaster, replaced the brick, and the ashes of our fire were alight in the morning. I *never* enjoyed a night's rest so much. But at 5 A.M. there was the Colonel with the tea under weigh, and adjuring me to rise.

Up I got, gobbled down some hot tea, and we started in the snow at six, for it had come down heavily in the night.

Ah, it *was* cold! and hardly light, the horses trying to turn back as we followed at a snail's pace the shargird, who seemed not to know much of the road. In a few minutes I was sitting on alternate hands in a vain attempt to keep them warm. We had fortunately taken the precaution to put on big Turkish wool socks over our boots, and this kept our feet from freezing, for the cold stirrup-iron soon, in such weather, extracts any warmth from the feet.

At last the light came, and we could see the village and post-house, some half-mile off, after an hour's wandering; but we were on the road, which was something. And now that we could see to go, and the shargird was sure of the way, off we went at the usual pace, a smart gallop. Nine o'clock brought us to the next stage—five farsakhs.

We reached Meana, at which there is a fine new post-house, at about five, but we had arranged that, unless we were compelled to sleep at this place, we would avoid it, as the celebrated so-called *bug of Meana* is found here. During the whole time I have resided in Persia I never could find any one who had

suffered any ill effects from the bite of the “Meana bug” at all in proportion to the horrors narrated; and I must look on the description given by travellers as apocryphal: Eastwick dilates on it. The kenneh, or camel-tic, certainly causes a particularly irritating wound, which will be found fully described further on. But the “Meana bug,” I am inclined to think, is nothing more than an ordinary camel- or perhaps sheep-tic, and by no means dangerous to life (*pace* Eastwick). But we both at that time were inclined to believe that there *was something* in the terrible accounts given of the insect, and so we avoided Meana. As it was we made a very great mistake; Meana, having at that time a brand-new post-house, was quite safe; but as we pushed on darkness caught us, and we did not arrive till nearly ten at night at Turcomanchai. Here was an old caravanserai only to put up in; the post-house was in ruins. And on the Colonel asking the postmaster if he had many insects he shrugged his shoulders in a significant manner.

We found a French merchant, with a big box of valuables, in the blackened cell of the doorway appropriated to posting travellers. He was marching, but had taken the room as the only water- and wind-tight one, and he welcomed us to a share of it and his big fire. It was very cold outside, and we were glad to get to the grateful warmth and partake of a cup of tea. But we had not been in the place half an hour when we found that it was literally alive. We couldn’t go on, and there was no other place to go to.

I throw a veil over our sufferings. How we regretted the clean new post-house at Meana, and how glad we were to leave Turcomanchai[2] at the earliest break of dawn! The insects, however, were merely fleas, B flats, and those nameless to ears

polite.

There was little or no snow on the road as we started, but it was sufficiently cold; the roads were hard, good, but full of loose stones.

Such was the journey—each day a repetition of that before it, varied only in weather.

February 12, after going 480 miles chupper, we were met about twenty miles from Teheran by Major S——, the director of the Persian telegraph department, Mr. B——, my medical chief, and Messrs. T—— and M——, secretaries of the English Legation, all friends of Colonel G——'s.

They escorted us to a place called Kerrij, a palace of the Shah's, gave us a sumptuous dinner, and we lay down to sleep in huge rooms gay with paint, gilding, and coloured glass. A mighty brew of egg-flip prevented a wakeful night; and the next morning we rode over a muddy plain to Major S——'s house in Teheran, which was to be my home till I started for "down country."

CHAPTER III.
TEHERAN.

Teheran—The Director's house—Persian visits—Etiquette—Pipes, details of—Tumbakū—Ceremony—Anecdote—The voice of the sluggard—Persian medicine explained—My prospects as a medico—Zoological Gardens.

Teheran struck me as a poor place, particularly from the outside of the town; the streets were narrow, and the houses seemed mostly of plastered mud, or of mud alone. And when we reached Major S ——'s house, on the outside the prospect was not inviting, but no sooner were we inside than everything was comfortable: good doors, good windows, carpets of great beauty, *chairs*—only try to do without these for a few days, and then, and then only, does one appreciate their comfort—big settees and divans, and a host of smart and attentive servants. Tea and pipes at once; a warm bath, much needed, in prospect, and, above all, the freedom from the morning's call to boot-and-saddle at an unearthly hour.

No sooner was breakfast over than messages were for ever arriving for my chief as to what time he would receive this grandee or that friend; and shortly the ceremonious visits commenced. I was, of course, only too glad to see what a Persian visit was like.

To be a successful entertainer in Persia it is imperative to be a master in the art of compliment, as the conversation itself is generally trivial; but the

exact amount of compliment must be meted out with a careful hand, according to the visitor's rank. By no means should the thing be overdone, as an excess of good treatment, over and above what the caller is entitled to, merely lowers the recipient of the visit in the guest's estimation.

Of course I did not at once appreciate the differences of the intonation in the "Bismillah!" or invitation to be seated, but I saw that great differences were made in the position of the guest, in the duration of his visit, and whether he were pressed to stop or not, and in the rising and advancing to receive him, or the refraining from so doing.

I soon found out that in addressing a great man, or at times an equal, the third person plural was frequently used; while the expression "bander" (literally, the slave), really "your servant," in lieu of the first person singular, touched on scriptural form. "Shuma" (you), the second person plural, was, of course, frequent, but in the case of a grandee some prefix was used, as "sircar-i-shuma" (your excellency), &c.; these prefixes it was necessary to use correctly, giving each man his due, or if you wished to please him, a little more than his due. To give a man a *good deal more than his due* was understood to be sarcasm.

The second person singular is only used to inferiors, servants or children, or in anger. As a rule the lower-class Persian always uses to the European the second person singular, if he thinks he can do it with impunity; and it has to be resented, and the transgressor put in his place at once, or all respect is gone. Of course the offender feigns ignorance.

Each visitor was regaled with some three little

cups of tea and the same number of water-pipes; some of the more advanced among the guests affected cigarettes, as did Major S—— and most Europeans. A few whiffs would be taken from the water-pipes, and they would be removed or passed on, at the will of their masters, for I noticed that, as a rule, the greater personages brought their own pipes.[3]

The tobacco smoked in the kalian is called "tumbakū," in distinction to "tootoon," or that smoked in pipes or cigarettes; it is sold in the leaf, which is packed dry in layers, and is preserved in bags sewn up in raw hide; it improves by age, and is quite unsmokable the first year. The best comes from Jarūm, south of Shiraz.

When a visitor is offered a pipe, and there is not a second one to hand, it is at once taken to him by the host's servant. He then deprecatingly suggests that his host should smoke first; this is declined by a sweeping gesture. He now offers it to the other guests, if any, and, on receiving a negative gesture, commences to inhale.

Should, however, the host be much superior in position, the visitor will either refuse to smoke first, or, if he has the bad taste to do so, the host does not smoke at all, but sends the pipe away. When there are many visitors and only one pipe, the greatest one smokes first, then the rest smoke in order of rank, previously paying the compliment of suggesting that some one else should precede them. These little punctilios are endless.

Priests or holy men do not, as a rule, like to smoke the pipe of the European, or to smoke even out of the same pipe. Of course the only plan to be then

adopted is to feign a disinclination to smoke at all. As a rule, Persians (the Frenchmen of the East) are usually so polite as to prevent any sign of this disinclination to be apparent, and will bring their own pipes, or smoke those of friends, and so get over any hitch. But at times bigoted men will try to be offensive. I well remember a case in point. A priest of Hamadan, high in office, had occasion to call on our superintendent, Captain Pierson, R.E. Pierson, with whom I lived at the time, sought to provide against any possible unpleasantness by purchasing a pipe with a clay bottle and head (it was summer-time, and such pipes are liked then), and told his servant that if the priest didn't provide his own smoke, this particular pipe was to be brought to him, with a hint in a whisper to the guest that it was an entirely new one.

As he had expected, so it turned out; the holy man came without his pipe, and on the usual procession of pipebearers entering, he roughly informed Pierson that he did not smoke after Europeans. Pierson drew his attention to the fact that a new pipe had been specially provided.

He took it, smoked it, and then had the gross impertinence to hand it to Pierson; the latter politely declined, but the priest was not content, and drew from Pierson the following:—

"Just as it would be painful to you to smoke after a European, so it would pain me to do so after a Mussulman. I provided against you having to do without your pipe, and respected your prejudices; as you are my guest, politeness prevents my expressing what I think of your conduct. You can break that pipe to pieces and burn the stick"—this to his servant —"I do not care to smoke it."

The priest turned pale, sat silent for a minute, and then said in apology—

"Yes, yes, you say truly, I have eaten dirt."

Strange to say, we were very friendly with him afterwards.

The pipe affected by the lower classes is the short chibouque, this nearly every North Persian of the lower class carries at his back in his girdle or in his pocket; there is a small clay, brass or iron head, and a straight stem of cherry-wood, six inches to a foot long, with a bore some half-inch in diameter through it; there is no mouth-piece, and it is held to the lips, *and not in the teeth*. The tobacco smoked is usually Samsoon, a common kind of coarse Turkish; or Koordi, a mild tobacco, nearly white in colour, but with a pungent flavour; there are many other varieties. This Koordi looks like coarse sawdust, and is *quite* dry, and is simply the leaf-stalk and stem of the plant coarsely pounded; to look at it, no one would suppose on a first inspection that it was tobacco at all: the best comes from Kermanshah.

A third kind of pipe is used by the Arabs of the Gulf and many South Persians; it consists simply of a tube of clay, an inch in diameter, bent at a right or acute angle, and constricted at the middle; from end to end it measures four to seven inches; one side is crammed with tobacco, "Tootoon i Koordi;" a coal is placed on it, and it is passed from hand to hand till the contents are burnt out. It is a very primitive pipe.

Enough of pipes. By five all the visitors had gone; we dined at seven, and I retired to sleep in a comfortable bed.

At about five[4] next morning I am roused by—

"Chai, sahib" (tea, sir); and a lordly individual, with huge mustachios, a black lambskin cap, a brown cloth inner coat, a blue cloth outer coat, a broad belt, and a long "kummer" (or straight broad-bladed sword), dark-blue "shulwar" (what an American calls pants, and an outfitter pyjamas), and his stockinged feet—his shoes were outside my door—places a cup of tea, some twice-baked sweet biscuit, of delicious crispness, and some marmalade, at my side, and departs. He soon returns with a second cup of tea and a kalian.

As I am a griffin, he draws my attention to the latter being—"Welly good thing, kalian."

He then goes through a pantomime suggesting sleep, talking all the time to me in Persian. I take his advice.

At eight he wakes me, and I find he has a warm tub ready for me. I dress once again in the clothes of ordinary life, and go down, to find no one about, for Major S—— has gone to the office, and taken the Colonel with him.

However, my especial chief, Mr. B——, soon appears, accompanied by his big black dog "Topsy," who comes into all the rooms and sits on all the settees: there is a fine sense of liberty in this. Mr. B —— warns me that I must not hope to make anything by practice—that he never did, and I never shall; but that there is a fine field for gratuitous work.

He then explains to me the Persian system of medicine. It has its advantages in its delightful simplicity. All diseases are cold or hot. All remedies are hot or cold. A hot disease requires a cold remedy, and *vice-versâ*.

Now, if the Persian doctor is called in, and has any doubt as to the nature of the disorder, he prescribes a hot remedy, let us say; if the patient gets better, he was right; if worse, then he prescribes a cold remedy, and sticks to it. He thus gets over all need for diagnosis, all physiological treatment, and he cannot, according to his own lights, be wrong.

His prescriptions contain a multitude of mostly obsolete and inert drugs, ten being a small number of ingredients, twenty an ordinary one. Before he is summoned, an omen is taken by the patient and his friends, as to who shall be called in; when he has seen his patient, another is taken, as to whether his advice shall be followed or not. His fee is a few pence, or more generally he undertakes the case on speculation; *so much*—of which he is lucky if he gets half—if the patient gets well; nothing if he doesn't.

Most of the relatives, friends, and neighbours prescribe various homely, or at times, powerful remedies, which are all as a rule tried.

Quiet by the sick-bed is unknown; in fact, the patient used to fuss and noise would be depressed by it. And remedies and contrivances of a barbarous nature, such as putting a patient in fresh horse-dung, sewing him up in a raw hide, are the rule rather than the exception.

Usually the European doctor is distrusted, only called in when the patient is breathing his last, or by the very rich or very poor.

Mr. B—— gave me one very good piece of advice. "You will go to Hamadan—with the Persians novelty is everything. Strike while the iron is hot, and before the novelty is worn off, and you—well, you will get lots of experience."

I was astonished and incredulous—*it was all true*. [5]

We visited the telegraph-office, and looked round the Colonel's garden, returning to breakfast at eleven, and we sat down to a substantial *déjeuner à la fourchette*, with country wines, and tea for those who preferred it. It was followed by the inevitable kalian and coffee.

I wanted much to see the Zoological Gardens, but we were told that the Shah had turned the beasts loose. We, however, decided to go, and we found it so—they were all loose.

The leo-panther, a cross between the lion and panther, a lovely animal like an immense cat, very tame, allowing one to pat him; two lions, a bear, two tigers (young ones), walking about with the antelopes and wild sheep. I must say the presence of the tigers was not quite pleasant. There is a pretty building—a sort of summer pavilion—here, belonging to the king, well worth seeing.

A curious incident occurred as Major S——, Mr. M ——, Mr. B——, and I were walking home from these Zoological Gardens; we were crossing a bit of desert plain behind the gardens towards the Major's house. On a sudden we saw come from under the corner of the garden wall at a shambling trot—a big tawny animal; to discover that it was a lioness was instantaneous, and it was coming our way. B——, with whom discretion was the better part of valour, did not hesitate; like the last of the Horatii, he "vowed revenge, and to pursue it fled."

We kept on, but fear was in all our hearts—I know it was in mine, possibly the Major was exempt—but we *walked very fast*, looking ever and anon at the

advancing *lioness*. There was apparently no mistaking the shambling pace of the wild beast; as it got nearer it turned out to be a big dog. Of course when we arrived at the house we all laughed at B——.

The Major's dignity and profession forbade his running, Mr. M——, as a diplomat, never of course did anything in a hurry, so couldn't run, and as they were present I didn't like to run, though I itched to do it. Of course, B—— said he *knew* it was a dog, and ran to frighten *us*; if so, his simulation of terror was *almost lifelike*.

In the evening we dined at the English Mission,[6] where there is a billiard-table—my last game for some time, I fancy.

CHAPTER IV.
TEHERAN.

The Gulhaek Road—Visit to a virtuoso—His story—Persian New Year—Persian ladies—Titles—The harem—Its inhabitants—A eunuch—Lovely visions—The Dervish—The great festival—Miscellaneous uniform—At the Court of Persia—The Shah—The ceremony—Baksheesh—Rejoicings.

I passed a fortnight in Major S——'s house, and gradually got some sort of smattering of colloquial Persian; but I could not see much of the place, for I had no servant of my own, and, though a horse was always at my disposal, not knowing the language, I was unable to go out alone, and was forced to content myself with rides on the "Gulhaek Road" with my chief, Mr. B——.

This "Gulhaek Road" was the usual ride, simply because it was at that time the only attempt at a road on our side—or, in fact, any side—of Teheran. It led past the Kasr-i-Kajar, one of the royal palaces, to Gulhaek, where the English Legation summered, and also to the other numerous villages at the foot of the mountains, at each of which a foreign legation during the summer hung out its ensign; as Zergendeh, where the Russians lived; Tejreesh, the French, &c.

One visit we paid, to a gentleman who had been many years in the Persian service, was rather amusing. Our host was an old Frenchman who held an appointment as instructor in French and

translator to the Shah, and was a Mahommedan. I do not know whether the account I heard of his mode of life was true or not. It was that he proceeded to Hamadan every year, and invested in two wives; as the spring came round he divorced them, and made his annual excursion, returning with two more. He was a very cheery old man, and evidently derived great comfort from a barrel-organ that stood in his room. Of his other comforts I know nothing, but I did see two remarkably clean pairs of ankles and two remarkably fine pairs of eyes. This was all one could make out of two closely-veiled females, who, with many giggles, constantly bustled in and out of the room on divers pretexts. The Frenchman had a large collection of valuable antiquities, which he showed us, and they were all genuine. That was seventeen years ago; now, in a hundred specimens from Persia, be they what they will, ninety are shams. Amongst other treasures he had a fine balass ruby as big as a florin, on which was cut an intaglio of a Sassanian king, which was, I believe, afterwards purchased by Mr. Alison (then Her Majesty's Minister) for a large sum. At that time the craze for objects of oriental art had not set in, and the big tiles we saw (or bricks) of *reflet métallique*, with raised inscriptions, were such as one seldom sees nowadays, save in national collections.

Our host's history had doubtless been a checkered one, and I was told on good authority that he had a faithful page who waited on him, and—gaily dressed as a boy-pipebearer, a favourite attendant with the wealthy of the capital—attended his master wherever he went. The page was a lady in disguise, and a Mussulman; but, alas! this romantic episode could not be allowed to continue. Some busybody betrayed him to the priests, he and the lady were

arrested, and he had the usual choice of Islam or death. Under the circumstances he chose the former, and retained, under an outward conformance to the tenets of Mussulmanism, a practical power of jollity and "keeping it up" which few of the most advanced *viveurs* could rival. I was afterwards led to understand that the French Minister of the day at the Court of Persia had the power, but not the will, to protect the poor fellow against the very unpleasant choice given him. Years sober us all, and I saw the gentleman long afterwards, a most grave and reverend seigneur.

The Persian New Year was about to commence, and, as there is always a jubilee reception of all the foreign ambassadors by the Shah, it was decided that Colonel G—— should be presented at it by the minister, and I too was to have the pleasure of seeing the splendours of the Persian Court; after which Major S——, who was going to Baghdad on duty, kindly promised to allow me to accompany him as far as Hamadan, where I should enter on my active duties.

One morning my medical chief asked me if I should like to visit the anderūn, or ladies' quarter, of a great Persian nobleman?

"As you are going down country you probably won't have the chance again; and I have seen such things too often for it to be any pleasure to me."

Of course I was delighted. I hurriedly put on a long-tailed coat, which is *de rigueur* in visiting a Persian house, our short ones being considered by them as extremely indecent. I had goloshes on over my boots, and rode off with one of B——'s servants to the house of the Eyn-ul-Molk (eye of the state);

such titles, not being hereditary ones, are usual among the statesmen and great officials of Persia.

"The Sword of the State," "The Pillar of the Kingdom," "The Shadow of the King," are all titles in actual use; they are sufficiently high-sounding and poetical even to satisfy a Persian's sense of dignity.

No sooner is a prince born, than the king proceeds to give him a title, which as he grows in dignity and years is often changed for a higher one; thus, when I came to Persia, Sultan Massūd Mirza, the eldest son of the king, was known as Yemeen-u-dowlet, or Sword of the State; this some ten years afterwards, when the young man became a real power in the kingdom, was changed to Zil-es-Sultan, or Shadow of the King.

On reaching the house of Eyn-ul-Molk, I was at once conducted to his presence, given a chair, and treated with great consideration. I removed my goloshes at the door of his apartment. An interpreter, who spoke pigeon French, informed me that one of the ladies was ill, and that I had better see her and prescribe.

The Eyn-ul-Molk was a blear-eyed, venerable man of evidently high position, very rich and very anxious; as the interpreter put it, the patient was *trop jolie pour mourir*, and my expectations were considerably aroused.

I was handed over to a white eunuch, who seemed to be troubled with all the ills that flesh is heir to, and who grunted and grumbled a good deal as he led me towards the part of the house set apart for the habitation of the ladies.

After passing through several yards and passages, we came to a low door with a curtain. My guide

entered, and raised the curtain, previously shouting "Bero! bero!" (be off, be off).

A crowd of children and negresses scuttled off into the various rooms which surrounded a well-kept garden, with beds of flowers and playing fountains, some thirty yards by fifteen.

Those who did not go out of sight drew down the big sheets of printed calico that covered their heads, turning themselves into faceless bundles, terminated in bare legs visible to the knee, with feet either bare or thrust into tiny slippers; even the very little girls had veils, though they did not cover their faces, and were mostly pretty little round-faced things, with large eyes, and fringes of black hair cut across their foreheads.

I had been told not to appear to notice anything, as that would be interpreted as a desire to *look at* the inhabitants of the anderūn, which would be considered the height of bad breeding. So I kept my eyes discreetly fixed on the ground, feeling certain that I should find plenty of time for thorough investigation.

The old eunuch took me into a room, beautifully carpeted, and bare of all furniture save one chair, on which I was directed to sit.

He left me, and I noticed that the room was decorated with small mirrors let into elaborately cut plaster-of-Paris work; the walls were so covered with small facets of mirror that one could hardly see anything of the white plaster, which was arched at the ceiling, arch within arch, in the manner so familiar to us in the decoration of the Alhambra; but a peculiarly chaste effect was produced, for neither colour nor gilding was used—only pure white plaster

and mirror. In many places there were panels, where plaster-work, cut (not moulded) in high relief, showed patterns whose effectiveness could not be denied. In fact, the result was one of chastened splendour quite new to me. The doors, which were of polished walnut-wood, were covered by curtains of bright colours of Yezd silk, some six feet by four, simply suspended in front of them. The window, which occupied one entire end of the room, was composed of small pieces of glass of all the colours of the rainbow, set in a wooden frame of a geometrical pattern of a very elaborate nature; as the window was some fourteen feet by ten, and no piece of glass was more than two inches square in size, some idea may be formed of the enormous amount of work in such a piece of carpentry. The wood employed in such work is plane, and it does not warp.

This window was made in three compartments; each one was made to draw up when required, thus giving a full view of the garden; all were, however, at present down, and the coloured light which entered produced a very rich effect—a relief, too, from the strong sunlight outside.

Round three sides of the room were nummuds, or felt carpets, some two inches thick; as one walked on them, it was like going over the softest turf; they were light-ochre in colour, with a pale-blue pattern inlaid. In the centre was a carpet some twenty feet by nine. I had never seen such a carpet; it was very beautiful, but of very subdued colours, and of a rather large pattern.

In each of the three walls there were three recesses or takhjahs, a yard from the ground, and in each of these was placed a glass vase of narcissus blooms; as every vase contained some hundred stems, the

perfume was somewhat overpowering.

The eunuch now returned, seated himself on the ground at my side, and a black woman, of hideous aspect, brought me a water-pipe.

While I was smoking it, the curtain at one of the doors was lifted, and two young ladies entered, aged from sixteen to eighteen, though they seemed some three or four-and-twenty to me. I must acknowledge that I was unprepared for such a free display of loveliness, and it was the first time I ever saw Persian ladies in their very becoming, if slightly indelicate, home-dress.

Their feet and legs were bare; their skirts were *bouffés* by a number of under-skirts such as are usually worn by the ballet on our operatic stage; but instead of these under-garments being white and gauzy, they were of silk, and of all colours. The outer skirt was of silk also—in the one case pale pink, in the other pale blue—with gold patterns on them, and these voluminous skirts barely reached their knees. Each lady wore a small zouave jacket of bright-coloured gold-embroidered velvet, with tight-fitting sleeves, which buttoned from the elbow with a multitude of small silver buttons, but these buttons were not fastened. A gold-embroidered gauze shirt was worn under this jacket that left, I am sorry to say, nothing to the imagination; the sleeves of it were wide and open. Each lady had tied a gold-embroidered silk kerchief, called a “chargāt,” over her head, fastened by a brooch at the chin; each had a fringe of hair over her forehead, and each had a big love-lock, which came from under her kerchief, at the middle of her cheek. Long tresses of black hair came below their waists.

Both were good-looking plump girls, in robust

health. Both giggled, and both were full of fun.

The one who was supposed to be ill had not coloured a very rosy pair of cheeks; the other was heavily rouged. Their eyelashes were darkened with antimony, but their eyebrows were unpainted. The Persian woman's eye is usually very dark and large, and the painting the edges of the lids produces a very languishing effect.

After talking to the eunuch for some minutes, in which the old fellow evidently was calling these very gushing ladies to order, they suddenly plumped down on their knees in front of me, and compelled me to feel *both* their pulses, look at *both* their tongues, examine their throats, and a second time to feel their pulses at the other wrist.

As I understood very little Persian, and neither they nor the eunuch anything but that language, it was very difficult to make out what was the matter. One thing was very certain—they looked upon the whole matter as a very good joke; and seemed inclined to torment the eunuch and make great fun of me.

At last one lady showed me a flea-bite on a very round and shapely arm, which literally jangled with glass bangles and gold bracelets. As this was the most serious symptom I had yet seen, I began to think I had better retire, when tea was brought in by a young negress.

The ladies, the eunuch, and myself, all partook, but the two ladies did so with shrieks of laughter, in which the negress joined.

Suddenly a cry of "Aga! aga!" (the master, the master) was raised, and I saw the Eyn-ul-Molk coming up the garden. The two indiscreet ones

became at once staid matrons of the severest type. They sprang to the other side of the room, they drew their kerchiefs, or rather the corners of them, over their faces, leaving the eyes alone visible; and the young negress who had brought the tea became a statue of propriety in ebony, pulling her big print veil over her mouth till she looked like a living bolster.

The old nobleman came in, and I was made to feel again the pulses of my patient, and again look at her tongue. But nothing but her eyes and tongue were now visible, and both ladies pretended to look on the infidel doctor with horror. They answered their husband's questions only in a whisper, and in a few minutes I followed the Eyn-ul-Molk to the "berūni," or general apartments. I noticed that these were furnished with much less luxury than the women's side.

I now managed to find out that the fair sufferer had that morning very early had a slight attack of intermittent fever, and, with the help of the interpreter, I said that I would prescribe on getting home.

The farewell pipe was brought, and I retired, I trust, gracefully. Thus ended my first visit to a Persian patient.

I suppose that my remedies were successful, for, though I was not asked to attend again, I received a plate of oranges and two dried salmon as a fee, with a polite message of thanks in a day or two.

As this visit had occupied some four hours in all, I came to the conclusion that I should not add much to my income by private practice, the result of an attendance on the wife of a great noble being so

small in a money point of view; and though interesting at the time from its novelty, yet I felt that that would soon pass off.

I had been regularly robbed of my rest, after the first few dreamless nights that one has at the end of a long journey, by a sort of hooting sound, followed by cries of "ya huc, h-u-u-u-c." These noises were repeated at irregular intervals all through the night, and I found also that they occurred in the day-time whenever Major S—— entered or left the house. They proceeded from the Major's dervish, and they grew louder and more frequent day by day.

The dervishes, or wandering mendicants, are persons who, from laziness or inclination, take a vow of poverty, either for a time or permanently. They form various colleges or sects, and have recognised heads ("mūrsheds") to whom they show great deference. It is extremely difficult to find out what their precise tenets are, for the more learned among them have a great disinclination to discussing religious matters with the infidel, while the more ignorant seem, when sane, to have really no religion, *save that of doing no work*. In many ways they resemble the monks of old amongst ourselves, though, as—in Persia at least—they seldom live in communities, "wandering friars" would be a safer comparison. Persians as a rule dislike and despise them, but they fear to offend the masses by showing it, and cede to them a great show of deference. The more respectable simply wander about, obtaining free food and lodging in any town they may pass through. Others combine the profession of travelling mountebank and dealer in charms with that of religious mendicancy.

Many are clothed all in white, having taken a vow

to that effect; and most of them refrain from shaving or from cutting the hair. All, or nearly all, wear a tall cap of felt or cloth, shaped like a sugar-loaf, and ornamented by inscriptions of texts from the Koran. Most of them carry a carved almsholder, which is generally composed of a huge nut elaborately carved, and suspended by brass or silver chains from the waistband. A steel axe is often carried, and a panther or deer-skin worn. All affect a striking and eccentric appearance, and all have a lean and travel-worn air, save some few, who merely affect the costume, and are dervishes only in dress.

One man who used to haunt the Gulhaek Road was entirely naked, and was a most importunate and offensive beggar. A European got into some trouble on this man's account, for on his accosting him with great importunity, and then proceeding to curse him because his demands were ungratified, the despised infidel administered several lashes with the long thong of his hunting-crop.

Another celebrated dervish, who is a man of some property, draws a good pension from the Shah, and is sent yearly to some shrine to pray for the king, his expenses being defrayed from the royal purse. He perpetually rotates his head, after the manner of the harlequin of the old school, and incessantly vociferates in a loud voice, *Ali Oh! Ali Oh!* As he is always bareheaded, and an old man rather inclined to corpulence, the result is not edifying; but his perquisites must be very large, as he is well known to possess the royal favour. Provincial governors and local magnates treat royally "him whom the king is delighted to honour." I have seen this man roll his head continuously and vociferate his cry, merely pausing for breath, for three hours at a stretch: the

power of doing this continuously can only have been attained by long practice. His journeys over all Persia are so frequent, and he is so well known, that in every large town great crowds turn out to gaze on and follow “Ali Oh!”, by which name the man is always known.

A striking appearance is attained at all hazards; often the clothing being merely a pair of short drawers, an antelope, panther, or tiger-skin being slung across the shoulder, and an axe or huge club, often armed with spikes, being almost invariably carried.

When a dervish meets a horseman or any one of condition he offers him in the politest manner a flower, or even a leaf or blade of grass; as a rule it is accepted and a trifle given. At other times the dervish will simply stretch out his hand or his almsholder, and favour the passer-by with a steady stare, the word “huc” (my right) being suddenly ejaculated.

Dervishes are often professional story-tellers, the costume being merely donned for effect; or, as in the case of a highly-gifted story-teller of my acquaintance, one Aga Nusserulla of Shiraz, a man who earned a good living by his erudite and interesting tales, the cap only was worn, and that merely when engaged in his public recitals; he also carried the big iron axe, with which he gesticulated in a manner really graceful and artistic.

I often, as I grew more acquainted with Persian, had this man in to beguile the tedium of the long evenings, and he would sit by the hour under the orange-trees, rattling off an endless story freely interspersed with poetical recitations, which were always apposite and well given—in fact, they were

intoned. He never allowed the interest of his tales to flag, and never left off, save at a point so interesting as to ensure a request for his attendance the succeeding evening, adopting the principle of the lady of the 'Arabian Nights.' I frequently, on passing through the Maidan, or public square, of Shiraz, saw Aga Nusserulla surrounded by a gaping crowd of peasants, porters, and muleteers squatting in a circle, he striding up and down and waving his axe as he told his story of love or fairyland; then he recognised my presence by merely the slightest drop of his eyelid, for his harvest of coppers would have been blighted had he betrayed to his gaping listeners his intimacy with a "Feringhi" ("Frank"—the term used in Persia for all Europeans *to their face*; that of "Kaffir," or "unbeliever," being carefully kept for speaking of them in their absence).

The tales told in the bazaar to the villagers were mostly bristling with indecency; but the dervish never transgressed in this respect on getting a hint from me that that sort of thing was unpleasing, and his stories were always of great interest, intensely pathetic at times, and at others very comic. His power of imitation was great; the voices of his old men and women were unmistakable, while the sex of the lovers was equally distinct, and his laugh was infectious and sympathetic.

Another dervish I knew was a man six-feet-six in height, who was possessed of the sounding title of "King Panther" (Shah Paleng). This man's only title to respect was his great height and startling appearance, for he was but a stupid and pertinacious beggar, after all. I had the misfortune to make his acquaintance, having selected him as a good photographic type; I got my type, but could not get

rid of my model, always finding the fellow seated in my courtyard, engaged apparently in religious meditation. It was only by the strongest remonstrance with my servants that I could get him kept out of the house, and even then he used to haunt my door.

Dervishes, as a rule, have many vices. They have very often vague ideas of *meum* and *tuum*, and debauch and rob the wives of the villagers by tricks; in fact, their holiness is more believed in by the women than the men throughout Persia. Many are drunkards, others take opium; this is often the cause of their haggard appearance.

Others indulge in the smoking or drinking of bhang, or Indian hemp, and when under the intoxicating influence of this drug, a state which is induced prior to the coming-on of the stupefying effect, they have been guilty of great and dreadful crimes.

In Shiraz they were credited with nightly orgies and the celebration of unknown rites, the mysteries and horrors of which were probably much exaggerated, being possibly merely debauches of smoking and drinking.

So common is the condition of the dervish in Persia, that in each of the big towns there is a shop appropriated to the sale of their paraphernalia of tiger-skins, axes, embroidered hats, &c.

The vows seem simply to consist of those of poverty and obedience to a chief, with a payment of a portion of the alms extracted from the charitable to him. There is no vow of continence; and, on the whole, a dervish may be generally said to imply an idle “vagrom” man, who lives by imposing on the

good-nature of others.

We were approaching the Aid-i-No-Ruz, or festival of the New Year, when it is the custom of the dervishes to erect a sort of tent at the street-door of any personage, and to remain in it till dismissed with a present.

Major S——, as an undoubted personage, had a dervish sent to his house. He had suffered from the infliction before, and had bought himself off on that occasion by a gift of fifty kerans (two pounds), but this time he was determined to grin and bear it, thinking that by making a stand he would escape a similar infliction in the future.

The chief of the dervishes indicates to his subordinates the houses that they are to besiege, and they are allotted to the various members of the fraternity according to seniority—the king, the prime minister, the chancellor, and so on, downwards.

When I say that every man of standing had his dervish, it will be seen that there were many of the brotherhood at that time in Teheran.

Every foreign minister had one at his door, and I am sure that any Persian of consideration would have been very loth to be without this very visible sign of greatness.

The Major's dervish was to be found in the street day and night, in or beside his so-called tent; this consisted of some two yards of thin canvas, pegged into the wall at the side of the outer gate, and held down by three pieces of string. The dervish sat by day on an antelope-skin, and by night (if he ever did sleep) slept on it in his clothes.

As any one, visitor or host, entered or left the

house, a shrill blast was blown on a buffalo-horn, and the man emitted his monotonous “Huc—yah huc” and extended his palm. He had a small pot of live charcoal before him; and smoking, and his so-called garden (a sort of playing at gardening, six twigs of box-tree being planted in a little heap of dust, and an orange being placed between each), occupied a good deal of his time.

The annoying part of it was that he was *always there*, and that we could never forget, or fail to notice this fact, from the persistent salutations of “Salaam, sahib!” smilingly given, or the eternal cries and blasts of the buffalo-horn, by which he made night hideous and the day unbearable. As time wore on and the New Year approached, the blasts and cries became more prolonged and more frequent, and the whole household became more and more depressed. We all knew that the servants were providing the man with two square meals a day and unlimited tobacco, of course quite contrary to orders.

But I think the greatest sufferers were myself and a friend, whose bedroom-window was above the so-called tent of this demon in human form. Patience has its limits, and one morning we determined to, as we hoped, induce our bugbear to shift his quarters. We poured our two tubs into one, and carefully choosing our moment, suddenly emptied the contents on the tent.

Down it came on the head of the dervish, putting out his fire-pot, and producing a very free succession of invocations to saints.

But, alas! when we went out in the morning, hoping to find him gone, we were received with “Salaam, sahib!” and a solo on the horn that for volume, Harper, of trumpet fame, might have vainly

attempted to emulate.

We slunk off, but vowed further vengeance. The next day we determined on a baptism of fire, and we carefully stoked our “mangal,” or brazier, till it gave off a fine red heat, and was quite full of live charcoal. At that time, when there were few fire-places in the rooms of Persian houses, it was usual to employ these braziers to warm the rooms.

We did not impart our design to the Major, who would doubtless have disapproved, but as soon as the coast was clear, and we were sure that the dervish was in his tent, we prepared for action.

We had got the brazier into position, when the wretch commenced one of his frantic solos; down came the contents, some twenty pounds of live charcoal and wood-ashes.

The dervish laughed at such things, and blew a defiant blast; but in a moment the charcoal, having burnt through the tent-roof, descended on his flowing locks, and, amidst deriding shouts of “Khock ber ser um!” (ashes on my head), a favourite form of imprecation with Persians, from my companion, the dervish emerged considerably the worse.

We were delighted, and felt that we had been at last too many for him. Though our minds were not quite free from visions of a severe wigging from the Major, we felt we had triumphed, and hurried down to tell our tale.

We then found that the dervish had exhausted even the Major’s patience, and had received his present and gone. We maintained a discreet silence. Whether the Major heard of our two attacks I never knew, but the man was gone—tent, garden, fire-pot, oranges, and all. Perhaps the treatment he got was

considered too bad; anyhow, *he was gone*, and we ceased to hear nightly "the voice which cried, Sleep no more."

A few days after the above little drama came the Aid-i-No-Ruz, or New Year's Day: the excitement was great. It appeared that uniform of some sort was *de rigueur*, and Colonel G—— kindly lent me a blue frock-coat with many frogs, and a gold-laced cap; a pair of uniform inexpressibles with a broad red stripe, were got from some one else; a cavalry sabre and a pair of buckskin gloves completed the semi-military appearance which is possessed by officers of the English army on the stage; there they always live in uniform, *off it never*; a pair of goloshes were also donned!

I was only too grateful to complete my nondescript rig-out, for, determined as I was to see the sight, and uniform of some sort being a *sine quâ non*, Mr. Alison, Her Majesty's Minister, had kindly placed at my disposal the full-dress costume of a Highland chief, in which all my friends were dying to see me, and in which I should no doubt have presented a striking appearance; and rather than not go, I was determined to don even so appalling a costume as that worn by the traditional Highlander.

I had girded on my sword, when my medical chief entered in a frock-coat similar to mine, but with fewer frogs, and a cap with much narrower lace.

We were doubtless filled with mutual admiration, but my chief's eye soon fell on my wealth of frogs, for was not I disguised as a lieutenant-colonel, while he was merely a travesty of a captain?

"This will never do, Wills. Why, *I* shall appear to be *your* subordinate!"

There was no doubt of the justice of the remark. My plumage was decidedly the handsomer. I consented to a change to the less-befrogged and humbler coat; but my chief had long arms, and what was short in the sleeve for me was only half-way down his fore-arm, and he showed all his cuff and a good deal of shirt-sleeve. He looked now undoubtedly my senior, but also *as if he had grown considerably* since that coat was made. We had to stick to our caps, as my head was too big to get into his.

We all collected, and we two doctors caused some amusement by our very martial array; in fact, our get-up was a considerable likeness to that of "the bold gendarmes."

Off we went, all on horseback, to the English Mission (or Legation), and we joined the procession of his Excellency, Mr. Alison, who was doubtless disappointed not to have in his train a spurious Highland chief.

The streets were crowded; every one, to the poorest, in new clothes, for the Persian on this auspicious day always puts on a new suit. Many of the streets and bazaars were lined by soldiers of rather unmartial appearance, and most of them were preparing plumes of white cocks' feathers, which they got ready with a knife, a bit of stick, and some string.

The din was tremendous. Gradually we neared the palace, and, getting down at one of the side doors of it, we entered in the order of our rank, the ambassador and Colonel G——, in full uniform, with cocked hats, leading the procession; then came the secretaries, then the mission doctor, the major, then my chief, while I came last and least, the junior of

all.

Passing through many courtyards crowded with grandees and their servants, we came into a handsome apartment well provided with chairs; there we found the other ambassadors and their suites, viz., the French, Russian, and Turkish, who had preceded our party; they were in full dress, and wore all their orders.

Pipes were handed round, and then trays of sherbet (iced water flavoured with syrups) and coffee; also a profusion of sweetmeats.

After some half-hour, the master of the ceremonies —who was arrayed in the tall turban of Cashmere shawls, the long robe of the same, trimmed with fur, and the red stockings, that constitute the Court dress of Persia; decorated with numerous orders and the portrait of his sovereign set in diamonds—preceded Mr. Alison, who, as the "doyen" of the ambassadors, took precedence of the other nationalities; and ushered us in.

We entered a garden, up the path of which were laid carpets, and in the midst was a fountain; various little formal beds, filled with narcissus and planted with shrubs, occupied the rest of the space, while a long "hauz," or enclosed basin, raised some six inches from the ground, ran down the centre; the water in this, which was quite still, was ornamented with an elaborate *pattern*, formed on its surface by sprinkling handfuls of rose-leaves, and the effect was pretty in the extreme. All round the edge of the hauz were placed a continuous row of oranges.

A few of the royal body-guard, or "gholams," with their guns in red cloth cases, slung over their shoulders, stood about in motionless groups; also

some of the king's ministers and more favoured servants chatted in whispers; while at an open window sat the Shah-in-Shah, or King of kings and Asylum of the Universe.

When we had all entered we made a military salute, to which the Shah vouchsafed no reply; after a few more paces, we halted again and made a second; and then we were ushered into the room itself in which his Majesty deigned to receive us. Here we all formed in single file in order of rank behind our respective ambassadors, thus forming four files.

The Shah was on our entrance no longer sitting, but lounged against a table; on it lay his jewelled sword, which, covered as it was with diamonds, literally glittered in the strong sunbeams, these also illuminated the jewels with which the king really blazed; the royal plume, or "jika," of white feathers and diamonds trembled on the black hat of finest Astrachan lambskin, shimmering with rays of many-coloured light.

I learnt afterwards that as the Shah, *if he sits himself*, is obliged to give seats to the ambassadors, he avoided it by not sitting down, but lounged in the manner described. There was nothing particularly striking in the room; it was much over-decorated, and in the most barbarous taste; the carpets, however, were valuable.

The ambassadors now all gave the king a military salute, and so did the suites and hangers-on. To this his Majesty returned a not over-gracious nod. The king now addressed them in turn, and each ambassador replied through his dragoman or Oriental secretary, replying to the questions as to his sovereign's health, and congratulating the Shah on

his festival. Mr. Alison presented a new secretary, and introduced Colonel G——, who was favourably received, and in fluent and graceful Persian he replied to the Shah's queries, and made somewhat of a speech on telegraph matters, which was also graciously received, the Shah assenting frequently. The king now unceremoniously left the room, and every one saluted.

We all hurried off to see the great ceremony of the public salaam. We were ushered pell-mell into a room that commanded on one side the court of audience, on the other the public square of Teheran. In the former were drawn up in rows, according to their degree, all the officers of state, all the governors of provinces, all the generals and servants of the Crown, the secretaries of various departments, and the foreign employés, among whom I saw Mr. D —— and one of the signallers, of the Telegraph Department.

We were told that in a few moments the Shah would lighten their countenances by appearing in an open balcony above our heads.

The royal "farrashes," or carpet-spreaders, armed with long wands of unpeeled boughs, who surrounded the courtyard, began to beat the few unauthorized onlookers at the far corners, and on a sudden the whole crowd bowed nearly to the ground —a ceremony in which the unfortunate Mr. D—— had to join *nolens volens*. This told us that the king had shown himself.

The prostration was repeated a second and a third time. Then the Prime Minister, having his rod of office, with many bows, mumbled a speech to his Majesty; to which the king replied in a few words in a loud voice.

A priest in a green turban (being a Syud or descendant of the prophet) now recited what was apparently a long prayer: a dress of honour on a tray was immediately, by the king's order, produced, and placed on his shoulders; and this was no empty compliment, for I was told by an experienced onlooker that the cloak was worth one hundred pounds or more.

Then a poet recited an ode, and got also a dress of honour; and then, at the royal command, men bearing trays of gold coin distributed handfuls to the officials, the number and size of the handful being in proportion to rank; the bigger people, who stood in the front ranks, getting the larger and more numerous handfuls. Even Mr. D——, who was in a back row, got some seventy kerans (three pounds). The coins were gold, and very thin, and are instituted for this special occasion; they are called "shahis," which is, literally, "king's money," and were worth some one shilling and eightpence each. During the excitement and scramble that the distribution occasioned, the king retired, and the orderly ranks of Government servants became at once a seething crowd.

We lookers-on now crossed the room and stood at a balcony which commanded the public square. This was kept clear by a double line of soldiers all in new clothes for the occasion. The space was occupied by dancers, buffoons, jugglers, wrestlers, sword-and-buckler men, and owners of fighting sheep and bulls, with their animals; while in front of the big pond or hauz, immediately below our balcony, stood twenty wretched Jews in rags and tatters, prepared to be thrust head over heels into the water for the royal delectation.

The king's farrashes kept up showers of good-humoured blows on an equally good-humoured crowd at all the entrances. Not less than fourteen to sixteen thousand people were present; all were on the tiptoe of expectation.

Suddenly a cannon from among a battery in the square was discharged, and the king appeared. The entire crowd bowed to the ground three times; then the people shouted and cheered, the dancers went through their antics, the buffoons began their jokes, some forty pairs of wrestlers struggled for mastery, among whom was the king's giant, seven feet eight inches high; gymnasts threw up and caught huge clubs, and showed feats of strength and skill; the swordsmen engaged in cut and thrust, hacking each other's bucklers; the jugglers showed their sleight of hand; the fighting bulls and sheep rushed at each other; the royal bands and the regimental ones struck up different tunes; the zambūreks (or camel artillery) discharged their little cannon; the Jews were cast into the tank, and on coming out were again thrown in by the farrashes and executioners; while the rest of the cannon fired away merrily in every direction; the bulls got among the crowd, the women shrieked and the men shouted.

Handfuls of gold coin were thrown to the various performers, for which they violently scrambled; and amidst the smoke and cries the king retired.

The royal salaam was over, and we struggled through the crowd within the palace to our horses at the gate, and rode home through a happy mob, having assisted at a great Persian festival.

I dined at the Russian, English, and French embassies several times at Teheran. As the

entertainments were European there is nothing to be described.

CHAPTER V.
HAMADAN.

Start for Hamadan—Bedding—Luggage makes the man—Stages—Meet Pierson—Istikhbals—Badraghah—Pierson's house—Hamadan wine—Mode of storing it—My horses—Abu Saif Mirza—His stratagem—Disinterested services—Persian logic—Pierson's horse's death—Horses put through their paces—I buy Salts and Senna—The prince's opinion—Money table—Edict.

A few days after the great festival Major S——, who was going down country, kindly allowed me to accompany him as far as Hamadan. We started one afternoon, doing the two first stages by sunset, and stopping at the post-house at Karneabad.

The weather was fine, the roads and horses good. I had by this time learnt to ride by balance only, and acquired the art of remaining in an upright position on my steed whenever he suddenly dropped as if shot, instead of going over his head by the force of momentum. The Major had a few tinned provisions, which it had been impossible to get in a place like Tiflis, and with a roast fowl or two our commissariat was well provided. The intense cold was over, and I was glad to use my goggles to protect my eyes during the middle of the day. We also never started before the light was good, which made an immense difference in our comfort.

I had invested in a native bridle, the severe bit of which enabled me thoroughly to control my horses,

and, being the one they were used to, did not keep them in the perpetual state of fret that the European bit did. My saddle-bags, too, were well packed and exactly the same weight, so that I never had to get down to put them level, and they never annoyed the horse.

I had my rugs, four in number, and the same size, sewn together down one side and at the bottom, so that whichever side I might have to the draught, and of this there is always plenty, I could have one blanket under me, three over me, and the sewn edge to the wind, while, as the bottom was sewn up, the blankets could never shift, and the open side could be always kept to the wall. This arrangement, an original one, I have never altered, for in hot weather, by lying on say three blankets, one only was over me.

There is, however, one thing that I soon found out in travelling. To thoroughly rest oneself it is needful to, firstly, undress and wear a night-jacket and pyjamas; and, secondly, to sleep in a sheet. The addition to one's comfort is immense, particularly in warm weather, while the extra weight of a sheet is not worth considering. An air pillow, too, is a great luxury.

I have been in the habit of no longer using a waterproof sheet to keep my blankets dry, but of rolling them tightly up, and then strapping them and cramming them into an india-rubber soldier's hold-all, which ensures a dry bed, and straps handily to the saddle. This hold-all was the cause of a rather amusing adventure.

On coming home once on leave, in a great hurry, I had left Persia with only my hold-all, having given my saddle-bags and road kit to my servant. I had

come direct from Tzaritzin on the Volga to Boulogne without stopping, but had to wait some hours on the tidal boat before she started. I stepped on board and asked one of the men where the steward was.

“Oh, he ain’t aboard yet, mate.”

“Can you get me a wash?”

“Come along a’ me, mate.” The man took me down to what seemed the fo’cassel, and placed a bucket of water before me.

I said, “Come, is this the accommodation you give your first-class passengers?”

The man roared with laughter.

“No yer doant, mate, no yer doant. I never seed no first-class passengers with luggage like that,” pointing to my hold-all; and it was only on producing my coupon book, that the man could be persuaded I was not a deck passenger, and to take me to the saloon aft.

As I was covered with coal dust, and generally grimy—the opportunities for washing being then not what they are now in Russia and Germany—the hold-all had made the man sure that I was an impostor.

We came in the afternoon of the third day into Hamadan, having done the stages in fair time. The journey was without incident, save that a string of antelopes crossed the road in broad daylight some ten yards ahead of us. As they appeared so suddenly, we neither of us thought of using our revolvers. Hamadan looked pretty as we entered it, and was surrounded by apparently interminable gardens. On turning a corner we came upon Captain Pierson,

under whom I was to serve, and of whose division I was in medical charge. He had ridden out to meet us.

In the early days of the Persian Telegraph it was usual to ride out with the departing, and to do the same to meet the coming guest.

This is the Persian custom of the “istikhbal,” or ceremonious riding out to meet the new arrival; being a very important ceremony, regulated by hard-and-fast rules: such as that the greater the personage, the further must the welcomer travel; while the lesser the welcomer, the further must he go. Thus, in the case of a new governor of Shiraz, the king’s son, the big men rode out three stages, the ex-governor one, while some actually went as far as Abadeh, or seven days’ journey; but these were mostly merchants or small people.

Great fuss and parade is made, the condition of the incomer being denoted by the grandeur of this “istikhbal,” or procession of welcome. In the case of official personages, soldiers, both horse and foot, go out; led-horses also are sent simply for show, splendidly caparisoned with Cashmere shawls or embroidered housings on the saddles. And it is found necessary, in the case of the arrival of ambassadors or envoys, such as that of Sir F. Goldsmid (when on the duty of the definition of the Seistan boundary), to stipulate that a *proper* istikhbal shall be sent out prior to the commissioners entering a large town.

There is another ceremony, that of the “badraghah,” or riding out with the departing guest. This, however, is not so formal, and is less an act of ceremony than one of friendship; however, it is a compliment that in both cases is much appreciated, especially when shown by a European to a native.

Latterly the Europeans have almost given up this riding out, which practically is a great nuisance to those riding at an unusual or uncomfortable time, *perhaps in the sun*, and when the arrival of the guest is very uncertain; it is, too, very annoying, when tired with a rapid chupper, and having ridden many hours on end, to be put on a very lively horse, ready to jump out of his skin with condition, and to pull one's arms off.

As we had got in sooner than was expected, and were only some mile from Pierson's house, we did not change our horses for the fresh ones provided by him, and after many turns and twists between high mud walls, we came to the house, and here my travels ended for the time.

The courtyard was some twenty yards by thirty wide. A hauz or tank ran the entire length, filled by a constant stream of running water, and on either side of it was a long flower-bed sunk in the stone pavement, about the same depth below it as the hauz was elevated above.

On a level with the ground in the basement were the cellars and servants' quarters, and above this a platform ten feet from the ground, some four yards broad, which extended the whole width of the courtyard. This was covered by an enormous structure, consisting of a roof some six feet thick, being painted wood mudded over a yard deep; and then under it a hollow air-chamber, supported on three huge wooden octagonal columns, likewise painted in red, blue, and yellow. Behind and beneath this talár, or verandah, which was some thirty feet from floor to ceiling, was a central room (orūssēe), elaborately painted and gilt in the vilest taste, with a huge window (which could be kept wide open in hot

weather) of coloured glass, in small panes four inches by seven. This was the dining and reception room.

On either side of this orūssēe, and having the talár still in front of them, was a smaller apartment. One was Pierson's bedroom, the other mine. Thus in front of the three rooms was a covered platform, four yards by twenty. On this during the summer, save when the sun was on it, we lived, and when the sun was high the rooms were kept cool by the talár.

We soon sat down to a sumptuous dinner, and I tasted, for the first time, Hamadan wine, of which I had heard many and different opinions. It was a delicious pale, scented, straw-coloured wine, like a light hock; rather too sweet, but apparently of no great strength. I soon found, however, that in the latter idea I was much in error, for it was a wine that went straight to the head, and remained there.

Delicious as it is, the fact of its newness—and it often will not keep, a second summer generally turning it sour if in bottle—makes it objectionable, for though it is light and delightful, especially when iced, a headache surely follows even a third glass.

The natives, we found out in after years, are able to keep it in bulk, and then the tendency to give an after headache goes away, but so does the delicious flavour. In winter so cold is Hamadan, that the wine, which is kept in huge jars holding two hundred maunds (or eight hundred bottles), or even more, sunk half their depth in the ground, has to be kept from freezing by making a hot-bed of fermenting horse-dung around the upper part of these jars, and often these means fail; for I have myself been present when blocks of frozen wine have been chopped out

of the jars for drinking; these plans of storing wine only refer to Hamadan: in other Persian towns the wine, as soon as it is cleared, is placed in carboys, holding from six to twenty-four bottles.

It is sold in Hamadan in baghallis, or native bottles, holding about a pint and a half. They are of the very thinnest glass, and very fragile *when empty*. One of these bottlefuls costs about fourpence—at least it did when I was in Hamadan in 1869.

In a couple of days Major S—— left on his way to Baghdad, and Pierson insisted on my remaining his guest, which I was only too glad to do, till I could get servants, etc. of my own.

The first thing, however, was to buy a horse, as I could not draw my horse allowance from Government till I had really a horse of my own, and the three pounds a month was, considering the smallness of my pay, a consideration. Of course at that time I knew nothing about horses, and was fortunate in having the advice of Pierson. As soon as it was given out that I wanted horses there was a permanent levée at our quarters of all the owners of the lame, the halt and the blind, and their animals. These men, however, were all sent to the right-about by Pierson, and at last a dealer came with four likely young horses; these were examined and pronounced sound. On their price being asked, one hundred tomans each was demanded. I was disappointed, for this was exactly the sum (forty pounds) that I was prepared to give for *two* horses. But I was reassured by Pierson, who made me understand that that was *always* the price *asked* for any beast worth having, and merely meant that the seller did not mean to take less than one half the amount. I was told, too, that if one wanted to buy a horse anywhere near its

value *some weeks* must be taken in the negotiation. The matter ended in Pierson's offering the dealer fifty tomans for two of the animals, and the man leaving our courtyard in simulated indignation, declining even to notice a bid so ridiculous. However, as Pierson said we had not seen the last of him, I did not despair.

Next morning, on coming out to breakfast, I saw our horse-dealer seated with the servants, and as Pierson put it, "They are settling the amount of commission they are each to get, and this commission they *will* have; ten per cent. is legitimate, more is robbery. So all we have to do is to be very determined; if you can get any two of the four animals for your limit you will do well, if not you must let them go."

Pierson now sent for his head-man and told him that "I was to have two serviceable horses for forty pounds, and that I should not pay a penny more; so, as he knew the amount of modakel (profit) he and the rest of the servants could make, he had better do the best he could for me, and that *he* (Pierson) would see that I was not done as to quality." The man cast up his eyes and retired.

While we were at breakfast a poor prince, Abu Saif Mirza, came, and was invited to partake. Pierson told me that he was a very good fellow indeed, and a grandson of Futteh-Ali Shah,[7] a former Shah of Persia, but from the irregularity with which his very small pension was paid, he had to live almost by his gun, and chance meals, such as the present.

Of course I could not understand what he said, but he fully entered into the difficulty as to finding me a horse. And as *in Persia nothing can be done without stratagem*, he suggested on the spot a means for

bringing the dealer to his senses; it was deep, “deep as the deep blue sea.” It was simply this: he would exhibit his horse to Pierson and promise to send it for trial to-morrow, naming a price just about its value, and “then you will see all will be well.”

No sooner was breakfast over than the prince’s horse was brought into the courtyard, stripped and examined, and the suggested arrangement made. As it happened I afterwards bought this very horse for Pierson to make a wedding present of, but he would have been more than I could manage at the time, being a spirited beast and a puller. The Shahzadeh (prince) took his departure, promising loudly to send his horse round in the morning.

No sooner was he gone than the nazir, or head-servant, presented himself and delivered to Pierson an oration somewhat of this sort. “May I represent to the service of the sahib, that it would be very unwise to purchase the horse of the prince? he is not young” (he was five years old), “he is gone in the wind” (he was quite sound), “and his temper is awful; besides this I have reason to know that he is worthless in every respect” (he was one of the best horses I ever saw, and I knew him for ten years). “Of course to me it would make a great difference, for the prince has indeed offered me a handsome commission” (quite untrue), “while from this poor dealer not a farthing can be wrung by the servants. No! he would rather die than pay one farthing. So though the other servants are loath to let a sale take place to my sahib’s friend, yet I, as an old servant, and looking for a reward from my sahib for conduct so disinterested, have after infinite trouble got the dealer to consent to a hundred and fifty tomans for any two of his four horses.”

"Be off," was the laconic reply of Pierson. "When we ride to-day, if the dealer will sell for my price, let the horses be ready and I will see them and ride them; if not he can go."

The man sighed and replied: "Ah, I see, sahib, the prince has laughed at your beard, and persuaded you to buy his worthless brute. I can't offer such terms to a respectable man like the dealer, but I will give the message."

I now saw the horse-dealer leave the courtyard with the air of an injured man, and I feared I was as far off a purchase as ever. But Pierson reassured me. I had plagued him to sell me one of his own large stud which he wished to reduce, but he declined with a smile, saying he never sold a horse to a friend unless he was a thorough judge, and that as I knew nothing about horses he must decline, as I might repent when too late; and though I pressed him a good deal, he would not relent. Few men would have lost an opportunity to get rid of beasts they did not require, but Pierson was a man in a thousand.

At that time he had eight horses in his stable, all good and all sound. He had named them after heathen gods, Jupiter, Pluto, Saturn, Cupid, Hercules, etc. But his pet nag, Apollo—a grey he had given one hundred and twenty tomans, or fifty pounds, for, an enormous price in those days in Persia—had a few weeks before caught his foot in a hole while galloping over turf; horse and man came down with a crash; Pierson was insensible; and when he came to himself he found, some four yards off, his favourite lying dead with his neck broken.

He rode away on his groom's horse, the man carrying his saddle and bridle. On getting to the house he sent a gang to bury the poor beast, but too

late, for the villagers had taken off the skin and tail. Pierson on telling me the story did it so pathetically, that he left off with wet eyes, and I felt inclined to sob myself.

As we got ready for the afternoon ride, the horse-dealer and his four horses appeared, and with a sigh he informed Pierson that he accepted the terms, or nearly so. On getting out of the town the horses were put through their paces. They were a big grey, with enormous mane and tail, of not much breed, but in dealer's condition, and a well-shaped and strong-looking beast; an iron-grey, who plunged and shied and was generally vicious, but really the most valuable of the four; a fourteen-hand pure-bred Arab, with a huge scar of a spear-wound a foot long on his shoulder, otherwise perfect, of angelic temper, but small by the side of the Persian horses, as all Arabs are; his muzzle almost touched his chest as he arched his neck, and his action was very high, yet easy; he seemed an aristocrat compared to the rest; his thin and fine mane and tail were like silk—he, too, was five. A big, coarse, raking chestnut, that took all the boy who rode him could do to hold him, rising four, completed the list.

Pierson kindly rode them all, and with considerable fear I did the same, save the lively grey, which I wisely acknowledged to be too much for me. The big chestnut bolted with me, but I stuck on. The other chestnut was all I could wish, fast, paces good, no tricks, willing—but, then, the scar. I did not wish to buy him on that account, but Pierson over-ruled me, and I took his advice; he told me that in Persia a scar was nothing, that I could ride the horse in comfort and safety, as he had no vices, and that whenever I wished to sell I should lose very little.

The raking chestnut, as a young horse, Pierson told me was a speculation; he might turn out well, he might not. And the grey—well, all I could get out of Pierson was, that “he had a fine mane and tail,” which he certainly had, and that “he was value, or nearly.” He was not a well-bred animal, and I liked him, I fear, on account of the mane and tail; but he pulled. All were entire horses.

Pierson wouldn’t let me buy the iron-grey, had I wanted to, as he said he was dangerous, even to a good rider.

So the matter ended in my taking the chestnut for five hundred and fifty kerans and the grey for six hundred and fifty. Pierson said the prices ought to have been reversed. He was right. I had that chestnut Arab ten years; he never was sick or sorry, and I never had to strike or spur him; a pressure of the knee and a shake of the rein would make him do his utmost. And he was a fast horse; small as he was he carried my twelve stone comfortably, and as a ladies’ horse he was perfect, having a beautiful mouth, while he followed like a dog, and nothing startled him or made him shy. In the stable he was quiet, save to a new-comer, on whom he always left his mark by a bite on the neck, and then, having asserted his position, which was afterwards never disputed, he was always friendly to stable companions. He never kicked. I gave him away at last, when I left Persia on leave.

Next morning the “poor prince” called and looked over my purchases; he approved the chestnut, but shook his head at the grey, saying he had “ableh,” or leprosy, and that in time he would break down, pine, and die. The only sign he had was a pink patch the size of a fourpenny-piece on his black muzzle. “Give

him back," said the Prince.

"I can't see anything wrong," said Pierson. *His mane and tail decided me.* I stuck to him, christening him "Salts"—the chestnut I called "Senna."

The custom in Persia is that, until a horse has been three nights *fed* in the stable of a new master (unless specially stipulated to the contrary before witnesses of respectability, or in writing) he may be returned without giving any reason whatever, simply on the purchaser repenting his bargain; this is often taken advantage of by the buyer to return the animal in order to lower his price; the manœuvre seldom succeeds, as the seller is prepared for it.

The European, if awake to his own interest, generally spends the three days in giving the beast a good "bucketting" over ploughed land, when, if there be any hidden defect, it comes out, and the animal can be returned. We did this, but no fault showing itself, I paid my one hundred and twenty tomans[8] (forty-eight pounds) and concluded the purchase.

CHAPTER VI.
HAMADAN.

Morning rides—Engage servants—Dispensary—A bear-garden—Odd complaints—My servants get rich—Modakel—The distinction between picking and stealing—Servants—Their pay—Vails—Hakim Bashi—Delleh—Quinine—Discipline—I commence the cornet—The result of rivalry—Syud Houssein—Armenians—Cavalry officer—Claim to sanctity of the Armenians—Their position in the country—Jews.

As the weather got warmer we began morning rides; we used to start regularly at six *A.M.* Pierson kindly gave me a hint occasionally, and we had some very enjoyable canters about Hamadan, the environs of which are very pretty and full of foliage; in this other Persian towns are generally rather deficient. We usually managed to get in before the sun got too high, had a second tub, and dressed for breakfast.

I engaged three servants, Abdul-Mahomed, personal or head-servant; Abdullah, a groom-boy; and Ramazan, as sweeper and dispensary attendant.

As the staff under my official charge was very small, and they were unmarried healthy men, my Government work was very trifling; but a constant crowd at the door, desirous of seeing the new Hakim, [9] made me anxious to take the advice given me while in Teheran, and make the most of my opportunities ere the novelty had worn off. I gave out, then, that I was prepared to see patients from eleven *A.M.*, and a courtyard that we did not use in

any way, (it was originally the women's quarter of our house,) was kindly placed at my disposal by Pierson, who also gave me the advantage of his knowledge of Persian as an interpreter.

I saw my servant was very busy indeed, and that all the morning a file of people were flocking into the courtyard, in which I had installed my dispensary. Precisely at eleven I proceeded to seat myself; what was my astonishment to find some two hundred people sitting in groups, my two servants vainly endeavouring to keep some sort of order; the noise was great, and practical joking and laughter were in the ascendant.

Pierson's presence, however, awed the rioters, and silence was after a time obtained, some few of the more noisy among the males being ejected.

I soon found that many of the so-called patients had merely come from curiosity, while others had old injuries to complain of, and did not expect medicines, but miracles.

The replies to the question, "What is the matter?" were sometimes highly ridiculous, one man informing me that he had a serpent in his inside, while another complained of being bewitched.

Among the ladies, Pierson, who bravely stuck to his self-imposed duty of interpreter, informed me that the principal request was for aphrodisiacs, drugs to increase *embonpoint*, and cosmetics; while many women of apparently great age were urgent for physic for improving their appearance. Many cases of eye-disease presented themselves, and not a few of surgical injury, which had been treated only in the most primitive manner. It was only by four in the afternoon that I succeeded in getting rid of the

rabble-rout that had come to my dispensary.

Rome was not built in a day. As the novelty wore off and the sightseers ceased to come, the sick, who generally amounted to from two hundred to two hundred and fifty a day, more or less, became more tractable, and my servants better able to manage them.

I made stringent rules as to seeing all in the order of their coming, and separating the men from the women. Although I saw many thousands of patients in Hamadan, yet I found that I made no appreciable addition to my income; those who could pay, didn't; and the only grist that came to the mill my two men absorbed. These now bloomed out in silken raiment, and my head-man, whose pay was twelve pounds a year, and clothe and feed himself, actually kept a servant of his own, and adopted a slow and dignified pace, which, as he day by day increased in wealth, became more and more apparent.

I, after some weeks, on some provocation or other, determined to discharge Ramazan, who immediately told me, with many protestations, that on account of the great love he bore me he could not leave me, and was desirous to stay at half-wages. On my remaining obdurate he wished to stop on nothing a month and "find himself." He begged so hard that I couldn't turn him out, and forgave him. The fact was, that his pickings from the daily crowd of patients was some ten times as much as his pay.

Often have I been asked by Persian acquaintances, "What is your pay?" "Little enough," I reply. "Ah, but what is your modakel?" *i. e.* pickings and stealings.

This system of modakel it is useless to fight

against. The Persians, from the king downwards, speak of “my modakel.” The governor of a province buys his appointment: this is *the king’s* modakel; he farms the taxes for one hundred thousand tomans, and sells them for half as much again; this is *his* modakel; the buyer exacts two hundred thousand, the difference is *his* modakel.

I buy a horse, a carpet, or a pound of sugar, ten per cent. is added by my servant to my bill. I sell a horse, and ten per cent. is taken on the price by my servant. I pay a muleteer, and ten per cent. is deducted from the hire. These things are the so-called legitimate “modakel” of my servant, and I cannot avoid it. If pressed, or the thing is brought home to him, he will not even hesitate to acknowledge it.

“It is the custom, sahib. Could you have bought the thing cheaper than I, or sold it so well, even with the modakel? No, you could not; then why object? What stimulates me to do the best I can for you? My modakel; you cannot fight against it.” And he is right; the ten per cent. is extracted from all, Europeans or Persians; and it is no use to kick against the pricks. But more than this is considered robbery (*if detected*).[10]

In the last five years of my life in Persia I kept all these servants mentioned in the note, with the exception of a *nazir*, who is, as a rule, a purely useless man, and only an increaser of his master’s expenses for the sake of the addition to his own profits. Thus my cook, through whose hands the whole expenses, eight hundred kerans a month, or at times a thousand, used to pass, made, say, ninety kerans as his percentage; out of the sums paid for shoeing and repairs and sale of manure (a valuable

perquisite), the grooms made theirs; while for every penny expended by my servant a percentage was taken in money or goods.

Even the laundress would *take* (*not steal*) a tenth or more of the soap given her. But then it was no use fighting against it, for it was not etiquette for the better-class European to be seen in the bazaar, save for special things, as curios, and such a proceeding would entail a great loss of consideration, and cause him to be classed as a “mean white.”

Again, one’s head-servant, though he took this percentage, made it a point of honour to do his best for you *after that had been deducted*, and no one else but himself was permitted to rob on a large scale.

I have struggled against the system repeatedly. I have even caused muleteers to be paid in my presence, and have given them a present for civility, and have then ordered the men off the premises, not allowing my servants to leave the house; or I have paid by cheque on a native banker; but I am sure the servants got their commission, and shared it in certain proportions arranged among themselves.

Another source of revenue to servants is the system of vails. This is, I am glad to say, being lessened. At one time the Europeans encouraged it. I remember, after I had been about a year in the country, going to stay with Pierson in Teheran, on a visit of five weeks: I gave his head-servant to distribute amongst the rest two hundred and fifty kerans, or ten pounds. The man’s face did not express a lively satisfaction, though that was merely policy; and as I was riding out of the gate, the “dog-boy,” a youth retained to feed the five or six dogs my friend kept, seized my bridle, and asked me roughly,

"Where was his present?" This was more than mortal man could stand; I thonged the fellow, going back afterwards to explain and apologise to his master, who turned him out then and there.

Thus a servant, though he nominally feeds and clothes himself, has his wages, his profits, his presents which each servant gets from his master at the New Year—generally a month's pay—his vails, and his master's old clothes; as these fetch a high price in a bazaar, they are an important item in the servant's budget. In addition to this, he gets a small allowance when travelling, and on the road his master feeds him. So that, taken altogether, his position is not a bad one, the emoluments of my head-man, for instance, being more than those of a native country doctor in fair practice.

I felt considerable satisfaction at this time at the visits to my dispensary of the "hakim bashi" (chief doctor), or rather one of those who had that title in Hamadan. He expressed himself as eager to learn, and knew a few words of French. I was, of course, delighted to give him any information I could, and he seemed very grateful for instruction; he, however, turned out afterwards to be a wolf in sheep's clothing, and was very nearly the cause of my stay in Persia being brought to an abrupt termination, a matter which will be duly detailed.

One day one of the servants brought a "delleh"[11] for sale, a sort of weasel, and of similar size; he was of an olive-green colour, with a bushy tail, having patches of yellowish-white on the body: a boy dragged him in by a string. He was so fierce no one would go near him, and was evidently carnivorous.

He was kept on our platform tied to a ring, till one

day he gnawed his thong and bolted into a hole. In this hole he remained, just showing his nose in the daytime, but coming out at night, when he was generally pursued by our dogs, who roamed about the place loose.

I had been in the habit of feeding the beast on raw meat, of which he was immoderately fond, and after some little trouble I taught him to come to call. The animal got very tame, though extremely pugnacious when teased, bristling his long soft fur out, like the mongoose, biting savagely, and emitting a short sharp cry of rage.

He used to beg for his food, sit in our hands, allow himself to be stroked, and became a great pet with both of us; but, as he showed a great disinclination to be tied up, we allowed him to live in his hole in the wall. As he grew fat from good living, he discontinued his nocturnal excursions, presenting himself at meals with great regularity; his intelligence was great, and the servants, who hated him, and looked on him as “nejis,” or unclean, kept carefully out of his way; as did the dogs, most of whom had been bitten severely, and the suddenness of his movements and the sharpness of his cries terrified them.

The beast, too, had another mode of defending himself, which I am glad to say he only resorted to once when hard pressed. Two of the dogs had got him in a corner, when suddenly they both bolted, and the delleh made for his hole in a dignified manner. He had employed the mode of defence used by the skunk, and the particular corner of the courtyard, and the two dogs and the delleh were unapproachable for a fortnight.

However, the animal had no stronger odour than

any other carnivorous beast, *save on this occasion*, and it probably was his only means of safety. After he had inhabited his hole some months, while he was gambolling on our platform, I saw the head of a second delleh cautiously protruded and rapidly withdrawn. He had been joined by a female, and after a week or two, she too became quite tame. Like the ferret and mongoose, these animals waged war against whatever had life, hunting fowls, etc., with the peculiarly stealthy gait so well known.

I noticed now that a considerable number of my patients, and Persian acquaintances, and all the servants, were continually pestering me for quinine. The reason was that the high price of this drug, pure as I had it, was a temptation, and as each impostor got a small quantity, my store sensibly diminished.

I was loath to stop distributing the drug altogether, as I had been particularly instructed that the giving away of quinine to the sick was beneficial, indirectly, to the good feeling which we desired to produce towards the English in Persia.

However, I made a rule only to give away the drug *in solution*, or, in the case of servants of our own, in the dry state *in the mouth*.

This had the desired effect, and as a rule one dose of the bitter drug caused the most grasping of the domestics to hesitate before applying for a second. This system I adopted during the whole time I was in the country, only giving the crystals to the European staff, and the quinine being distributed each year in ounces, where before it had been pounds. In fact, I did away with one of the sources of *legitimate* (?) *modakel* of the servants, who had traded on my innocence and simulated fever (intermittent) to obtain what was such very “portable property.”

One morning, while we were at breakfast under the “talar,” we saw a European enter the compound, and a little scene ensued that was sufficiently amusing. I must premise that in those early days of the Persian Telegraph Department, when communication was infrequent, owing to the continual destruction of the line, orders could only be conveyed by letters, which often never reached their destination.

The unknown sahib, without announcing himself, or asking if the superintendent were visible, stalked up on to the platform and thrust a paper into Pierson’s hand. On it was an order to Mr. P—— to proceed to Hamadan and take charge of the office there. And he (Mr. P——) had that moment alighted from his horse, having marched some twelve stages from Ispahan.

Pierson took the paper, read it, and said, “Well?”

The stranger replied, “I’m P——.”

“Have you nothing else to say?” said Pierson.

“No; I’ve come to take charge of the office here.”

Pierson now called for ink, and wrote “Mr. P—— will proceed at once to Shiraz, and take charge of the office there,” and signed it.

“You need not discharge your mules, and will start to-morrow. Good morning to you.”

Mr. P—— was equal to the occasion; he walked out of the place without a word, and he *did* start the next day (on his march of sixteen stages).

So much for discipline.

Pierson, who played the concertina, cornet, and piano, suggested to me as a pastime that he should

teach me the cornet. To this I assented; and the first thing was to learn to blow. This is not so easy as it seems, and as the noises I produced were not pleasant, Pierson only allowed my practising in the house when he was not at home. The flat roof at sunset was my place to practise, and here I blew to my heart's content. I only blew one note of various loudness, and to my astonishment found I had a rival, whose lungs were stronger than mine; he, too, blew one note in rapid succession. I blew—he blew—but his were decidedly the stronger sounds, and he blew longer. I kept up my blowing, but soon came down, feeling my inferiority.

The next night I was alone, my rival absent. I blew my one note in rapid succession till I could blow no more. Suddenly I heard cries, and sounds of beating, and shouts of men and women—a row evidently. I blew on.

Next morning the British Agent, Syud Houssein (these native agents are appointed by the English Legation in lieu of consuls throughout Persia at the great cities; they are really news-writers, but act as consuls, and look after English interests), came to Pierson, with a long face, saying that a complaint had been made to him by the Governor, of the conduct of the sahibs in his (Pierson's) house.

It appears that when the bath is full of men, and the time allotted to them expires, the bath is cleared, and the bath-man, *on its being empty*, blows on a buffalo horn for a few minutes a succession of notes. This is the signal to the expectant women, and so on, when the time for the ladies expires, for the men. *The bath-man was my unknown rival.*

The day before, the bath being full of women, I proceeded to our roof to indulge in cornet practice.

My efforts, alas! were so like the solos of the bath-man, that the Hamadan men of our quarter rushed to, and into the sacred precincts of, the bath. The women who were inside were furious at the unexpected intrusion, and called on their male relatives for protection. A fight ensued, which only ceased on both parties uniting to give the innocent bath-man a sound thrashing; which having thoroughly accomplished to their satisfaction, and broken his buffalo horn, they retired, *hinc illæ lachrymæ*. The matter was soon explained, and a small present consoled the beaten bath-man, and I gave up the cornet.

Syud Houssein was a dignified little man, with the dark complexion and scanty black beard that is supposed to characterise the true descendants of the prophet. I fancy myself that while his duties consisted merely in looking after the few Persians who were British subjects in Hamadan, and writing a monthly news-letter to the Legation at Teheran, he was quite happy; but that the actual presence of the unbeliever in the city itself was not very palatable to him. However, we ever found him kind and courteous, though he avoided breaking bread with us, save in secret and when there was no escape.

There are a great many Armenians in Hamadan, and there are villages in the immediate neighbourhood of the place inhabited only by them. They have mostly adopted the Persian dress and language, Armenian being in disuse as a language among those living in Hamadan, and there being no distinctive mark by which one can tell them in either indoor or outdoor dress; unlike the Armenian of Teheran, who adopts the dress of those of his nation who are Russian subjects, or the Julfa (Ispahan)

Armenians, who affect the fez to simulate the Turkish subject, or at times pretend an ignorance of Persian, and disguise themselves as sahibs. A ludicrous instance of this occurred once when I was coming into Shiraz chupparee. In the distance I saw under some trees, by a running brook, where generally travellers from Shiraz bid their friends farewell, what appeared to me an officer in the full-dress uniform of the English (?) army. I was intrigued, and as the trees were off the road I cantered up to the group.

I found one of our Armenian signallers in an engineer officer's full-dress scarlet mess jacket, jack-boots, a full-dress uniform cap, lambswool drawers (sewn up in front) to simulate buckskins, a huge cavalry sabre, and *three* revolvers. The fact was that he had assumed what he supposed to be the correct get-up of an English officer of rank, in order that if any highway robbers met him (the country was very disturbed at the time) on his seven days' march to Abadeh, they might refrain from attacking him. He arrived safely. Unfortunately these assumptions of the appearance of the European by Armenians does not add to the respect which the real sahib receives.

Some of the tales these people tell to increase their own importance in the eyes of their oppressors, the Persians, are ingenious and amusing. When I was living in Julfa, an Armenian village close to Ispahan, which had been for divers reasons made the headquarters of the Persian Telegraph Department in that place, I was called upon by a great personage, the farmer of the taxes, a Persian, one Rahim Khan.

After the usual compliments, he remarked, in conversation, that "I must be very glad to live in so holy a place as Julfa. Full, too, of churches."

I demurred.

"But amidst your co-religionists, men whom you so much revere."

This was too much. I told him that "we could not respect the Armenians, but that we pitied them for the many years of oppression they had undergone, which probably had brought out the bad points in their characters."

He would not be denied. "But you *revere* them?" he persisted.

"Quite the contrary."

He burst into a laugh. "Ah! dogs, and sons of dogs as they are," he replied; "only the other day one of them told me, on my congratulating him on the presence of their protectors, the English—for you know, sahib, before the Feringhis came, *they were as are now the Jews*—that *they* were not complimented, but rather the Europeans; for, said the dog, 'we are to them what your Syuds (descendants of the prophet) are to you, noble sir'—in fact, holy men."

This anecdote is characteristic of the Armenian.

The Hamadan Armenian is brighter and more civilised than his Ispahan *confrère*, his frequent journeyings to Russia having sharpened him, while, there being only two priests in the place, he is not bigoted. He has adopted the manners and dress of the Persian, also his language, and is so far less exposed to annoyance by the reigning people; in fact, in Hamadan he is not looked on or treated as an outcast; while in Julfa the national dress, specially apparent in the female attire, the national language, and their ignorance and lack of politeness, make them a people apart.

The gist of the matter is, that in Hamadan and its environs, the Armenian is simply a Persian, not a Mahommedan; while in Julfa he is an Armenian of the Armenians; “and the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”

As to the Jews, their position is terrible. Probably in no country in the world are they treated worse than in Persia. Beaten, despised, and oppressed, cursed even by slaves and children, they yet manage to exist, earning their living as musicians, dancers, singers, jewellers, silver- and gold-smiths, midwives, makers and sellers of wine and spirits. When anything very filthy is to be done a Jew is sent for.

CHAPTER VII.
HAMADAN.

Tomb of Esther and Mordecai—Spurious coins—Treasure-finding—Interest—A gunge—Oppression—A cautious finder—Yari Khan—We become treasure seekers—We find—Our cook—Toffee—Pole-buying—Modakel—I am nearly caught—A mad dog—Rioters punished—Murder of the innocents.

Hamadan has no show place save the shrines of Esther and Mordecai. A poor-looking, blue-tiled dome or "gōmbeza," some fifty feet in height, surmounts the shrine, and covers the tombs themselves; the rest of the building is in red brick, in many places mudded over. It presents the appearance of an ordinary minor shrine. In the outer chamber is nothing remarkable. A low door leads to another apartment by a passage; on crawling through this inner passage, which can only be done with considerable discomfort, almost on hands and knees, one enters a vaulted chamber, floored with common blue tiles. There is no splendour here, and nothing to attract the cupidity of the Persians.

In one corner lay a heap of common "cherragh," or oil lamps of burnt clay, covered with blue glaze, such as are used by the poor. They are on the same principle as the classic lamp, a reservoir for the oil or fat, with a projection in which lies the wick of twisted cotton or rag; these lamps will give a dull, smoky light for some hours without trimming. Our guides, two evil-looking and squalid Jews, informed

us that twice a year the place was illuminated. In the centre of the apartment stood two wooden arks, almost devoid of ornament, but of considerable age; these were thickly sprinkled with small pieces of paper, on which were inscriptions in the Hebrew character, the paper being stuck on as is a label. Our guides could only tell us that pious Jewish pilgrims were in the habit of affixing these to the arks. We could not even ascertain which was the tomb of Esther and which that of Mordecai. The arks were shaped like dog-kennels, and had a slightly ornamented pinnacle of wood at either extremity of their roofs. The guides declined to allow Pierson to make a drawing of them; but I fancy this was merely done to extract a further gratuity. Nothing else was in the place save a poor and much-thumbed copy of the Jewish Scriptures, quite modern and in the book form.

When we left the tomb, after having gratified the two Jews, one produced from his pocket a large bag of what appeared to be ancient coins, both copper and silver. We examined these, and I was anxious to make a purchase; but Pierson assured me that they were spurious. And the Jew, after many protestations, acknowledged that they were so, with the exception of a few coins of Alexander the Great, with the head in high relief; and Sassanian coins of various monarchs, on the reverse of which were always represented figures and an altar (of a fire temple). These two sorts of coin are so common in Persia as to be absolutely worth merely their weight in silver, and the coins of the Sassanian monarchs are constantly being found in crocks.

Treasure-finding in Persia is a frequent thing, and is easily to be accounted for in a country where the

bankers are simply money-changers, and there is a danger of being a mark for the oppressor, in being thought a rich man. The only way to invest money is in land or houses; either of these methods are subject to the same objection, the owner is known to be a man of property; and unless he can buy protection is subject to exactions and extortions innumerable. Burying or secreting remains; for a good Mussulman will not lend his money at interest, though many who are not strict do so, the current rate of interest among merchants being twelve per cent. per annum, paid monthly; while, where there is risk at all, or the loan is given without full security, twenty-five to forty per cent. is often exacted.

Ruins of all sorts abound in every part of Persia, and these ruins are constantly being either levelled for cultivation, the earth being valued as a fertiliser (they are many of them of mud), or taken down and removed in donkey-loads for the sake of the old *burnt* bricks, which it is found practically cheaper to obtain in this manner than to make and burn; for an *old* brick is more valuable to the builder, being always a good brick, than the *new* one, which is often small and worthless, except for ornamental facings of decorative brickwork—an art in which the Persians, particularly in Shiraz, have attained a great proficiency, but which, from the poverty of the country, and the less substantial mode of building practised on that account in the present day, is rapidly dying out.

In these various operations the discovery of a “gunge,” or treasure, is not infrequent, although such a find is not always a very profitable transaction for the finder. I have known three such instances.

One occurred at a place called Bonaat, in the

province of Fars, some five stages from Shiraz. The finder was a man of learning, who had a house and a few acres of land at this place. He had mostly lived at Baghdad, where he had been well educated, but, on his marriage, bought the little estate at Bonaat.

He found one day in the mud wall of his house, a very old one which he was rebuilding, five jars full of coin. He sent away the workmen, but not before some of them were aware of the discovery, and at once proceeded to bury the treasure (of the truth of this story there is no doubt). Two or three days after this, a messenger from the owner of the greater part of the country in the neighbourhood arrived, and he proceeded to demand the whole of the treasure-trove; he gave no good reason, simply saying that his master meant to have it. The finder tried to make terms with the man, but, unfortunately, he had no means of bribing him but with the actual coins found, which the messenger was anxious but afraid to accept. Taking possession of all the contents of one jar, which my acquaintance with many protests placed at his disposal, the great man's retainer produced a written order for the man to accompany him to Shiraz, and, putting two men in charge of the house and the rest of the treasure, the poor fellow's wife, child, and servant being sent off to a neighbour's without ceremony, they started at once for the residence of the man in power at that place. The end of the matter was, that the contents of *all five jars* went to this grandee, while nothing remained to the unhappy finder but the suspicion of his having secreted a still greater treasure, and he went about in fear of his life, frequent demands being made for the supposed balance still hidden. In disgust he sold his house and land for a trifle, and went to Bushire, where, under the shadow of the

British Residency, he was safe from further troubles. I never got other details than this, but I am in a position to vouch for their truth.

Another case was that of a villager who found a treasure of coin in the ruins of a mud village close to Ispahan. He, luckily for himself, was alone, and managed to transport the whole amount, little by little, to a place of safety. Shortly after this he set out, as a poor man, to walk the pilgrimage to Mecca. This was sufficient and valid excuse for a disappearance for two years. This time he wisely employed in the safe investment of the amount. He went in rags, he returned in comparative affluence; and though often accused of *the crime* of having discovered a treasure, he wisely denied it; and having secured by a handsome payment the protection of a local magnate, whom he had, doubtless, to heavily subsidise each year, he remained a wealthy man, and will probably be allowed to die in his bed.

The last case was that of a peasant of the neighbourhood of Zinjan, and occurred within the last five years. It was reported to the local governor that a peasant named Yari was in the habit of selling ingots of gold to the Jews of Zinjan at a rate considerably below the market price; the governor seized the man, searched his house, finding a considerable quantity of gold in ingots therein, and, *as the matter had now become public*, reported the whole affair to Teheran, with a statement that the fellow had discovered a gold-mine, or found “the treasure of King Darius,” or the way to make gold!

This “treasure of King Darius” is a legendary myth that is constantly occurring to the minds of the inflammable Persians. An order came to take the

man at once to the capital, but he simply denied either the treasure or the mine, stating that he had found a few ingots, and sold them gradually. But the evidence pointed another way, for the appliances for fusing the metal, of a rough description, were found in his house, and what could an obscure villager know of fusing gold?

The man remained a long time in prison in Teheran, and it is stated on the best authority that means were employed to cause him to speak, which are common in the East, but are happily no longer in use in Europe (save, it is said, in Turkey).

At last he confided to his jailers that he had discovered a gold-mine in the hills; the excitement was intense, he received at once a dress of honour and the title of Khan, equivalent to our knighthood—*i. e.* it converts a nobody into a somebody. And Yari Khan, carefully guarded and treated with consideration, was taken to Zinjan that he might point out the site of the mine, for his descriptions, though very graphic, had not enabled the searchers to find it. On his arrival he endeavoured by an opportune illness to put off the evil day, but as finding the mine was of more importance to the authorities than the health of a villager, he was soon conveyed to the mountains where he had carefully indicated its situation. But he could not or would not find it. Free recourse was had to the bastinado, but no mine. The man was cast into prison, and doubtless, unless ere this he is dead, or has confessed the source of his wealth, or found means to administer a bribe, he is still in prison on the lowest diet and a frequent administration of stick, even if other and nameless horrors be not resorted to.

Pierson told me that one of the *occupations* of the

Hamadan Jews is the manufacture of the so-called ancient coins; these are sent in large quantities to Baghdad, Teheran, Ispahan, and Constantinople, and sold there to the unsuspicious or ignorant European. He told me, too, that Hamadan has a great reputation for the finding of real antiquities, and that many of the Jews actually paid a small sum for the privilege of searching the ground in certain spots, taking the chance of a find or a blank day.

A Jew readily acceded to the proposal that he and two labourers should be paid for their time, and a few kerans should be given by us for permission to dig, and the intrinsic value of any object in the precious metals handed over to him, the objects themselves being ours.

A few days after, the Jew came to show us the place, some miles from the town where the search was taking place. Two labourers dug some foot of the surface earth away in clods and piled it in heaps. The Jew watched the labourers, and we watched the Jew. After they had uncovered the whole of the ten yards square, which it was agreed that we should dig, the labourers set to to sift it through a coarse sieve, but nothing was found; a second sifting, however, which we noticed that the Jew watched with much more curiosity than the first, produced four small cubes of gold; they were about one-third of an inch cube, and were composed of tiny beads of pure gold soldered together, a hole being left in two of the opposite sides for stringing; they were hollow, and about two pounds in value (the four). We found only these, and they were too few to form an ornament, though doubtless real relics of ancient Ecbatana. So we rewarded our Jew, and dug no more for hidden treasure, or rather antiquities.

I frequently laugh at our housekeeping experiences in those early days. We paid our cook ten kerans a day each for our messing, but every little extra was debited to us with stern accuracy; as, one day we made a pound of toffee, and at the month's end were charged, "For making the Feringhi sweetmeat, fifteen shillings!" These items and the pay of my servants and my horse-keep made me fear that I should not be able to live on my pay; but I soon found that the cook was simply charging us four times the cost of our living. As Pierson was now leaving for Teheran, I was able to manage with a humbler cook on a less extravagant scale, and live better.

An amusing instance of the inveterate habit of making modakel now occurred prior to Pierson's departure. In the early days of the Telegraph Department in Persia the line was supported by *wooden* poles, generally poplar, and much trouble was found in buying these. It would have been impossible for a European to buy them at all, and as the natives had to be employed, it taxed all Pierson's ingenuity to prevent wholesale robbery taking place. The poles had to be paid for, and the buyer and seller generally managed to put their heads together to make the "Dowlet Ingleez" (English Government) pay a very fancy price.

Some poles were suddenly very urgently required, and the Sarhang or Colonel, the chief of the officials of the Persian office of the telegraph in Hamadan, the moonshee[12] or interpreter, a member of our staff, a native of Baghdad, and Pierson's head-servant or nazir, were sent together to buy poles to the tune of kerans two thousand four hundred, in the villages in the neighbourhood, on the principle that each would act as a check on the other. These gentry

divided their money into two portions, half to be profit and half to buy poles.

The poles were purchased; but when they returned, the moonshee desired an interview with Pierson.

After pointing out his own integrity and high sense of honour (this man's English was peculiar; it had been acquired of the sailors in Baghdad, and was freely interlarded with oaths; but, worst of all, he had never learnt the use of the words *very*, *more*, and *most*, substituting the more homely expression which is used by Anglo-Saxons for sanguinary, as a word meaning all three; his conversation was thus less choice than forcible), he communicated to Pierson that half of the sum said to be expended had been set aside as plunder, but that *he* was no party to such arrangement. When I heard of the matter I set it down to disinterested virtue, but Pierson, whose experience of the Oriental was larger than mine, determined to sift the matter.

Hardly had the moonshee retired than the nazir requested a private interview, and stated that he too felt impelled by virtuous indignation to discover to his master the wicked conspiracy of the Colonel and the moonshee, who had agreed to divide the hundred and twenty tomans illicitly gained into three shares, making forty for each; but that the Colonel suggested to him that it would be better to give the moonshee nothing, which would leave them, the sarhang and himself, sixty each.

"Of course, I report the affair to the sahib, and he will use his discretion," he said. The next morning Pierson sent for the Colonel, who denied the whole matter, produced receipts duly sealed for the payment of the whole two thousand four hundred

kerans, and indignantly protested his honesty: “Comme officier Persan—décoré par sa Majesté!” (he spoke French fluently.) On an inquiry being instituted, it came out that the original idea was, as the moonshee said, to divide the plunder into three shares. Then, as the nazir said, into two—hence the honesty of the moonshee; and at last the Colonel resolved to keep the whole himself, which accounted for the virtue of the nazir. The money was disgorged, and the chief of the Persian Telegraph in Teheran fined his subordinate in Hamadan forty pounds, or one hundred tomans. So there is not always, in Persia at least, “Honour among thieves.”

Pierson left for Teheran, and I was alone in Hamadan with no one to speak to but the two corporals of engineers, who were the office staff, and the two others, who were inspectors of the line. I was then very ardent, and pushed my dispensary work, having many and interesting cases, and finding my patients, especially among the poor, increasing in number. Ramazan was gayer in his attire than ever, and my knowledge of the colloquial increased rapidly. I had, however, to freely have recourse to pantomime, as my only interpreter, the moonshee, now Pierson was away, seldom came near me.

But I had, without knowing it, raised up enemies among the native doctors. I found that, if I could not get money from my better-class patients, I could get experience; and I had commenced a system of seeing every one gratuitously. Of course I had no lack of patients, but the effect was, that the consulting-rooms of the native doctors were emptied, as the Persians would always prefer gratuitous physic with the additional “tamasha” (show) of a European doctor, to paying those who practised medicine

strictly as taught by Aflatoon (Plato), Abu Senna (Avicenna), Galenus (Galen), and Pocrat (Hippocrates). This state of things was naturally intolerable to the profession in Hamadan, and my pseudo-friend, the Hakim-bashi, with the rest of his brethren, took steps to frighten me, in order to make me cease my obnoxious system.

I had been sitting quietly in the courtyard when my servant ran in to say that there was a mob at the door. I went on the roof and found it was so; some two hundred ragamuffins were assembled; they hooted me, and said a good deal evidently of an uncomplimentary nature. After a while stones began to come. I returned with a gun, which I valiantly discharged over their heads, shouting “Bero!” (“Be off;”) for I felt that, if I did not get rid of the small mob, a big one would soon form, at whose hands I should fare badly. However, the gun effectually frightened the fellows off, and the space outside my door was cleared. I got on my horse to go to the telegraph-office and seek advice. Off I started, accompanied by my servants (three) and all Pierson’s dogs.

I noticed on the road that one of these dogs behaved in an eccentric manner, attacking several people; but I was too occupied and excited by my own affairs to take much notice. On getting to the office, I at once sent a message to the director in Teheran, and his promptitude prevented any further unpleasantness to me. Orders came by wire to the Governor of Hamadan to punish the rioters the next morning; and ere I left the office a guard of soldiers (at the instance of our British Agent in Hamadan, who had heard of the affair) was sent to escort me to my house, four sentries being placed to relieve guard

at my door.

I felt now that all was safe, and the only result was that my friend the Hakim-bashi, who got up the row, was severely bastinadoed by the Governor.

On my return to the house I noticed the very extraordinary behaviour of “Jill,” a black setter, one of a pair (“Jack” and “Jill”) belonging to Pierson; she snapped and bit, emitting a peculiar cry, and showed signs of rabies. I shut her up and made inquiries; it appeared that she, an unusually quiet and playful dog generally, had bitten every dog in the house. These were a very fine Arab greyhound and two young bull-terriers of Pierson’s, a Persian greyhound of my own, and a little white dog owned by the cook —for Persians will often own and pet a small, long-haired dog. Undoubtedly all had been bitten.

There was nothing for it but (Jill being now certainly rabid, for I had watched her, and she was eating earth and uttering the special cry which, once heard, can never be forgotten) to destroy them all; this I had done, and the cook wept bitterly, but assented to the measure. It is sad, in such a place as Persia, to lose all one’s four-footed friends at one fell swoop; but so it was, and thus ended an exciting day. I have never seen, except on this occasion, a rabid dog in Persia; and as it is a country where water is very scarce, it shows that want of water can have little to do with causing rabies. I never either saw or heard of a case of hydrophobia in Persia.

CHAPTER VIII.
HAMADAN.

Antelope—Hunting and hawking—Shooting from the saddle—Thief-catching—The prince offers his services as head-servant—Our hunting party—The prince takes the honours—Kabobs—A provincial grandee—His stud—Quail-shooting—A relative of the king—Persian dinner—Musicians and singers—Parlour magic—The anderūn—Cucumber-jam—Persian home-life—Grateful Armenians—Lizards—Talking lark—Pigeon-flying—Fantails—Pigeons' ornaments—Immorality of pigeon-flying—Card-playing—Chess—Games—Wrestling—Pehliwans—Gymnastics.

The "poor prince," Abu Seif Mirza, called one day and suggested our going the next morning to hunt antelope, promising to show us sport. When posting from Teheran we had seen several herds of antelope, generally five or six animals together; and on one occasion, as I have noted, a string had suddenly crossed the road within ten yards of us—a thing very unusual, and which never occurred to me since. The hunting of the antelope is a favourite pastime among the grandees of Persia, and is also practised by the villagers, who will frequently get a pot-shot from behind a stone when the animals visit their drinking-places. They are either pursued with relays of dogs, shot from the saddle, or, rarely, hawked with a specially large kind of falcon, who always succeeds in stopping them till the dogs pull them down. Our plan was the second one. After drinking tea, we started one afternoon and marched out some seven

farsakhs into a sandy wilderness; the shah-zadeh (or prince), who was a well-known shikari, shooting several small birds from the saddle while at full gallop, to show his skill.

Abu Seif Mirza, after holding small offices at the courts of the different Governors of Hamadan, such as mirshikar (or chief huntsman), ser-cashikji-bashi (or chief of the guard), etc., had given up the life of a courtier, and tried to support himself by agriculture; this did not answer, for the prince, though a sober man, was a spendthrift. He told us an anecdote, which we found on inquiry to be quite correct.

On one occasion the Governor of Hamadan sent for him, and offered him a present of forty pounds and a dress of honour if he would rid the environs of the town of a certain highway-robber. The grandson of a king did not hesitate, and set about the matter in a business-like way.

“My great object,” said he, “was to obtain the reward intact, and so the only thing was to do the job myself, as going out in a party in search of the robber would have been expensive, and he would have got wind of it and kept out of the way. I consequently put on the dress of a substantial villager, disguised myself as a man of the pen by a big turban and huge slippers down at heel, mounted a donkey provided with a big pair of full saddle-bags, and started for the neighbourhood where the robber carried on his trade. At the first stage I purposely started after all other travellers had left, so as to make myself a conspicuous mark for attack, and as I apparently carried no weapons, I seemed, doubtless, an easy prey.

“On getting some half-way to the village to which I was proceeding, I was suddenly pounced upon by

two men armed to the teeth, who rushed out from behind a ruined wall and covered me with their guns. I placed my donkey whom I was driving between us, and immediately simulated abject fear. ‘Amān, amān!’ (‘Mercy, mercy!’) ‘Oh, masters!’ I cried out; ‘I am a poor priest.’

“The men, seeing me apparently unarmed, lowered their guns and demanded my money; with many protestations I thrust each hand into the long pockets of my outer garments, and whipping out a brace of pistols before they had time to raise their weapons, I had shot one through the heart, and now rushed on the other, ordering him to drop his gun or I would fire; he was too astonished to resist. I bound him firmly, and informing him that on the first attempt to escape I should either hamstring or shoot him, I proceeded to reload my discharged pistol. I now searched them both, but only found a few kerans on them. I laid the dead man across my donkey—he it was on whom the price had been set; I shook the priming out of their guns and removed the flints, and we got safely back to the caravanserai from which I had started. The next morning I brought my prisoner and the dead man into Hamadan. Of course the fellow was duly executed, but the dog of a Governor never gave me anything but a colt worth some fifty kerans—a bad business, sahib; and though the catching the thieves did not cost me much, on other occasions I didn’t get off so cheaply.” Here he showed us several scars of sword-wounds.

The prince now changed the subject to that of servants. Addressing Pierson, he asked him what wages he gave his head-man (nazir).

Pierson told him he gave two pounds a month.

“And he robs you, I suppose?”

"Of course."

"Why not engage an intelligent and honest man?"

"You know, Prince, I can't find such a man in Persia."

"Don't call me 'Prince,'" he said. "A man so poor as I am should do as I have done and drop the title; I only call myself 'Khan'"—and here the tears were in his eyes—"till—till I can find myself in bread and my horse in food. Let me see; five tomans a month, the usual modakel—say ten tomans, my commission say twenty tomans; thirty-five tomans—a noble position! try *me*."

Pierson was amused, and treated the matter as a joke.

"No," said the prince, "it is real earnest. I will come to you the day after to-morrow."

Pierson pointed out that it was impossible.

"I can't see it," said the prince; "in Persia the servants of the king may attain the highest offices of the State; there is no degradation in being a servant. What is the chief vizier but the king's head-servant?"

The matter passed over, and Pierson did not engage a King of Persia's grandson as his domestic.

We put up for the night in a village, and were sufficiently comfortable. At two A.M. we rose, and started at three. Abu Seif Khan (as I may now call him, for so he desired to be addressed) directed us to load with slugs, which he declared much more favourable than a bullet, and gave us his directions, which Pierson explained to me. They were, first, that it is no use to follow an antelope unless he is hit; second, to be sure not to fire until near enough;

third, to keep our eyes open, and note the animals ere they could see us. The antelope, the prince told us, always make straight for their lairs, avoiding the mountains, and the only way to get a shot is to attempt to cross their track, and to fire at the point where the animal is actually nearest. He particularly warned us as to the futility of *following* the animal, unless wounded, and definitely instructed us always to fire on the slightest chance, and to keep the horse at his greatest speed when doing so, “as unless he is really going *ventre à terre* it is impossible to attain accuracy. If you do make a hit, follow the beast as long as you can see him, then follow his track if you can find it.”

It was now nearly dawn, and we were going straight for a range of low hills, and as yet had seen nothing. Our Nimrod now stopped, and directed our two grooms to continue slowly straight towards the hills, now three miles off, in order to disturb the animals, while we turned our horses’ heads to a direction nearly parallel with the range, but tending towards it, going at an amble.

Every now and then we saw groups of antelope in the distance, on the plain on our right, but nothing between us and the hills. Abu Seif Khan explained that to follow these would be hopeless, and that our chance was that the servants, with whom were the dogs, would put something up, and that we should attempt to head them, in which we should certainly fail, but that we should have a chance for a shot. All the dogs had been sent with the servants except the Persian’s, which, though of strange appearance, could both, *so the prince said*, hunt by sight and scent, and would find an antelope if we had the luck to wound one.

The ground was good going, a plain of sand and gravel, a few loose stones lying about, and a rock or two protruding occasionally; the whole having a greenish tinge from the tufts of young spring grass growing here and there, and as yet undried by the fierce sun: patches of thorn-bushes (bhuta) were frequent, but there was no cover of any kind. The sun now rose, and the few antelope we had seen, which before had appeared black, now became white, but they were all on the open plain and quite out of our reach, of which they seemed well aware, as they continued grazing.

Our leader adjured us to keep a sharp look-out, and kept himself carefully watching the space between the hills and us, more especially in our rear.

At last we saw four rapidly moving spots: to dash for the hills was the work of a moment. The spots on our left became galloping antelope. How we thirsted for their blood, and we raced apparently with them as to who should attain first a point half-way between us and the hills. On they came, and on we went; our horses needed no stimulus, our guns were on full cock. Pierson, who had borne too much to the left, came near them first, or rather, they came near him, for they seemed to fly. He did not raise his gun.

Now was my turn. I was, I fancy, some hundred or perhaps ninety yards from the animals, and I should have fired as they crossed me, bearing to my left, and thus had them broad-side on, but I forgot the Persian’s caution; my horse was going well, and I thought I must get nearer. I bore to my right and followed; but, alas! I found my “Senna” seemed, having made a supreme effort, to die away; the antelope were doubtless well out of range when I fired my two barrels, without effect of course.

I did not attempt to reload, but watched the prince, who with loud cries had kept well to the right, fire first one barrel and then the other; at the second discharge the third antelope swerved, but kept on his course, and the animals were soon out of sight, Abu Seif Khan tearing after them in hot pursuit, loading as he went. Pierson now galloped up, and we cantered after the prince, although we were doubtful if his eager pursuit was aught but mere bounce. But, no; after a smart canter of about two miles, we saw the Persian stop behind a low sandhill, dismount, look carefully to his gun, ramming down his charge again for precaution's sake, and flinging off his huge, loose riding-boots and his heavy coat, he commenced climbing the mound, crouching as he went. He had previously by a gesture warned us to remain where we were.

As soon as he reached the top of the mound he fired and disappeared on the other side. We cantered up, and found him cutting the throat of a fine buck ahū (antelope). He now set to in a sportsman-like manner to disembowel the animal, and it was soon slung *en croupe* on his horse.

It appeared that his first shot was unsuccessful, but the second had injured the fore-leg of one of the herd. As he instantly followed, he noticed that one lagged a little behind, and that *four* passed behind the sandhill but only *three* reappeared. The sequel we had seen.

The sun was now high, and it was close on eight; we marched slowly back to the village and breakfasted on antelope kabobs; that is to say, small lumps of meat of the size of a half walnut skewered in the usual manner—of a piece of meat, a shred of onion, a piece of liver, a shred of onion, a piece of

kidney, and so on; they were impaled on a long skewer and turned rapidly over a fierce fire of wood-ashes until cooked; and very tender they were.

The Persians always cook an animal before it is yet cold, and thus ensure tenderness, otherwise antelope-meat must hang ten days to be eatable, for we do not boil venison as they do in Persia.

We started from the village at midnight, and marched till nine A.M., arriving at a large village by a river, called Mahrand, thirty miles from Hamadan, the owner of which, Mahommed Houssein Khan, Mahrandi, had invited us to visit him for a few days; we were to hunt the antelope and have some quail-shooting. Our host, a great friend of Pierson's, was an enormous man of great wealth, whose life was a harmless one, passed generally in his own village, and he was liked by his acquaintances, and adored by his ryots (villagers). Simple-minded in the extreme, he had, save a fondness for the bottle—a fault common with the wealthy in Persia—no vices such as are usual in the Persians of towns.

We stayed with him four days; the first morning some fifty horses were paraded for our inspection, for our host bred very fine animals, and among other taxes had to find yearly three fine beasts fit for the royal stables. As we sat at a window just raised from the ground, the entire string were led or ridden past us; but as the clothing was on, one could not see much of them.

This clothing consists of a perhan (shirt) of fine woollen blanketing, which envelops the whole body of the animal, being crossed over the chest, but all above the withers is bare. Over this is the jūl, or day clothing; this the horse wears summer and winter, save during the midday time in summer, when he is

either naked or has only the perhan on. The jūl is of the same shape as the perhan, but is of coarser texture and lined with felt. Over the jūl is the nammad,[13] or outer felt.

This is a sheet of felt half or three-quarters of an inch thick, and so long that it can be drawn over the horse's head and neck while the quarters are still well covered, thus completely enveloping the animal in a warm and waterproof covering, and enabling him to stand the cold of winter in the draughty stables of the caravanserai, or even, as is frequently required, to camp out. (During all the summer months in Persia the horses sleep outside.)

This nammad is held in its place by a long strip of broad cotton webbing, which is used as a surcingle, and usually, except at night, the part of the nammad used to cover the neck is doubled down over the animal's body.

As the procession went by we gave free vent to our admiration; as Pierson acknowledged, he had never seen such a collection of horses. I, too, was surprised. Some dozen of the finer animals were stripped, and as we admired each, the usual empty compliment of "Peishkesh-i-shuma" ("A present to you") was paid us.

The quail-shooting was good fun; we marched through the green wheat in a row of some ten, horses and servants following, and the birds got up in every direction, a very large bag being made, though probably as many more were lost in the high wheat. The peculiar cry of the bird resounded in every direction.

Several princes were among the guests of Mahommed Houssein Khan, and he and his sons

showed us and them the greatest kindness and attention.

In the afternoon suddenly arrived Suleiman Mirza (literally Prince Solomon), a near relative of the king, who was returning from a pilgrimage to the burial-place of the saints at Kerbela, near Baghdad. This man was quite a Daniel Lambert, moving with difficulty, very old, but of a very merry disposition; a good deal of joking took place after his arrival.



PERSIAN BAND.

After an apparently interminable Persian dinner, which consisted of some hundred *plats*, among which may be favourably mentioned the *pillaws* of mutton or fowls, boiled and smothered in rice, in rice and orange-peel, in rice and lentils, in rice and haricots, in rice and "schewed," a herb somewhat resembling fennel; the fizinjans of fowls and boiled meats; also partridges *boiled* and served with the concentrated juice of the pomegranate and pounded walnuts; kabobs of lamb and antelope; a lamb roasted whole, stuffed with dates, pistachios, chestnuts, and raisins;

salt fish from the Caspian; extract of soup with marrow floating in it; dolmas, or dumplings, made of minced meat and rice, highly flavoured and wrapped in vine leaves and fried; rissoles; wild asparagus boiled; new potatoes, handed round cold, and eaten with salt; while roast quails, partridges, and doves were served with lettuces, drenched with honey and vinegar.

Each guest was supplied with a loaf of flat bread as a plate, and another for eating.

We sat on the ground, some twenty in all, round a huge tablecloth of red leather, if I may use that expression, for a large sheet of leather laid on the ground. Suleiman Mirza, as the king's relative, occupied the place of honour. On the other hand of our host sat Pierson, and I next him, while Abu Seif Mirza, as a prince, took his position by right on the other side of the great man, and was by him punctiliously addressed as prince, and generally treated as one. Huge china bowls of sherbet were placed down the centre of the sūfrah (tablecloth), and in each bowl was an elaborately-carved wooden spoon, which were used indiscriminately; these spoons held a gill, and were drunk from, no glasses being used.

During the time the dinner was progressing little conversation took place, everybody being engaged in eating as much of as many dishes as possible. But a band of villagers played the santūr, a sort of harmonicon; the tūmbak, or small drum, played on with the tips of the fingers—there were two tūmbak players; the neh or flute, or, more properly speaking, reed; and the deyeereh, literally circle, a kind of large tambourine, played, like the tūmbak, with the tips of the fingers.

As soon as every one had (literally) eaten his fill, Suleiman Mirza, the king's relative, rose, and we all got up.

In lieu of grace each man said, "Alhamdillilah!" ("Thank God!") and from *politeness* most of the guests *eructated*, showing that they were thoroughly satisfied.

This ceremony is common through the East, and it is considered the height of rudeness to the host to abstain from it. Coffee was now handed round, and pipes were brought. A singer, too, commenced a ditty, which he shouted as do costermongers when crying their wares in England; he put his hand to the side of his mouth to increase the sound, his face became crimson with his efforts, the muscles and veins stood out in relief on his neck, and his eyes nearly started from their sockets. He frequently paused to take breath, and ceased amid loud applause. The singing and music were kept up till a late hour.

Politeness prevented our retiring, but we longed for rest; and on Pierson's being tormented into a long disquisition on magic, he seized the opportunity to get away by stratagem. Telling the fat prince that, as he insisted on seeing the magic of the West, he would gratify him, he placed the old gentleman on a mattress, and putting four princes (he insisted on royal blood), standing each *on one leg* at the four corners, with a lighted lamp in *each hand*, he gravely assured them that we should retire and perform an incantation, while, if no one laughed or spoke, *on our return* the lights would burn blue. We got to bed, barricaded ourselves in our room, and tried to sleep. After some few minutes, loud shouts announced the discovery of the ruse, and a party arrived to bring us

back, but too late, for we had retired.

Next morning I was asked to see some of the ladies of the family. So little does this village khan observe the Mahommedan rule of veiling the women, that I was allowed to pass my whole morning in his anderūn. My host's wife, a huge woman of five-and-forty in appearance, but in reality about thirty-five, was intent on household cares; she was making cucumber-jam. The cucumber having been cut into long slices the thickness of an inch, and the peel and seeds removed, had been soaked in lime-water some month; this was kept frequently changed, and the pieces of cucumber were now quite transparent. They were carefully put in a simmering stew-pan of strong syrup, which was placed over a wood fire, and, after cooking for a quarter of an hour, the pieces of cucumber were carefully laid in an earthen jar, and the syrup poured over them, spices being added.

I fancy that about a hundredweight of this preserve was made that morning. When cold the cucumber was quite crisp; the result satisfied our hostess, and she presented me with a seven-pound jar.

Our host's young son, a youth of seventeen, caused considerable commotion among the two or three negresses by his efforts to get his fingers into the cooling jam-pots; while his two sisters, nice-looking girls of fifteen and sixteen, tried to restrain his fancy for preserves in vain. We all laughed a great deal, and mother and daughters were full of fun, while the grinning negresses thoroughly enjoyed the noise and laughing.

Not having seen a woman's face for three months, these girls seemed to me perhaps better looking than

they really were, but I confess returning to the outer regions of the berūni with regret; and Pierson envied my good fortune in having, as a medico, had a glimpse of Persian home-life which he could never hope for. Really the patient was, as it often is, a mere excuse for entertaining so strange a being as a Feringhi, and getting thus a good look at him.

We went out twice after antelope, which we hunted with relays of dogs; but as we were not successful, there is little to tell. We returned to Hamadan, regretting the end of a very pleasant visit.

On our arrival a grateful patient among the Armenians sent me eighty kerans (three pounds ten) in a little embroidered bag. As the woman could ill afford it, I told her that I would accept the bag as a keepsake, and returned the money. So unheard-of a proceeding astonished the Armenian community, and the priest, a wealthy old sinner, saw his way, as he thought, to a stroke of business. I had treated him, too, and he brought me a similar sum in a similar bag. Great was his disgust when I thanked him for the money and politely returned the bag, and he confided to my servant that, had he thought this would have been the result, he would never have paid a farthing.

One day a villager brought us two large lizards, some three feet from snout to the tip of the tail, and we secured them for a couple of kerans. They ran about the place for a week or two, interfering with no one, but did not get tame. The dogs chased them when they were not on the face or top of a wall, and they at first used to bolt; but after a time they stood still, allowed the dog to get within range, and then—thwack—the tail was brought down with tremendous force, and the dog retired howling. After a day or

two no dog would go near the lizards. They were uninteresting as pets, and as Pierson once got a severe blow on the shin from one he stumbled over in the dark, we sent them away. They were huge beasts, of a yellow-ochre colour, and lived on flies and chopped meat; they were never seen to drink.

I purchased about this time a *talking* lark: he seemed the ordinary lark such as we see in England; "torgah" is the Persian name. The bird never sang, but said very plainly, "Bebe, Bebe Tūtee," which is equivalent to "Pretty Polly"—being really "Lady, lady parrot;" he varied occasionally by "Bebe jahn" ("Dear lady"). The articulation was extremely clear. There are many talking larks in Persia. The bazaar or shopkeeper class are fond of keeping larks, goldfinches, and parrots, in cages over their shops.

Sitting, too, on our roof, we could see the pigeon-flying or kafteh-bazi. A pigeon-fancier in Persia is looked upon as a lūti (blackguard), as his amusement takes him on the roofs of others, and is supposed to lead to impropriety; it being considered the height of indecency to look into another's courtyard.

The pigeons kept are the carrier, which are very rare; the tumbler, or mallagh (mallagh, a summersault), and the fantail, or ba-ba-koo. The name exactly represents the call of the fantail. It was this bird which was supposed to bring the revelations to the prophet Mahommed, and consequently keeping a fantail or two is not looked on as discreditable. They are never killed. These fantails do not fly with the rest, keeping in the owner's yard and on the roof. The yahoo is the other ordinary variety, and is only valued for its flesh, being bred, as we breed fowls, by the villagers. It has a feathered leg, and will not fly far from home.

The pigeons are flown twice a day, in the early morning and evening, and it is a very pretty thing to watch.

The owner opens the door and out fly all the pigeons, perhaps thirty, commencing a circular flight, whose circles become larger and larger. The fancier watches them eagerly from his roof, and when he has given them a sufficient flight and there are none of his rival's birds in view, he calls and agitates a rag affixed to a long pole. This is the signal for feeding, and the weaker birds generally return at once to their cupboard, the stronger continue their flight, but lessen the diameter of the circle, and one by one return, the best birds coming back last. As they come over the house they commence to "tumble" in the well-known manner, falling head over heels as if shot; some birds merely make one turn over, while others make twenty. It is a very curious and a very pretty sight. The birds are extremely tame, and settle on the person of the fancier.

Hitherto there has been nothing more than a flight of pigeons, but in the afternoon, about an hour or two hours before sunset, the real excitement commences. Up goes a flight of some twenty pigeons, they commence to make circles; no sooner does their course extend over the house of a rival fancier than he starts his birds in a cloud, in the hope of inveigling an outlying bird or two into his own flock; then both owners call, whistle, and scream wildly, agitating their poles and flags.

The rival flocks separate, but one bird has accompanied the more successful fancier's flight. As it again passes over the house of the victimised one, he liberates two of his best birds; these are mixed

with the rest, but ere they have completed half a circle they, with the lost one, rejoin their own flight. Their delighted owner now calls down his birds, and in a few moments envelops a pair of his rival's in a crowd of his own.

Then again commence the cries, the whistlings, the agitating flags, and the liberation of single or pairs or flights of birds. As one of Mr. A.'s birds is being convoyed towards B.'s roof with a pair of his, Mr. C. envelops the three in a cloud of pigeons, and the whole flock alight—C.'s flight in his own dovecot, and A.'s bird and B.'s pair, as timid strangers, on a neighbouring wall; A. and B. vainly screaming while their two flocks keep circling high in air. C., B., and A. simultaneously run over roofs and walls to get near the birds. But B. and A. have a long way to travel, while happy C. is close by; he crouches double, and carrying in one hand a kind of landing-net, makes for the birds; in his bosom is a fantail pigeon, in his left hand some grain. Artful B. throws a stone and his two birds rise and fly home, and with a fancier's delight he watches C.; but A. is too far off for this manœuvre, and hurries over roof after roof. Too late! C. has tossed his fantail down near A.'s bird, the fantail, struts about calling "Ba-ba-koo, ba-ba-koo!" The prize has his attention taken and stoops to peck the seed that C. has tossed over a low wall. As he does so C.'s landing-net is on him, the fantail flies lazily home, and C., shouting and brandishing his capture, makes the best of his way to the roof of his own premises.

Then the flights begin again, rival fanciers from distant roofs liberate their flocks, flags are waved, and the drama, with endless variations, is repeated. Once a fancier always a fancier, they say.

A. repairs to C.'s house to buy back his bird at six or more times its intrinsic value, for to leave a bird in the hands of a rival fancier might cost the man his whole flock on a subsequent occasion, the captured birds, of course, acting as the best of decoys.

The favourite birds are ornamented with little rings or bracelets of silver, brass, or ivory, which are borne like bangles on the legs (the mallagh, or tumbler, has no feathers on the leg) and rattle when the bird walks; these bangles are not ransomed, but remain lawful prize.

As the colours of the birds are very different, one soon recognises the individual birds of one's neighbours' collections, and the interest one feels in their successes and defeats is great. Our high roof, towering over most others, made us often sit and watch the pigeon-flying; and the circling birds as they whirred past us, flight after flight, against the blue, cloudless sky near sunset, was a sight worth seeing. The fanciers were many of them old men, and some actually lived on the ransom exacted from the owners of their captives.

These pigeon-fanciers had a slang of their own, and each coloured bird had a distinctive name. So amused were we that I ordered my groom to buy a flight of pigeons and commence operations; but Syud Houssein, the British Agent, pointed out that it would be *infra dig.* to engage in a practice that was considered incorrect. It is strange that sporting, or what is called sporting, generally leads, even in the East, to blackguardism.

Card-playing, too, is only indulged in by the less reputable of the community; there is only one game, called Ahs an Ahs; it is played with twenty cards—four kings, four soldiers (or knaves), four queens (or

ladies), four latifeh (or courtesans), and four ahs (or aces). This latter is shown generally by the arms of Persia, “the Lion and Sun.” The lion is represented couchant regardant, bearing a scimitar, while the sun (“kurshid,” or head of glory) is portrayed as a female face having rays of light around it; this is shown as rising over the lion’s quarters. There is only this one game of cards played with the gungifeh (or cards); they can hardly be called cards, as they are made of papier-maché an eighth of an inch thick, and elaborately painted. As much as ten tomans can be given for a good pack. European cards are getting generally used among the upper classes, who, under the name of bank or banco, have naturalised the game of lansquenet. But as Persians have an idea that all is fair at cards, like ladies at round games, they *will* cheat, and he who does so *undetected* is looked on as a good player (“komar-baz zereng,” *clever* gamester).

Chess (“shahtrenj”) is much played by the higher classes, but in the Indian manner, the pawn having only one square to pass and not two at the first, as with us. Backgammon, too, is in great vogue; the dice, however, are thrown with the hand, which leads to great “cleverness,” an old hand throwing what he likes; but as the usual stakes are a dinner or a fat lamb, not much harm is done.

The lower orders have a kind of draughts played on a board (marked somewhat similar to our Fox and Geese), and at each angle of which is placed a mor (seal), *i. e.* piece. This game is generally played on a brick or large tile, the board being chalked, the pieces stones; they are moved from angle to angle. I never could fathom *how* it is played, the rules being always different and seemingly arbitrary.

Another game is played on a wooden board or an embroidered cloth one; this is an ancient one called takht-i-pul. I have a very old embroidered cloth forming the board, the men being of carved ivory, given me by Mr. G——, of the Persian Telegraph Department, but I never could find two Persians who agreed as to the rules. Pitch-and-toss is constantly engaged in by the boys in the bazaar.

Rounders (a bastard form of it) are played by the Ispahan boys, and they also play at a species of fives. Marbles are unknown, but I have seen the primitive game of "bonse," which is played by our boys with "bonses" (large marbles), large pebbles being the substitutes for the bonses in Persia, as they are with street-boys here.

Wrestling is in great favour; the gymnasia (Zūr Khana) are frequented by the youth and manhood of all ranks, *who meet there on an equality*. Wrestling bouts are common among the boys and youths on every village maidān.

In each gymnasium (Zūr Khana, literally "house of force") the professional "pehliwan," or wrestlers, practise daily; and gymnastics, *i. e.* a course of attendance at a gymnasium, are often prescribed by the native doctor. Generally an experienced and retired pehliwan acts as "lanista," and for a small fee prescribes a regular course of exercises. Dumb-bells are much used; also a heavy block of wood, shield-shape, some two feet by three, and three inches thick, with an aperture in the middle, in which is placed a handle. The gymnast lies on his back, and holding this in one hand makes extension from side to side; a huge bow of thick steel plates, with a chain representing the string, is bent and unbent frequently.

But the great and most favourite implements are the clubs (what we call Indian clubs); these the professional athlete will use of great size and weight; and after going through the usual exercises will hurl them, together or alternately, to a great height, and unfailingly catch them.

The wrestling is carried on, as a rule, good-temperedly; but when done by professionals for reward, awkward tricks are employed, such as suddenly thrusting the fingers into the eye of the adversary, and others still more dangerous.

As a preventive against these, the wrestler always wears knee breeches of stiff horsehide, some of which are beautifully embroidered with blue thread; all above the waist and below the knee being bare. A good deal of time is, as a rule, lost in taking hold and clappings of hands, and then generally the bout commences with one hand grasping the adversary's, while the other clutches the body. The object is not a clean throw, but to make the knees of the opponent touch the ground, and consequently agility tells more than strength and size. The pairs are always made with regard to skill, size and weight being little considered.

The gymnasia are merely darkened rooms (for coolness), with a sunken ring in the centre, where the wrestling takes place. The floor is nearly always of earth only, to render falls less severe.

A Persian has no idea of the use of his fists. When a street-fight takes place, the combatants claw and slap at each other, and end by clutching each other's "zūlf" (long love-locks, which most wear), or beards, or clothing. Then comes a sort of wrestle, when they are generally separated.

Every great personage retains among his favoured servants a few pehliwans or wrestlers; and among the artisans many are wrestlers by profession, and follow at the same time a trade.

CHAPTER IX.
KERMANSHAH.

Leave for Kermanshah, marching—Detail of arrangements—Horse feeding—Peculiar way of bedding horses—Barley—Grape feeding—On grass—Nawalla—Colt, Anecdote of—Horses, Various breeds of—Turkomans—Karabagh—Ispahan cobs—Gulf Arabs—Arabs—Rise in price of horses—Road cooking—Kangawar temple—Double snipe—Tents—Kara-Su River—Susmanis—Sana—Besitūn—Sir H. Rawlinson—Agha Hassan—Istikhbal—Kermanshah—As we turn in another turns out—Armenians—Their reasons for apostatising—Presents of sweetmeats.

On Pierson's return to Hamadan, I gladly prepared to start with him for Kermanshah. My traps were not numerous—a folding-table, four chairs, a tressel bedstead, and two bullock-trunks, formed one load; and my bedding in a case, made of carpet, bound with leather, and surmounted by my head-man, another; my groom was perched on a third, sitting on the clothing of the two horses, and carrying their head and heel ropes and the stable spade, with which their bed of "pane" (dried horse-dung) is prepared at night, and the copper bucket for watering them.

The cook, with all his *batterie de cuisine*, had the fourth, and Ramazan and the contents of the dispensary took two more. I think another was charged with bottled beer, and of course we each rode our horses. The stages were:—

Farsakhs.

Assadabad or Seydabad	7
Kangawar	5
Sana	6
Besitūn	4
Kermanshah	6

Or miles, 112; farsakhs, 28.

An hour's riding took us clear of the vineyards of Hamadan, and we passed over grassy downs with patches of desert till we got to the commencement of the Seydabad Pass. This, though it would be looked on as a tremendous matter in England, is nothing difficult to get over when there is no snow, and an hour's smart climb brought us to the top.

The descent on the other side was much longer, and we made the seven farsakhs, about twenty-eight miles, in nine hours' continuous marching. The road was very bad, being full of loose stones the whole of the way from the commencement of the ascent. We put up at the "chupper-khana;" as this was my first experience of marching, I may as well detail our arrangements.

As soon as we had cleared the top of the pass, the servants pushed on with those loads that it was needful to unpack, while we came on slowly with the mules; the grooms, too, went on as smartly as possible; my fellow had my other horse led in a halter. As it got to nearly sunset (we had started very late, as is always the case in a first stage), we cantered gently in to the post-house.

Our grooms were at the door ready to take our horses, and we found the dirty little mud room swept, carpeted, a fire lighted, and the entrance curtained with a tent door; the chairs and table had

been put out, and the kalians got under weigh. Our servants had tea ready, and we were quite prepared to rest and be thankful. Our books and pipes had been put handy in our bedding, and were laid out for us.

Half-an-hour after sunset the groom came to say he was going to feed the horses. We go into the yard, into which our room opens, and find Pierson's stud of Gods on one side, my two on the other, each tethered by double head-ropes to a mud manger, which is constructed in the wall, and secured by heel-ropes of goats' hair tied to pins of iron a foot long, firmly driven into the ground.

The horses had been carefully dry-rubbed and clothed, the nammads, or felt coverings, drawn over their necks, for it was chilly, and the beds of "pane" laid for them.

The Persians use no straw for making beds for their horses, as it is too valuable; but they utilise the dung, which is carefully dried in the sun and then stored, as bedding; this is very dry, clean, and soft, and quite without smell. When thus dried, it is called "pane." It is laid a foot deep all round the standing of the horse, and the edges carefully smoothed (as a gardener in England smooths his flower-beds) by the grooms.

The horses, well aware that it is feeding-time, and having been watered some ten minutes before (they had been walked about for half-an-hour to cool them on arrival—a thing a Persian never omits), now commenced neighing, playfully biting and letting out at each other as far as their heel-ropes would permit. Pierson's head-groom measured out in handfuls the allowance of barley for each beast, and it was poured into a nosebag filled with "kah," or chaff, and then

affixed to the animal's head, that not a grain might be lost. When we had seen this done, and noticed that each horse fed well, we left, our place being taken by the head-servant, who stayed till the barley was eaten; for in those days we could not trust our grooms, who would always steal the barley if they could.

Oats are not used in Persia, though there are many salt-marshes in the country where they would grow well. Barley is the only food for horses, the allowance being from seven to ten pounds of barley for the animal's two feeds; generally seven pounds are not exceeded. (It must be remembered that the general run of animals is much smaller than that of English horses, fourteen hands being the usual height, and fifteen being an unusually large beast.) This allowance is divided into two feeds, five pounds at night and two in the morning. This, with as much as he chooses to consume of wheat or barley straw, broken in pieces two inches long ("kah"), is all the animal has from one end of the year to the other; no hay is given, but for a month the horse is put on an entire diet of young green barley-grass, of which he will eat two hundred and fifty pounds a day. Prior to being put on this diet, which is termed full grass, he has a larger and larger proportion administered with his chaff; this mixture is called "teleet."

The barley-grass is cut by the grooms, by tearing handfuls of it against a curved toothed sickle fixed upright in a piece of wood, and is given from two to four inches long. As the horse is given "teleet," his grain is diminished, and, when he is on full grass, stopped altogether; as he gets more and more grass, his teeth get blunt, and do not break the grain, and on leaving off grass his barley has to be soaked.

A horse on grass cannot do any serious work, and the gentlest canter will put him in a lather. Of course it is very difficult to march a horse when on grass, and in Persia it can only be had in the spring; and unless he is going from a country where the season is early to one where it is late, the animal has to do without grass altogether, or even to march on “teleet”—a very dangerous thing, as he will often break down. The Persians are very fond of seeing their horses fat, particularly the townsmen, so that these latter will keep their beasts on entire grass for two months, and on “teleet” seven months in the year, giving clover, too, mixed with the “kah,” when they can get it. The result is an animal bursting with fat, very irritable and restive, but who can do no work.

To old horses “nawallah,” or balls of dough made of barley flour and water, are given; the animals take to this, which is the usual camel food, and will look fat and work well when they have not a tooth in their heads.

During the only grape season that I was in Hamadan, the fruit was so cheap that we put our horses on a diet of it for a week. Hasseens, or earthen pans of tile, were affixed to the wall in the mangers, and the horses grew extremely fat on a diet of grapes alone.

Persian horses, like Persian women, age early; possibly they are ridden too young; the two-year-old is often put to hard work, and an animal of nine is an old horse.

The young colt of two is termed a no zin, or newly fit for the saddle. On one occasion I had removed a tooth for the Zil-es-sultan, the Governor of Ispahan (the king’s eldest son). As it came out at once he was

much pleased, and gave me an order on his master of horse for an “asp-i-no zin,” “a horse just ready for the saddle,” meaning a two-year-old.

I sent over the order, and to my disgust got back an eight-months-old colt. This, of course, was of comparatively little value. I did not like to complain, for “one must not look a gift-horse in the mouth,” and the master of horse was an acquaintance, and the prince’s maternal uncle.

I had recourse to stratagem, being put on my mettle by ironical questions from my Persian friends, as to whether I had ridden my horse, etc.

The prince was about to review the troops, and I sent a polite message to the master of the horse, asking the loan of a Persian saddle, for, said I, “I want to ride out on my *new horse*, and to thank the prince for his present.” This brought the master of the horse (“mir-achor,” or “lord of the manger”) to my house to call on his dear friend the English doctor. Pipes were smoked, tea drunk, and then I was asked why I wanted a Persian saddle.

“You see, the prince’s present has been probably only used to a Persian saddle, having been just broken in, and I have none.”

“But, dear doctor sahib, he is not fit to ride, he is eight months old.”

“Oh, my friend, you, as the mir-achor, are far too good a servant of his Royal Highness to give me other than his order said, a horse *fit for the saddle*—the order *said* so, so he *must* be fit for the saddle. I ride him out to the review to-morrow, and shall thank the prince.”

The mir-achor sighed, and with a half-wink said, “I

see you don't like the colt, I shall send you another; in fact, some to choose from."

"Many, many thanks, *let* them be good, or I shall surely ride out on the one I have; and in case I don't take any of those you send, don't forget the saddle."

The mir-achor left, and in an hour sent me over three full-grown but worthless brutes to choose from.

I sent them back, telling his servants that I would send for the saddle their master would lend me.

The grooms returned with a full-grown horse of considerable value, which I took, and returned the worthless eight-months-old colt. I was duly felicitated on my action by my Persian friends, and was told that I had behaved in a very diplomatic way.

The horses most in use in Persia are, in the north, the Turkoman, rarely seen south of Teheran, and despised in Fars—a tall, ungainly animal, sometimes over sixteen hands, with no barrel, heavy head, but great stride and endurance.

These Turkomans, when one is on them, give the idea of riding on a gate, there is so little between the knees. They will get over, at a jog or loose canter, one hundred miles a day, and will keep it up for ten days. Their gallop is apparently slow, but, from the length of stride, they get over a great deal of ground.

They are, however, not sure-footed, and quite useless on bad roads and hilly country, having a tendency to fall. I have never seen a Persian of condition ride a Turkoman horse himself, though many great personages keep several for show, on which they mount servants. In their own plains, and for the long expeditions for plunder ("chuppaos")

made by the Turkomans, they are doubtless invaluable; they are able to go without water for three days, and to subsist on the hardest and scantiest fare, and after the severe training they undergo previous to these expeditions, they will get over an amount of ground that no other breed could hope to cover. Their paces are rough and uncomfortable. They vary in price from kerans three hundred to kerans five thousand; the usual price is four hundred to six hundred for a good one. The mane is in some cases almost wanting, and what there is is generally removed by a knife, and the stubble burnt off by a hot iron, or by means of gunpowder or depilatory. This gives the breed an unearthly and incomplete appearance. The tail, too, is very slenderly provided with hair.

The “Karabagh”—also used in the north and towards the Caspian; he is seldom seen south of Teheran—is a miniature edition of the English hunter: big-boned and clean-limbed, he stands fourteen and a half to sixteen hands; the latter is, however, an unusual size; he is generally evil-tempered, but is up to hard work, and always has a black mark running from the mane to the insertion of the tail; his mane is thick, so is his tail; his head is heavy. Many big horses are produced in Teheran from the mixture of the Turkoman and Karabagh, but they are leggy, and retain the tendency of the Turkoman to fall on stony ground. They are called “Yamūt;” the price is two hundred and fifty to five hundred kerans. There is an underbred look about both species.

Ispahan produces a peculiar kind of cob, with great weight-bearing powers, short-legged, big barrelled, never exceeding fourteen hands, often less.

These animals are taught to amble, and are capable of carrying heavy men or heavier loads. The neck is generally very short and thick. Often very full of go, they are seldom fast, but have much bottom, are very hardy, and stand exposure and hard work. They have a clumsy appearance, enormous manes and tails, and often a good deal of long hair under the jaw; all have huge ears and coarse coats; the colour is generally grey; their appetites are enormous, and they eat more than larger horses. Price, from one hundred and twenty to four hundred kerans. This, I am convinced, is the natural horse of Persia.

The horses of Shiraz, or “Gulf Arabs” as they are called in India, because they are *shipped* from the Persian *Gulf* for the Indian market, are the result of cross-breeding from big Persian mares by the smaller and better-bred Arab horse. They are practically the best horses in the country, quite free from vice, fast, and with most of the good points of the Arab, particularly the small head. In the good ones the forehead (brow) is always very convex, never flat. The ears are small and carried well. The tail is carried, as the Persians put it, like a flag, the tail-bone very short and straight. Among the natives, if the tail is carried at all on one side, and not well up, it considerably detracts from the animal’s value. They frequently dock the tail-bone, but the hair is never shortened. Grey is the usual colour; though there are many chestnuts and bays, I never saw a black. The barrel and chest are very large, and the body short and compact; they have magnificent shoulders, and are full of bottom. The better ones are not at all goose-rumped, which all other breeds in Persia, except Arabs, are, while the hoofs are large and healthy. These horses are always full of spirit, and willing, their faults being that they are a little

delicate, and dainty feeders; they are very sure-footed, going at full speed over the roughest ground or loose stones. They all pull, and, from the severe nature of the Persian bit, are hard-mouthed, till they have been ridden on the snaffle for some months. Many have a tendency to shy, but no other vices; they stand fourteen and a half to fifteen hands, and cost from five hundred to two thousand kerans.

The real Arabs, which come from Baghdad and the frontier, in the Kermanshah Province, are too well known to need description, and are all that the heart could desire, save as to size. They stand thirteen three to fourteen two, seldom more, and cost from five hundred kerans up to anything.

In the last fifteen years the price of horses has gone up from fifty to eighty per cent.; this is due to the steady drain for the Indian market, and also to the famine, when thousands were starved to death and thousands more killed and eaten, and to opium-growing in lieu of corn.

When I first came to Persia a fair yabū, or pony, could be got for one hundred and twenty kerans; they cost now (1883) two hundred to two hundred and forty. Horses in proportion. But the Gulf Arabs are very cheap in Teheran, which is by far the best place to buy horses in.

To return. We have smoked and chatted till eight o'clock, when our dinner is put on the table—soup, tinned fish, a leg of mutton, potatoes, a custard-pudding; these have been properly cooked, and are served hot.

Save the eggs and the milk for the custard, we brought all these good things from Hamadan, and the cook deserves great credit, for his kitchen has

been merely a corner of the post-house yard, his range three or four bricks, and he has *roasted* his leg of mutton in a saucepan, and sent it to table with delicious gravy; and thus we fare daily while on the road. Some men, even when marching, insist on a hot breakfast on the road itself, of three or four courses, but this is only needful when there are ladies. Dinner over, kalians and coffee are brought. Our beds are made one on each side of the fireplace, but not on the ground, for we have tressel bedsteads, and ten sees us fast asleep.

A fertile plain brings us, next morning's stage, to Kangawar, a large and prosperous village. Here the climate grows warmer. It is a very well-watered district, and the people seem well-to-do. In fact, in Persia, wherever there is water there is prosperity.

There is the ruin here of a temple said to have been erected to Diana; nothing seems to be known about it, and it is only memory that tells me that some authority gives it as a temple to Diana. However, the four stone columns, minus their capitals, are still standing; they are united by a mud wall, and form part of a villager's house.

In the swamp in front of the village we go out for snipe; Pierson gets three brace and one *double* snipe. I manage to get a teal, which I pot from behind some reeds, the snipe being as yet too much for me. I also shoot several snippets, but am disappointed when Pierson tells me to throw them away. I have one cooked in defiance—it is uneatable.

We stop two days in Kangawar, and live in a tent. This is a very comfortable one, with double walls, the property of Government, made, so a label on it says, at the school at Jubbulpoor. It is constructed, so another label tells me, for two subalterns. It has a

passage a yard wide between the walls, which keeps it cool in summer. We find it chilly at night, and as we have no stove we are unable to light a fire. The second day Pierson gets several double snipe, and I get very wet.

On our next march we come upon the Kara-Su (black water) River, and see a valley teeming with bird-life—herons, ducks, geese, what appear to be black swans, cormorants, cranes of various colours, from the big white "leg-leg" with black wings, to small and graceful ones of pure white; mallards, teal, and widgeon. They unfortunately are on the other side of the river, which is unfordable here, in a swamp which extends for miles.

As we near Sana we see a man and woman seated on a mound commanding the road, under a big green cotton umbrella, near a grove. The woman, gaily dressed, with her face painted and without any veil, her hair in long tails, strung with coins, importunately solicited us. The man remained under the umbrella, and took no notice. They were "Susmanis," or gypsies. These people have no particular religion—certainly they are not Mussulmans; they live by singing, dancing, and prostitution. The woman, who had considerable attractions, followed us for nearly a mile, and begged hard for a present. Sana is always infested by bands of these "Susmanis," who prey on the pilgrims.

We are now on the direct pilgrims' road to Kerbela, where are buried the imams, or saints, of the Sheahs, Hussein and Hassan, one of the greatest shrines of Persian pilgrims. More groups of "Susmanis" accost us, and demand alms, openly proclaiming their trade.

We reach Sana, and pitch the tent in a large

garden with plenty of running water, where we are able to get a good bath next day. The climate is here very pleasant; although it is early in spring, the sun is very powerful, and the night no longer chilly. The greater part of the afternoon is taken up with a long wrangle with the head-men of the village as to the price of poles for the telegraph-line. Pierson's ideas and theirs differ widely as to the value of these, but a threatened reference to the Imād-u-dowlet ("Pillar of the State"), the Governor of Kermanshah, soon reduces the price, for these sharks would much prefer dealing with the Feringhi than their fellow-countrymen, as the latter would probably take the poles for nothing.

Another day's journey brings us to Besitūn, which is distinguished by an inscription carved on the face of a perpendicular cliff, with colossal figures, of which a correct and learned description has been given by Sir Henry Rawlinson. At the foot of this cliff are a few fragments of what is supposed to have been "Shushan the palace."

It is said that here, when Sir Henry Rawlinson was engaged in copying the inscriptions, on a scaffolding on the face of the cliff, at a great height from the ground, that he fell over backwards, and was caught by his trusty Arab muleteer, Hadji Khaleel; and that, in gratitude, Sir Henry, who at that time held a diplomatic position in Persia, made the Hadji British Agent in Kermanshah. This is the legend among the natives. I give it as I heard it.

I had the pleasure of the honest old Hadji's acquaintance in that place, and was shown much kindness by him. Whether or no this legend had any ground I cannot say; but Hadji Khaleel was a charming old man, honest as the day, though with

somewhat rough manners.

His son, Agha Hassan, who was, at the time I speak of, his right hand, is now the British Agent, and has become, by successful commerce, the wealthiest man in the province. Agha Hassan rode out to meet us, his father, Hadji Khaleel being ill, and Pierson told me that he recognised and spoke in rapturous terms of my “Senna,” to whom by this time I had become much attached, and who once had belonged to him.

An istikhbal of a colonel, his attendants, and two led-horses, were sent out to do Pierson honour by the Governor; kalians were smoked on the high road, and we came in sight of Kermanshah after crossing the Kara-Su River by a fairly well-made bridge.

The place looks well, and appears surrounded by a grassy plain, a very unusual sight in Persia. The town had an air of prosperity, and the people were well fed and well clothed. It occupied several small hills, and hence appeared considerably larger than it was.

Like all Persian towns, the streets were narrow, and, save in the bazaars, in which were the shops, one saw nothing but dead walls; each house having an arched entrance closed by a heavy, unpainted wooden door, with many big nails in it.

The causeway was generally some three feet wide, and raised a yard from the ground, and frequently ran on both sides of a path a yard wide and often two feet deep in mud or water, looking like a ditch, but it was really the road (save the mark!) for horses, mules, and camels. Many of the houses were built of burnt bricks, and the place seemed busier than Hamadan. I noticed many Arabs about wearing the gay Baghdad dress, with fez and small turban. The town was straggling, with many open spaces.

Quarters were assigned to us in the house of a man who was ejected to enable us to occupy them; they were not in themselves a bad place, but were in the worst and most disreputable part of the town; while the house I was obliged to rent was actually next door but one to that occupied by the public executioner, one Jaffer, and where dwelt the public women, the monopoly of whom was the largest source of this man's revenue. All this is now changed, and Europeans can in most parts of Persia live where they like, the householders being only too glad to get a solvent tenant. Save in the capital, houses rarely are rented by Persians, it being usual to borrow a spare house, or, if a man has more than one, to put a relation in, rent-free.

The farce of the danger of living in the Persian towns is still kept up in Ispahan (the Ispahanis are the quietest men in Persia), where the English inhabit an unclean Armenian village, paying high rents, when houses in the town could be had much better and cheaper; the real reason probably being that the Armenians may enjoy the immunity they have from all control, caused by the presence of the European. But it has *not* answered, for in Ispahan the European is looked on as merely a clean and sober Armenian. Still, as an experiment of what the Armenian would be when practically unrestrained, it is valuable.

The Hamadan Armenian is hard-working and respectable, if occasionally a drunkard, looked on by his Persian fellow-subject as a friend and a good citizen. While the Ispahani looks on the Julfa Armenian as a race apart, and merely the panderer to his vice and the maker of intoxicating liquors; and the hang-dog Armenian, with his sham Turkish or

European dress and the bottle of arrack in his pocket, scowls staggering along in secure insolence, confident in the moral protection given him by the presence of the Englishman, whom he robs; respecting neither his priest, whom he has been taught to despise; nor the missionary, whom he dislikes at heart (though he has educated his children gratuitously), and whom his priest openly reviles.

A curious instance of the religious stability of the Julfa Armenian is shown in the fact, that a Protestant on any dispute with the missionary becomes Catholic or Old Armenian. The Old Armenian, after a row with the priest, becomes either Protestant or Catholic. The Catholics, as a rule, do not relapse or become perverts. In fact, a common threat with the Armenian to his spiritual pastor and master, missionary, priest or padre, is to say, “Do it, and I’ll turn,” *and some have* many times; in fact, a very small temporal matter often is the cause of conversions as sudden as insincere.

We were glad enough to get in, and had hardly got our boots off ere a number of trays of sweetmeats were brought for Pierson, on the part of Hadji Khaleel, with compliments, and a similar present was sent from the Imād-u-dowlet, who sent his farrash-bashi (literally chief carpet-spreader, but really his minister) to represent him. This man was well bred, well meaning and obliging, and afterwards, through a singular circumstance, one of my best friends among the Persians.

I continued to stay with Pierson, not moving into my own quarters till he left Kermanshah.

CHAPTER X.
KERMANSHAH.

Kermanshah—Imād-u-dowlet—We visit him—Signs of his wealth—Man nailed to a post—Injuring the wire—Serrum-u-dowlet—Visits—We dine with the son of the Governor—His decorations and nightingales—Dancing girls—Various dances—The belly dance—Heavy dinner—Turf—*Wild* geese—The swamp—A ducking through obstinacy—Imādieh—Wealth of the Imād-u-dowlet—The Shah loots him—Squeezing—Rock sculptures—Astrologers—Astrolabes—Fortune-telling—Rammals—Detection of thieves—Honesty of servants—Thefts through pique—My lost pipe-head—Tragedy of two women.

Kermanshah is decidedly the cheapest place in all cheap Persia. Bread was selling at seven pounds for twopence; mutton, seven pounds for fourteenpence, or twopence a pound; and other things in proportion. It costs here threepence a day to keep a horse (1867).

The day after our arrival Pierson went to visit the Imād-u-dowlet, uncle (?) of the king, and Governor of the province. He is a man of very large fortune, and is liked as a Governor, being stern, but generally just, his wealth putting him above any wish to oppress the *little* people. We rode to the maidān, or public square, then in under an archway and up a steep incline, which conducted us to the interior of the citadel, in which the Imād lived.

As we entered we noticed a man nailed by the ear to a wooden telegraph post.

The Imād-u-dowlet received Pierson very kindly, and laughed and joked a great deal. His eldest son, the "Serrum-u-dowlet," a man of five-and-thirty, was present; he spoke a little French and was very friendly and complimentary.

The wealth of the Governor was shown in his coffee-cup holders, of gold enamelled, and decorated with rows of diamonds; his water-pipes (kalians) all of gold; and his own special one, the bottle of which was of gold so thickly encrusted with emeralds that it appeared like green glass; all the stones were pale, and consequently of comparatively little value separately.

The Governor in appearance was a man of five-and-forty, with a heavy black beard and thick moustache; but he was really sixty-five: this youthful look was due to hair-dye.

He told us that the man who was nailed to the telegraph-post was a villager who had been detected red-handed in breaking the telegraph-wire, and that he was to remain thirty-six hours, when he would be imprisoned. "It is a capital warning to other offenders," said the Imād. At this time the line was frequently damaged, several miles at a time often being pulled down by malicious travellers and villagers, particularly on the frontier near Kermanshah. Pierson, however, begged that the man might be removed at sunset, on the ground that he would cease to act as a warning at night. This was reluctantly agreed to.

The latest gossip of Teheran was retailed, and a few vague remarks were made as to the politics of Europe. I was asked to feel the Imād's pulse, and did not fail to try both wrists, as I found if I did not do so I was supposed not to know my business. This was

hardly charlatanry, but merely a deference to the prejudices of the place. After the usual tea and pipes had been gone through we retired.

The man was still nailed to the post, surrounded by a gaping crowd of villagers. He amused himself by cursing Pierson as “reis-i-seem” (“master of the wire”) as we passed him. The Imād, however, unpinned him at sunset, as he had promised.

The next morning the “Serrum-u-dowlet” called to return Pierson’s visit to his father, and asked us to dine with him that evening, entreating us to come in time for tea in the afternoon. The whole forenoon was occupied in receiving visits from the personages of Kermanshah.

At five we repaired to the house of the “Serrum-u-dowlet.” We found him sitting with his brother in a large talár, or archway, one side of which was open to the air. The whole room was decorated in the strangest taste; there were the usual mirrors and florid mural paintings; these in this case were life-size full-length portraits of posture dancers and dancing girls, and were in ancient costumes, having been painted fifty years ago. The takhjahs in the walls were filled with chromo-lithographs in very dubious taste; several odd chandeliers hung at various heights as ornaments, some twenty pair of old carriage-lamps were stuck into staples in the walls, and as many small cages stood about, each containing a bulbul, or nightingale. What with the noise these birds made, and the splashing of a fountain which played furiously in a basin of yellow Yezd marble in the centre, it was difficult to catch what was said. Pipes were brought, and a long desultory conversation ensued, in the course of which our host’s guns, dogs, and miscellaneous

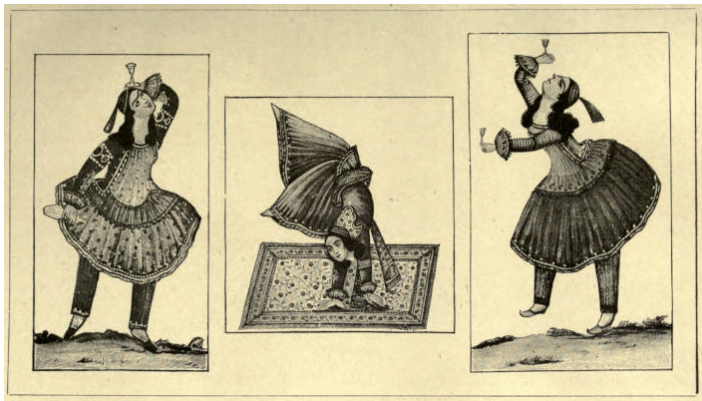
property were exhibited and duly admired.

The noise was deafening, and directly we had walked round the garden a band of musicians, some twenty strong, made night hideous with their strains and singing. Wine was now produced, and freely partaken of by both brothers, and trays of sweetmeats were handed round and afterwards placed on the ground around us. Spirits, in the form of arrack, the strong coarse spirit of the country, were pressed on us, but we declined. Our host and his brother, however, drank it like water.

On a whispered order being given to the servants four Susmani girls and a buffoon now appeared. These commenced a kind of posture dance, the buffoon singing and making remarks, which produced a good deal of laughter from the host and his brother, but were unintelligible to me, and simply disgusting, as Pierson told me, who *could* understand.

The girls were pretty in a way, brunettes with large eyes; their faces were much painted, and they were fine girls; their ages were from twelve to seventeen. Their dance had no variety, they spun round, the hands high in air, while the fingers were snapped with a loud report. A very free exhibition of considerably developed charms took place. Every now and then the dancer would make what we call a cheese; then, standing with the feet motionless, the body was contorted and wriggled, each muscle being made to quiver, and the head being bent back till it almost touched the ground; the fingers being snapped in time to the music; or tiny cymbals, some inch in diameter, were clashed between the forefinger and thumb of each hand. The musicians, who played continuously, kept up a sort of loud

chant the whole time. The girls now showed some skill as equilibrists, balancing full glasses, lighted candles, etc., and an exhibition of posturing was gone through. They stood on their heads and walked on their hands; they then danced a scarf-dance.



FEMALE DANCERS AND EQUILIBRISTS.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

We had not noticed that the buffoon had retired, but he now re-entered, disguised in a remarkable manner. He seemed a figure some four feet high, with a face huge and like a full moon. This was, in fact, carefully painted on his bare abdomen, the whole surmounted by a gigantic turban. He had constructed a pair of false arms, and, with a boy's coat and large girdle, he presented the effect of a dwarf with a huge round fat face; his head, chest, and arms were hidden in the enormous white turban. The face represented was one of intense and dismal stupidity, and his whole appearance was most ludicrous; in fact, it was only on afterwards seeing the man disrobe, that we made out *how* it was done.

He danced in and out among the girls, who stood

in a row snapping their fingers and posturing: but what was our astonishment when we saw the dismally stupid face *expand into a grin*, which became at length a laughing mask; it resumed its dismal stupidity—it grinned—it laughed. The musicians played and shouted their chant more and more loudly, and the face of the figure assumed the most ludicrous contortions. We all were unable to restrain our laughter, and the triumphant buffoon retired well rewarded by the Serrum-u-dowlet. The four dancers now became rather too personal in their attentions, and begged for coin. We gave them a few kerans, but were glad when they retired on dinner being announced. We both pronounced them monotonous and uninteresting.

After a heavy Persian dinner—much such a one as we had at Merand—we, with some trouble, got away at eleven P.M. Our hosts seemed inclined to make a very wet night of it; in fact, their frequent acceptance of cupfuls of raw spirits from the hands of the dancers had made them see things generally in a rosy light. They wept when we left!

We rode home through the silent streets of Kermanshah, the only light being our farnooses, or cylindrical lamps, made of copper and calico, something in the fashion of a Chinese lantern; and the full moon.

We met no one in the streets, which were deserted save by the dogs, and the whole town seemed sunk in sleep. The Persian is an early bird, going to bed at nine, and rising at four or half-past four. It is very difficult to break oneself of this habit of early rising on returning to Europe. One is looked on as very eccentric on getting up at half-past four, and is hunted from room to room by the housemaids.

Certainly the early morning is the best part of the day all over the world, but we Europeans in our wisdom have altered it. “Nous avons changé tout cela”—and we prefer living by gaslight, electricity, etc.

The next morning the Serrum-u-dowlet came over to take our photographs, and was very friendly; he took them really well, and is a clever fellow.

We went for a ride, and had the unwonted luxury of a two hours’ canter over good turf. I never had this anywhere else in Persia but once. While near the river we saw plenty of duck, and Pierson told me that they are always to be had in the Kermanshah river.

In Kermanshah I found that the grassy plain round the town had many attractions. Some two miles’ canter on it brought me to a swamp where there were always snipe, except in the hot weather, an occasional duck, and even at times wild geese. A ludicrous incident happened to me one day in regard to the latter. As I was cantering up to the swamp with my groom, I saw on the other side of a herd of cattle a flock of geese grazing. To dismount and take my gun from him was the work of an instant, and I quickly inserted a cartridge charged with No. 4, and a wire ditto, for my left barrel. I walked stealthily among the cattle towards the flock of geese, but the game took no notice of me, and allowed me to get within thirty yards; then it came across me, how if these were *tame* geese, what a fire of chaff I should get from Pierson. I did not think of shouting, as of course I should have done, which would have settled the question, but I retreated stealthily to where my groom was standing with the horses. I saw that he was full of excitement, and felt that I had made a

fool of myself. “Shikar?” (“Are they wild ones?”) said I. “Belli, belli, sahib!” (“Yes, yes, sir!”)

Back I went, but alas! only to be too well convinced that they *were* wild ones, for the whole flock sailed away ere I could get within a hundred and fifty yards. I have often shot geese—that is, a goose at a time—but I never had such another chance. The birds really behaved just as tame ones would; I can only suppose that my being among the grazing cows I was looked upon as harmless. I did not relate that afternoon’s adventure to Pierson for some time after.

The swamp, which was about a mile long, and at the widest parts only five hundred yards, was in the centre impossible to cross, save in summer, when there was no sport there. One side had not nearly so much cover as the other, but there were no holes; the other side was full of them, and it was only after a long time that I got thoroughly acquainted with the geography. In after days I had a guest who was very hot on sport of all kinds; and as the swamp was all I could show him at the time, it was arranged that we were to have a day there.

I, having a holy horror of wet feet, used to go in with a pair of duck trousers and Persian shoes regardless of water, and march on frequently up to my waist, changing on coming out. I suggested this mode to my sporting friend, but he looked on it as very *infra dig.* and unsportsmanlike, and set out in a most correct get-up of shooting-coat with many pockets, and the usual lace-up shooting-boots. Nothing would induce him to take a change in case of a wetting, and off we went. As his gun had no sling—almost a necessity in Persia, where the weapon is so frequently carried on horseback—his

groom carried it in its case.

We got to the swamp, and, knowing the place, I said, “You take the left side—there are no holes; and I who know the holes will take the right, which is full of them.”

But my friend was not to be led; he remarked that the right was certainly the best side, and as guest he ought to have it. To this I of course agreed, but I pointed out that the holes were deep and dangerous, and that I knew them, and he did not. But, no, he insisted. I could, of course, only give in.

The place was alive with snipe. I went to the left, or more open side, and was over my ankles in a moment. My enthusiastic friend was in to his knees. We blazed away, and were getting on well, when my friend lost his ramrod. Persia being a very dry place, all wood shrinks, and it had probably slipped out. There was nothing for it but to take the cleaning-rod from the case and use that; the difficulty was how to carry it, as we were firing frequently, and he didn’t want to unscrew it. My friend had no belt, and so thrust it down his back, between his shirt and waistcoat. We began again, and were soon in the thick of them. We had now got to the widest part of the swamp; I was separated from my guest by deep water-holes, and was looking at him when with a shout he suddenly disappeared, and it was evident he was in a water-hole. I rushed out and ran round the head of the swamp to his assistance; the servants were out of call. When I got there he was nearly done for; he had fallen head foremost into a hole, and could not get out, as the reeds gave way when he pulled them, and there was only a bottom round the edge of soft mud. The loading-rod had *somehow got down his back*, and he could not get hold of it,

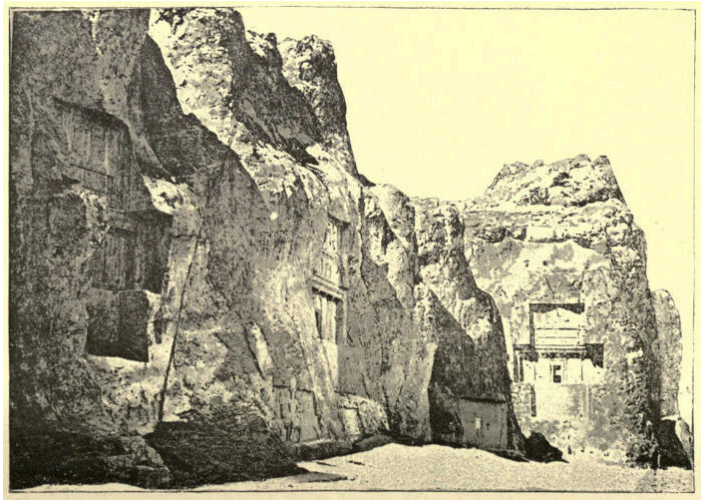
while it crippled him; and he had a very white face indeed when I helped him out by holding my gun out to him. He had lost his gun, but my groom dived and brought it out.

I wished him to canter home at once, but he did not like to be seen in the pickle he was in—mud, *green* mud, from head to foot; and he insisted on waiting till his man brought a change. This took an hour, and the day, though bright, was cold and windy. So there he stood in his wet clothes, his teeth chattering, trying to keep himself warm by jumping; but his struggles in the water-hole had so weakened him that he could hardly stand. Of course he had a severe go of intermittent fever, which laid him up for a fortnight. In after excursions he was content to leave me the right or dangerous side, which I from habit was able to safely travel in.

Pierson and I visited a magnificent palace which was in course of construction by the Imād-u-dowlet. Some idea of its size may be given when I say that there was stabling for two hundred horses. In Persia, when a man passes fifty, he begins to be seized with a mania for building, but he takes care not to *finish* the works he undertakes, being thoroughly persuaded of the certainty of his own death *in case of the completion of the edifice*.

Some ten years after I had left Kermanshah, Imādieh—so the place was called—was presented (I dare say much against the grain) to the king. At that time the Imād-u-dowlet had become the actual freeholder of the whole of the Kermanshah valley, and his wealth was immense in money and flocks and herds. But the inevitable evil day arrived. The Shah recalled him to Teheran, and the squeezing process commenced; large sums of money were

wrung from him, and the royal treasury correspondingly enriched. It is always so in Persia; a man is allowed to quietly enrich himself, but when he has achieved immense wealth he becomes a mark for oppression in his turn. To use the common expression of the country, “He is ripe; he must be squeezed.”



THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS. (NAKSH-I-RŪSTAM.)

Just by Imādieh, at the base of a high cliff, is an excavated arched chamber, at the back of which, carved from the living rock, is an equestrian statue armed with a lance; it is of colossal size, and some fourteen feet high (?). Both figure and horse are much damaged by time and the hand of man, and it is difficult to make much out of the detail. There are two other figures, one at either extremity of the back of the arch.

Over the entrance of the arched chamber, which forms a delightfully cool place to have tea in, are carved in the face of the cliff itself two figures of

Fame (?) (or winged female figures); to the best of my remembrance they have trumpets. These are more in the Roman style, or may be even modern (pseudo-classic), for the early Kings of Persia employed foreign artificers to decorate their palaces; instance being seen in Ispahan, particularly in the large oil-paintings, which are certainly not by Oriental artists. Of the great antiquity of the figures within the arch there can be no doubt, and they are more than alto-relievo, for they are only affixed to the rock by a small strip, and are much under-cut. They have been frequently scientifically described, and appear to be the work of the Sassanian kings.

There are several similar though less pretentious figures: one at Naksh-i-Rūstam,[14] near Persepolis; another, called by the people “Ferhad and Shireen,” near Shiraz; but these latter are simply rough carvings in relief.

A stone platform has been built in front of the archway, and below this flows a great volume of spring-water that comes from a natural tunnel beneath the statues. A large hauz or tank is kept constantly full by this, and when we were there it was ornamented by a flock of some sixty tame geese, the only ones I had seen, save those in Teheran, and the recent sight of them had something to do with my hesitation when in search of sport on the occasion which I have noted.

The shade and coolness, the noise of flowing water, and the huge tank with the geese on it (and a swimming goose in a large piece of water is a decidedly handsome bird, *when you have no swans*), rendered this place a favourite one to drink tea and smoke pipes in.

The Naib-ul-ayālut, the second son of the Imād-u-

dowlet, was a man who devoted much attention to astrology and the pursuit of the philosopher's stone. He entertained us one day with tea at the statue, and gave us an impromptu exhibition of fireworks; and as they were discharged from the edge of the tank, it acted like a mirror, and the effect was good in the extreme.

Astrology is at a premium in Persia; the monajem, or astrologers, are consulted on almost every subject. Each village has its diviner, and each big town supports several, the head of whom boasts the sounding title of "monajem-bashi" (chief astrologer).

Their great occupation is to predict fortunate hours, days, etc. They will fix on a day for a great man to start on a journey or arrive at a place, and the man will be careful to follow the astrologer's direction, for they have a great belief in bad and good luck. The rules by which the astrologers make their calculations are very complicated; strange to say, there are many of them who really believe in their own profession. Each has his astrolabe of brass or silver; some of the brass ones are very large and handsome: I have known as much as one thousand kerans paid for a good one. They are manufactured in the country. The king's astrologer is a very great man indeed, and no important act is undertaken without consulting him. Often the astrologer goes further than his own special business of "ruling the planets," and by means of rolling six dice, which revolve on a rod run through the centre of them, he pretends to read the future—in fact, he is a fortune-teller. Many, too, are rammals, or discoverers of stolen property. This is often ingeniously done, after a good deal of hocus pocus, by working on the fears of the thieves.

The old, old plans are adopted: sticks are given to the suspected, and they are told they will grow if they are guilty; the conscience-stricken breaks a piece off. Or they are told to dip their hands into a pot placed in a dark room; this is full of dye stuff; the guilty man does not dip his hand, and is so detected. Or, more frequently, all the suspects are sworn to innocence in the name of some local saint, and are informed that the vengeance of the saint will fall on the guilty man if the property is not returned; in the morning it often mysteriously reappears. These men, then, are of use, and by their means property may often be recovered that would otherwise never be traced.

I myself have employed them successfully on several occasions. As a rule, thefts by domestics of anything *valuable* are very rare, though pilfering goes on a good deal, for the Persian servant looks on his master's tea, sugar, and grain as lawful plunder; when things are taken, it is usually done by a servant merely in the hope of getting a rival into trouble, and an edict that the servants will have to pay a little more than the value of the lost property is enough to bring it back; it is impossible to detect under these circumstances the abstractor. But if a *thief* is really among the household, the servants as a rule find him out and clamour for his discharge.

Such an event happened when my best pipe-head suddenly disappeared. I sent for the rammal, and after various mysterious ceremonies unsuccessfully gone through, the man retired promising me my property before noon the next day. Next morning one of my men calmly informed me that he had seen the prophet Mahommed in a dream, who addressed him thus—

"'Hadji, my son, are you well?'

"'Alas! no, holy prophet; I am in deep grief, my heart is burnt up with misery.'

"'Why is this, son Hadji?'

"'My master has lost a pipe-head, O prophet, and I —I, the innocent Hadji—may be suspected; the hearts of all the servants are tightened (idiom) by this sad fear.'

"'Be not afraid, son Hadji; if you look at the top left-hand corner of your master's tank, you will find it.'

"I swooned away with delight, sahib, and am only waiting your permission to make a search."

I smiled, and of course there they found my pipe-head. As I knew theft was not intended, I said nothing, but I did not reward the vision-seeing finder.

One day in Kermanshah I was surprised to meet a procession in the streets. First came all the lutis or buffoons, the public musicians singing and dancing, then a crowd of drunken roughs, then a few soldiers with fixed bayonets, then the "farrash-bashi," or "principal tent-pitcher"—in reality the Imād-u-dowlet's head-man—on horseback; then the executioner, clad in red, and his aides; then two wretched women, their heads shaved and rubbed with curds, their faces bare and blackened, *dressed in men's clothes*, and both seated on one donkey, led by a negro, with their faces to the tail (their feet had been beaten to a pulp); then a crowd of some two thousand men, women, and children. On inquiry I learnt that these women were attendants at a public bath, and had betrayed the wife of a tradesman into

the hands of an admirer, who had secreted himself in the bath with their connivance. The woman complained, the man fled, and justice (Persian justice) was being done on the two unfortunate women. The Imād-u-dowlet had severely bastinadoed them and then gave them over to the executioner to be paraded through the town and then banished—after they had been handed over to the tender mercies of all the ruffians of the city. The first part of the sentence had been carried out, and they had been led thus through the bazaars from dawn till afternoon; the executioner taking, as is customary, a small tax from each trader according to his degree. Such is the Persian custom from old times. I learnt afterwards that the mob defiled these women, and one died of her injuries; the other poor wretch either took poison or was given it by her offended relatives the next morning.

Such is Persian justice.

CHAPTER XI.
I GO TO ISPAHAN.

Deficiency of furniture—Novel screws—Pseudo-masonry—Fate of the Imād-u-dowlet's son—House-building—Kerind—New horse—Mule-buying—Start for Ispahan—Kanaats—Curious accident—Fish in kanaats—Loss of a dog—Pigeons—Pigeon-towers—Alarm of robbers—Put up in a mosque—Armenian village—Armenian villagers—Travellers' law—Tax-man at Dehbeed—Ispahan—The bridge—Julfa.

In these early days of the Telegraph Department we all had considerable difficulty in getting furniture; the little good furniture Pierson and I had, viz., two tables, came from Baghdad, and was originally made in India. I was delighted to get from my friend the farrash-bashi a magnificent arm-chair made of mahogany and stuffed in velvet. Even the word for a chair, "sandalli," was not used in Kermanshah, but "kūrsi," a platform, was the expression; and the rough chairs we got made, of plane or poplar, painted bright green or red in water-colour and unvarnished, and pinned together by wooden pegs in lieu of mortises, were uneasy in the extreme, always coming to grief; and the travelling camp-stools, with no back, were nearly as bad. In Ispahan the natives are clever as carpenters, and now make chairs, tables, and even chests of drawers very fairly. I once had some made by a very clever young Armenian carpenter, and the chests of drawers were very good indeed, but I found that the locks and hinges were *nailed* on instead of screws being used. I

sent them back, and then, rather than buy screws, which are somewhat expensive in Persia, the carpenter cut slots with a file in the head of each round-headed nail, sending them to me and triumphantly demanding his money, supposing that *now* at least I was satisfied.

But on putting a screwdriver to them, I detected the ingenious deception, and remembering the Persian proverb, “If you can deal with an Armenian, you can deal with the devil,” I had to put pressure on the man to get screws really put on.

The farrash-bashi’s arm-chair arrived with five pounds in cash, ten loaves of sugar—loaf-sugar was one and sixpence a pound at that time and only used by the rich—several pounds of tea, and twenty mule-loads of barley—not a bad fee. I was surprised at the largeness of it, and found that the farrash-bashi was a “mason,” which accounted for it.

One of the king’s servants conceived the brilliant idea of introducing pseudo-masonry into Persia for the sake of his own aggrandisement. He inaugurated so-called lodges of masons (Feramūsh-khana, “the house of forgetfulness,” is the name used in the country for a masonic lodge) all over Persia, specially impressing on the neophytes the doctrine that implicit obedience was in *all things temporal* to be yielded to the superior, and exacted large contributions. With a people so excitable as the Persians, anything mysterious has a great charm. The astute mirza took care only to initiate rich neophytes, or at all events men of position, and a gigantic political engine was the result (of course all this was quite contrary to the spirit of masonry, which especially avoids politics). The king got wind of the matter, and the clever Armenian (for he was a

son of poor Armenians of Julfa) was banished the kingdom, or fled to save his throat. But time went on, the past was condoned, and the poor Armenian boy now occupies a high diplomatic position at a great European Court, and holds the title of prince.

It appears that the farrash-bashi's handsome fee was not so much caused by gratitude for professional treatment, but was merely a way of "rendering unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," for he had seen a masonic jewel of mine similar to one worn by the maker of mock masons, and hence the chair and the rest of it.

A curious episode now occurred. The Imād-u-dowlet had a son, his youngest and favourite. This fellow was guilty of every crime that is possible. While we were in Kermanshah he had attempted his father's life, and actually wounded him with slugs from a pistol discharged at a few yards' distance. The Imād at length confined him in chains to his chamber. At the intercession of his brothers, the chains after forty-eight hours were removed, and in a week or so he was received into apparent favour, and set at liberty. But from what we learnt afterwards, this was merely a manœuvre to quiet the minds of the townspeople—his destruction had been resolved on.

One morning a man of the Imād's rushed into our courtyard and implored me to start at once for Imādieh, where, it was stated, the prince had *wounded himself* with his gun. I left at once on a very good horse of Pierson's, and galloped violently to the place.

Here I found the Imād's doctor, Mirza Zeynal Abdeen. He was as white as a sheet, and hurried me to the edge of the large tank; there lay the corpse of

the Imād's son; a few servants stood round, and seemed frightened out of their wits. Mirza Zeynal Abdeen was beside himself, and besought me to do something.

I told him the man had been dead some time. This seemed to astonish him. On closer inspection I found that death had been caused by a gun-shot wound, fired with the muzzle touching, or almost touching, the junction of the chin and neck; so close had the weapon been placed that the flesh was burnt by the flame. The entire charge was lodged in the brain. Nobody could give any information, but the man's discharged gun lay by him. I have no doubt that the matter was really an execution, for one of the wrists was bruised by finger-marks, and doubtless the unfortunate man had been held down and slain with his own weapon.

An account was given that he had thrown the gun up and caught it several times, but, missing it, that the butt struck the pavement and the gun exploded; but the muzzle must have been nearly touching when discharged. There being nothing more to do, I promised to break the news to the Imād-u-dowlet, though doubtless he was well aware of the result.

I got on the horse Pierson had lent me on account of its swiftness, to return, but he could hardly move, so I took my servant's. As we crawled towards the town, my servant leading the foundered animal, we had to take him into a village; he lay down and died, and I rode home on the servant's horse. On the way, every now and then, I met parties of the grandees of Kermanshah, coming out with their servants to inquire the result of the "*accident*."

I replied to their questions that the man was dead, on which these bearded men burst into loud weeping

and shed floods of tears, getting down to take up handfuls of mud, which they immediately plastered on their hats as a sign of mourning.

I was spared any interview with the Imād. His people stated that he was aware of what had happened, and was in retirement in his women's quarters. The unfortunate young man's funeral was conducted with every show of grief.

Pierson left for Teheran, where he was called to act temporarily as Director, and I became now much occupied in looking after the building of my house, which a native had contracted to finish in six weeks under penalty of one toman a day for any delay over that time. I frequently sent to the man to ask why he did not commence, but the answer was always the same, "Furder" ("to-morrow"). To-morrow, of course, never came, and the fellow incurred a penalty of six hundred kerans. I let him off two hundred, but he was compelled to pay up the remainder, much to his astonishment and disgust.

I had occasion to go to Kerind, which is the last telegraph-station in Persia. The country was covered with snow, so I could not see much of the place. The Kerindis are reported to be a very turbulent set, and bad Mussulmans. They eat many things that are unlawful, as the hare, and are said to be devil-worshippers, or Yezeedis, and to celebrate certain unchaste rites.

However this may be, they seemed to me to be a fine, honest lot of people, and their then Governor, Malekneas Khan, certainly was not deficient in politeness and florid compliment, for he sent me a letter addressed "To the great English doctor, he who *sits* in the presence of princes."

On my return I passed through Myedesht, some seven farsakhs from Kermanshah, celebrated for its horses. Here I bought a strong three-year-old horse for four hundred kerans (sixteen pounds). My stud had now got to five, for my patients kept me in corn and fodder, so all an animal cost me was his price and pay of groom. I used to take long rides each day, and we always managed, the groom and I, to tire all five horses over the turf. In fact, after dispensary hours there was little else to do, for there were only two signallers here, of whom I did not see much, as when one was on duty the other was sleeping.

Captain Chambers, who was newly appointed to the Persian Telegraph, now arrived, and it was a change for the better to have a companion. He received orders to buy mules for the Indian Government, for use in the Abyssinian war, and purchased some three hundred. Hardly was the mule-buying over, when orders came that the line from Teheran viâ Hamadan and Kermanshah, was to be handed over to the Persians; and I received orders to march across country to Ispahan, to which station I was now appointed.

We started—Mr. Hughes, clerk in charge of Kermanshah office, and his wife; Sergeant Hockey, Line Inspector, and his wife; and two signallers, all of whom, with myself, were transferred to the Ispahan section.

We went as far as Kangawar upon the post-road towards Hamadan, and then turned off on a less-known route to Ispahan, viâ Khonsar and Gūlpigon.

Nothing particularly noticeable occurred till we got to a large village called Gougas, where we had to make a day’s halt to rest the mules. The spring was

well advanced, and the whole plain showed heavy crops. What, however, interested us was the quantity of ruined kanaats, or underground watercourses, these teemed with pigeons; some of them were of a depth of seventy feet.

The greater part of the irrigation of Persia is carried on by systems of underground tunnelling, called “kanaats.” A well is dug, generally on the slope of a range of hills, until water is reached; then, a few feet above the bottom of this well, a tunnel is made some four feet high and two wide, having its outlet in a second well, and so constructed as to have a very slight fall towards well No. 2. Should the ground be soft these tunnels are lined by large oval hoops of baked pottery, two inches thick and a foot wide. By placing these continuously the prime cost of the tunnel is much increased, but the expense for repairs is very much less; the great charge being the annual clearing out that the tunnels, unless lined, require, the soil falling in and blocking them, and the fall of water being lost by accumulations of the settlings of mud and sand.

Sometimes the wells of the kanaats are not more than twenty yards apart; sometimes as far off as fifty or even eighty. As each well is dug, the “mokennis,” or tunnellers, draw up from it all the earth, which they carefully place round it in a circle. As they come to water, the mud which is drawn up is poured on the earth, and as it hardens in the sun, a number of crater-like mounds are formed; these mark the lines of kanaats, which may be distinguished running across barren plains for many miles, or even farsakhs. They are often dry, and disused ones are rather dangerous.

I once, when riding, went into an old one, horse

and all, but managed to scramble out as my horse struggled; he plugged the well, and had to be, with some difficulty, dug and drawn out.

A very curious accident happened to Mr. H——, of the Department, when coursing at Teheran. Fair coursing was obtained in the immediate vicinity of the capital, but the kanaat-holes rendered it somewhat dangerous. A run took place, and Mr. H —— was missed. His horse, riderless, joined the others, and the only conclusion was that he must have tumbled down a well-hole, which occur here in tens of thousands, and in every direction. After a long search his hat was discovered at the margin of one of the innumerable well-holes. That saved his life; for had his hat not been found, he would still be in the kanaat, as his voice would never have reached the surface. Stirrup-leathers were joined, and he was drawn out not much the worse, strange to say, though his face and hands were badly cut. To construct a kanaat is the highest benefit a rich man can confer upon a village; it at once becomes a flourishing place. Sometimes a long series of tunnels and wells are dug, and by some error in calculation there is no supply of water; but this is very rare. The great advantage of these subterranean channels is, that loss by evaporation is reduced to a minimum, and water cannot be stolen; of course the cost of making is very great; but if successful it is a very profitable transaction, for the ryots have to *buy* the water, and at a high price.

Most of the kanaats are full of fish: where they come from is a puzzle, as the water is lost in the ground at one end and rises subterraneously at the other. I believe it has been shown by Darwin that fish-spawn is carried on the feet of frogs: this at

times accounts for it. The larger kanaat fish are not very nice, having a sodden muddy taste—they are like tench; but the smaller ones, when fried, resemble much the “Friture de la Seine” sold at the restaurants at Asnières. We often, when marching, amused ourselves by obtaining a good friture from the openings of the kanaats in the villages, in rather an unsportsmanlike manner. Cocculus Indicus (some ten beans) was pounded and mixed with dough, and cast down one of the wells; in an hour, at least a half-bushel of fish were always caught. The fish poison imparted no poisonous effects to the flesh of the fish, probably because so small a portion was taken. The fish, if allowed to remain in the water, generally recovered; the large ones always did. This mode of getting a dish of fish would have been hardly excusable; but in a country where the only food on the road is fowls or eggs, a change is of great importance. These kanaat-fish will not take bait as a rule, though I have known them to be voracious and easily taken by paste.

The ruined and dry kanaats are much more numerous than those in working order, and form a secure asylum for jackals and porcupines. Three very good bull-terriers I had, once went down a kanaat near Shiraz after a porcupine; two were badly wounded from the quills, and the third, a very old and decrepit dog, was lost, probably drowned. I fancy from their muzzles that they must have killed the beast, but the dogs did not recover from the effects of the quill wounds for a fortnight; and one had a piece of quill lodged in her thigh that I did not detect till she showed it me and almost asked me to extract it a month after. In the unsuccessful search we made for the decrepit dog in the kanaat, we nearly came to grief ourselves, for as I was creeping

along with a lantern in my hand, up to my knees in mud and water, a quantity of earth and stones fell from the roof, separating me from my man who followed. I rushed for the well in front, and was drawn out by servants who were awaiting me, while my man made for the one we had descended by; we were equally glad to see each other. It was the first time I had been in a kanaat—I mean it to be the last.

Pigeons may generally be shot for the pot from these kanaats, and afford very good practice; the pigeons are similar to our blue rocks. One simply follows a line of wells, and just before you reach a well, a servant throws a stone into that behind; if there be any pigeons they usually rise and give a fair chance, returning to the kanaat by a neighbouring well. Considerable amusement may be got out of this. Gougas was full of pigeons, and here we first saw the pigeon towers so common in Ispahan. A description of one will serve for all, for they differ merely in size. The towers are constructed simply for the collection of pigeons' dung, which commands a high price as a manure for the raising of melons, and, in fact, is a kind of guano. The pigeon when living in the kanaats is liable to the depredations of jackals, foxes, etc., so the Ispahanis, the most careful and calculating of the Persian nation, build these towers for the pigeons. They are circular, and vary in height, from twenty to seventy feet, and are sometimes as much as sixty feet in diameter. The door, which is merely an opening in the wall half-way up, is only opened once a year for the collection of the guano, the remainder of the time it is plastered like the rest of the building, which is composed of mud bricks and ornamented with a ring of plaster painted with scrolls or figures in red ochre. These bricks are made on the spot, and cost from one

keran to two kerans a thousand. The whole surface of the inside of the circular outer wall is covered with small cells open to one side about twelve inches in size; in these the pigeons build. In the centre of the circle are two walls cutting each other at a right angle, and so forming a cross; the sides and ends of these walls are also covered with cells.

I have counted cells for seven thousand one hundred pairs in a large pigeon tower; there were five thousand five hundred in the outer wall, and sixteen hundred in the cruciform wall occupying the centre. Most of those near Ispahan are now in ruins, for as it is no longer the capital, an excessive price cannot be obtained for early melons, and so pigeon-keeping is not so profitable. In no case did the proprietor of the tower feed the birds; they picked up a living from the fields of the neighbours.

A ridiculous incident now occurred to us. As we were marching across an immense plain, we noticed men in a crowd on the side of the mountains; they were all armed, and seemed over a hundred in number. We were considerably alarmed to see that they ran in a body towards our caravan, which we had no doubt would now be looted, for what were three revolvers and a cavalry sabre against a hundred armed men? The muleteers ran away, shouting “Doz, doz!” (“Thieves, thieves!”) We could not save ourselves by flight, for two of the party were married—Mr. Hughes and Sergeant Hockey—and their wives were in palikees, or paniers, on the mules.

The armed crowd advanced at a run; we put ourselves on the supposed danger-side of the caravan. The mules had all stopped when the drivers ran away, and to our delight we found that the

armed men were merely some villagers who had fled to the mountains rather than pay excessive taxes. These poor fellows begged us to intercede with the Governor of Ispahan for them on our arrival, which we promised to do. Our muleteers, seeing there was no fighting, now returned; we put up our revolvers, and on we went. We did not pass through Khonsar, which is off the road.

That night we arrived at a small village which had a quantity of warm springs. So unsophisticated were the natives that, having no other shelter to give us, they suggested that we, like Mussulman travellers, should put up in the mosque. To this we did not object, and had a very good resting-place. This was a very extraordinary occurrence, as villagers are generally very bigoted; but I fancy these people did not really understand that we were not Mahommedans.

The next stage was Lilliane, an Armenian village; the people were apparently prosperous; they wore the dress of the ancient Armenians, or Feridan costume. Feridan is a collection of villages, most of which are Armenian, in the neighbourhood of Ispahan. The priest put me up; he had been to Bombay, and seemed a decent fellow. He was an old man, and told me that, were it not for their secluded position, they should be much oppressed.

The men and boys seemed very boorish; the women were clad in the peculiar ancient costume referred to. Cylinders of pasteboard were swathed in chintz of various colours, and worn as head-coverings. These hats, if they may be so called, were ornamented with strings of silver coins; they wore long trousers, the bottoms of which were in some cases elaborately embroidered. It is these

embroideries, called naksh, that are exhibited in the Persian collection in the South Kensington Museum. At one time they were part of the universal indoor dress of the Persian women; each bride worked herself a pair during her girlhood, and they are said to have employed three, four, or even five years in the labour. The figures are flowers, generally roses, worked in diagonal rows in fine silk on muslin; there is no filling in, it is *all stitching*.

To return to the women. They had high shagreen shoes and thick socks of coloured wool; the skirts were long but not voluminous; over the dress was worn a long mantle of red cloth, trimmed and lined with foxes' skin; the shirts were red or green, and the breasts were allowed to be fully exposed *as ornaments*. This liberal exhibition struck us as very strange. A huge metal belt of copper plated, or silver, girded their waists; the hair was hidden by long kerchiefs tied over the head and hanging down behind, while, strangest of all, a white cloth was tied round the neck and hid the nose and mouth. This, I was informed by the priest, is never removed—they even sleep in it. With them it is what the veil is with the Mahommedan woman, the sign of modesty: this completed the costume.

The women, all save the very old, spoke only in whispers or by pantomime. A girl on marriage never speaks in the presence of her mother-in-law or husband—she only signs. The very young girls and very old women, however, fully made up for the silence of the rest.

The priest was much surprised that we did not accept his invitation to get drunk, telling me that "if one didn't get drunk one might as well be a Mussulman." The Armenians were very friendly, but

charged us much more for provisions, etc., than the Mussulmans. They are great beggars.

Of Gūlpigon, a large, scattered place, we saw nothing, from the weather being bad, but I got some good carpets there.

Our last stage brought us again on the regular caravan road to Ispahan, and there we found a magnificent stone caravanserai (Charlēseah).

There were quantities of travellers, but we were lucky enough to arrive in time to find good rooms. This is of great importance, for if one happens to come in after the arrival of a big caravan with pilgrims, or a regiment of soldiers, it is next to impossible to get rooms, and a row is often the result, for the presence of a large number of co-religionists makes the people put on the appearance of bigotry; and some beggar will insist perhaps on occupying a room large enough for ten, and decline to be even bought out; an unpleasant wrangle will ensue, and then, if one is not good-tempered, a row. First come is first served, and good road law.



ARMENIAN WOMEN.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

Generally, however, a few kerans will secure two rooms, and as a rule stratagems obtain the accommodation that force fails to secure. I thought myself, when a married man, that it was better to pay a small fee when I found, as I did at times, every room occupied and no other place to go to. At the same time it is a crying shame that the employés of *our* Persian Telegraph Department, *who always travel on business*, should not be enabled to go to the post-houses *as a right*, and that they are at times compelled to argue in the rain, or engage in serious rows, when they find that there is absolutely no other means of getting shelter for themselves and families. This is particularly hard, too, on the signaller and subordinate member, who, with few muleteers and perhaps two servants, finds it more difficult to secure a place to put his head in than the superior officer, who has a regiment of servants and muleteers, and can consequently overawe opposition, and be too strong to provoke a row.

At times one *must* have recourse to stratagem. At Dehbeed, the loneliest and coldest station in Persia, there is no village, only a post-house and caravanserai, the latter quite in ruins; these, with the telegraph-office, form all the shelter in winter, in summer-time there are a few black tents. One bitter winter's day I arrived at Dehbeed, marching, and proceeded to the post-house. This I found full of irregular horsemen, some twenty in each bottom room, while their master, a Khan, engaged in collecting taxes, occupied the top room. I, supposing these men were servants, asked them to vacate one room; they declined, and told me to get out of the place, and not on any account to wake the Khan.

What was I to do? Dehbeed is twenty-four miles from any village, the caravanserai in ruins, and the greater part of the telegraph-office had *fallen in* from heavy snow. The unfortunate sergeant in charge had reported to the superintendent, Mr. W——, the state of his office, and on asking how he was to keep the instrument dry with no roof, had been told "to sit on it." He and his family were at a loss for room, and there was no other shelter of any kind, and snow to any amount, temperature awful, and three in the afternoon. The only thing was to shake down in the stable. I had no *right* in the post-house as I was *marching*, and not riding, post, nor had this Khan, for the same reason.

Programme:—to attempt to get a room by begging and trusting to his politeness; if that fails, a ruse. I shout violently, and am threatened by the rough horsemen.

At last I wake the Khan, and a message is sent down to know what I want. I reply that a room is all I need, and will he give me one of the three he occupies?

I am invited to a cup of tea.

Fortunately my caravan is not yet arrived, I being ahead, so I go up-stairs, am very polite, and have no doubt of getting a room. I am regaled with a cup of tea, and after a long explanation from my entertainer, the royal tax-gatherer, as to what a great man he is, and how he is waiting orders from the Governor of Fars, at Shiraz, I am told I had better march twenty-four miles, through the snow, to the next stage.

I did not argue with the Khan, but I was determined to get quarters, and I told him that I

should telegraph at once to the Governor at Shiraz and complain.

“Go to the devil,” was the reply.

Boiling with rage I plodded through the deep snow to the telegraph-office. I knew the line was down, and that I could not telegraph to Shiraz, but I had my plan.

I returned with a large telegraph form covered with English writing, and entering the Khan’s room in a blustering manner sat down and tossed him the supposed despatch.

“What is this, sahib?”

“A message for you.”

“But I can’t read it; please read it for me.”

I carelessly comply, after pulling off my wet boots.

“His Royal Highness the Governor of Fars to ——, Khan.

“What do you mean by refusing to give the European quarters? Vacate post-house at once, and proceed *instantly* to Abadeh for orders.”

Now had this Persian been as sharp as he was ill-mannered and dog-in-the-mangery he would have known that he would never have received such a message; but he gave credit to it, supposing that I had complained by wire, and he cleared out with many apologies. Poor devil! He started for Abadeh, seventy miles off, the nearest halting-place twenty-eight miles, just as day was fading and my caravan marching in to the post-house. The weather was very bitter, and this rather Persian way of getting the man out did not weigh on my conscience. I told the Governor of Fars, and he said simply, “Serve him

right, he ought to have given you at least one room."

Ispahan was surrounded by gardens and full of ruins. Here a street, of which a fourth of the houses were inhabited; there a ruined quarter; then miles of bazaar full of buyers and sellers, who shouted "Bero, Armeni!" ("Be off, Armenian!") with occasional gaps of ruins. Then a huge maidān, or public square, the largest in Persia, one end thronged by hucksters, at the other the Musjid-i-Shah, or royal mosque; more ruins, then a magnificent and lofty bazaar, also in ruins, through which we rode; then the Char Bagh, a royal garden, with its tile-domed college and golden ball, and with its rows of magnificent planes, and its dry and ruined tanks and watercourses; then a fine and level bridge which crossed the river Zendarūd, which just at that time was full of rushing muddy water, passing furiously under the many arches.

At length we arrived in Julfa, the Armenian village on the further side of the Ispahan river, after seventeen days' marching from Kermanshah, and two occupied by our halt in Gougas. We had found the grass and young wheat high there, and plenty of lambs to be bought; but Ispahan was not so forward, the trees being only just in leaf, and weather cold.

CHAPTER XII.
JULFA.

Illness and death of horse—Groom takes sanctuary—Sharpness of Armenians—Julfa houses—Kūrsis—Priests—Arachnoort—Monastery—Nunnery—Call to prayer—Girls' school—Ancient language of the Scriptures—Ignorance of priests—Liquor traffic—Sunday market—Loafers—Turkeys—Church Missionary school—Armenian schools.

I was given quarters in Ispahan that did not possess a stable, and I had to hire one a good way off. This cost me one of my horses, for my careless groom, instead of giving the animals "teleet," the mixture of grass and straw, simply filled their mangers with clover, and, leaving them to their fate, went to enjoy himself in the town. The natural result followed: I was hurriedly summoned to the stable, and found my Myedesht horse "Armchair" (I had given him this name on account of the ease of his paces) flinging his head about against the ground, from which he was unable to rise; he had acute inflammation of the bowels, as I found from an examination after death.

At that time, knowing little or nothing of the diseases of horses, I was compelled to send for a native farrier, and let him work his wicked will on the poor beast. The treatment he employed was to put on a quantity of heavy clothing, canter the animal furiously about, and deprive him of water; in about four hours he died. I have since had horses

who suffered in a similar way, notably in one case where I was offered ten tomans for a horse which cost sixty. I bled him largely and saved his life, but his hoofs were never any good afterwards, becoming hollow, and he was chronically foundered. I had better have dealt. Bleeding, in my experience, is the only remedy; of course, the violent cantering is the very worst possible thing.

During the excitement, my groom, a Persian of Kermanshah, slipped away, and I found that he had taken sanctuary in the Armenian Cathedral. I, however, as he was a Mussulman, got him with some difficulty away, gave him the thrashing he deserved, and kicked him out.

I found that in Julfa the cost of living was much higher than in Kermanshah, the Armenians never allowing anything to be sold to the English save at a high price; and in this manner a sort of special rate was paid by the Europeans. The remedy we adopted was to buy everything from the town, and this answered so well that, in about six months, our pay went twice as far as before. Mr. Walton, the superintendent, with some difficulty got a bazaar list with the real prices of the usual necessaries *as sold in the town of Ispahan*, and circulated it among the staff. These prices turned out to be nearly the same as those we had paid in Kermanshah.

Julfa itself was, for an Armenian village, unusually pleasant in appearance. The Armenians are essentially gardeners, and each house had its vineyard or orchard; the water for irrigating these was led in open channels through the middle of the principal streets, and the edges of these channels were thickly planted with “zoban-i-gungishk,” or “sparrow-tongue,” a quick-growing kind of willow,

so called from the pointed leaf. This tree makes the best firewood, giving a lasting ember; the trees are lopped each year, and the twigs and branches are used for making thatch, over poplar or plane poles, for roofing those rooms which are not arched. In Ispahan most rooms have an arched roof.

The houses in Julfa are all built of mud bricks; some of them are very ancient, going back to four hundred years. The clay of Ispahan is very tenacious; and as the walls, particularly of the older houses, are built from four to five feet thick, very substantial dwellings are the result, warm in winter but cool in summer.

The Armenians almost invariably at that time (1871) built their rooms with arched brick roofs; these were quite impervious to the weather and delightfully cool in summer. The cold in winter was very great, but as the Armenian does not use an open fire, but sits the greater part of his time, his feet under a “kūrsi,” or platform having a brazier under it, and is very warmly clad in wool and skins, he does not feel it.

These “kūrsi” (literally platforms) are an economical arrangement used in every Armenian house. A small hole is dug in the floor (in summer it is planked over); in this is placed a clay fire-pan, half full of wood ashes; on them are a few handfuls of lighted charcoal. The “kūrsi,” a frame eighteen inches high, and varying from two feet square to four, is placed over this fire, and over this “kūrsi” is laid a “lahāf,” or thickly-wadded cotton quilt of such size as to cover the “kūrsi” and extend beyond it for a yard and a half. Around the “kūrsi” are placed thin mattresses or cushions; on these the whole family sit by day, and here they all sleep at night. In the day

the “kūrsi” acts as a table, on which the meals are eaten; at night the feet are kept thoroughly warm by the fire-pot and the quilt. As the Armenians never wash more than once a month, and very seldom that, the “kūrsi,” with its heat, forms a nidus for the vermin with which they are infested; but it enables them to support the cold of their large and airy rooms at a minimum cost for fuel. Whole families thus sleeping in one apartment, guests, married couples, children and all, does not tend to promote morality, which with these people is at a very low ebb.

What struck me most was the great multitude of priests in the place. India and Batavia are supplied with priests from Julfa; these priests are under the jurisdiction of a bishop, whose head-quarters are the so-called monastery, or Egglesiah Wang, literally “big church.” He is assisted by a monk of jovial port, the Kalifa Kuchek, or, as he is familiarly termed, the little bishop. This little bishop, who has held his post for many years, is much and deservedly respected in the place. Nominally the jurisdiction of Julfa is in the hands of the bishop; literally, the little bishop attends to this temporal power, and gives general satisfaction.

The Arachnoort, or bishop, at the time of my arrival was one Moses; and he added to his income, regardless of consequences, by accepting bribes to make priests; some of the priests he made he accepted as little as ten pounds for, and many could neither read nor write. His successor, the present bishop, a man of singularly prepossessing appearance and blameless life, does not do this, and exacts a fair education and a good character in his candidates for ordination.

A very amusing instance showing this occurred in 1881. I had a dirty, drunken cook, whom, though knowing his work, I had to discharge for drunkenness and dishonesty; he was notoriously a great blackguard, but a clever fellow. To my astonishment in a day or two I met my drunken cook, dressed in sad-coloured garments, washed and sober. I was much surprised at the change for the better, and was told that the reason was that he was to be made a priest in a day or two. I inquired of the little bishop, and was told that he had offered a bribe of twenty pounds, or kerans five hundred, to be made a priest; but that, as the bishop did not like to hurt the man's feelings, he had told him to live cleanly, keep sober, and that with study he might hope in time for ordination, but that just at that time it was impossible to comply with his wishes. The man's feelings were thus spared. Alas! for the cook; in a few days he was found, as usual, drunk and incapable in the street, and compelled to say, "Nolo episcopari."

The "Egglesiah Wang" (great church) was formerly a large monastery, and many monks inhabited it; the cells are now mostly used as store-rooms. Besides the Arachnoort and the little bishop, there were only two monks in my time, of whom one died; the other, after offering himself as a convert to Protestantism, and then to Catholicism (previously he had even tried to turn Mussulman), was sent to Etchmiadzin, in Armenia, on condition of being subsequently reinstated, and there was subjected by the patriarch to severe discipline, and forgiven. He has not returned.

The nunnery is still flourishing, and there are many nuns; some of them have attained a great age.

They are harmless women, whose only fault is a love of the bottle; they fast religiously, and conduct their services, which are very frequent, by day and night, with great regularity. There was a time when the Julfa churches were not allowed to have bells, and over each church-roof is a board, hung from two posts. This is drummed on with mallets, at first slowly, then fast, for some fifteen minutes before each service at the nunnery; and, as my house was near it, I can testify to the punctuality of at least the call to prayers, at half-past three A.M. and other unearthly hours.

These boards are used on every church save the "Wang," which is provided with a handsome bell-tower, standing in its inner court on four substantial brick columns, and covered by a dome-like roof; it is at least one hundred and thirty feet high.

On Sundays, Saturday afternoons, and all feast-days, the knocking is deafening, and the awakening power is certainly greater than the bell to those in the neighbourhood. We may yet have it adopted in England as one of the *primitive forms* of the early Church.

Great scandals have at times arisen in this nunnery. A nun, the sister of a deserving artist who had learnt his profession in India, was starved and beaten to death, and the corpse buried at night-time by the nuns on account of her alleged irregularities. The elder nuns are very fanatical and ignorant old women. A curly-headed young Armenian, who was detected on the premises by them, and excused himself on the ground that he wished to convert them to Protestantism, of which faith he was a paid teacher, nearly met with the fate of Orpheus; that enterprising youth, after having an application for

increase of pay refused, left religion as a business and took to dealing in skins, which offered more scope for his talents. So much care had been expended on his education that he could read the New Testament in the original Greek; he, however, wisely left a calling for which he felt he had no vocation.

The nuns visit the sick, and teach, under the superintendence of an able priest (Mesrop), all the Julfa girls. They are instructed in the elements of religion, and taught to read the Scriptures, without understanding them, in ancient Armenian, and to embroider, or to knit socks. The Armenian Scriptures and prayers are written in ancient Armenian, which is a language as different from the modern dialect as nineteenth-century English is from that of Edward the Confessor. Consequently, all the people, and most of the priests, do not understand either the Scriptures or the prayers, which many can read. I was present at the burial of a Christian child by the Shiraz priest; the poor man could neither read nor write, but he was prompted with the beginning of each prayer by a member of the congregation, who could read the ancient tongue; as he had these prayers all by heart he, on getting the cue, recited them fluently.

A great portion of the service in an Armenian church is performed behind a curtain, which is raised and lowered at intervals. The sacrament is, I believe, not administered to the laity. The services are inordinately long. I was present once at a wedding, and the ceremony certainly lasted two hours.

Baptism is performed by total immersion, and the infant is anointed in seven places with a cruciform mark, with green oil, said to be brought from Etchmiadzin.

A priest, as a rule, is sent forth for two years to either India or Batavia—*where* he goes is the important point. If he be sent to Bombay, or a large community of rich Armenians, he returns with enough to keep him for life and provide for his children; if to a poor village, he returns as poor as he went; he then is without duty for perhaps five years. All this is arranged by the Arachnoort, and is usually determined by the amount of bribe tendered by the priest to him; kissing, in fact, goes by favour.

Some few of these priests are well educated, and have made the most of the advantages of their stay in India—notably the vicar, Kashish (priest) Mardyros. He is an enlightened man, and honest, but he can never become bishop, for the bishop must be a monk, and is always sent from Etchmiadzin.

The present Arachnoort speaks only ancient Armenian, Constantinople Turkish, and a little Persian, and the power for good or evil is mostly in the hands of the little bishop and vicar. A priest may *marry* before he receives priest's orders, but if his wife dies he cannot re-marry, and the widowed priest often becomes a monk. This rule leads to a good deal of immorality, some of the priests being of very bad repute.

Another cause of crime in Julfa is the existence of a barely-concealed traffic in liquor with the Mussulmans of the town. Certain wine-sellers are tolerated by the venal authorities; these men allow the Persians to frequent their houses at all hours of the day or night, selling to them dreadful mixtures of sour wine and arrack. A Persian is never a tippler—he drinks till he is mad drunk, or till overcome by sleep. As a rule the Armenian receives him as a guest, and he deposits his weapons with his host for

their mutual safety. He then hands over his money, and drinks it out. Of course scenes of violence ensue: stabbing is common. A fatal case again occurred during my last stay in Julfa. I have been twice myself threatened in the street by men carrying naked knives; on the second occasion I thrashed the man severely, and took away his knife. Any appeal to the authorities would be useless. They reply, “He went to Julfa to get drunk; what can you expect?”

A few months after my arrival I removed to comfortable quarters in the Shireh-Khaneh, or wine-sellers’ street. Unfortunately mine was the first house; at all hours of the day and night violent knocks would be given at my door by intending arrack-buyers. I could only reluctantly, and as a last resource, administer a good beating to the knockers. This, after a time, had the desired effect. In my street, too, a sort of Alsatia or Tiger Bay was established; all the houses were inhabited by wine-sellers save my own, and down this street the inebriates from the town, and their Armenian friends, were in the habit of swaggering, often with drawn swords (kammer). On meeting these men I always used to thrash them, and gradually this nuisance too was abated, and when they got drunk, they got drunk on, and not off, the premises of the wine-sellers. All the Julfa houses are made with small low doorways, and massive doors are provided, of great thickness. In many of the wine-sellers’ houses a beam is kept, which leans against the door, the end going into the ground; the door is then safe against the attacks of those without.

All the old gardens and vineyards, too, are protected by low doors, some yard square, constructed of *stone* six inches thick; these revolve on

a pin, and are like those figured as “stone shutter at Bashan” in ‘The Rob Roy Canoe in the Holy Land.’

There is a weekly market held each Sunday in the little maidān, or square, of Julfa; it is well attended. Raw cotton, fruit, grey shirting, chintzes, and notions, are sold here, and also *beef*, for the Armenian, unlike the Persian, is a beef-eater. Fairly good meat is obtained; one’s cook goes with a chopper and hacks off what is wanted; they have no idea of any difference in the value of joints.

Here, too, the Persian women hawk their cotton-yarn and buy socks, which are hand-knitted in Julfa by the Armenians, of wool, and also of cotton. Any hard-working woman can keep herself in Julfa by knitting; the earnings barely exceed five kerans (three and ninepence) a month; but this, with economy, is enough to keep and clothe them.

As a rule the Armenian women are industrious and notable housewives. In the summer they knit socks in groups at the doors of their houses, and gossip; in winter they do the same around the kūrsi, as long as it is light. Wine is made by all, and the jars used in the fermenting are often very ancient, some being two and three hundred years old.

Most of the men who work do a little market-gardening, and many have orchards or vineyards. But the more active and brighter travel to India or Batavia, and often make fortunes in retail trade; some have even established well-known houses in Manchester, Liverpool, and London. Many enter the Persian service; these generally apostatise. The effect of this emigration on the inhabitants of Julfa is deleterious in the extreme. The rich relations rarely forget the family in Julfa, and there are consequently

a number of people subsisting on what the successful husband, father, or son, sends as a pension. These will not work, but prefer to drag on a life of idleness on a pittance. I often have asked a man, “What are your resources?” and he has replied, “My relatives at Bombay,” etc., as the case may be. Armenians at times rise to high employ: the chief of the Arsenal to the Shah is an Armenian, so is the Ambassador in London.

The first day of my arrival in Julfa I was visited by twenty-six priests; they were all regaled with brandy. The next day there were twenty-nine, including the original twenty-six, who called again. However, I treated them this time to tea, saying I had no more brandy. The third day no more priests came.

Near the banks of the river is the old church of “Soup Gework,” or “St George.” This is celebrated for being the receptacle of two miraculous stones, which have reputed power in the healing of diseases. They are said to have flown from Etchmiadzin, in Armenia, in one night, and are the ordinary stones of the country brought to Julfa by some rich citizen in bygone days for some building which was never erected.

There are also the ruins of the old church of the Jesuit Fathers standing in its garden. There is nothing remarkable in it. It is a plain brick building, less pretentious than most Julfa churches, and whitewashed inside; it is rapidly going to decay, as are many other of the Julfa churches, for the population is lessening by emigration.

The successful Armenian seldom returns; when he does, he repairs his father’s house, buys up the gardens round it, and his estate is usually devoured

at last by the priests and the Persian authorities.

At one time turkeys were bred in Julfa, but the Governor of Ispahan having imposed a tax of a certain number of fat birds at the New Year, the Julfa Armenians allowed them to become extinct. At the present moment—thanks to the protective presence of the English in Julfa—the Armenians are quite on an equality with the Persians, nay, even treat them with a certain amount of arrogance. When I first came to Julfa, no Armenian dared to ride a horse, and all used to get off their donkeys when they saw a Persian of position.

Education has advanced. The English missionary school and its energetic teacher, Mr. Johannes—who, educated in England, left the Nassick School, where he was a master, to take charge of the C.M.S. school—has effected wonders. The boys, really well educated, go off at about seventeen to India, and get their living respectably; and the C.M.S. has done really good *educational* work; as to the proselytising, *no Mussulman convert has ever been made*. Many fanatics of the Baabi sect have sought and obtained temporary protection, to which they owe their lives, but as a Christianising influence it is at present a failure, though the enterprise has been carried out regardless of cost, even in the most liberal manner.

The American mission at Teheran has really succeeded in making some headway.

However, the at present (in regard to converts) abortive mission to Julfa has in the educational department certainly done wonders, and has given an impetus to the native schools, which previously, heavily subsidised by successful Armenian emigrants, had done no work at all, and were battened on by a set of hungry priests and mirzas, who on some

pretext or other sent away their pupils for five days out of seven, and declared a holiday. Where the income went nobody knew; this much was apparent, there was no result.

The long fasts of the Armenian Church are loyally kept by the poorer of the Armenian community and by the villagers. They occupy altogether a sixth of the whole year, and in them no eggs or meat may be eaten, only vegetables, fruits, grain, and vegetable oil, but wine and spirits are freely indulged in.

CHAPTER XIII.
ISPAHAN.

Prince's physician—Visit the Prince-Governor—Justice—The bastinado—Its effects—The doctor's difficulties—Carpets—Aniline dyes—How to choose—Varieties—Nammad—Felt coats—Bad water—Baabis—A tragedy—The prince's view.

Almost as soon as I arrived in Julfa I received a visit from the prince's hakim-bashi, Mirza Abdul Wahab. This gentleman, a native of Kashan, had received his medical education in Paris, and was an M.D. of its University. He described his life in Ispahan as dull in the extreme, that he was never off duty save when the Prince-Governor was asleep, and that his anxieties on account of the vagaries of his charge were great. The Mirza had spent seven years in France, and had married there; he had also two native wives (his French wife afterwards came to Teheran, but soon returned to France). He complained of the many hours he had to stand, etiquette forbidding any other attitude in the prince's presence. He told me that he had to read poetry to his Royal Highness for many hours each day.

"Not that I mind reading poetry," said he, "but no one listens, which is provoking in the extreme."

I was very glad to have an acquaintance with whom I could converse, for of course the hakim-bashi spoke French fluently. The appointment as physician to the eldest son of the king and Governor of Ispahan is a high employ, and the doctor hoped it

would lead to better things; but he did not like the being away from the capital. He became shortly a Khan.

He invited me to call on the prince, and told me that his Royal Highness would receive me at half-past eight A.M. the next day, or, as he phrased it, two hours after sunrise. I promised to be punctual, and duly presented myself at the appointed hour.

I passed through a garden crowded with soldiers, servants, persons having petitions to make, and the usual hangers-on of a great man and his train. In a crowded outer room sat the Minister (or real Governor), Mahommed Ali Khan, under whose tutelage the Zil-es-Sultan is. The prince himself, being a mere youth, has no real power, and everything is done by Mahommed Ali Khan. The hakim-bashi now met me, and conducted me past a sentry into the private apartment of the prince.

I took off my goloshes at the door, keeping my hat on, and making a salute. The doctor introduced me in a few words, and the prince, a good-looking youth of about eighteen years, motioned me smilingly to a chair which had been placed for me opposite him. I asked after his health in French, but he insisted on my talking in Persian, and was much amused at the hash I made of it. He was a fine, good-humoured youth, full of spirits.

After the first few minutes he threw off all his air of dignity and talked and laughed merrily, asking many questions as to the manners of Europeans, the Queen, climate of England, etc. He then gave me his likeness, and told me that he photographed himself, which was the case. I was regaled with tea, and took my leave, breakfasting in the town with the hakim-bashi at his residence.

Here I saw for the first time the administration of justice in Persia. The doctor was given the charge of the Jews of Ispahan: the Jews had attended in a large crowd to complain of extortions practised upon them by the soldiers who stood sentry at his gate. These men, not content with exacting small presents from the poor people, had insulted the wife and daughter of one of their number and severely beaten them.

As we sat smoking the kalian at the open window, the crowd of some hundred Jewish men and women shrieked and gesticulated; while the two accused soldiers, who stood with the doctor's servants, vehemently protested their innocence. The hakim-bashi shouted, so did the accused, so did the accusers, who wept, beat on their heads, and prepared apparently to rend their already ragged garments.



THE BASTINADO.

"Somebody must be beaten," said the doctor, "and these Jews are undoubtedly horribly persecuted."

When the shouting was at its highest, the doctor

called to the sergeant of infantry and whispered in his ear. The two soldiers turned pale, and the Jews proceeded to implore blessings on the head of the doctor.

Presently a pole some eight feet long, with a transverse handle at either end and a loop of rope in the middle, was produced, and, kicking off their boots, the two soldiers lay down on the ground, and each raised a foot; but the doctor was not to be appeased so easily, and insisted on both feet of each man going into the loop. On this being done, the noose was tightened by turning the pole by means of the handles, and the soles of the soldiers' feet were now upwards, and a fair mark; two other soldiers held the ends of the pole, which is termed a "fellek."

The doctor now adjured the men to confess, as, if they did not, as he put it to them, he should have to thrash them till they did, and then have to punish them for the offence itself; whereas, if they confessed, there would be only one beating and accounts would be clear.

Both men confessed, though the value of a confession under such circumstances may be doubted. Then the doctor's servants drew from his hauz a huge bundle of sticks some five feet long; they were ordinary willow wands, switchy, and about twice the thickness of the thumb at the butt; the bark was left on, and it appeared that they were kept in water to prevent their breaking too easily.

Four of the soldiers now seized each half-a-dozen wands, and, taking one in their right hands, awaited the signal. "*Bezan!*" ("Lay on!") exclaimed the hakim-bashi, and they proceeded to thrash the bare soles of their comrades with the sticks; at first they struck fair on the feet, but whenever the doctor's eye was

not on them, they broke the stick over the "fellek" and substituted a fresh one.

The men now roared for mercy; some hundred sticks had been broken over their feet, and, taking an average of four blows for each stick, they had received four hundred, or two hundred each.

"*Amān Agha!*" "Mercy, Lord!" "Oh, hakim-bashi!" "Oh, merciless Jews!" "Oh, Mussulmans!" "Oh, doctor, sahib!" "Oh, Lord, without mercy!" "Oh, rascal Jews!" "Sons of dog fathers!" "Mer—cy!"

The hakim-bashi now addressed them—"Rascals, do you know now that you are not to oppress the king's subjects?"

"Ah," replied one man, "but *Jews*—" He had better have been silent, for the hakim-bashi raised his hand, and the beating recommenced. I now interceded, and the men were led off, limping.

I asked the doctor if such beatings would not lame the men.

He replied, "Not in the least; they will be all right in two days, if a little tender to-morrow. I have myself had quite as bad a beating from my achōn (schoolmaster) when a boy. There is no degradation in the punishment; all are liable to it, from the Prime Minister downwards. What you have seen is merely a warning; one and two thousand sticks are often given —I mean to say fairly broken over the soles of the feet—and thicker sticks than mine; say, six thousand blows."

I asked what was the result of such beating.

"Well," said the doctor, "I *have* known them fatal; but it is very rare, and only in the case of the victim being old or diseased."

I was told that it is really very much a matter of bribing the farrashes (carpet-spreaders) who administer the punishment. As a rule, a severe beating, such as is given by the king's farrashes, keeps a man in bed for weeks or months. Culprits much prefer it to a fine. Here the doctor called one of his servants.

"Which would you prefer," said he, "to lose a month's pay or take such a beating as those soldiers had?"

"The beating, of course," replied the man.

"His pay is ten kerans a month," said the doctor (seven-and-sixpence).

Custom, I suppose, is everything; to *our* tender feet such a beating would be very terrible, but Persians of the lower class walk much barefoot; in fact, like our own tramps, unless the road be very stony, one sees them on the march take off their boots and go bare, to save shoe-leather or sore feet.

The doctor told me of the trials and troubles of his position, his long hours of duty, and his many anxieties when his young charge was ill. "Your arrival is a great thing," he said; "you can speak as I cannot dare to, and you can insist on proper directions being carried out. At present, when the prince is indisposed, all the visitors and all the old women prescribe, and as he *tries* all the remedies, he becomes really ill.

"Then I have to telegraph his state to the king; then the king's French physician and his other hakims are ordered to suggest remedies. You can fancy the result. Why, when I came here, the then hakim-bashi was a young and rowdy prince, who, though a very good fellow, kept the Prince-Governor

permanently on the sick-list, gave him two china-bowls of physic to take a day, and tabooed everything that was nice. Of course I broke through all that, and, by keeping him free from physic and on good plain food, he is a strong and healthy youth." I sympathised with the doctor, and took my leave.

From the doctor's house I went to the principal bazaar of the town to buy carpets, for I had disposed of most of my own on leaving Kermanshah, to lessen the weight of my luggage. I was shown several hundred carpets, some four by seven yards, down to little rugs a yard square. Some of the finer carpets, astonished me by their beauty, and also their price—forty pounds was a usual figure for a large and handsome carpet.

The finer and more valuable carpets were not new—in fact, few really good carpets are made nowadays. At the time I am speaking of (sixteen years ago) the magenta aniline dyes were unknown to the carpet-makers of Persia, and all the colours except the greens were fast. Nowadays the exact reverse is the case. A very brilliant carpet is produced, and if a wet handkerchief is rubbed on it, *the colours come off*; these are not fast, and the carpet is worthless.

The aniline dyes are particularly used in the Meshed carpets, and as these are the showiest and most attractive, they are largely exported. Of course a native will not look at them, for when he buys a carpet he expects it to last *at least* a century: he is generally not disappointed. One sees many carpets which are quite fifty years old with hardly a sign of wear.

At the time of which I am speaking, carpets had very seldom been exported from Persia, and

consequently there was no rubbish manufactured; now (1883) it is quite different; if a very good carpet is wanted, an old one must be bought.

The carpets made for the European market are coarse, and the weaving loose. Many, indeed, are made of fast colours, but gaudy patterns only are used, and the fine and original patterns formerly in vogue are disappearing. Of a couple of hundred carpets brought for sale, perhaps there may be only six distinct patterns, though, of course, the borders and arrangement of the colours may vary. The favourite patterns are the “Gul Anar” and “Herati:” the latter is certainly very effective, and is the pattern of nine-tenths of the carpets exported.

To choose a carpet, the first thing is to see if the colours are fast. This is done by rubbing with a wet cloth. If the slightest tinge is communicated to this, the carpet should be rejected. Then, if the carpet is limp, and can be doubled on itself like a cloth, it is “shul-berf” (loosely woven) and scamped. A carpet which is well woven (I am speaking of new ones) is always stiff. Greens in the pattern should be avoided, as they will fade to a drab, but this drab is not unpleasing; white, on the contrary, in time becomes a pale yellow, and is a good wearing colour, and should be chosen rather than avoided.

The thinner and finer the carpet is, the greater is its value. The size of the thread of the wool should be noticed, and the smaller it is the better. It should be remembered that, in the question of price, a thinner thread means a great difference in the amount of labour in making.

The size, too, of the pattern should be noted, as a large pattern is proportionately much cheaper. Again, the finer patterns being only undertaken by

the best weavers, one is more likely to get a good carpet with a fine pattern than with a coarse. The general effect, too, should be noted. This is never bad, but at times an eccentric pattern is come across.

The softer the carpet is to the hand, the more valuable it is as a rule, if it be not a Meshed carpet with aniline dye. These latter should be avoided, as they always fade, and are of very small value.

One of the reasons why Oriental carpets last so long, is that chairs are not used, and they are not walked on by boots, and so dirtied and worn, but by *bare* feet. The carpet should now be doubled, and the ends applied to each other. If one is broader than the other, it shows careless work, and the carpet should be rejected as “kaj” (uneven, or rather, crooked).

It must be then spread on a level floor and smoothed, to see if it lies flat. Many carpets have “shatūr,” or creases; these never come out. The carpet never lies flat, and wears in a patch over the “shatūr.”

If all is yet satisfactory the carpet must be turned bottom upwards, and the *edges* carefully examined; if any darns are seen in the edges of the carpet it must be rejected, for the Persians have a plan of taking out any creases by either stretching the edges, which often break under the process, or, if there is a redundancy, *cutting* it out and fine drawing it so skilfully that it is only detected on *carefully* examining the back. Such carpets are worthless.

The top of the carpet should now be inspected; if the edging of cotton at the top or bottom be blue with no white in it, the carpet is rubbish, and merely a thing got up for sale, absolutely a sham. The edge or finish should be either white cotton or black wool;

the latter is by far the best, but is seldom seen nowadays. The *all*-woollen carpets are mostly made near Mūrghab, and by the wandering tribes of Fars; they are very seldom exported, and are always of sad patterns, often very irregular.

In making a carpet, the women who weave it will often run out of the *exact* shade of wool used in some part of the pattern or even ground-work; they will continue with *another shade* of the same colour. This has a curious effect to the European eye, but the native does not look on it as a defect.

The value *in Persia* of a carpet in the present day may, *if perfect* (either new or old), be reckoned at from fifteen shillings to two pounds a square yard. In the larger carpets nothing can be obtained under a pound a square yard.

Of course there *are* a few carpets which have been made to order for great personages which are worth more than the price I have given, but these are not easily obtained and only at *prix fou*. By the term *carpet*, I mean what Persians call kali, that is, in contradistinction to farsch. Kali is our idea of carpet, that is, a floor-covering, *having a pile*.

Farsch means floor-covering generally, and may be “nammad,” or felt, or “gelim,” a thin, pileless floor-covering of coarse pattern, and much used in Europe as a *portière*; in these “gelim” white greatly predominates, and they soon get soiled and dirty; they are only used in Persia by the villagers and poor.

The farsch hamam-i, or bath carpet, is a finer species of gelim made near Kermanshah; both sides are alike, the patterns are elaborate and beautiful, and the colours very lovely, *but they fade*, being

mostly of aniline dye, and are harsh to the feel. Their only recommendation is their extreme portability.

The nammad, or felts (carpets), are generally used by Persians to go round the room and act as a frame to the carpet (kali), which occupies the top and centre.

They are three in number for each room; two kanareh, or side pieces, a yard to a yard and a half wide, and a sir-andaz, literally that which is thrown over the head (of the apartment). The kanareh are from half to two and a half inches in thickness, and are usually of a light-brown or yellow-ochre colour, being ornamented with a slight pattern of blue and white, or red and green, which is formed by pinches of coloured wool inserted when the felt is made.

The best nammad are made at Yezd, and are often expensive; they cost about thirty shillings a square yard, and will last a century; they are two inches thick.

Nammad, however, are now getting out of fashion, for they will not stand the wear produced by chairs, which are coming into common use among the rich. Carpets are taking their place.

These nammad, or felts, are universally used as great-coats by the peasantry, and are very good indeed as an outer covering, being seamless. They are often made with bag-like sleeves with a slit at the wrists, thus forming a glove, and when the peasant wants to use his hands, they are thrust through the slit and the glove portion turned back over the wrist. They are all in one piece.

The gelim, or tent carpets, are very suitable for travelling or rough work, and being thin are easily dried. They wash well, and have no pile.

There is yet another variety of carpet called jejim: this is very thin and more like a plaid in consistency; it is used by horsemen, who wrap their spare clothing in it and use it as a bed and carpet too.

For about fifty pounds I was able to get enough carpets for all my living rooms, and, owing to the steady rise in the price of carpets, on my departure in nine years' time on leave, I got as much as I gave for them. Exactly the same as with horses after the famine, the demand being greater than the supply on account of exportation, prices rose considerably.

A good deal of illness occurring just at this time among the staff, I had my attention directed to the water, which, being mostly from surface wells, was much contaminated. I therefore engaged a water-carrier from the town, purchased a skin and bucket for him, and the staff were supplied with a skinful twice a day, for cooking and drinking purposes, from the monastery well—a deep and good one.

The Persians are particular what water they drink, and invariably employ a sakka, or water-carrier; but the Armenians generally have a cesspool just outside their house door, and in its immediate proximity the well is dug, often only ten feet deep. The result is obvious.

Our superintendent being a married man, collars which I had cast off for the last year, principally because I could not get them washed, had to be worn; and I had to send them to Teheran by post to get them washed, for in Ispahan the art of ironing was unknown; and the American term for a shirt, "boiled rag," was literally appropriate.

I made the acquaintance of three brothers who were Syuds, or holy men, but who had the reputation

of being freethinkers; these men called on me and insisted on my breakfasting with them in the town: they were wealthy landed proprietors and merchants. I found their house beautifully furnished and their hospitality was great; they discoursed much on the subject of religion, and were very eloquent on the injustices perpetrated in Persia. They were nearly related to the Imām-i-Juma, or high priest, a very great personage indeed, who ruled the town of Ispahan by his personal influence. It was said that any one who incurred his displeasure always, somehow or other, lost his life.

Under the shadow of such a relation, the Syuds Hassan and Houssein and their brother openly held their very liberal opinions. They were, in fact, sectaries of the Baab.

This impostor has succeeded in establishing a new religion, the tenets of which are very difficult to get at—a community of property being one. Mahommedans state that a community of women is also observed; this is, however, very doubtful.

The execution of their prophet, far from decreasing their numbers, has had an opposite effect; many among the Ispahanis and Zinjanis still secretly profess Baabiism.

A few years before my arrival in Ispahan (1867), a determined attempt was made on the life of the present Shah by a few of the fanatics of this sect, and the unsuccessful conspirators were put to death with horrible tortures. (For details see Lady Shiel's work.) In these latter days (1880), when I was in Ispahan, a priest was denounced by his wife as a Baabi. I saw him led to prison; he avowed his Baabiism and declined to retract, though offered his life; he,

however, denied the statements of his wife and daughter, who accused him of wishing to prostitute them to others of his co-religionists.

On being taken to the public square for execution, after having been severely bastinadoed, and when in chains, knowing his last hour was come, he was offered his life if he would curse Baab.

He replied, “Curses on you, your prince, your king, and all oppressors. I welcome death and long for it, for I shall instantly reappear on this earth and enjoy the delights of Paradise.” The executioner stepped forward and cut his throat.

A few days after his execution, my friends the three brothers were arrested, their valuables looted by the king’s son the Zil-es-Sultan, the then Governor of Ispahan, and by the Imām-i-Juma, the successor of their former protector in the office of high priest of Ispahan. Their women, beaten and insulted, fled to the anderūns (harems) of friends and relations, but were repulsed by them for fear of being compromised. They then came to the telegraph-office in Julfa and sat in an outer room without money or food. After a few days the relatives, rather than let the (to them) scandal continue of the women being in the quarters of Europeans, gave them shelter.

The real cause of the arrest of these men was not their religion; the Imām-i-Juma owed them eighteen thousand tomans (seven thousand two hundred pounds); they were sent for and told that if they did not forgive the debt they would be denounced and inevitably slain. But habit had made them bold; they declined to even remit a portion of the sum owing; they were politely dismissed from the high priest’s presence, and a proposition made to the prince that the whole of their property should be confiscated by

him, and that they should be accused of Baabiism and executed. This was agreed to. They were sent for and taken from the prince's presence protesting their innocence, the youngest brother cursing Baab as proof of his orthodoxy.

The next day all were savagely beaten in prison, and it was generally given out that they would be executed; but being men of wealth and influence, no one believed in this.

The English missionary in Julfa, the assistant superintendent of the telegraph, and a few Armenians, addressed a letter to the prince which, while apparently pleading their cause, really, I fear, accelerated their fate (if it had any effect). The prince was furious, and vouchsafed no reply.

I happened to see him professionally, and he asked me why I had not signed this letter. I replied that I had not been asked to in the first place; and that I should hesitate to mix myself up in the politics of the country, being a foreign official. He appreciated my motives, and asked if I knew the three men.

I replied that all three were my intimate friends, and I trusted that their lives were not really in danger.

I never have been able to ascertain if his reply was merely given to quiet me or not; it was this:—

"The matter is really out of my hands—it has been referred to the king; he is very bitter against Baabis, as you know; nothing that sahibs in Julfa may do will have any effect. Why, sahib, what would your Prince of Wales say if *he* were interviewed, and letters written to him about confessed criminals by obscure Persians? The missionary, the missionary, he only troubles me to make himself notorious."

I explained that these Syuds were really personal friends of the missionary as well as my own.

“All disaffected people are friends of missionaries, as you very well know.”

I again asked him if they would be spared or not?

“I can tell you nothing more,” he said; “one has cursed Baab, he will not die. As for the others the king will decide; for me, I wish personally to kill no one; you have known me long enough to know I dislike blood. I am not the Hissam-u-Sultaneh” (the king’s uncle, a very severe Governor). He changed the subject and declined to return to it. I cannot tell if the two elder brothers had been offered their lives or not. I went back to Julfa hoping that they would all be spared. The town was in great excitement. Next morning at dawn their throats were cut in the prison, and their bodies flung into the square. The prince had not dared to execute them publicly for fear of a tumult.

Their houses were looted, and part of their estates; the Imām-i-Juma’s share of the plunder was large, and he never repaid the eighteen thousand tomans. Such was Persia in 1880. The youngest brother, who had cursed Baab, was spared, and afterwards reinstated in part of his family property.

CHAPTER XIV.
JULFA AND ISPAHAN.

Julfa cathedral—The campanile—The monk—Gez—Kishmish wine—The bishop—The church—Its decorations—The day of judgment—The cemetery—Establishment of the Armenian captives in Julfa—Lost arts—Armenian artificers—Graves—Story of Rodolphe—Coffee-house—Tombstone bridges—Nunnery—Schools—Medical missionary—Church Missionary establishment—The Lazarist Fathers.

The sights of Julfa are very few—the cathedral, or Egglesiah Wang, and the schools of the Church Missionary Society, the cemetery, and the nunnery, being the only objects of interest.

The Egglesiah Wang, or “big church,” is a part of the monastery of Julfa. At the entrance, which is by a stuccoed doorway surmounted by a Latin cross in a mud wall, is a sort of stone drinking trough, something like our old English fonts; it is embedded in the wall. The door is of great thickness, so that in disturbed times the monks would be safe against attacks of Mussulmans; and for the same reason the entrance is narrow and winding. On emerging from this short passage, one comes to the outer court, in one corner of which are the graves of a few Europeans who have either died in Julfa or been brought here for burial. These are noted in Sir F. Goldsmid’s ‘Telegraph and Travel,’ and some of the Latin inscriptions are translated into English verse by him. A large campanile of imposing appearance and peculiar (qy. Russian) style, stands in the centre; it is

new and well made, and consists of a brick tower standing on stone columns, and containing three bells. The rest of the courtyard is occupied by logs of wood from the monastery garden brought here to season previous to being sold to the Julfa carpenters. Armenians are very unromantic. The monastery church has a door opening into this courtyard, but entrance is usually effected through a passage, in which are the tombs of former bishops; these are mostly mere blocks of stone let into the ground, but the two last bishops have more ambitious mural monuments; the last, Thaddeus, having a black marble tablet, probably cut in India, with an inscription (*in English*), setting forth his virtues; over all is his photograph. There is an inner entrance in this passage of railings, and the walls have some small trap-doors through which the monks in stricter days used to confess the laity—at least the females.

A few miserable daubs on plaster in this passage represent Saint Michael weighing good and evil spirits, etc. To the right is a low door, which leads to the church; at the extremity of the passage is a large courtyard, which contains the apartments occupied by the Arachnoort and the little bishop Christopher.

There is no pretension to magnificence in these. The rooms of Christopher are small, and comfortable in a humble manner; a few religious engravings and paintings of saints that Wardour Street would not look at, hang on the walls; it is carpeted with cheap rugs, and a mattress and a couple of cushions form the furniture; in the corner is the tall, silver-headed ebon staff of the little bishop; in a recess stand his conical hat and hood. A room quite without ornament forms his bedroom, and his property, a few years ago considerable, he has made over to the

Church.

The little bishop is a gouty man, and does not indulge, though there are legends that in his youth his potations were pottle deep; he does not even smoke, but he snuffs—a thing that most of the old people in Julfa do. A jovial old man in a skull-cap and flowing black robes, he insists on regaling one with gez; a sort of sweetmeat, prepared from the gezanjebine, a mawkish exudation from a plant found in the desert near here, and akin to manna; it is mixed with sugar and made up into round cakes with almonds or pistachios. It is impossible to break these cakes with the finger; they will bend freely, but on striking them with a hammer or another cake, they fracture at once. Ispahan is celebrated through Persia for this sweetmeat, and large quantities are sent away in every direction. In Julfa and Ispahan the gez is always offered on the arrival of a guest, and urgently pressed on one; it is considered impolite to refuse. The flavour is merely sickly sweet, and it sticks to the jaws like butter-scotch; it is white in colour, and very cloying. The monk, too, always has a glass of good old Kishmish wine for his friends. The Kishmish grape is the smallest in Persia; it is a bright yellow colour, and very sweet; it is, when dried, what we call the Sultana raisin. The wine is a golden yellow, delicious when quite new, but terribly heady. It is a great favourite with the Armenians, as it is quickly intoxicating. As a rule it will not keep well, but when it does is not to be despised. A glass of arrack is offered as an alternative, and this is more suited to the native taste; it is, as a rule, what is called in India “fixed bayonets.”

The monk is a laughing philosopher, and generally has some store of local yarns; in fact, he is a sort of

"vieulx Parchemins," and his tales would have astonished and delighted the author of the 'Contes drolatiques.'

Passing under the guidance of the monk we ascend on the further side of the courtyard a long staircase and enter a huge empty room newly carpeted, which brings us to the curtained doorway of the bishop's private apartment. On the walls, decorated with many figures in cut plaster of the Russian eagle (for the bishop is a Russian subject, and wisely takes care that the Persian authorities shall know it),[15] hang some twenty daubs in oil of saints and sacred scenes; these are more pretentiously framed than those in the monk's room, but of equal value. A high chair, considerably ornamented with native carvings, is the bishop's habitual seat, and at its side is a table covered with well-bound books, which at my first visit considerably impressed me; but I found out afterwards that they were always the same books, so my respect for the literary attainments of the Arachnoort somewhat diminished.

After a decorous interval the bishop enters, a handsome man—a man who would create a *furore* in England—a man with large, dreamy, black eyes, which he uses as much as the late Mr. Fechter, a pale and interesting face, and a long, silky beard, well combed, and black as the raven's wing. From his neck hang an amethyst cross and a large portrait of the Virgin, in an oval enamel surrounded by paste. Clad in black lined with violet, his tall conical cap and flowing black hood give a fine stage picture, which is completed by a gentle raising of the hand (a white and delicate hand) as if to bless; a soft, whispering, almost purring voice, completed the charm of a man who in some other sphere would

have doubtless achieved the success usually attained by great personal attractiveness. A sort of smile, as of a superior nature compassionating itself, spreads over his handsome face, and in a whisper he asks after one's health. The glossy beard is stroked, the black eyes are rolled; coffee is brought, a kalian, and the visitor retires, after much bowing on both sides.

The church alone remains to be seen, for the monastery itself is not in use, the cells being filled with firewood and corn. The church is not large, and is divided by a row of coarsely-painted wooden rails into two compartments, the outer and larger one, which is surmounted by a dome, being decorated with large paintings in oil of the events in Bible history from the creation. There is nothing particularly remarkable in these; most are copied from well-known pictures, while others are amusing in their naïveness. The general effect is good, a sort of gorgeousness being produced by so many yards of brightly-painted canvas. All round the walls are modern tile-work, presenting a florid pattern of green leaves on a white ground. The general effect of this is not bad. The episcopal throne is placed just beyond the railings, and consists of an elaborately-carved and ornamented chair, covered by a wooden domed canopy, gilt and painted in gaudy colours. A few feet in front of this is a raised platform, some four feet from the ground, running back into a recess. This can be curtained off at pleasure; a gaudy curtain hangs at either side of it. At the extremity of the recess is the altar; there is only one in the church. It has a sort of cabinet for the host, and has numerous smaller platforms above it, each a few inches high; on these are coarsely painted a few figures of saints.

All round the church run various pictures of martyrdoms, some of them horrible in their grim realness, others as intensely ridiculous. Here are shown the various sufferings of Ripsimeh virgin and martyr, also Gregor; these are the chief saints in the Armenian calendar.

Illustrations are also seen of the parables and miracles. One of these is the man who had the beam in his eye seeing the mote in his brother's. The mote is depicted as a moat, and the beam as a huge beam of wood.

A painful daub, framed, and meant for the Entombment, is gravely exhibited as a Raphael, and once it was intimated to me that a good offer would not be refused. It is even copied on the outer wall near the bishops' tombs.

But the bouquet of the whole collection is the *great* picture of the Day of Judgment. All the persons of the Trinity are depicted, and the heavenly hosts are shown with the delights of heaven. These are, however, in the upper part of the picture, and of small size; but in the lower part, that representing the pangs of hell, the artist has given free vent to his taste for horrors.

New ideas for bogey might be derived from his very vivid treatment of the devils. George Cruikshank, the devil-drawer *par excellence*, is nowhere with the Eastern artist. These devils are life-size, and so are the nude male and female figures suffering torments. The mouth of hell is represented as a yawning beast, vomiting fire and smoke, into the jaws of which the nude wicked are tumbling. As a popular preacher is reported to have said, "The devil feeds you on fire, and if you don't take it properly

you get touched up with the spoon." This is actually represented.

The position of the picture is well chosen, being over the door. All the congregation must see it on going out; and if they feel certain of getting their deserts, it must make them uncomfortable indeed.

Julfa was once a very large place, having twenty-four well-populated parishes, and the Armenians were extremely prosperous. A large village, with valuable lands, and an energetic trading population, the agricultural portion of the community being market gardeners, within a couple of miles of the then capital Ispahan; it was a very different place from the Julfa of to-day, which contains merely a population of old men, women, and girls, the better description of male having all emigrated. Ispahan, too, is now merely a vast ruin, with small local trade and few wants. Shah Abbas the Great brought away the entire population of Julfa on the Araxes, which now marks the Russo-Persian frontier on the road between Tabriz and Tiflis, and is now merely a village of a few hovels; and, giving them lands in the immediate and best part of the environs of Ispahan, in fact its present site, called it Julfa. The far-seeing monarch sought to introduce the thrifty trading habits of the Armenian among his own subjects, and to give an impulse to the commerce of his country, and the Julfa artisans in those days were not to be despised; travelling east and west, they brought many arts from Europe, India, and China. The weaving of shawls at Kerman and Yezd is still an important trade, and only the connoisseur can detect the difference between the Cashmere shawl and its imitation, that of Kerman: probably the European would prefer the Kermani one. Silk weaving was

doubtless brought from China to Yezd. Coarse imitations of the Chinese porcelain are to this day common in Persia, but the art is dead. Enamelling, which the Armenians practised, and even patronised —for in the Persian collection in the South Kensington Museum may be seen a large enamelled tray, quite a unique specimen, which bears an inscription saying it was made for ——, prince of the Armenians—is a dying art.

As jewellers these people attain great proficiency. Any really difficult work was always brought by the native gold or silver smiths of Ispahan to be finished by an Armenian of Julfa, one Setrak. The trade of watchmaker, or rather watchmender, is almost monopolised in Persia by Armenians; and my former dispenser was a very good drug-compounder, having received his instruction when a convict in India, serving his time after committing a burglary with violence.

The cemetery lies on a bare and stony plain, under a lofty hill called the Kūh Sufi. When Ispahan was the capital this plain was all under cultivation by irrigation, the remains of the canals being yet visible: here lie the inhabitants of Julfa, and also a few Europeans. Each ancient grave is marked by a huge block of stone of a cube form, the upper face being, however, generally larger than the under one. Some are nine feet long, a yard high, and two feet wide. Many of the stones have Dutch, Latin, and French inscriptions. One of these latter is the well-known one of the watchmaker to Shah Abbas the Great. “Cy gît Rodolfe” is the inscription it bears; and here lies Rodolphe, who was a great favourite of the king, Abbas the Great. He was a youth of great beauty, and the king was much attached to him. Having killed a

Mahommedan after being struck by the latter, he was offered the usual choice of Islam or death. He preferred the latter; and though the king is said to have given him ample time for reflection, and to have promised him rank and wealth if he would apostatise, preferring death to dishonour, he was executed, and interred beneath this stone. It is very difficult to get at the exact details of this story, as there are many versions. It is told first by Chardin or Tavernier. Just at the entrance to the burial-ground, by crossing a ditch, over a bridge *composed of old tombstones*, one comes to the Kaweh-Khana of the Armenians, a mud building of two stories. Here in wet weather the funerals halt, and here on their return the mourners stay to partake of wine and arrack. All through Persia the habit of utilising tombstones for building bridges occurs, and is not confined to the Armenians. Ispahan, which is surrounded by huge cemeteries and intersected by many watercourses, presents many instances of these tombstone bridges.

There is little to see in the nunnery. The revenues which have been, and are, plundered by the priests and those in authority, are very small. Very few nuns are now encouraged to take the veil. The scandals have been many, and instances of cruel punishments have not been wanting. One nun was expelled, but is now leading a reformed life in the Church Missionary Society's establishment, being employed as a teacher of sewing. The nunnery has a large school, and the girls are taught to sew and embroider, also to knit socks. Long portions of Scripture are committed to memory, and the ancient Armenian Bible is read, but not translated. Of course, as the ancient and modern languages are quite different, the power of reading what one does not understand is rather useless.

But the schools of Julfa have received a great accession in the establishment of those of the Church Missionary Society, which are now (1883) conducted by Dr. Hoernle and Mr. Johannes, the former being a medical missionary (*i. e.* a medical man in priest's orders), and the latter a young Armenian gentleman, who was educated in England, and at one time a master in the Nassick School in India. All that is taught in a middle-class school in England is taught in the Church Missionary Society school in Julfa; and the upper form proceed to the first four books of Euclid, Algebra, Latin, and French, in which, unlike the smattering of a middle-class school at home, a thorough grounding is given. Dr. Hoernle, too, sees all comers gratuitously, and administers to their ailments. He has a large apartment as a consulting-room, with convenient waiting-rooms for either sex. Another room has been set apart as a hospital, where the more serious cases are treated surgically; and the Church Missionary Society certainly has not spared money in benefiting the inhabitants of Julfa.

Some orphan-boys are fed, clothed, and educated with the others, and gradually it is hoped to make the school self-supporting; but I fear that the Julfa people will hardly pay for what they are used to get gratuitously. A girls' school has also been commenced by Mrs. Bruce, and sufficient funds having been collected to obtain a schoolmistress, in November 1882 one went out. The Rev. Dr. Bruce, who commenced the work in Julfa, is engaged in translating the Bible into Persian, and portions of it have been completed and published.

All the difficulties which were first thrown in the way of proselytism *among the Armenians*, have now been surmounted, and a considerable number of

converts have been made from the Armenian Christians to the tenets of the Church of England. But as yet no converts have been made from the Mahommedans. These, however, are encouraged to come to the services, in the hope of arousing their curiosity; but they simply seem to come for the show, only presenting themselves very occasionally. The magnificent establishment kept up by the Church Missionary Society is the wonder of the Persians, and Dr. Bruce has succeeded, principally by having expended large sums of money in building in Julfa, and employing many labourers, in securing the respect of the Julfa Armenians.

Employment is sought to be given to the less gifted among the scholars in a factory where various arts are taught, such as weaving, but this does not appear a success. The clever artisans, Baabis, nominally Mussulmans, employed by Dr. Bruce as decorators and builders, have made a really handsome series of buildings, perhaps a little florid. These men have been able to show their great skill in decoration, and the beautiful geometrical patterns on the outer wall of the church, the hand-painted screen which runs round the eaves of the courtyard, and the incised decorations in stucco in the interior of the church, representing parrots, flowers, etc., are curious in the extreme.

This church can seat three hundred comfortably; the effect is good of the pale yellow of the plaster and the coloured glass of the windows.

Every door and window in the house, etc., is beautifully made, stained, glazed, and varnished, and fitting accurately; in fact, one feels a little envious when one leaves one's poor Persian quarters, with ill-fitting doors and windows, for this handsome

European-like establishment.

On leaving the first courtyard, which contains the private quarters of Dr. Bruce and the church, one enters the school. Three sides of a large courtyard are occupied by schoolrooms, and a fine playground is in the middle, with a large stone hauz, or tank, handsomely built. In this the boys in hot weather daily bathe. Here, too, are parallel bars, a vaulting pole, and a giant's stride; beyond this is another courtyard, containing a vineyard, the technical school, the dispensary, and rooms for the orphans. Other rooms, but small and poor, are occupied by the girls' school, which is, however, I believe, to be enlarged, and an English teacher, too, has lately gone out for the girls. Another large house adjoining is occupied by the steward of the orphans, while at the other side are built a set of European stables. A garden is hired by Dr. Bruce, where he cultivates successfully all kinds of European vegetables for his table.

There is no doubt that so large an establishment, vying with that of the bishop in size, and far exceeding it in the amount of money expended, and the number of hands employed, is of great benefit to the Julfa people.

The influence of the priests is on its last legs, and the education given is very thorough, while gratuitous medical attendance is provided by Dr. Hoernle. This, however, is indiscriminately given to Mussulmans as well as Armenians. Of course the great hope is that the benefits of the school may be permitted to the Mahommedan population of the town; but this, I fear, will never be. Let us hope I may be wrong.

The small establishment of the Lazarist Fathers,

which is the next house to the vast range of buildings belonging to the Church Missionary Society, presents a great contrast.

The priest, with his two ragged servants, has much to do to keep body and soul together, and he teaches a small school of both sexes, where the course is less ambitious than that of the English missionaries. His flock, some two hundred strong, remains faithful to its ancient tenets, and has as yet given no recruits to the rival establishment. This is strange, as the Armenian Church has furnished the whole of some hundred and twenty Armenian boys, and two hundred Armenian communicants to the Church of England in Julfa; but as many of these latter benefit directly or indirectly, or are merely *temporary* Protestants to annoy their relatives, or to obtain protection, the result of the whole thing cannot be considered a success as yet—in eleven years a single Mahommedan convert not having been obtained.

CHAPTER XV.
ISPAHAN AND ITS ENVIRONS.

Tame gazelle—Croquet-lawn under difficulties—Wild asparagus—First-fruits—Common fruits—Mode of preparing dried fruits—Ordinary vegetables of Persia—Wild rhubarb—Potatoes a comparative novelty—Ispahan quinces: their fragrance—Bamiah—Grapes, Numerous varieties of—At times used as horse-feed—Grape-sugar—Pickles—Fruits an ordinary food—Curdled milk—Mode of obtaining cream—Buttermilk—Economy of the middle or trading-classes—Tale of the phantom cheese—Common flowers—Painting the lily—*Lilium candidum*—Wild flowers—The crops—Poppies—Collecting opium—Manuring—Barley—Wheat—Minor crops—Mode of extracting grain—Cut straw: its uses—Irrigation.

Mr. Walton, the superintendent of the Ispahan section, had a full-grown buck antelope ("ahū"), which was kept tied to a peg on his croquet-lawn; the animal was rather fierce, and my young bull-dog was accustomed to bark at him, keeping, however, out of reach of his horns. On one occasion the antelope got loose and chased the dog round and round the croquet-lawn, from which there was no exit, it being between four walls; the antelope was going well within itself, but the dog, its eyes starting from its head, and its tail between its legs, gave a shriek of terror as it felt the sharp prongs of the pursuing antelope prodding it every now and then; at last, utterly expended, fear made it brave, and it turned on the animal, pinning him by the throat. We were then able to secure the antelope, which no one

had cared to approach, as his horns were very sharp and he was very savage from being tied up. The little croquet-lawn had been made under very great difficulties, and it was only by getting grass seeds from Carter's that Mr. Walton was able to keep up turf; but he had, by dint of watering and putting tent walls over the young grass in the heat of the day, succeeded in making a very good lawn; and he and his young wife played croquet nearly every evening. The fate of the antelope was a sad one—he got loose one night, and next morning was found drowned in the well.

Great quantities of wild asparagus were brought to the houses of the Europeans for sale: it grows on the banks of the ditches which surround the gardens of Julfa; there is no saltness in the soil, but it thrives in great luxuriance, and is sold for a trifle, the villagers gladly accepting a keran (ninepence) for fourteen pounds' weight.

A man came one day (March 4th) bringing the no ber, or first-fruits (*i. e.* the first cucumbers of the season); they were little things, some three inches long, packed in rose leaves, and probably had been brought up by some traveller by post from Shiraz, or down from Kashan, where it is very hot indeed. As usual the man declined to sell, insisting that they were a present—"peishkesh-i-shuma" (they are an offering to you)—and consequently he has to be rewarded with twice the value.

Tiny unripe almonds, called "chocolah," the size of a hazelnut, have been brought too; they are much appreciated by Persians as a first-fruit; they are soaked in brine and eaten raw, and they are crisp and certainly not bad; or, when a little too large and hard for this, they are eaten stewed with lamb,

forming a “khorisht,” or dish eaten as sauce to rice.

Unripe green plums are also eaten stewed in this way with meat—*Persians eat them raw with salt*; and the unripe grapes, preserved in their own juice as a pickle, or the juice itself (ab-i-goora) is used to season the stews.

The first really ripe fruit is the white cherry, which is called gelas; then the morella, or alu-balu; then the goja, or bullace plum; then follow plums in endless variety, and then the peach and apricot.

These latter grow in great perfection in Ispahan; there are seven known kinds, six of which are sweet, and one bitter. The most valued variety is the shukker-para; it is excessively sweet and cloying. All grow to a large size, and so great is the plenty that the fruit in an ordinary season is sold for twopence farthing the fourteen pounds, or maund. The orchards where the apricot is grown are generally sown with clover; the trees are never thinned, but, notwithstanding this, the finest apricots in the world are certainly produced in Ispahan. There are also plenty of nectarines and peaches. The fruit being so cheap, the natives never gather it, on account of cost of labour, but allow it to fall into the clover which is universally sown under the trees, and which partially preserves it from bruising; so ripe is the fruit that it may be generally seen cracked, with the stone appearing.

Great quantities of dried fruit are exported from Ispahan, which is celebrated for its “keisi,” or dried apricots; these are merely the fallen fruit, which is either too much bruised for sale or has not found a market. They are simply placed in the sun, and become in a week dry, hard, and semi-transparent, thus forming a very portable food: the stones are of

course removed and the fruit becomes as hard as horn; an hour's soaking renders them fit to eat, or when stewed they are delicious, being so very sweet as to require no added sugar.

As a dessert fruit the Persians at times place an almond or a peeled walnut within the fruit where the stone has been; as it dries the nut becomes embedded, a sharp packing-needle and string is run through them when half dry, and they are sold thus, hung on strings like huge necklaces.

Enormous quantities of alū Bokhara, or acid plum, are sold; these, however, are not dried but half boiled, and poured into the skins of sheep, as bags, forming a kind of preserve; they are very appetising, being a very acid yet sweet fruit, and are eaten raw with mast (curdled milk), or are used as a sauce to stewed meat with rice.

Cherries, too, are dried in the sun in the same manner, the stones being extracted; also peaches.

Small melons, called germak and tellabi, now (May) make their appearance; these, though far superior to anything produced in England, are not thought much of. The big brown melon, or karbiza of Gourg-ab, which will keep good a year, and attains an enormous size—some being seventy and eighty pounds in weight—is the most highly prized; the flesh is white, and tastes like a Jersey pear. They grow on a salt soil, are heavily manured with pigeons' dung, and freely irrigated till the plant flowers. Many choice varieties of melon abound, as the "Shah passand," or king's favourite, and others.

The "Hindiwana," or water-melons, are of three kinds, the red-fleshed, the yellow-fleshed, and the white-fleshed: these run from three to twenty-eight

pounds in weight, as an ordinary size; there are long and round descriptions. The skin varies from pale green to almost black with green blotches; the latter are the best.

Pumpkins also are common and of great size.

Cucumbers never grow long, but short and thick; they are called “keeal,” are very plentiful and delicious, and may, at the height of the season, be bought fourteen pounds for one shaie, or halfpenny. There is another fruit something between the melon and cucumber, a kind of eatable gourd, called the koompezeh; it has not much flavour, and is eaten with salt. The cucumbers form one of the staple foods of the people; they are eaten with salt, and are looked on as a fruit; the peasants eat at a sitting five or six pounds’ weight, and find no inconvenience; the Persian cucumber may be eaten with impunity.

Lettuces grow in vast profusion, also the kalam kūmri, a strongly-flavoured kind of nohl-kohl. The Aubergine, or “badinjan,” the fruit of which I have seen weighing three pounds, and carrots and turnips are also grown: the carrots are generally a *green*-rooted variety. Spinach, called “Ispinagh,” is a favourite vegetable. Kanga (or chardons), a kind of thistle, is brought from the mountains, and also Rivend, or wild rhubarb; both are good.

Potatoes are now much grown, but were hardly known on my first arrival in Persia. Kalam-i-Rūmi, or Turkish cabbage, is raised successfully and attains an enormous size, twenty-eight pounds being a common weight for a head; it is the perfection of cabbage, and nearly all heart. Parsnips are unknown.

Toorbēsah, white radishes, are grown about the size of an egg, the tops are boiled and eaten as

greens. Apples are good and common. Pears are very bad. The quinces and pomegranates are magnificent; the former especially are grown in Ispahan and are of great size and fragrance. They are sent with the Gourg-ab melons all over Persia as presents to grandees.

The bamiah, or lady's finger, is little grown; it is a nasty slimy vegetable when cooked. Vegetable marrows are common; they generally have the seeds removed, and are filled with spiced and minced meat, and are boiled. Gourds of many forms are found, and used as vessels for oil, etc. Walnuts and almonds are plentiful, also filberts. There are no chestnuts in the south.

Some thirty varieties of grape are raised; some are merely used for pickling, others for eating, and some only for wine-making. The best eating grapes are the Ascari. This is the first good grape to ripen; it is a smallish white grape, globular, bright golden colour, very delicious, and the skin, being very thin, is swallowed.

Kishmish, a delicious grape, of white elongated shape, also small, and very sweet, both eaten and used for wine-making. When dried this is the sultana raisin, *stoneless*, the skin very thin.

Riech-i-baba, or "old man's beard," a long white grape, very sweet and delicious in flavour. Some varieties of this have tiny stones, others large; they are both red and white. Some are two and a half inches long. The Persians, when the price of grapes is very low, and they are unable to dispose of them, boil them down to obtain the grape-sugar, which is sold all over Persia and eaten in lieu of sugar; it is called "*sheera*."

With vinegar this forms circa-sheera, a sour-sweet liquid, in which various pickles are preserved, as grapes, apples, lemons.

I have mentioned that grapes are used in some places as horse-feed.

The variety in Persian pickles is infinite, from grapes, walnuts, almonds, peppers, onions, oranges, and lemons, green fruits, etc.; a long list of conserves are produced.

All the fruits grown in England are found in Persia, save only the currant, gooseberry, and raspberry.

Persians look on fruit as a staple food, and the ordinary meal of the working classes and peasantry is a loaf of bread and a pound or two of grapes or apricots, or a half-dozen cucumbers, which are considered fruits. Meat is not often eaten by the poor save at the great festivals. “Mast” is also much consumed. This is curdled milk, and is made by adding a little curdled milk to fresh milk warmed. It is then left to cool, and the basin of curdled milk sets in a few hours, leaving the cream on the top. For the first twenty-four hours this is sweet and delicious, tasting like a Devonshire junket, but as a rule the Persian does not care for it until it has become slightly acid. When in this state a farthing’s worth (about half a pint) added to a quart of water forms buttermilk, or “doogh.” A little cut mint is added, and a few lumps of ice, and a cooling drink is made, which is supposed by the Persians to be a powerful diuretic. It is without question a capital thirst-quencher in hot weather.

Cheese, too, is much eaten for the morning meal, with a little mint or a few onions. The banker at Shiraz, to whom the Government moneys were

entrusted—a rich man—told me that he or any other merchant never thought of any more elaborate breakfast than these named above. This same man, when *giving a breakfast*, would give his guests twenty courses of spiced and seasoned *plats*. It is said of a merchant in Ispahan, where they are notoriously stingy, that he purchased a small piece of cheese at the new year, but could not make up his mind to the extravagance of eating it. So, instead of dividing the morsel with his apprentice, as that youth had fondly hoped, he carefully placed it in a clear glass bottle, and, sealing it down, instructed the boy to rub his bread on the bottle and *fancy* the taste of the cheese. This the pair did each morning.

One day the merchant, being invited to breakfast with a friend, gave his apprentice the key of his office and a halfpenny to buy a loaf of bread; but the apprentice returned, saying he could not get the door open, and though he had bought his bread, could not eat it without the *usual flavour* of cheese.

"Go, fool, and rub your bread on the door, which is *almost* as satisfying as the bottle."

Doubtless it was.

Persia is not a favourable place for flowers; the gardeners merely sow in patches, irrigate them, and let them come up as they will. Zinnias, convolvulus, Marvel of Peru of all colours, and growing at times as a handsome bushy plant, five feet high, covered with blossoms; asters, balsams, wallflower, chrysanthemums, marigolds, China and moss roses, or "gul-i-soorkh" (from these the rose-water is made), and the perfume in the gardens from them is at times overpowering, are the usual flowers. Yellow and orange single roses are common; they are, however, devoid of scent. The noisette rose, too, is

much grown, and the nestorange, a delicately-scented single rose, the tree growing to a great size.

The favourite plant is the narcissus; it grows wild in many parts of Persia. Huge bundles of the cut flowers are seen in the dwellings of rich and poor; the scent is very powerful.

The Persians cut small rings of coloured paper, cloth, or velvet, and *ornament* (?) the flower by placing the rings of divers colours between the first and second rows of petals, and the effect is strange, and not unpleasing, leading one to suppose on seeing it for the first time that a bouquet of new varieties has been cut, for so transparent a cheat does not strike one as possible, and a newcomer often examines them with admiration, failing to detect, or rather not suspecting, any deception. The ordinary *Lilium candidum* is much admired in the gardens of the great, and is called “Gul-i-Mariam” (Mary’s flower). A large proportion of the narcissus are double; it is the single variety that the Persians *ornament*. The tulip, too, grows wild, and the colchicum, also the cyclamen. Above Shiraz, however, there are few wild flowers until one nears the Caspian; but below Kazeroon, in the spring, the road is literally a flower-bespangled way, blazing with various tulips and hyacinths, cyclamens, etc.

The principal crops in the neighbourhood of Ispahan are, first the poppy; this is the white variety, and has been grown with great success in Persia, particularly in Ispahan. It has enriched the peasants, but rendered grain and other produce much dearer, as, of course, much less is cultivated. The young plants are carefully thinned till they are a foot apart, and the ground is kept clear of weeds. When the poppy is in flower, and just as the petals are about to

fall, the labourers, principally under the direction of men from Yezd, who are supposed to understand the method of collecting opium better than the rest of the Persians, score the seed-vessels with a small three-bladed knife, making three small gashes an eighth of an inch apart and three-quarters or half an inch long at one cut. This operation is performed in the afternoon. From these gashes the opium exudes in tears, and these are carefully collected at early dawn. The process is repeated a second, and even a third time; this latter is, however, unusual.

And here lies the danger of the opium crop: should a shower of heavy rain descend the product is absolutely nil, the exuded opium being all washed away by the rain. All around Ispahan, where there is good land, and it is not exhausted, nothing can be seen for miles but these fields of white poppies, and the scenery is thus rendered very monotonous.

The Persian farmer is fully alive to the value of manure, and makes it in a very simple manner. All the wood-ashes collected from a house, and the rest of the refuse-heap, are placed in the open street in a circular ridge mixed with mould. Into this is poured the contents of the cesspools, which are allowed to sink into the thirsty heaps of earth and ashes. The “koot,” or manure thus formed, is removed to the fields, allowed to dry in the sun, then mixed with more earth, and after a month or two scattered equally over the soil and dug in.

Barley—which is used for the feeding of horses and mules, to the exclusion of oats, which are never grown—rice, and wheat, are cultivated largely. The barley of Persia is very fine; the wheat grown is the red variety. Beans, pulse, clover, sesamum, maize, cotton, castor-oil plant, cunjeet (a sort of colza), and

nokōd, a grain like a pea, which is much used in cookery; potatoes, lettuces, spinach, are all largely raised. Tobacco, olives (near the Caspian), melons, and cucumbers form the rest of the crops; and millet is also grown.

Quite one half of the barley is cut as grass for the horses, and not allowed to ripen. Tares are grown for the same purpose and cut green.

The harvest of wheat and barley is cut with the sickle, the whole crop being cast pell-mell in a heap in the centre of the field, perhaps some twenty feet high; there it is allowed to lie for a month, or till it is convenient to the owner to extract the grain. This is done by laying round the heap a small quantity of straw with the ear on, and going over it with a kind of car made with heavy beams and running on rollers fitted with sharpened edges of iron; a boy rides on this, and, with a rope and a stick, guides a pair of oxen, or a mule and a horse, or a mule and a donkey, which draw this very primitive machine. As the straw gets broken, more is added, and the broken straw and ears dragged to the side with the grain entangled among them; the weather being very dry, the grain generally all falls out ere this crushing process commences. The straw is in this way crushed into pieces some two or three inches long. When the whole heap has been gone over, the farmer waits for a windy day; when it comes, he tosses the heap in forkfuls in the air. The cut straw is carried a yard or two, and the grain being heavier falls straight to the ground and is removed: the straw is now termed “kah,” and is stored; it is the ordinary fodder of the country, hay being seldom used, save by the rich.

It is also useful as a packing material and to make the “kah-gil” (“gil,” clay), a kind of plaster with

which all houses, save those built of burnt bricks, are smeared, and with which all roofs in Ispahan, Teheran, and Shiraz are carefully coated: it is not until Ghilān, on the Caspian shore, is reached that we come to tiled roofs. Mud bricks are also made with mud and old or spoiled kah. It is doubtless for this that the Jews desired *straw* of the Egyptians to make their bricks.

Sheep are never fed on clover *in sitû*, it is considered too precious (it is cut and dried in twists some two yards long); but they are, however, allowed to graze on the stubble of wheat and barley, and so manure the land.

The greater part of the country is irrigated (save near the Caspian, where the water is in such excess that men may be seen ploughing up to their knees in it); consequently the fields are made up into small squares or parallelograms by trenches raised with the spade; these parallelograms run on each side of a small trench, from which the water is admitted, and as fast as one is opened and filled from the trench, it is stopped, and water admitted to another, and so on until the whole field is thoroughly soaked. Of course it is impossible to ride over a recently watered field, as, if the soil is light, one's horse is soon up to his girths.

Land in Persia is of value according to the quantity of water it is entitled to, and the great cost of a crop is usually not the amount of labour bestowed or the rent paid, but the quantity of water purchased.

In some places land is sown with barley, etc., as a speculation, and it is left to chance; if it rains, a profit of, say, eight hundred per cent. is secured; if it does not do so, which is often the case, the whole crop, seed, rent, and labour is utterly lost. This is the

case near Bushire; the ground is just scratched and the seed thrown in: it is looked on as gambling by the Persians, and a religious man will not engage in it.

CHAPTER XVI.
ISPAHAN AND ITS ENVIRONS.

Pig-sticking expedition—Ducks not tame, but wild—Ruined mosque with tile inscription—Ancient watch-towers—The hunting-ground—Beaters—We sight the pig—Our first victims—The bold Gholam—Our success—Pig's flesh—A present of pork—How Persians can be managed—Opium—Adulteration—Collection and preparation—Packing—Manœuvres of the native maker—Opium-eating—Moderate use by aged Persians—My dispensary over the prison—I shift my quarters—Practice in the bazaar—An ungrateful baker—Sealing in lieu of signing—Seals—Wisdom of a village judge.

On the arrival of Captain Chambers, our new assistant-superintendent in Ispahan, he determined to get up a pig-sticking expedition, a thing hitherto unknown in Persia.

The only man among us who had enjoyed that sport before was Captain Chambers himself, and he had brought with him from India a little armoury of spears; the shafts of these were bamboo, and the heads, keen as razors, were protected by small leather cases.

With some trouble we got one of these heads copied in the bazaar; and Captain Chambers, three of the sergeants, and I started for Ruhdesht, where we were assured we should find plenty of sport.

We took with us two subalterns' tents—Captain Chambers and I occupied one, the other was used by

the sergeants.

On our way we came to a little mosque all by itself in the open plain, some twelve miles from the town; in front of it was a large pond, on which were peacefully swimming some thousands of ducks. We supposed that they were tame, and belonged to the mosque, but on a stone being thrown among them, they all flew away, to our great surprise, showing unmistakably that they were wild ones.

After a wandering march of eleven farsakhs, we found the particular village in Ruhdesht, to which we had been recommended, for, as we found, Ruhdesht was not a village but a district.

We passed many ruins, one of which was a large mud-brick mosque in very good preservation. On the inside was a band of tile-work some twenty feet from the ground, which was four feet wide, and bore a beautiful inscription in interlaced Arabic letters a yard high—the letters were white on a blue ground; it was quite perfect, the height from the ground and its lonely position having protected it from villagers. We also saw several “mil,” or hollow columns; these appeared to have been used as watch-towers, and not as places from which the call to prayers was made, as they were frequently a long distance from the mosques.

We gladly halted, having marched continuously from two P.M. till dawn, and having gone off the track, mules, tents, and all. We took a day’s rest for the horses and to arrange operations. We found that a small river close to the village was swarming with pig, and it was in the low shrubs and jungle near the banks that the animals lived in the day, only coming out on the open plain when driven, or at night. The cover lay on each side of the river for a quarter of a

mile in depth; it was very dense and full of holes. As we had provided ourselves with a “hukm,” or order, from the Governor of Ispahan, we had no difficulty in hiring sixty beaters at sixpence each, and this number was swelled by as many volunteers; as the pigs did much damage to the crops, the villagers were only too glad to assist in the hunt.

The cover was not so dense as it would be later on, it being early spring, and the bushes as yet not in leaf. Having made all the needful arrangements, Captain Chambers, as the Nestor of the party, took command of the beaters, and sent the whole of them in to beat up the river bank, while we were posted at intervals of fifty yards, with strict instructions to attack the boars only, which were carefully described to us. The beaters were accompanied by many of our servants who wished to enjoy the “tamasha” (show), and all the dogs.

While we sat anxiously watching the edge of the jungle, the beaters gradually approaching us, a pig broke cover. Regardless of the shouts of Chambers, who implored us to let him get well out on the open and so give a run, all of us raced at him; of course he re-entered the cover, and was no more seen.

Then out came a sow and seven squeakers, each about eight pounds. This was too much for our equanimity, and though we had promised to carefully obey orders, the frantic cries of Chambers of “ware sow” could not restrain us; we repeatedly charged the sow, and it was a good way of learning, for she got away untouched; all our horses were blown, and as men charged her from different directions at the same time, it was a mercy that there was no accident. Our horses, all much too fresh, now became more manageable. We really did succeed in

spearing two young boars, neither of which showed any fight, being ignominiously pursued and prodded to death.

But a third and more matured animal was now put up, and we carefully allowed him to get well into the open. Here science was served, for Chambers got first spear easily by good riding; the boar turned each time he was struck, and after having been speared some seven times sat down on his haunches with two spears in him, which some of the inexperienced had let go.

The animal was evidently badly wounded, and it was a mere question of time; but though our horses would pursue him when running, none would come within striking distance now he was stationary, and he certainly did not present a very pleasing appearance; and though we rushed them at him, they swerved and shied.

One of the Persian "Gholams," or line-guards, now asked to be allowed to cut the boar's head off; permission was given, and the man dismounted, drew his curved sword, made a tremendous chop on the pig's head, which did not seem to wound but revive him, breaking the short sword off at the hilt.

The animal now pursued the shrieking gholam for some distance, but a few more stabs with the spears finished him, then he was triumphantly borne away by the villagers.

The dogs caught three young pigs, and we returned to camp tired out. In the party of five there had been seven spills. I had two; on one occasion I was knocked over, horse and all, by another man coming up diagonally without warning and striking me sideways, and as he was the heavier, over we

went. My second was when pursuing a pig; my horse slid down a dry ditch, and, on trying to get up the other side, rolled over me.

But no one was hurt, which is a wonder, considering that it was the first time we had carried spears, and they were all eight feet long, and sharp. As we could get no bamboo, we had had the shafts made of chenar or plane-wood; these were heavy but strong; the few made of poplar were light, but all of them broke at or near the head. I fancy that for good sport the ground should have been better; our ground was very open, but deep dry ditches to horses who do not jump are serious matters. We had a good dinner when we got home to the tents, and some tried to eat the pig's meat, but even the young pig's flesh was blackish, and tough as india-rubber.

Eating wild pig's flesh, considering what they will eat, is a disgusting idea; and I quite agree with the action of Captain S—— when a dead pig was sent him by the Governor of Shiraz *as a present*.

The pig was dragged to the door by the servants of the farrash-bashi (head carpet-spreader), a high official, and followed by a shouting mob, and a verbal message came that a pig was sent as a present. S—— happened to be out, but on his return he wrote a polite note to the Governor telling him that the English did not, as he had erroneously supposed, eat wild pig, but looked on it as an unclean animal; and requesting that the person who brought it might remove it.

It was ordered to be done, but the farrash-bashi sent some Jews to drag it away. This S—— would not allow, but insisted that the farrash-bashi himself should come and take it away; he had to do so, and doubtless thought it not quite so good a joke as the

bringing, for the shouting crowd *now laughed at* him instead of *with* him.

We had a second day very similar to our first, fortunately no accidents and fewer spills. We then returned as we came; the greater part of the way was near the river banks, and as we were all very tired, also our horses, we were only too glad to get in by sunset.

I had now an opportunity of seeing the preparation of opium for the English and China markets.

A partner of the principal mercantile firm established in the Persian Gulf came to Ispahan to examine the branch of their business there and test the value of the trade.

The great difficulty with Persian opium is to obtain it of sufficient purity; the Persian opium is always very deficient in morphia, and upon the percentage of morphia by analysis the value of the drug is determined in London.

As opium when bought in the country has to be taken in small quantities and purchased blindfold, or rather on the opinion of judges, whose fiat is possibly *influenced*, the whole business is risky in the extreme. The ryot adds all sorts of abominations to the fresh opium, to increase the weight, as the pulp of apples, grape sugar, etc., and a further adulteration is generally practised by Armenian middlemen. The system generally adopted by the respectable merchant is to buy direct of the ryot, if possible; even to go so far at times, if the farmer be a substantial man, as to make him advances against his future opium crop.

Having purchased the opium, the merchant pours it into large copper pots, some of which may contain

a quarter of a ton of opium. He then proceeds to the "teriak-mali," or preparation, literally opium-rubbing. Having engaged skilled workmen headed by a "reis" or "boss," he contracts to pay these men so much per chest, or by daily wages; and then, if the weather be cold, the semi-liquid contents of the pots are simmered over a very slow charcoal fire. The more solid portions being previously removed, when the "sherbet" or juice has become pretty thick, it is mixed again with the original more solid portion and the whole beaten up; it is, of course, frequently weighed to prevent thefts. Now commences the regular "teriak-mali;" weighed portions, from half a pound to one pound, as may be found convenient, are smeared upon thin planks with a wooden spreader or spatula.

It is first spread perpendicularly, then horizontally, just as in old days medical men used to spread a blister; it is done with great rapidity and exactness. As each plank is covered it is placed on end in the strong sun, and when sufficiently dry, scraped off for rolling into cakes. If the opium be very moist, or the sun weak, this has to be done many times.

The washings of the pots and utensils are carefully boiled down that nothing may be lost, and after many weighings and much manipulation, the opium, in theory absolutely pure, is made into pound cakes, generally the shape and appearance of a squared penny bun of large size, each weighing exactly one pound. The cakes are varnished with some of the liquor or a composition, having in the case where I was present been stamped with a seal bearing the name of the makers.

Each cake, after it is thoroughly dry, is wrapped in a sheet of clean paper, folded as a neat parcel and

packed in chests. The tax on each chest is heavy, and as the duty is levied per chest and not per pound, a small profit may be made by having light cases and making them hold, by careful packing, a little more. The cases are marked, sewn up in hides, or, still better, dammered, *i. e.* packed in tarpaulin.

The preparation is an anxious time, as the workpeople will steal the opium if they can, and it is very portable. Opium is also made up with oil in masses for the Chinese market and in round cakes packed in poppy refuse to simulate Turkish, but this manœuvre is not adopted by the English firm, who attempt by great care in the manipulation, and by only buying of the respectable among the farmers, to prevent anything but pure Persian opium being sold under their brand.

Of course the smaller native makers try every means in their power to increase the weight by fraudulent additions—starch even has been employed—but these specimens often betray their admixture by a peculiar appearance or fracture, and defeat their object—often indeed bearing their own punishment by being unsaleable, save at a loss. At the time I saw the manufacture, Persian opium of the best quality was selling in London at sixteen shillings a pound.

Large quantities of opium are consumed in the country. Almost three-fourths of the aged, of both sexes, are in the habit of taking from half a grain upwards, three times a day. And I am unable to state that the moderate use of opium by the aged or those travelling is attended with any ill effects. Of course the abuse of opium is well known for its terrible results.

The “teriakdan,” or opium pill-box, is in as

common use in Persia as the snuff-box was in England. The pills are usually about one grain in weight, and mostly contain spices to the extent of one half. But I have occasionally seen pills of five grains in weight of purest opium—indeed, one of my patients, who was an opium-eater, used to take seven such pills in the twenty-four hours!

The Prince-Governor kindly placed at my disposal the rooms in the town that had been previously occupied by Dr. Pollak, the king's physician, as a dispensary, and I saw many patients among the very poor there; but as these rooms were over the public prison, of course no respectable people, particularly women, would come. So after some months I engaged rooms looking into the great bazaar over the door of the principal caravanserai, the caravanserai Mokhliss. Here for two tomans (eighteen shillings) a month I had three handsome rooms, a servant's room, and a kitchen; and three times a week I saw patients. As a rule the attendance was gratuitous, though some few of the wealthier paid a fee.

A curious instance of Persian would-be smartness was shown here. A baker in the neighbourhood had suffered from cataract, and had come to me for relief. I had been happily successful, and to my satisfaction had restored sight to both eyes. For this I was rewarded with the sum of four pounds, and as the man was a thriving tradesman and well to do, *I* thought him the obliged party; but *he* regretted the four pounds.

One day, as I was sitting in the dispensary surrounded by a crowd of sick and their friends and relatives, a melancholy procession entered the room. The baker, with a rag of a different colour over each eye, and a huge white bandage round his head, was

led, or rather supported, into the apartment; and on my expressing astonishment, his relatives informed me that his sight was quite gone through my unfortunate treatment; and that he had come to get his four pounds back, and any compensation for the loss of his eyes that I might be pleased to make would be thankfully accepted.

"Ah, sahib, dear sahib, I am now *stone* blind," he said.

Here with extended arms he advanced to my table, and the assembled crowd shook their heads. I had some difficulty in getting him to remove his many bandages; but on looking at his eyes I saw that his vision, as I had supposed, was extremely good. I naturally was very angry, for, letting the ingratitude of the man alone, I did not care to be robbed of the credit of a cure in so public a manner. I did not take long to decide what to do. Among some antiquated instruments that had accumulated in the dispensary was a large amputating knife in a leather box. I got this box from the cupboard and placed it before me. Taking my seat, with the man on the other side of my table, I addressed him:—

"Of course, if I have deprived you of your sight, it is only fair that I should remunerate you and return you the money you have paid me."

A beatific smile spread over his face.

"Ah, sahib, I know you are a great and generous sahib. I am sure you would not wrong a poor Mussulman. Oh, sahib, I want nothing but justice."

"And what, my friend, do you consider justice?"

"Oh, sahib, doctor sahib, if you would refund the four pounds that I paid you, and give me, say forty

pounds, even less, for my eyes, I should pray for you —yes, I and my family, we should all pray for you."

Here the supporters and family chimed in, "Yes, yes, he has spoken well," and the crowd of interested patients and their friends whispered approbation.

I noticed, too, that my servant seemed trying to attract my attention, and to dissuade me from a course he thought just, perhaps, but too generous.

"Yes," said I, "this is what ought to be done, there is no denying it, in the case you describe. But"—and here I began to shout—"but what should be done to the man who comes here with a lie in his mouth? Know you, bystanders, that this man is a liar; he sees perfectly!"

Here the patient shook off his supporters, and grasped my table, turning pale.

"Ah," I shouted, "you dog, I will enlighten your eyes," and, opening suddenly the morocco case, I produced the huge glittering old amputating knife, and brandished it in his face. Without a word he nimbly turned and fled down my staircase, pursued by my servants, the two sentries, and the more active of my patients' friends.

"Stop, thief!" I shouted from my open window; "stop, thief!"

This resounded along the crowded bazaar. Every idler took up the cry; every hand and every stick was turned on the flying man. In an instant he was secured, his clothes torn to rags by the seething mob in the bazaar.

I shouted to him from the open window, and sarcastically asked him if he was blind or not.

"Oh, sahib, sahib, through your kindness I see, indeed I do."

But I was not satisfied with this, and sent him, under guard of my servant and the two sentries, to the high priest, who registered his confession of attempted imposture, and drew up a *procès verbal*, to which he affixed his seal. It is an ill wind that blows no one any good, and the matter was for several days the talk of the town, and increased my practice for the time.

When I say that the high priest "affixed his seal," I may explain that sealing is always used in lieu of signing. When a Persian writes a letter, he affixes his seal by dipping his finger against the sponge-like ball of silk, that is full of Indian ink, in his inkstand, and, rubbing a small quantity upon the seal, gives a lick with his tongue to the paper to render it moist and supple, waves it in the air to get rid of excess of moisture, breathes on his seal, and presses it firmly against the paper held over the forefinger of the left hand, which acts as a pad. A very clear impression is thus produced.

Merchants and officials generally have several seals, one for familiar communications, having simply the man's name, as "Hassan son of Houssein;" the next perhaps for sealing cheques or receipts; and a third for official documents, of larger size, with all his titles on it. He may even have several other secret or private seals. They are generally beautifully cut on agate or cornelian. Teheran produces the best seal-cutters, and the price for engraving is from one farthing to one pound a letter. Common seals are cut on brass or silver. The rich Turks of Stamboul have their seals cut in Teheran.

A curious story is told among Persians of the

wisdom of a certain cazi or magistrate. The story is a well-known one. A woman was claimed by two men as wife; one a peasant, the other a mirza or scribe. The two men each swore to the truth of his claim. The woman was silent. The cazi, failing to get any corroborative evidence, ordered the woman to remain for a time with his own wives, and next day handed her over to the mirza, ordering the peasant to be severely beaten. Then the woman broke silence for the first time, and praised the just judge. The lookers-on applauded the justice of the cazi, but failed to see the grounds for the verdict.

Said the cazi: “I told her to milk a cow, and she could not. I knew then she could be no peasant’s wife. Then handing her my writing-case, I told her to put it in order. She took the little silver spoon, and replenished my inkstand with water. Only the wife of a man who could write could have done this correctly. Hence my verdict.”

CHAPTER XVII.
ISPAHAN.

Cost of living—Servants—Our expenses—Price of provisions—Bargains—Crying off—Trade credits—Merchants—Civil suits—Bribery—Shopkeepers—Handicrafts—Damascening—Shoemakers—Other trades—Bankers—An Ispahani's estimate of the honesty of his fellow-townsmen.

The cost of living in Persia is very low; and to give an insight into the actual expense of housekeeping, I may say that on about five hundred pounds a year I was able to live in Ispahan, keeping—

	Kerans.	
A cook	50	a month.
A tableman	40	”
An assistant ditto	25	”
A farrash	25	”
A platewasher	20	”
A boy	15	”
A head groom	30	”
A second ditto	20	”
A woman laundress	25	”
An assistant ditto	15	”
About £10, or	265	kerans.

These servants all clothed themselves, and were not fed by me, save in sharing the remnants of the meals.

About *fourteen pounds of tobacco* was expended in my house, at a cost of eight kerans, each month.

A substantial breakfast of three or four courses was served at twelve, tea and a snack being taken on waking. And a solid meal of four courses and a dessert was taken at eight as dinner. Tea and cakes at four, previous to the daily ride.

The bill for messing myself, my wife, two children, and our English nurse, together with our horse-keep for five horses, our house rent being included, and the servants' pay, was about thirty-five pounds a month. Of course our English nurse's wages were not included in this, nor our bill for European wines and tinned provisions. These latter were, however, quite needless, save when travelling, when it is difficult to obtain supplies, or anything but the roughest food. I found the cost of living[16] pretty much the same in Ispahan, Teheran, and Shiraz. At Hamadan and Kermanshah prices used to be much less, but are now, I think, nearly the same.

As I previously stated, no European goes himself to the bazaar. To conclude a bargain with any Persian shopkeeper great haggling and waste of time is required; and so high are their ideas of the wealth of the Europeans, that it would be hopeless to attempt to deal with them personally. Honesty cannot be expected in the Ispahani or Teherani, but the Shirazi may be pretty fairly relied upon.

A peculiar custom is in force in Ispahan, which is possibly legal by the religious law. A man comes to a merchant and makes a bargain. In the morning he makes "Dubbeh," *i. e.* repents of his bargain, calmly stating, "Makhmūn shūd um" ("I have been deceived"). And now the bargain is off! This is frequently done either to lower the price a little, or,

when the article is a fluctuating one, such as opium, to take advantage of a rise or fall in the market. For this reason it is, that all contracts have to be in writing, and generally something is paid on account to bind the slippery Ispahani.

The difference between wholesale and retail is very great, the retailer not taking generally a profit of less than twenty per cent. The usual rate of interest in the bazaar is twelve per cent. per annum, *i. e.* one per cent. per mensem, simple interest. Most, in fact nearly all, mercantile transactions are on credit, discount for cash or a cash price being the exception. In fact, so common is credit that the price of a thing is quoted *at so many months*. Thus, in the case of loaf-sugar, it may be, say a toman (seven and sixpence) a maund of fourteen pounds and four months' credit, or, when very cheap, eighteen months' credit. The price would be quoted as either four or eighteen, meaning the amount of credit allowed, the actual price being the same. Most of the wholesale trade is done through brokers, who act as commercial travellers, and solicit orders on commission, which they generally manage to extract from both buyer and seller. Among the brokers a few honest men may be found, but they are rare exceptions.

The tager, or merchant class, are generally the most bigoted and penurious of the Persian race. Only on retiring from business do they dare to launch out into ostentation; for the mere suspicion of wealth in Persia exposes them to the exactions of those in power.

All disputes among merchants are settled by the mushtaheds, or teachers of religious law. No court fees are paid openly, but heavy bribes are often

administered. Most questions are submitted by mutual consent to arbitration, and a mejlis (council of merchants) appointed by the disputants generally meet at the house of some mūlla, or religious personage. These, acting as assessors, settle the matter to the satisfaction of both parties. A definite judgment is seldom given for either plaintiff or defendant. A compromise is nearly always suggested and carried out. Cases of flagrant miscarriage of justice are not frequent. When they do occur, the merchants generally decline to resort to the court of the particular judge until he reconsiders the unsatisfactory decision, or by petition to the capital they effect his removal if obdurate. As *both* sides bribe, as a matter of course the judgments are generally fair, always specious. These bribes are termed “rūshwah” (manure).



THREE SHOPS IN THE BAZAAR.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

The bazaaz, or shopkeeper, is the class next below the merchant. He obtains everything on credit, and has frequently no capital of his own. As a rule he has two prices, one for cash, the other for credit. To his credit customers he gives the worst of his

merchandise, and tries to defraud them in the weight. The cash customers, whom he is very desirous of retaining, he treats better.

The “kossib,” or handicraftsman, is, as a rule, an honest man. Healthy competition is kept up by the various trades being located together, but this is merely by force of custom, and is not compulsory. Thus, all the coppersmiths work in one bazaar, and the noise caused by their hammering is deafening.

All of the wares made by natives are of the most solid and substantial kind; cooking pots, always of solid copper, last for generations, and when eventually worn out, are sold as old copper, at half the price of new ones. The silversmiths also usually work in the same neighbourhood; some among them are very skilful, but the coarse work required by the villagers tends to lower the tone of the articles turned out. Thin plates of silver hammered into patterns of raised flowers and arabesque work are in great request as mirror frames; the sheet of silver is backed with pitch and hammered; the effect is good. Silver articles are made which are afterwards chiselled in high relief in patterns similar to the Scinde work. Armlets to hold talismans (telism) are in great demand; they are called bazū-band, and are made of gold, silver, or damascened steel, often inlaid with gold.

The “pūlad,” or damascened steel, is beautifully veined, and much of it is ornamented with work *à jour* and inlaid with gold. But the almost prohibitive prices asked for this pūlad work and the constant demand for export render it very expensive.

The classes of shoemakers are many: the kafsh-dooz, or slipper-maker, as we should term him, makes the coloured leather, or shagreen slippers

worn by the women; these only just reach the commencement of the heel, and when new are very elegant. They are shod with iron heels, which is a separate trade of itself. The orussee-dooz, or men's shoemaker, is another trade. The chekme-dooz, or riding-boot-maker, a third; these boots are always made loose enough to kick off, and are practically better for long journeys on horseback than European boots. There is also the ghēva-dooz, who makes the ghēva or cotton shoe, by sewing together the knitted cotton top, or "jurab"—literally sock, made by the village women—to the sole, which is made by another trade, and formed of rags sewn together and tipped with horn. These ghēvas are light and cool, and very good for walking in; they are usually worn only in summer, and on the naked foot; they are unsurpassable in the foothold their broad soft sole gives for mountain climbing. When dirty they are whitened with pipeclay. The price is from two kerans to five kerans for an ordinary pair; it is possible to give a pound for an elaborate or embroidered pair.

The zangal, or leggings, are made of leather, and cover the space between the knee and ankle; they are affected by tribesmen, grooms, and muleteers as being cheaper than boots and as useful. They are often elaborately ornamented with embroidered leather. They are worn with ghēvas, sandals, or coarse shoes. The "terkesh-dooz," or harness-maker, is the seller and maker of leather goods, such as holsters, harness, saddlery, etc.

The attār, or apothecary, sells all the drugs in use in the country, and most of the drysaltery, also tea.

The aleph sells grain, grass, and cut straw, also clover which is dried in ropes, wood, and charcoal.

The bakkal, or general dealer, sells groceries, dried

fruits, and all that is sold by the oilman in England. Some of the goods sold by the aleph, who generally only sells wholesale, are retailed by the bakkal to the little people.

The dyer in Persia drives a roaring trade, as the cotton cloth, shirting, or longcloth, as the case may be, is often bought and afterwards dyed. The dyer, or rangraz, may always be known by his arms, which are stained a deep blue, or other colour, generally blue, as indigo is most used; all the shulwar (trousers) of the men and veils of the women, and most of the shirts of the lower orders, being dyed fast by indigo. The Persians dislike dyes that are not fast, as the aniline, and prefer the old ones, such as madder and indigo.

The tailor ("khyat") in all cases makes up the materials of his clients, and ready-made clothing, or "slops," are unknown. The tailor always cuts out the coat *in presence of* the customer. The price for making a coat is about one toman, or two or three kerans for a day's work by a master tailor. The seamstress is glad to take a less figure, and goes out to work for half a keran a day and her breakfast. All sewing is *invariably done with silk*, which is sold by weight.

The ūtūkash, or ironer, is employed to ornamentally iron the dresses of the lower orders that are made of coloured calico or longcloth. This he does by ironing a pattern upon them with the edges of his iron, generally a box-iron filled with charcoal; often, however, merely a heated rod. He irons upon a large jar, which he holds between his knees. He also marks the stuffs that are to be quilted for under-garments.

The shops of the potter are frequent. Pans for charcoal, jars for the storing of grain, are made of

sun-dried clay, while a variety of burnt-clay articles are exposed for sale; cheap kalian and chibouque heads, flower-pots of blue, green, and purple glaze, tiles, kūmrahs or jars for wine, water, or vinegar, goglets, pans, and drinking-vessels innumerable for holding water; these are porous, and keep it cool. This ware is pale greenish yellow, and very fragile; the best is made at Kashan. Other non-porous and stronger vessels are made of red clay, and are glazed of various colours. A black clay is frequently employed, and decorated with silvery lines; the effect of this is good.

The art of making pottery with a *reflet métallique* is now lost in Persia. The wall tiles now so much valued in Europe are seldom seen *in sitû*. Clever imitations are made in Ispahan, but the art of making the metallic (*reflet*) lustre is gone. Most of the bricks that are not protected, by the fact of being in shrines, have been already stolen, and fear of the consequences of detection is all that protects the rest. All is fish that comes to the net, and the local magnates would sell the big monolith of Yezd marble, which covers the grave of Hafiz, *for a price*.

The caravanserais in the principal towns are surrounded by hoojrahs or offices; these are protected by an orussee or glass window or by wooden shutters. In these hoojrahs the merchant transacts his business, and in the inner room or umbar, which is approached by a low, heavy door from the outer office, is his strong box and the more valuable of his merchandise.

The banker in Persia is looked on simply as a small tradesman—in fact, the business of the serof is despised; as being a usurer on the sly, he cannot be a good Mussulman, to whom usury is forbidden. His

office is often merely a stall in the bazaar, at which are exposed old bracelets, gold, silver, and copper coin, and jewels always full of flaws. His principal profit consists in the remittance of moneys from town to town, and the buying and selling of bills on India and London. A few bankers have offices in the caravanserais, and are in the position of merchants, but there are no mahogany counters, no rows of clerks; a couple of scribes and a black slave often comprise the whole staff, but the bankers manage to do all that is needful with this small assistance. Gold, until recently, was seldom seen, and as everything was paid in kerans and half-kerans, counting was very tedious—bad kerans common. The usual way was to count a small amount, such as ten tomans in kerans, and then weigh heaps of ten tomans each. Some of the bankers are very reliable, and have accumulated considerable wealth. Hadji Mirza Kerim of Shiraz is one of these, and he is one of the few instances of a banker thoroughly respected as a good Mussulman by his fellow-townsmen, and as a good man by Europeans and Persians. The Ispahani is so well known for trickery that Hadji Mahommed Saduk, the Crœsus of Shiraz, a native of Ispahan, but trading and residing in Shiraz, informed me himself "that a merchant *in Ispahan* to live must cheat, and to thrive must steal."

CHAPTER XVIII.
ISPAHAN.

Daily round—The river—Calico rinsers—Worn-out mules and horses—Mode of treating the printed calico—Imitations of marks on T-cloths—Rise of the waters of the Zend-a-Rūd—Pul-i-Kojū—Char Bagh—Plane-trees—The college—Silver doors—Tiled halls and mosque—Pulpit—Boorio—Hassir—Sleepers in the mosque—Cells of the students—Ispahan priests—Telegraph-office—Tanks—Causeways—Gate of royal garden—Governor's garden—Courtiers and hangers-on—Prisoners—Priests—The Imām-i-Juma—My dispensary—Ruined bazaar—A day in the town—Bazaar breakfasts—Calico-printing—Painters—The maker of antiquities—Jade teapot—Visit to the Baabis—Hakim-bashi—Horse-market—The "Dar"—Executions—Ordinary—Blowing from guns—A girl trampled to death—Dying twice—Blowing from a mortar—Wholesale walling up alive—A narrow escape from, and horrible miscarriage in carrying it out—Burning alive—Crucifixions—Severity: its results.

In my early days I was in the habit of riding over from Julfa to the town of Ispahan daily; twenty-five minutes' smart trotting brought me to my dispensary. During the summer the river was easily fordable, large banks of gravel being visible; these were occupied by the "rinsers of printed calicoes;" while the sun was out, for about half a mile the gravel banks were covered with long strips of printed calico placed closely together; at dawn the rinsers came down from the bazaars with many donkey-loads of dyed cotton cloths; the beasts used for the carriage

were the lame, the halt, and the blind of the asses and mules of Ispahan. As the last use a horse is put to in Persia is to be a miller's pack-horse, so this work seemed to be the end of the donkeys and mules.

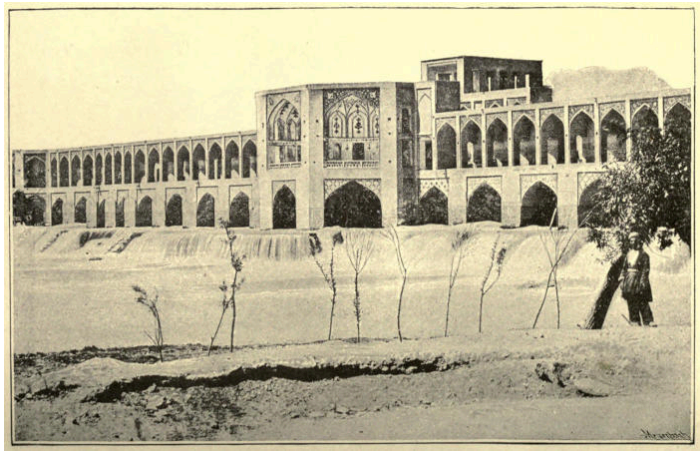
Along the edges of the channels between the gravel banks stood rows of old millstones; in front of each stone was a rinser up to his knees in the river. Taking a piece of dyed cloth half wrung out, which had been thoroughly soaked in water, in his hands—and the pieces were at times twenty yards long—he proceeded to thwack the roll of cloth against the stone with his whole strength, keeping time to a loud song until he was out of breath. As these men worked in rows, and the cloths were full of water, the noise and splashing were something tremendous. The work was heavy in the extreme, and as they can only get to the river when low, some seven months in the year, the pay is good.

As each piece had the water thus thoroughly beaten out of it, a boy on the bank seized it and proceeded to spread it on the gravel, fixing the edges and corners with a stone; his duty was never to let the wrung cloth get dry, which he managed to do by constantly dashing water over the out-spread rows of dyed cloths with a pan. Often the process has to be repeated several times, as the cloths are sent down from the printers in the various stages. Above each furiously beating rinser rose a cloud of variously coloured spray which gradually became colourless; in every direction the sheets of water thrown by the boys glittered in the strong sun, and the loud choruses of the half-naked rinsers, and the barking of their watch-dogs—for each batch had their dogs—made a cheerful and exciting scene.

Of course the calico, cotton-cloth, or T-cloth, as it is variously termed, had to be strong and good to stand such a process; and the adulterator had little chance with the wily calico-printer, who always weighed his cloth prior to purchasing, washed and dried it, and then weighed it again; the consequence is that, save of *the best quality*, little cotton-cloth is sold in Ispahan. Certain brands well known for their genuineness command a high figure, such as that of the Ace of Spades, though they are soon closely imitated by unscrupulous makers. However, the calico-printer is generally quite a match for the adulterator.

Many of the rinsers make little hovels of brushwood and earth, and live altogether on the banks of gravel, and in February, when the waters suddenly rise, the scene is exciting as they collect their traps at the last moment, and a few seconds after, their huts are swept away—banks, huts, and millstones disappearing, and a furiously rushing river of muddy water taking their place. This yearly occurrence of the rise of the waters happens on the melting of the snows on the mountains. The Ispahan river (Zend-a-Rūd) usually presents the appearance near the town of a number of chains of pools of water united by a central brook just occupying the middle of a wide but dried watercourse, having a hardly perceptible stream, and as clear as crystal. No sooner, however, do the spring rains commence than the stream becomes muddy, or at all events discoloured; and when the “sale ab,” or rise of the waters, comes, the dams that have been placed to regulate the amount of water taken off by the various canals for supplying the town and irrigation—some of which are very old and really important works—are carried away, the river is seen to rise many feet

an hour; at times even a large wave appears, and trees torn up by their roots come rapidly down in large numbers. The huge bridges are crowded by a shouting and excited populace, the banks and all coigns of vantage are thronged, and for a couple of days all Ispahan enjoys the sight. Then the river sinks, the stream becomes clear, and a broad and swift river is seen till May, when it gradually sinks to its normal summer insignificance, most of its waters being taken off for irrigation and the supply of the town.



THE PUL-I-KOJŪ.

During the “sale ab” the great sight is at the Pul-i-Kojū, Bridge of Kojū. This handsome structure, crossing the river from one of the ruined quarters of the town of Ispahan to the palace of Haft Dust, in which Futteh Ali Shah died, is built of brick with well-made stone piers, and is of very original construction. As through its arches for eight months in the year a small stream slowly flows, the huge piers are separated at the bottom by merely narrow channels; these are arched over, and a level

causeway is the result; over this is built the second or real bridge, which has rooms on each side of it at each pier, with open doorways looking towards the waters; there are stairs and rooms too in the upper piers.

When the rise of the waters takes place, this bridge, rooms, staircases, and parapets are crowded, also the causeway. Rapidly the lower arches become filled with the roaring torrent, still more quickly it rises above them; at length it flows over the causeway of stone, which at the last moment is left by the crowd, and falls with tremendous noise into the seething flood the other side; still rising, it thunders through the large archways, and soon the curious appearance from the lower side is presented of a regular waterfall the whole width of the stream, with as many torrents as there are arches, seething out above this; above all, the double-storied bridge covered with sightseers shouting, singing, and shrieking, with the additional possibility of the whole being washed away at any moment. The upper bridges are often damaged; somewhat of the beauty of the scene, however, is detracted from by the river at these times being the colour of *café au lait*.

In summer, fording the river, I entered the Char Bagh (four gardens), or in winter approached it by the bridge. There are several Char Bagh in Ispahan, but the principal one extends for about a mile on either side of the river in a straight line, the centre of the line being formed by the bridge, which is quite level—a rare thing in Persia; and also a rare thing in Persia, it has many *large* arches; the parapet is some twelve feet high, and at each pier is a small chamber having three apertures to the river; above the parapet is ample room for foot passengers.

The Char Bagh contains a double avenue of magnificent plane-trees, some of great age—alas! too soon to disappear. As these gigantic planes decay in the inside, they are felled and become the perquisite of somebody: at times in great gales they fall with a crash, the inside being quite gone. Also whenever the Governor wants a big tree for any purpose he takes one, but *nobody plants any new ones*.

A high wall bounds the Char Bagh on either side; at intervals are edifices pierced by gates of from three to four stories, of no architectural pretensions; they are of brick, ornamented with barbarous designs on plaster in flaring colours, which time has happily toned down; these gates lead to what were once lovely fruit gardens, now mere enclosures sown with grain, grass, etc. The Char Bagh is some thirty yards or more wide: about half-way up on the right-hand side is the Mehdresseh, or college, the tiled dome of which, now fast decaying, is a very ornamental object for miles. The dome is surmounted by a golden ornament which is stated to be solid and of pure metal; this, I fancy, is very doubtful. The college is entered by a high gateway, and here are the celebrated silver doors—of the genuineness of these there can be no doubt; the centre plates are very handsomely made, and have been heavily gilt; the plates are not, however, very thick, and the *substance* of the doors is wood under thin silver. The gateway, which is in bad repair, contains nothing of interest, and is blocked up by fruit-stalls and pipe-sellers. A rough kind of orchard and a tank occupy the courtyard, a few pomegranates and roses being the principal shrubs, though there are some large trees. Several halls for instruction are seen on either side; these, like the mosque beneath the dome, are lined and roofed with one sheet of perfect tile-work, green,

black, and yellow on a white ground; the whole interior of the college, too, is tiled. Taken separately, there is nothing particular about these tiles, but the *tout ensemble* is grand and cool in the extreme.

Of course we were not permitted to enter the mosque, as there were many idlers about, but a good view is got from the entrances and from the windows below the dome from the roof. The only furniture is the "mambar," or pulpit. The floor is covered with coarse matting, or borio, which is made only in Ispahan; another kind of matting, which is more expensive, is in use throughout Persia, called hassir; in the manufacture of this thread is used. The borio is of reedy grass alone, strong, clean, and inexpensive. Contrary to the hassir, which is made in strips, the borio is in one piece, and here we saw pieces twenty yards by ten.

Thus there is nothing in the Persian mosque to distract the mind from the prayers, the exhortation, or religious meditation, though the coolness and dim religious gloom of the lofty halls rather incline one to sleep; in fact, being the hot part of the day, we saw many men curled up in sleep covered with their camels' hair abbahs, or cloaks.

The mosques are at night the casual wards of Persia; there sleep those who have absolutely no home and no business, and entrance is always free to all comers. The busy use the numerous caravanserais. There were lofty minarets, from whence is made the call to prayers, and numerous little cells windowed with the old elaborate carpentry of the East, and their beautiful tracery often papered over by the inmate to render his cell warmer in winter; a bit of matting, a box, and a few books, were the contents of most of them, in the corner being a small carpet,

which formed the place of honour by day and the bed at night.

The students are all either divinity or law, aged from eighteen upwards; and an Ispahan lawyer or priest, on finishing his education, is looked on by Persians as the type of hypocrisy and *finesse*. Many of the mūllas (priests) are not, however, bad fellows when one can break through the crust of *apparent* moroseness and fanaticism; they are mostly at heart freethinkers, many Deists, more Atheists, few being good Mussulmans.

Leaving the college and still proceeding up the Char Bagh, a building on the right contains the Persian telegraph-office. The office is for the local traffic, and the Persians have possession, by convention, of one of the wires of the line; they do their own local traffic, but the line is kept up by the English staff of the Persian Telegraph Department.

At intervals in the Char Bagh are large hauz (tanks), most of them in ruins, but during winter generally full of water; all down the centre runs a watercourse a yard and a half wide—alas! dry—edged by huge blocks of hewn stone and bridged at intervals.

On either side of this watercourse is a paved stone causeway ten feet wide edged by similar hewn stones; along the edges under the walls is another paved road of less width; between these causeways are wide beds once covered with flowers and fruit-trees, now only sown with clover and barley, which in the early spring gives, with the huge plane-trees, a fine *coup d'œil*.

The Char Bagh ends in a gateway of more lofty pretensions, but of the same style of architecture as

the buildings on either side. Here, however, are a few tiles representing scenes in the chase, probably made during the Afghan occupation.

A wide paved chaussée leads to the gate of the royal garden, now merely a meadow with trees. At the entrance is the Lion and Sun daubed in staring colours on a plastered wall, and here, unless known to the sentries, one is not allowed to pass. My professional work having made me free of the place, we pass on, and leaving the Chehel Sitūn, or hall of the forty columns, crowded with the hangers-on of the minister, who here adjudicates with local grandees on minor affairs, we come, passing a huge hauz or tank full of clear water, to a wall in which are two recesses having life-sized portraits in oil of former Ispahan magnates, evidently good likenesses and not without merit. On the right is the principal entrance to the quarters of audience of the minister and various antechambers. We dismount, pass through a small door, are saluted by the sentry, and enter a well-kept Persian garden, the paved walks of which are fenced off, with telegraph wire and painted posts, from the sunken beds.

Here, too, everything is in good repair, for we are now in the outer courtyard of his Royal Highness the Zil-es-Sultan, Governor of one-third of Persia, the eldest son of the king, a man of genius, and in high favour; in fact, at present (1883) the most powerful of his Majesty's subjects, if we except the Valliāt, or heir-apparent, a priest-ridden ascetic of weak intellect, whom the royal policy, which points to the survival of the fittest, will probably quietly remove, in which case the Zil-es-Sultan will surely reign. Here all who are expecting an audience of his Royal Highness or his people, wait; great men and their

servants, merchants, artisans, priests, veiled women, wrestlers; a few well-dressed servants of the prince swagger about, while his carpet-spreaders, or farrashes, with long sticks, are present to keep order or administer the bastinado; a few executioners, dressed in red, and shunned save by the lowest, skulk in one corner, while half-a-dozen Jews gesticulate and shake their fists in each other's faces in another.

Rooms at the side, open to the air, show mirzas in long cloaks, busily writing official letters or making out accounts. Close to the door, which is covered with a curtain, on which is painted a colossal sentry on guard, stands a sentinel, and here lounges the big moustached doorkeeper with his huge silver mace.

The farrash-bashi here, too, is waiting a summons, with two villagers in shirt and drawers of blue cotton, and felt hats: they are chained, probably on a charge of highway robbery, or a still more heinous crime in Persia, backwardness with their taxes. They don't seem comfortable, for they know that a gesture from his Royal Highness will consign them either to the tender mercies of the executioners, or the bastinado of the farrashes, or even perhaps immediate liberty.

Many servants, with their masters' pipes of gold or silver, and dressed sumptuously, if domestics of the wealthy, smoke or chatter. A knot of thin and forbidding-looking priests, of sourest looks, some wearing the blue turban (marking the supposed descendant of the prophet, or Syud), take as a right, hardly acknowledging it, the salute of each passer-by, and favour me, an unbeliever, with ferocious sneers, drawing back their flowing garments to avoid contact, an action which I resent by doing likewise. Here the curtain is raised, and the greatest man in

Ispahan (I speak of some years ago), whose word to the priests and mob can give endless trouble to the king—the "Imām-i-Jūma," or high priest, and head of the law, for he was both—appears, followed by two other priests of high rank. His turban is dark blue, almost black; all bend and salaam to him. I stop to give him a military salute. He is an old patient of mine; he smiles and speaks in a stage whisper, saying to the other priests what a very superior unbeliever I am. I hurry on, and, passing through many passages, come to my dispensary over the jail.

Three hours are occupied in seeing patients, then back through the ruined bazaar, "Bazaarcha baland," a lofty but *empty* arcade of shops, having a second story above them, the whole roofed in and beautifully finished as to the brickwork. Cool and dim, this silent bazaar opens into the Char Bagh, and I return as I came, in the hot sun, to breakfast; then siesta, tea, afternoon ride, dinner at eight, perhaps a rubber, and so the days go on.

Or I have a day in the town, and lunch at my dispensary on *bazaar food*—slices of mutton off a sheep roasted whole; brilliān, *i. e.* chopped and seasoned meat; pillaws of rice, with various meats; kabobs, or chopped and seasoned meat roasted on skewers, and served hot with herbs between two flaps of bread, also hot; a bowl of sherbet, *i. e.* syrup and water, with blocks of ice in it; grapes or apricots as dessert; then my water-pipe is handed to me; the whole—and the plentiful leavings give my servant and the groom a substantial breakfast—costing a shilling.

Then, mounting, I visit the calico-printers, and see the elaborate printing by means of blocks—some of them over three centuries old—of the curtains for

which Ispahan is celebrated, covered with strange pictures of peacocks, elephants, soldiers, lions, etc., in all the colours of the rainbow, and *fast, too*, on a white ground.

Or I sit and chat with the artists on the upper story of the caravanserai Gulshan, who each in his little room is hard at work on some bookcover or pencase, or possibly is illustrating a manuscript copy of Hafiz or Saadi, and chatting with whom I learn a good deal of the inner side of Persian life. I look over the work of my artist friends, who do not press me to buy, but who do descant on the falling off in art in Persia.

Or I take a look at Houssein Khari, who has a factory for false antiquities. Here I see, among heaps of sham, at times something real and good; but Houssein Khari does not sell the good things, only the rubbish. As I go he ironically holds out to me a jade teapot, requesting me to buy it for one hundred pounds. I see that the age of bargains is over, and retire.

Or I make a visit to my friends the Baabis. Here, however, I have to eat such a tremendous breakfast that a siesta is needed, and I only am allowed to start homewards at six, after pipes and tea have been taken, and much information extracted from me.

Or a professional visit is made, and I come across bits of Eastern life in out-of-the-way quarters of the huge and ruined town.

Or I call on the hakim-bashi, or head doctor, my friend, and hear of his troubles in ruling the Jews, editing his newspaper—for he is the editor of the *Ispahan Gazette*—in establishing the *new* or *modern* college, of which he is the head and the prince the patron.

Or I take a long ride through the bazaars, to the disgust of my servants, who do not care to be seen as an unbeliever's servants in the fanatical heart of the city.

Or, riding to the maidān, I look out in the early morning for a cheap horse, which the brokers offer for sale here each day, and see the furious riding of the Persian buyer trying his steed. This maidān, or "*place*," is, I think, over a quarter of a mile long by a furlong wide. In the centre is a small circular brick platform, on which is a high pole, with projecting pieces for the feet, and a pulley at top. Here criminals used to be hoisted by the feet, and then allowed, the rope being cut, to be dashed head foremost to the ground. At the foot of this pole take place the numerous executions, though the Governor of Ispahan is not fond of shedding blood.

When the new Mission at Gulhaek was being finished in the time of the late minister, Mr. Alison, he instructed the builder to make "a place for a flagstaff," and a huge pole having been procured, it was set up, and the architect smilingly presented the work to his Excellency.

Mr. Alison looked at it and tapped his forehead, and, turning to the architect, said—

"I think I have seen somewhere something like this" (there was then an execution pole in Teheran exactly like the one in Ispahan, but with a higher and larger brick platform).

"Yes, yes," replied the smiling Persian, of course, "the Dar" (execution pole). "I have tried to copy it exactly; very imposing, is it not? Strikes the eye at once."

No praise came. His Excellency turned away, and

the pole was earthed up over the brickwork, leaving an ornamental mound, now covered with shrubs and roses.

The ordinary way of execution is by throat-cutting; the victim, clad in shirt and drawers only, is led into the square; unless a celebrated criminal, only a few loafers crowd round; a pipe is smoked by the culprit, and he is told to kneel; he does so, and the executioner, coming behind him, cuts his throat with a short curved knife. As a rule the body lies where it falls, and the relatives, on payment of a small fee to the executioner, are allowed to remove it next morning. Blowing from a gun is a common form of death when it is wished to strike terror into the hearts of evil-doers; I have known it done once at Ispahan, the criminal being a Khan accused of rebellion. This man had been some months in prison under sentence of death; day by day he found means to bribe the minister and the Governor, and his execution was delayed; at length his funds being exhausted he was actually brought out into the maidān, and the cannon loaded in his presence; but he had still a little money left, which he paid, or rather his friends did, and he was taken back to prison; this was his last penny; *the next day* he was blown from a gun.

Just after my arrival in Teheran a notorious female dancer of considerable personal attractions, and only seventeen years of age, was brought before the queen-mother, who was celebrated for her intrigues, charged with visiting the houses of Europeans. The girl did not deny her crime, and, feeling her danger, became desperate, reviling the queen-mother, and saying that they were fellow-sinners. The queen-mother immediately obtained an order for the girl's

death, and caused her, to be first handed over to her own servants' mercies, and then to be rolled in a carpet and jumped on by the farrashes till she was dead.

In the Governorship of the Zil-es-Sultan at Shiraz curiosity took me, with some of the rest of the telegraph staff, to see two men blown from guns; the roof of the doorway of the telegraph-office commanded the maidān, or square.

One man was led out and blown from a gun; a second was then brought forward, and they prepared to lash him to another gun; but as he was very short, a good deal of time was lost in getting some bricks, which were piled in a heap for him to stand on; he was then lashed to the gun, the executioner advanced with a port fire, the priming fizzled, but the gun did not go off—*they had forgotten to load it*; the man was unbound, the artillerymen went for more powder. I ran across the square to try and beg him off from the prince, being at that time in high favour. He kept me chatting, and in the meantime I heard the report of the gun which killed the poor fellow. About this time a man was blown into the air from a mortar by the Zil-es-Sultan's order in the square at Shiraz.

When I was last at Shiraz twenty highway robbers were caught by the Governor, Khosro Mirza, the king's uncle; nine escaped death by bribery, but eleven were *walled up alive*.

Fourteen hollow pillars, four feet high, built of mud bricks, were each built around a small hole in the ground, thus leaving a cavity six feet deep.

One morning we heard that eleven men had been walled up in them alive; it appeared that three of the

fourteen men were reprieved, that the farrash-bashi (chief carpet-spreader literally), or principal of the police of the Governor, was ordered to wall up eleven men, and that, fearing a disturbance, it was done suddenly. At midnight he, with a force of some two hundred soldiers, four executioners, and numerous farrashes, marched the eleven highway robbers in irons some mile and a half through the deserted streets to a place outside the town where the pillars stood. They were accompanied by several masons whom they had impressed, and a donkey-load of plaster of Paris. It seems that the farrash-bashi had received from the friends of one of the robbers forty pounds (one thousand kerans) to allow him to escape, so on the road he seized on a poor porter, intending to wall him up and let the robber go. Day dawned ere they reached the place, and fortunately for the porter a crowd assembled; among them were some who recognized him; the farrash-bashi was forced to let him go, for had he carried out his intentions Khosro Mirza, the Governor, would not have spared him. Each robber was placed in a pillar alive, then loose earth was poured in up to his chest, then a quantity of earth was hurriedly mixed with the plaster of Paris, water was added, a kind of mortar made, and the top of each column was plastered over having the man's head enclosed in a mass of mortar which, had there been *enough* plaster, would have *set*, at once destroying life. Unfortunately the plaster was insufficient in quantity, no more was to be had; the mud did not set, and many of the men *were alive and crying for water at the end of two days*. The Governor on hearing this sent the executioner to put them out of their misery, which he did by opening the top of each column and cutting their throats. As my wife and I came home from a ride we

passed the columns freshly plastered; this was in 1877.

Just prior to my first arrival in Persia the "Hissam-u-Sultaneh," another uncle of the king, had burnt a priest to death for a horrible crime and murder; the priest was chained to a stake, and the matting from the mosques piled on him to a great height, the pile of mats was lighted and burnt freely, but when the mats were consumed the priest was found groaning, but still alive. The executioner went to the Hissam-u-Sultaneh, who ordered him to obtain more mats, pour naphtha on them, and apply a light, which *after some hours* he did. A terrible death!

On another occasion a young slave who had shot his master's son by accident was "*crucified*,"[17] lived fifty hours, and was then put out of his misery. There was no cross—the men are nailed to walls. I was passing one day the outer wall of the "ark" or citadel of Shiraz; I saw a small crowd, I rode up, the crowd made way, and I found a poor fellow, very pale, standing with his face to the wall; a horse-nail had been driven through each foot, also through each of his hands, which were extended on the wall, and three more nails had been driven through his chest into the wall; he groaned occasionally, and I was informed he had smoked and drunk water offered him by compassionate bystanders.

He lived thirty hours, and the executioner took him down then, and put him out of his misery. His crime was that he had stolen a jewelled horse necklet of the Zil-es-Sultan's; this in the eyes of Persians is high treason.

The sentence, however, was not the prince's, then a mere boy, but his minister's. He is now averse to

blood, although he is given to making severe examples to avoid *continual* executions. With some Governors there are executions weekly, and this in such a sparsely populated country as Persia, is even more sad than the *occasional* cruel examples made by Khosro Mirza, the late Hissam-u-Sultaneh, and the Zil-es-Sultan, to avoid *continual* bloodshed, which I believe to be the true reason of their occasional great severity; and this policy is successful, for in their governments crimes of violence are unusual, their severity being deterrent; and the *total* of their executions very much smaller than that of the so-called merciful Governors. In justice to these three Governors this must be allowed, that the cruelty is much more apparent than real.

It is to be noticed that executions are not nearly so frequent now, as on my first experiences of Persia.

CHAPTER XIX.
MY JOURNEY HOME AND MARCH TO SHIRAZ.

Julfa quarters—Buy a freehold house—I ornament, and make it comfortable—Become ill—Apply for sick leave—Start marching—Telegram—Begin to post—Reach Teheran—Obtain leave—Difficulty at Kasvin—Punishment of the postmaster—Catch and pass the courier—Horses knock up—Wild beasts—Light a fire—Grateful rest—Arrive at Resht—Swamp to Peri-Bazaar—Boat—Steamer—Moscow—Opera—Ballet—Arrive in England—Start again for Persia—Journey *viâ* Constantinople—Trebizonde—Courier—Snow—Swollen eyes—Detail of journey from Erzeroum to Teheran—The races—Ispahan—Leave for Shiraz—Persian companions—Dung-beetles—Mole crickets—Lizards—Animals and birds—The road to Shiraz—Ussher's description—Meana bug legend again.

Finding my quarters in Julfa extremely inconvenient and small, I bought a little house and did it up after my own ideas of comfort. The place was originally two houses and formed the quarters of two sergeants, but by purchasing both houses, which I got for sixty pounds, *freehold*, with an indisputable title, I was able to make a very comfortable place indeed.

I had two large and airy summer rooms, cool in the extreme, and admitting currents of air in every direction. A large anteroom opened into a smaller room, when the doors were closed nearly air-tight, with a large fireplace. This was my winter room; and

in it I made a shutter opening into the anteroom by which meals were served without opening the door: these arrangements were needed, as Ispahan is bitterly cold in the winter. There were two cool upper rooms, one of which by a grated window looked on the street over the doorway. Besides this there were three warm and sheltered bedrooms on the ground floor of fair size, for winter, all with fireplaces. There was much good dry cellar accommodation, a good kitchen and servants' quarters, a small garden in the outer courtyard shaded by trellised vines, and I planted about fifty fruit-trees, which cost from threepence to sixpence each, in the inner one. The whole was surrounded by a high wall of some twenty feet, built of mud bricks; around the inner side of the parallelogram formed by this outer wall were built the rooms. There were heavy wooden outer doors, and within them a large arched doorway where the business of the house, with tradesmen, forage-sellers, etc., was conducted. I had also a room for my dispensary, and a granary.

And all this freehold for sixty pounds! Is it not a poor man's paradise?

On completing my purchase I proceeded to spend four hundred kerans, or sixteen pounds, in painting, plastering, wall-building; whitening or staining pale blue the interior of the rooms (the building was happily in thorough repair), paving my anteroom, six by four yards square, with white and blue encaustic tiles, kargilling or plastering with mud the whole outside of walls, roof, and rooms; putting in two windows of coloured glass, and painting, gilding, plastering, and decorating my dining or living room, and my best bedroom *de haut en bas*. In fine, for about eighty pounds, I had a freehold house, wind,

water, and cold proof, with large and cool quarters in summer, or warm in winter, a paved courtyard; and the happy feeling that I was in my own place and could do what I pleased to it, and that anything that I did was not a case of *sic vos non vobis*.

The superintendence of my alterations gave me pleasant occupation, and, like Robinson Crusoe, I felt time slip quickly away. But I had hardly been a year in the house when I went home on leave, and ultimately the place was sold by auction for sixty pounds with all my improvements! A friend of mine in 1880 wished to purchase it, but the then owner declined one hundred and sixty pounds for his bargain.

About September I had a severe attack of typhoid fever, and became on my convalescence extremely depressed. I could not regain my strength, and I applied for sick leave to England. I was told to march up by easy stages to Teheran and appear before a medical board. I started with my cook and a groom, and each evening I nearly made my mind up to go no further, so utterly done up did I feel. In this depressed condition I arrived at Kashan: here I got a telegram from Colonel S——, the Director, telling me that he was leaving Teheran the next day with Sir A. Kemball, the British Resident at Baghdad, who was going home on leave by the last steamer, that of course I could not catch that, and so he kindly invited me to stay in Teheran with him till I was myself again and able to return to duty.

This news upset me altogether; I had determined to march to Teheran, and had hoped that by that time I should have got strong enough to post to the Caspian, catch the last Caspian steamer, and so home *viâ* Russia.

So impressed was I with the stupid idea that I must get home to get well, that I made up my mind at once to try and make a push to catch the Colonel and Sir A. Kemball. Tired as I was, I took a post-horse at once—I had not enough money with me to take two (in Persia one carries as little cash as possible). I told my servants to get home as well as they could.

I determined to push on *coûte que coûte*. Leaving Kashan at dawn I got to Kūm, twenty-one farsakhs (seventy miles), by ten at night, and I felt fit to die, for I couldn't eat or drink, my stomach retaining nothing; eighteen hours in the saddle brought me to Teheran, twenty-three farsakhs, or seventy-seven miles. I got to Colonel S——'s house, *only to find him gone*. I had a bath, I still could eat nothing; I borrowed money and lay down till the afternoon, when I went before a medical board, who seemed to look upon my quick ride to the capital as a sort of certificate of perfect health, and I feared that my leave would not be granted. However, my appearance, my staring eyes and shaven head were in my favour, and leave was given me; but I was told that, as I must miss the steamer, it was useless. These steamers cease running as soon as the mouth of the Volga freezes, and a telegram had come to say the next one would be the last.

At five the same afternoon I mounted, having a bottle of claret, the only thing I could take, a tin of soup and some tea with me, also a brandy flask. I knew my only chance was to keep on. As I came to each stage I found the time Sir A. Kemball and Colonel S—— had preceded me was greater and greater, *but they slept*—I did not—I kept on, with the feeling that, as Giles Hoggett says, "it's dogged as does it." I rode all night and got to Kasvin, twenty-

five farsakhs (eighty-eight miles), in fourteen hours. Here I had a difficulty in getting horses. The liberal presents given by Colonel S—— and his party had roused the extortionate feelings of the holy man in charge of the post-house (he was a Syud and a noted rascal). At first he would not give me horses at all, telling me there were none, and to go and rest, as I was ill; but I was determined. I submitted to the swindle of paying five kerans for a so-called permit for horses; this I carefully kept, promising myself to administer a thrashing should I ever return.

This I had the satisfaction of doing, when in robust health, some five months afterwards. And I duly thonged the Syud, to his astonishment and disgust, for I was so changed he did not recognise me. He then of course called me “aga” (master) and held my stirrup when I mounted.

After a delay of about four hours I got away from Kasvin, and I was now gaining on the party in front; but I was doubly unfortunate: the Colonel’s large party took seven horses, and more if they could get them, and I was preceded by the courier, who, a hale man, had started two hours in front of me. Thus the horses I got were doubly tired, but I kept on with the obstinacy of a sick man, though at times I think I was half delirious. I could eat nothing, and the only thing that had passed my lips since leaving Kashan, where I took soup, was a little claret; an attempt to breakfast in Teheran had made me very ill indeed. I arrived at a post-house, got two new horses, gave a present to my former guide, and on I went. I was too ill to talk, and my disinclination to speak caused an amusing incident at one place. The guide, thinking me a “new chum” who did not understand the language, amused himself the greater part of the

stage by calling me “rascal,” “dog,” “son of a burnt father,” etc. This same fellow stole my matches and emptied my claret-bottle. I could have wept, but was too ill to thrash him or even remonstrate.

I kept on, never stopping more than the time to saddle. Night came on, and on getting to Rustumabad I was delighted to find the courier asleep, giving his two tired horses a rest. I took two others, also tired ones, and on I went, leaving him peacefully slumbering. We were now in dense forest —it was pitch dark; the horses previously tired by the rapid riding of Colonel S——’s party, and the return journey from the long and bad stage of six farsakhs, they having gone before my getting them about forty miles. When I got some ten miles into the forest, the poor beasts refused to move. The guide was, or pretended to be, in great terror of wild beasts, repeating “Jūniver, jūniver!” (“Wild animals!”) to me continually. Of the presence of these there was no mistake, from the continued noises and roarings, though we saw none. There was nothing for it but to dismount. My matches being stolen, I tore out some cotton wool from my quilt, mixed it with a little powder from a broken cartridge, and fired my revolver through it. We soon had an enormous fire. *How* I enjoyed it and the *rest*! The damp of the swamps—it is as damp here as it is dry in the middle and south of Persia—had seemed to enter my bones; and how I had longed for rest. Now I got a little for the first time, lying on my quilt, my head on my saddle-bags, before an immense fire, which the guide fed with broken trunks and boughs. I enjoyed a sensation of delightful rest I have never felt before or since. I even managed to eat a little soup, and the guide made tea in the tin. How I revelled in it, for I knew I *must catch* the Colonel by

breakfast-time, before he could leave Resht, and consequently not lose the last steamer. I reluctantly left the fire as soon as the horses could move, and we plodded on in the dark. We got to Koodūm before dawn, and into Resht to M. M——'s house by nine, where I found the Colonel and his party at breakfast.

Thirty-one farsakhs, over long stages and bad roads, in twenty-two hours (one hundred and eight miles), or one hundred and ninety-six miles from Teheran in forty-one hours, was good travelling on tired horses, and for a sick man.

Colonel S——, who was astounded at seeing me, supposing me four stages beyond Kashan, must, I think, have looked upon me as an impostor. He was very cold indeed.

I tried to eat some breakfast, but failed, and left on a bad horse to cross the swamp with the rest of the party for Peri-bazaar. It was some miles through a nasty swampy road, the fine chaussée there now is, not then existing.

My horse fell four times, and rolled me in the mud, for I could not help myself. We got into the boat which was to take us to Enzelli (or the steamer—I forget which), and then I went off into a series of faints. Now, as a man can't sham faints, I suppose the Colonel came to the conclusion that I was really ill. Anyhow, he was most kind to me; and as he went on with us as far as Lenkoran, on the Caspian, both he and Sir A. Kemball were lavish in kindness and attention.

I was very wretched indeed, for the spurt being over, I utterly broke down, and I fear I proved a wretched fellow-traveller to Sir A. Kemball, with whom I went as far as Petersburg. Of the Caspian

journey I remember nothing. I had a week's rest in my berth, during which I lived on wine and broth, only moving when I was obliged, or when we changed steamers.

When we got to Moscow we went to the Grand Opera and saw a *Russian* patriotic opera, called 'A Life for the Czar.' The music was pretty, the dresses interesting. It was well played and well sung by Russian singers. Another night we saw 'La Muette di Portici' (Masaniello) in Italian; and the third time we went, a grand ballet in five acts, that lasted four hours—oh! *and I had a cricked neck at the time*.

From Moscow to Petersburg is a run of twenty-four hours in a straight line, for when the railway was about to be constructed the then Emperor Nicholas, having the plans placed before him, took a pen, and, drawing with a ruler a straight line between the two places, indicated the route he wished, with a smile. At enormous expense every difficulty was surmounted, and the *direct* route was made. It is literally from Moscow to Petersburg, and no large town is touched. This is the *story*; the map says *nearly* a straight line.

I went home direct by rail from Petersburg, getting to Brighton November 1st, 1868, was in bed three weeks, and an invalid for three months. However, I got the balance of my sick leave cancelled, and came back to my duties before it was over.

On March 5th, 1869, I again set out for Persia, *viâ* Marseilles, leaving London at a quarter to eight A.M. I got to Paris at six P.M., took a cab for the Lyons station, caught the mail which left at a quarter past seven P.M., and arrived in Marseilles on the 6th at noon. Being very tired, I went on board at once, and succeeded in getting a state-room all to myself; slept

till four. At five P.M. we started in a tremendous sea, dead-lights up, and the violin (planks fixed with cords to prevent the table equipage leaving the table) at dinner. The steamer was one of the Messageries Maritimes, the *Illysse*, screw, two hundred and eighty horsepower.

The next day (the 7th) we entered the Straits of Bonifacio at four P.M., where the weather was fine but cold; passing Garibaldi's house in Caprera, a small white building, Corsica, and Sardinia; then the "passage of the Bear," so called from there being a figure formed by nature at the summit of the lofty rocks somewhat like a bear. The scenery of Corsica and Sardinia seems very desolate and rocky. Monday morning, Italy—fine and warm. Tuesday, 9th, at ten P.M., came to Messina; saw nothing. Half-past five next morning we started. Wednesday, very rough all day; only four at dinner; awful night; rounded Cape Matapan at eleven P.M. Wind, which was before in our teeth, then in our favour; impossible to sleep from cries of the sick and continuous smashing of crockery.

Thursday, 11th.—Splendid day, fair wind; reached the Piræus (port of Athens) in a lovely sun; water blue, smooth, and clear. Unable to go to the Acropolis, as our captain said we might start at any moment (you see it well in the distance). I saw the railway opened. The Queen was present; she is pretty, and very gracious. Left same day at five P.M.; awful night.

March 12th.—Very fine, fair wind. Saw the supposed site of ancient Troy. Supposed tombs of Hector and Achilles two large tumuli. Lovely scenery down Dardanelles. Stopped an hour at Gallipoli.

March 13th.—Arrived at Constantinople at seven

A.M. Went to Hôtel de Byzance—much better than Misseri's; to the bazaar—hot, noisy, and interesting. I had a Turkish bath; much better than the Persian ones. They give you clogs to keep your feet from the hot floors, and wicker cages with couches in them to smoke your hubble-bubble and drink your coffee in, after the bath.

Monday, 15th.—Left Constantinople by the French boat for Trebizonde.

March 20th.—Reached Trebizonde; breakfasted with Mr. G. Palgrave, our well-known consul, and his wife; started with the courier for Erzeroum at seven the same evening.

The first few stages were muddy and uneventful; we soon came to snowy passes; here my eyes got swollen, and I could barely follow the courier. When we reached Erzeroum (23rd), after having been several times stopped by snow, and once nearly lost in it, I was led into the house of Mr. Taylor, our consul. I could just see a dim form and hear a kind voice.

March 24th.—Next morning I could not open my eyes, they were so swollen. The tatar who came with me is in the same state. This is caused by the snow; my head is also swollen, and my face all swollen and puffy.

The Persian chupper (or post) was to start in the afternoon, and I decided to go on, but when I found that after leeching my eyelids they were still closed, I was only too glad to accept Mr. Taylor's kind invitation to stop. I was a prisoner to the house for five days, and at the end of that time I could open my eyes.

Erzeroum is a terribly cold place, although there are double windows and stoves all over the house, and though the skin-covered doors shut tight by means of a weight, it is impossible to keep warm. The snow in the town is four to twelve feet deep. It is supposed to be the coldest place in Turkey, and is on a snow-covered plain, surrounded by snow-covered mountains. Only four months in the year are surely free from snow.

Mr. B——, the Chancellier here, tells me that the Erzeroumis are so sharp that there are no Jews. A colony once came, but finding that the natives weighed the eggs and bought only the heaviest ones, they left the place in disgust.

Of course the state of my eyes prevented my seeing anything of the place, but I shall never forget the cold. Of my journey from Trebizonde to Erzeroum I have few details,[18] and my blindness prevented my writing up my diary.

I reached Teheran on the 13th of April, and meeting M. Sergipatoffski, one of the attachés at the Russian Legation, three stages out, I hurried in just in time to be present at the races got up by the Europeans, of which he advised me.

Being too wayworn and dirty to be introduced to the ladies, I saw the principal race decided in my posting dress. Here I saw one hundred pounds offered to my chief, Mr. B——, for his chestnut horse, Arkansas, who walked off with the big race as he pleased. Mr. B—— refused it, but the animal was not good for much afterwards.

I looked forward to a good rest, but on the 15th I had, after a two days' stay, to start on duty at nine

P.M., getting to Ispahan after a heavy journey in sixty-three hours (rain came down nearly the whole time. Distance, two hundred and seventy-two miles) on the 18th of April. My colleague, Dr. C——, whom I had gone thus hurriedly to attend, was seriously ill, but soon got on his legs.

Early in June I left under orders for Shiraz, marching at night, on account of the heat. In this mode of travelling one sees little of the country. For distances and stages see Appendix.

In this journey, on my second stage, I met a poor prince, Abbas Kuli Khan, who was travelling with his little daughter, aged nine, and a companion, Hadji Ali Akbar, a priest. This priest was a great sportsman, and a very amusing companion. Abbas Kuli Khan was a relative of my friend Abu Seif Mirza, of Hamadan, and introduced himself. He was one of the large number of poor princes of Shiraz. His pension from Government was very irregularly paid, and he was travelling with “kajaweh” (covered paniers) for his little daughter, and a pony on which he and the priest rode alternately. The roads from the commencement of the famine were very unsafe, and they were as glad to increase the force of my caravan as I was to get a reinforcement of two determined well-armed men. The little daughter delighted in the tremendous name of Bēbē Sakineh Sultan Khanum, and was very like a pet monkey, being mischief personified. The presence of these people broke the monotony of the fifteen days’ march to Shiraz.

One thing that attracts one’s attention when marching is the road-beetle. These insects seem to be perpetually employed in moving the balls of horse or camel dung to their nests off the road. They exhibit wonderful instinct in their manœuvres to effect this

object, and to bury the balls; they also bury themselves at the same time. Their search for the balls of dung is conducted on the wing, and they never seem to touch anything else. When found, the insect alights and proceeds to roll the ball by main force, either standing on its hindmost legs and rolling it as we do casks, or at times placing its head to the ground, and propelling the ball by the hind legs. Many of the insects are trodden underfoot by horses, as they seem impelled by a passion to bury the dung regardless of external circumstances. They vary much in size, from a Barcelona nut to that of a walnut. Through the activity of these insects very little horse-dung, save that which is trodden, is seen on the roads. They work summer and winter, and as one marches in the sun, with one's eyes on the ground, one is astonished at the myriads of these beetles.

At times, too, for about two days in spring, the ground teems with mole crickets. For two days around Meshed-i-Mūrghab, in the neighbourhood of Shiraz, there were such numbers that one would be seen in each space two yards square for several miles; two days after, though I searched for them, I could not find one. Near Ispahan, too, some fortnight afterwards, I found them innumerable, and next day I again failed to find a single individual in the same place. Do they all come out at once, *i. e.* in one or two days?

Lizards are very numerous in some places, and their varieties infinite; the dry, stony plains swarm with them in hot weather. They are generally small, but I have seen them over a yard long. The little fellows simply run a yard or two to escape the horse's hoof, and then remain motionless to avoid observation. One often thus loses sight of them when

attempting to watch them, so like in colour are they to the plain. The dogs on first starting on a march generally chase, kill, and eat them. They invariably vomit after it, and quite tire themselves out; as the journey tells on them, however, they cease to notice the lizards.

Jerboa rats are very frequent, particularly in the south of Persia, while one very occasionally sees a "Gūr-ken," or grave-digger (*Meles canescens*), and still seldomer the porcupine.

On the march antelope are frequently seen, and at times cross the road close to one. I have also twice seen wild asses in the distance, and moufflon in the hills. Sand-grouse (Bagh-a-ghulla)—so called from their cry, which it well expresses—ravens, hawks, eagles, owls, vultures, and fly-catchers innumerable —these latter sit in rows on the telegraph-wires, and are of gorgeous plumage—are often seen, and flocks of pigeons and partridges; while ducks, teal, widgeon, mallards, cranes, and herons, with single and double snipe, wild geese and cormorants abound near water, as do frogs, who generally announce its whereabouts at night. There is little enough to be seen in a march from Ispahan to Shiraz, and the greater part of the journey was done at night to avoid the heat.

Kūm-i-Shah, a large city, with many shrines and a great resort of pilgrims, is not seen much of by the tired traveller. Yezd-i-khast, or Yzed-khast, is elsewhere described by me, and Abadeh is little more than a large village; while Dehbeed, the coldest place in Persia, save in the high mountains, has merely a telegraph-office and post-house, the caravanserai being in ruins. Beyond this, one comes to Mūrghab and the tomb of Cyrus, of which the description by

Ussher will be found when a march from Shiraz to Ispahan is given in detail. Then the Persepolis plain, with Persepolis (Takht-i-Jemshid) and Naksh-i-Rustam on the opposite side of the valley.

To those who desire to get a graphic and correct account of Persepolis, I would recommend Ussher's 'Journey from London to Persepolis,' p. 533. All that can be said about it is said by him, and, being no archæologist, it would be impertinence were I to attempt a description. I have often passed it, and when marching have frequently visited it; but my curiosity was always exceeded by my anxiety to either reach Shiraz, or proceed on my journey to Ispahan. Accurate as he is, I regret to see that Ussher perpetuates the *legends* of the Meana bug, winding it up with the pathetic sentence, "All vital energy fading away from the emaciated frame, the victim perishes at the end, a prey to the fatal venom" (p. 654, *ibid.*).

CHAPTER XX.
SHIRAZ.

Entry into Shiraz—Gaiety of Shirazis of both sexes—Public promenade—Different from the rest of Persians—Shiraz wine—Early lamb—Weights: their variety—Steelyards—Local custom of weighing—Wetting grass—Game—Wild animals—Buildings—Ornamental brickwork—Orange-trees—Fruits in bazaar—Type of ancient Persian—Ladies' dress—Fondness for music—Picnics—Warmth of climate—Diseases—The traveller Stanley—His magazine rifle and my landlord's chimney—Cholera—Great mortality—We march out and camp—Mysterious occurrence—Life in a garden—The "Shitoor-gooloo"—Bear and dog fight—The bear is killed.

After a fifteen days' march over desolate plains without any sign of vegetation save sparse gardens round some few of the villages and the green valley of Yezdicast (or Yzedcast as the natives call it), the view of Shiraz is certainly grand and pleasing. Suddenly, after a twenty-mile march from the last stage, the greater portion of which was between rocky hills with nothing to please the eye save a little turf and a few straggling trees around the tiny stream of beautifully cool water known throughout the east as the Ab-i-Rookhni, and alluded to by Moore as the "Rookhnabad," the vast plain of Shiraz bursts upon one's view with the garden-surrounded city at one's feet.

Of course distance lends enchantment, and it looks so clean and so cool, particularly after fifteen days'

marching, that a strong contrast is presented to most Persian towns whose mud walls as a rule are seen from afar.

Shiraz is, however, as I said, embowered in gardens and cultivation. On the right, the Bagh-i-No, or New Garden; on the left, the Bagh-i-Jahn-i-ma, the Garden of my Soul, full of cypresses, which give, from their peculiar deep green, a coolness to the scene very rare in Persia; little oases of garden can be seen in the well-cultivated and smiling plain beyond the whitish city, and within the walls are the palaces of the Governor with their gardens full of trees, and numerous large private houses whose gardens are ornamented by huge planes.

The green swamps of Karabagh, to which Shiraz probably owes its unhealthiness, bound the view; but over the mist that hangs above them tower the dark purple mountains that bound the Shiraz valley.

A steep descent over a broad but good road brings one to the wide space between the two royal gardens. Here on the Thursday night the youth and bloods of Shiraz meet to race and show off their handsome horses and exhibit their gayest attire. Pistols are discharged, and light sticks, flung when at full gallop against the ground, are caught after having rebounded high in air; below the gardens, in the cemetery at one side of this Rotten Row of Shiraz, and only separated from it by a low wall, promenade the Shiraz ladies in search of fun, or it may be intrigue. Veiled as they are, all are outwardly decorous; but the laughter, the songs, and the frequent glimpses of very pretty faces and soft brown eyes of a lustrousness only seen in the East, and the tendency that the gayer of the cavaliers have to saunter or show off their horses along the cemetery

side, and their frequent purchases of nuts and melon-seeds from the peripatetic dealers with which the place is thronged, seem to point that the groups of laughing veiled ladies are the attraction. Certain it is that visits to this cemetery are generally made on the sly by the ladies of Shiraz.

One soon finds out that one has reached another country. Instead of the thrift of the Ispahani and his mortified look—his dress made purely for comfort and economy, and his donkey or ambling pony—the Shirazi smiling, joking, singing, clad if he can by any means attain it in gayest-coloured silk, the turban frequently discarded, even among the aged, for the jaunty hat of finest cloth or lambskin, the well-dyed and kept moustaches, and the long love-locks, with the hat of the smallest size and latest mode cocked with a knowing air among the beaux; the universal pistols at the holsters, the well-appointed and gay horse-trappings, and the well-bred, well-fed, well-groomed horses, all with some breed in them, like their riders. These men are a different race from the more northern Persians; polite, at times *debonnair*, they seem to enjoy life, and are in no way the down-trodden race that the Ispahani seems; with them it is a word and a blow. There is little fanaticism and some religion. Greyhounds, hawks, and even half-bred hunting dogs of sorts abound, and all are clean and well-looking.

As one approaches the walls, which are much ruined and surrounded by a dry ditch, the garden of Dilgoosha (heart's-ease), the property of the Kawam, the hereditary calamter or mayor of the town, and another huge Government garden, the Bagh-i-Takht (or throne garden), with numerous private ones stretching in every direction, varying in size from

two to one hundred and fifty acres, come into sight.

The dry bed of the river—it is only running say for two months in early spring, and is at times for a day or two a raging torrent—is now crossed by a steep bridge, and I canter off to our superintendent's (Captain St. J——) quarters by a road skirting the town ditch, thus avoiding a march through the crowded bazaars. He has kindly ridden out to meet me.

Here Shiraz wine is given me for the first time, and I am sadly disappointed; it is intensely bitter, and not very clear (when I first came to Shiraz it was only bottled for sending up country); it is very strong and very genuine however. After some years I got used to it, and cared for no other native wine than what Moore calls "the red weepings of the Shiraz vine," which rather looks as if he pronounced it Shī-raz, whereas the real sound is Shēē-rarz.

Here, too, we get delicious early lamb, for there are in all the places south of Shiraz *two* lambing seasons in the year, consequently young lamb all the year round; what *we* call lamb the Persian would call mutton. The extravagant Shirazi will not eat mutton when he can get lamb, and they only kill them before they are weaned; in fact, the early ones are, when ready for the spit, only some six to eight pounds in weight, and consequently very young.

Weights differ all over Persia. In Ispahan everything is sold by the Shah maund of thirteen pounds and three-quarters, here in Shiraz is the Tabriz maund[19] of seven pounds.

Weighing is done by means of a steelyard for anything over a maund. These steelyards are ingeniously made, one side of the yard having the

heavy weights, the other the lower marked on it; and by reversing the hook the position of the fulcrum is altered, and so either side reads correctly with the same weight.

Much trickery is employed by the Persians in weighing, and it takes some time to be able to circumvent their various ingenious manœuvres. Local custom also is curious—each article has a special mode of being weighed. Thus in Ispahan one pays for a load of wood of twenty Ispahan (or Shah) maunds, but the woodseller gives twenty-one, and thus five per cent. from the weight is deducted; the same for charcoal and so on. But the wily Ispahani also sells his grass (for the horses) by weight, and prior to his arrival the bundles are carefully dipped in water; it can hardly be called cheating, as they *all* do it. But it also spoils the grass and makes it liable to ferment, and give one's horses colic if not consumed at once.

There is little game to be found just round the town of Shiraz, though I have put up partridges within a mile, but the swamp of Karabagh, some seven miles to the south, swarms during the winter with ducks and geese, also snipe; the Persian does not try for the latter, as he does not shoot for sport but for the pot, and snipe would burn too much powder. Wild duck are generally sold in the market four, five, or six for ninepence—probably a native gets them for less—but they are not appreciated or eaten by the wealthy. Persians have no idea of *hanging* game. Partridge (the red-legged) are found on every hill and mountain, and are sold four for ninepence, and are as often sold alive as dead. Many people keep them in their gardens tame; they are as often netted as shot, particularly during the breeding

season; and quite young birds are often captured with even down on them.

Quail are plentiful during the spring, and there are a few woodcock in the gardens in winter and autumn; the wood-pigeon, also the blue rock (which occurs in enormous flocks), can always be got. Hares are not unplentiful, the price being fourpence to sixpence each. Rabbits are unknown. Wild geese are common, but very poor eating. Antelopes (gazelle) are commonly sold; wild sheep (moufflon) are very rare.

Hyænas are frequent about the gardens in winter, while the kanaâts swarm with jackals and a few porcupines. I have seen what appeared to be a panther, and he was hunted by the Persians, but got away. Foxes of the grey variety are common, wolves less so. Bears are occasionally brought in, they are small. Lions are at times seen and shot near Shiraz, particularly in the neighbourhood of a hill called Kola-Muschir (Muschir's Cap), near Desht-i-Arjeen, the second stage on the high-road to Kazerān and Bushir.

I had an idea that the lioness had as a rule a litter of only two. But I saw once a litter of seven lion cubs (the mother had been killed) in the possession of his Royal Highness Zil-es-Sultan; they were some twenty pounds weight each, screamed, continually growled, and always tried to bite when handled; they appeared like very vicious kittens, and were "the spitefullest little cusses" I ever saw.

The prince asked me if I should like one. I had no objection, but he said:

"These are toys for princes, not at all in your way, doctor."

They were afterwards sent to the Shah in Teheran.

Contrary to the custom in Ispahan, the houses are here built of kiln-dried bricks. In Ispahan the houses built with mud or sun-dried bricks stand at times five and six hundred years, but the clay is peculiarly tenacious and the climate extremely dry there. Here all save the houses of the very poor are built of burnt bricks, which are beautifully white, cheap, and good. The brickwork in Shiraz is often highly ornamental; elaborate patterns are made in bricks of very small size upon the walls; these are ever in the best taste and very chaste in design; the interiors, however, fall short of the Ispahan and Teheran work; brighter and more gaudy colours are used to suit the more florid taste of the Shirazi, and the effect is not so good.

In the sunken beds of many of the courtyards are orange trees; the scent from the blossoms of these is rather overpowering in spring; the beds beneath are generally covered with a tangle of luxuriant convolvulus or clover. The oranges are the bitter orange, like that of Seville; generally a few of the fruit are allowed to remain, and all through the winter the golden balls make the trees gay. In the bazaar the sweet oranges from Kafr and Kazerān, limes, fresh dates, pomiloes, shaddocks, and fresh lemons, show that we are in a warmer zone. And the complexions of the natives are more swarthy. Here, too, we see the type of the ancient inhabitant of Fars, the tall straight figure, the clear-cut features, and the *aquiline* nose; the eye, too, is much larger, and the foot much smaller; quite a Jewish cast of countenance is often seen. Here, too, the ladies' dresses are gayer. The hideous blue veil is often of silk, and, among the ladies of rank, generally trimmed with gold braid. These "Chadūr," or veils,

are very expensive, at times costing, when the embroidery is deep (and it is always *really* gold thread), some ten pounds.

The shirts are clean and white, the big baggy trousers always of bright silk and always fitting the feet like a glove, the slippers tiny; whereas the Ispahan lady never goes beyond a sad-coloured cotton for her nether garment, and the feet coverings are much larger and less natty in cut and material, as are the feet themselves.

The tall hats of the lower orders are often of felt, and the hideous triangular cap of chintz of the Ispahani is unknown, save among the Jews.

As evening approaches the sound of music and singing is heard in every direction, and the professional musicians, singers, and dancers, under their Mūrshed, Chelinjeh Khan, drive a roaring trade. There are here, too, many amateurs among the upper classes even; such a thing in Ispahan as an amateur is very rare. The “kosh guzerān,” or “free liver,” is openly a toper, and considerable licence is the rule. Even the merchant out of office hours enjoys himself, and as a rule does not work more than four days a week.

The numerous gardens, public and private, are open to all the world, and little picnic parties may be seen every day, all the year round, taking tea and smoking and singing near a stream or under the trees. The servants all smile, and everybody seems to be enjoying himself. The thrifty Ispahani when transferred to Shiraz becomes another man, and the corners of his mouth turn down less; the few Ispahan merchants soon make fortunes, and having done so seldom return to their native place.

The climate is much hotter than Ispahan; snow is rare, though at times very heavy. At night as a rule, during three months of the year, one sleeps on one's roof in the open air. Intermittent fever, diarrhœa, dysentery, and typhoid are frequent. Guinea-worm among those who have come from the Persian Gulf is often seen, and cholera of a severe type is a frequent epidemic; diphtheria and small-pox are rife. Shiraz is *not* a healthy place, and drink in this hot climate has many victims. Ophthalmia, too, is a great scourge, but phthisis here is happily unknown, and is rare in Persia.

During my first sojourn in Shiraz I had the pleasure of putting up Mr. Stanley, of 'Across the Dark Continent' renown; he had not then been to Africa, but was on his way. One thing that he brought with him, then a novelty, was a Winchester repeating rifle which carried a magazine of, I think, eleven or fourteen cartridges. One day my landlord happened to come in, and he being a travelled man had doubts on the authenticity of Stanley's "many-shooter." The fellow had been in India, and was a horse-dealer, and smart for that.

Stanley showed him the gun.

"Ah, I see," said he, "it has two barrels" (the second barrel is underneath and forms the magazine for cartridges).

He then declined to believe it went off more than twice.

Stanley was loath to fire away cartridges which he could not replace, but as Meshedi Aga Jan importuned him, he suggested that he should take an elaborately carved plaster-of-Paris chimney some seven feet high on Aga Jan's house as a mark.

"By all means," said the Persian.

At the fifth shot, for Stanley had fired at one point, down came the chimney, and Aga Jan's doubts were solved. He wished Stanley to go on firing, but this Stanley declined to do, as there were no more chimneys handy.

The second summer I was in Shiraz the cholera broke out with great severity. I laid down rules for diet for the staff; they were very careful, and nothing serious occurred among them; but my private work in the town became considerable, and my dispensary was thronged.

At length it became so serious that in our mohulla (or quarter) seventy-two bodies were washed for the grave in one morning (there are twenty mohullas in Shiraz). Of course in an Eastern town it is difficult to get at facts, but this one was sufficiently alarming, unburied bodies lay in rows in the cemeteries. After a consultation with Captain St. J—— it was decided to go into camp. By the energy of Mirza Hassan Ali Khan, British Agent, in getting mules, in a few hours we all cleared out of the town and encamped in Government tents in the bed of the river some two miles out. There the night was spent, and next morning the whole of the staff and their servants moved to the banks of a river near Khana Zinyun, quite away from human habitation, in cool and good air, taking with them what tents they could carry and leaving one of the inspectors and myself to take down the rest of them, bring on the heavy baggage, and bury a muleteer who had died in the night.

We had some difficulty in getting this latter done, as the natives were in what is termed a "blue funk" and wouldn't touch the poor fellow. Just as we were sitting down to breakfast Mr. P——, a Scotch

merchant of Bushire, turned up; he was surprised to find us, and had just arrived post from Ispahan. He took breakfast with us, but on hearing what had occurred in the night he declined our further hospitality and started off at once.

By midnight we got all the things to the camp and established a strict quarantine; we stayed out three weeks.

While we were in camp a curious incident occurred. I saw a well-dressed Persian riding in our direction. I hurried out on my horse and explained to him that he couldn't enter our camp. He said that he was ill and wanted the English doctor.

Of course I prescribed for him, and his servant proceeded to make him comfortable under a tree (the weather was warm).

Next morning when I went to see him no one was there, but the servant's clothes lay on the ground. He *may* have died in the night and the servant may have decamped with his clothes, arms, and horse; but what did he do with the body? The river would not have carried it away, and he could not have buried it without tools; he may have carried it off on the horse, or the master may not have died, but ridden away; but why the clothes? who knows? But a Persian servant does not throw away a suit of clothes for nothing.

We returned to the town without any casualties among the staff or their servants.

During the very hot weather it was my habit while in Shiraz to stay in the garden of "Resht-i-Behesht" (glory of heaven), coming or sending into town to inquire if my services were required and to attend to my dispensary. In this garden there was a building

with three large windowless rooms, but having many doors and air-holes; these, when carpeted and the doors covered with "chicks," or fly blinds, were very comfortable indeed. I slept on the roof, which was free from mosquitoes, and lounged about the garden, which was very large, sitting and smoking beside the streams, which were numerous, or by the side of the gurgling "shitūr gūlū," or "camel's throat."

The garden was *all* shade, and, in addition to the building, had two large brick platforms ten yards by ten, for day sleeping—one being shady in the morning, the other in the afternoon.

The shitūr gūlū was appropriately named, for it was a long channel constructed to cause a gurgling noise—camels have a habit of "gurgling." The stream irrigating the garden, which made a refreshing sound of running waters, was widened, and at the edge was a hole some five feet deep and two in diameter; at its bottom it branched off into a tunnel of some four yards at a right angle; it then ascended at right angles, opening into the bottom of a channel a *little lower* in level than the first one; this it supplied, and the air drawn in at the one hole and ascending at the other with the rush of water made a gurgling noise. The gardener's boy used for a present of a few coppers to allow himself to be sucked down the one hole, scramble along the earthen tunnel and appear at the further opening. The tame bear kept by the gardener nearly lost his life by jumping into the water (to avoid my dogs who pursued him), and getting sucked down by the "shitūr gūlū."

One day I was sitting with a young telegraph clerk of the cable department, Mr. P——, recently arrived from England, and on a pleasure trip (on leave) to Shiraz. As he knew nobody, I put him up. This youth

had a very high idea of the dignity of the Englishman, and looked on the Persians as "*niggers*." While we were sitting in chairs on one of the brick platforms reading the newly-arrived *Times*, the prince, his Royal Highness Zil-es-Sultan, entered the garden with two attendants only; he had on a blue satin coat with gold and coloured embroidery, a pink tie, and white duck trousers.

He was very polite, and of course I rose to receive him, but Mr. P—— remained in his chair reading his *Times*, and declined to take any notice. The prince, astonished at being treated in so cavalier a fashion, asked who he was. I told him.

"Ah," he said, "he is very young," and made no further remark to him.

He then began to question me respecting the capabilities of my bull-terriers who bayed at him from their chain pegs, asking me if they would tackle the gardener's bear. I suggested that the bear was a tame one; but his Royal Highness was not to be denied, and ordered my servants to loose the dogs, and the weeping gardener was told to produce his bear. This was a smallish, pale-green coloured animal about the size of a big St. Bernard dog, but heavier.

Here Mr. P——, being interested on the appearance of the bear, rose.

The prince laughed and said: "He will get up for a bear then, and not for a prince." He now ordered the dogs to be loosed: they flew at the bear, who slapped at them and tried to claw them, but they, fixing themselves one to each ear, avoided his paws and kept clear of hugs. There they hung, and the bear sat on his hind-quarters looking most miserable. The

prince now ordered my men to let loose a big and very savage watch-dog I had, of no particular breed —one of the big shepherd-dogs of the country.

This dog went immediately for the bear, who was quite powerless, having the other two dogs still on his ears. The force of his rush threw the bear over, the dog seized him by the throat and was proceeding to worry him, when suddenly dogs and bear all rolled into a muddy watercourse. Clouds of mud covered the gay dress of the Prince-Governor, and the dogs were by my order taken off, or they would have killed the bear. The prince presented a piteous figure, green and black from head to foot, for he had been standing close to the struggling animals when they fell in. His two attendants tried to get some of the mud off, but it was no use; good-humouredly laughing at the accident, his Highness mounted his horse and rode off at a gallop, attended by the crowd of mounted followers that awaited him at the garden door outside.

The dogs having been set at the bear was unfortunate, for having tasted the pleasure of bear-baiting, they barked and howled at the mere sight of Bruin. At night all the dogs were loose, but the bear was safe, for he lived in one of the high trees, where he was out of reach, having a chain attached to a rope some ten yards long. One night, however, he came down and the dogs were upon him in an instant; the noise of barking, shouting servants, with hurrying lights and sounds of a struggle, awoke me. I, thinking thieves were in the garden, rushed on the scene with my revolver, too late to save the bear, who had been severely mauled by the dogs, then five in number and all strong and savage. With difficulty they were separated, but they had broken one of the

bear's hind legs, and I was forced to shoot the poor animal in the morning when I found out the nature of his injuries.

CHAPTER XXI.
SHIRAZ WINE-MAKING.

Buy grapes for wine-making—Difficulty in getting them to the house—Wine-jars—Their preparation—Grapes rescued and brought in—Treading the grapes—Fermentation—Plunger-sticks—Varieties of Shiraz wine and their production—Stirring the liquor—Clearing the wine—My share, and its cost—Improvement by bottling—Wasps—Carboys—Covering them—Native manner of packing—Difficulties at custom-house—The Governor's photographic apparatus—Too many for me—A lūti-pūti.

My friend the Moollah, Hadji Ali Akbar (the priest who had accompanied me in my march), impressed on me the great importance of making my own wine. I pointed out that probably a first brew would turn out badly, but he overruled me.

"The fact is," said he, "I want to make wine for myself. I can't do it in my own house, I a Mahommedan priest; and if I get the Jews to make it for me, that is worse, for it will be bad, and I am a connoisseur. If I make it here, sahib, I shall make it good, and kill two birds with one stone: you and I will get good wine, and there will be no scandal."

After some hesitation I consented. I gave my priestly friend *carte blanche* to buy grapes for me, and, in fact, left it all to him.

The grapes used for making the real "Cholar" wine are brought from the vineyards, four days' march off, on camels or mules; they are carefully packed in

strong baskets, called lodahs, and are covered with brushwood to keep off the hands of the hungry.

The grapes brought from the immediate vicinity of the town, being cultivated by irrigation, are watery, and the wine made from them will not keep: it is made and drunk at once, and, being quite new, gives fearful headaches.

Of course we were to buy the Cholar grapes, and as many of the Shiraz grandees were wanting them for wine-making, the Hadji thought it better that we should send a trusty muleteer and his string of mules with one of my own men. It was arranged that the grapes already bought by the Hadji were, on nearing the town, to be escorted by all my servants, and so brought direct to my house, as otherwise they would be surely intercepted, and taken to the house of some big-wig, whose servants would simply carry them off, thus securing the real "Cholar" grape, and then sending me the value, with a polite message, saying that he thought that the grapes were his own.

I sent my head-man off, and we began our preparations. A large dry room was carefully swept out to receive the jars or kumrahs. These jars had been carefully selected by the Hadji, and were all old ones that wine had been previously made in; good wine cannot be made in *new* jars. Several were rejected as having held vinegar; these, had they been used, would have spoiled the wine. Each jar was scrubbed inside and out, and then put in the strong sun for several days to air and thoroughly dry it; then they were carefully dusted, and the insides painted with hot tallow; this rendered the porous jars thoroughly water-tight. They were now taken into the room which had been made ready, and placed in rows, but clear of each other, and a cloth placed over

the mouth of each, and on this a lid an inch thick of woven rushes. Each jar was about four feet high; the shape was that of two cones standing base to base; the size round the middle was seven feet, and the mouths were three feet in circumference—each jar held about one hundred and forty quarts or bottles. I had thirty jars, and as each jar would make on an average half the wine it would hold, I might reckon on two thousand one hundred bottles! Of these the Hadji was to have one-third, and the rest I was to lay down for my future use.

The Hadji warned me that a good deal of trouble was incurred in wine-making, and that it was impossible to trust to servants in the matter. “You or I will have to be actually present to see the various processes carried out, and the rest of the time the wine must be under lock and key.”

On the night of the 7th of October I got a note from my servant that he had bought his grapes, and should enter the town an hour after midnight, and he besought me earnestly to send a sufficient escort, or, better, to go myself.

Off I started with all my servants, except my door-keeper; the Hadji accompanied me, to act as a *disinterested* witness in case there was any row. It was quite as well I went, for I found my man with his thirty-five mule-loads of grapes being marched off to the house of a Persian grandee. Fortunately, the streets were clear, and as my servants outnumbered the two blusterers who had terrified the muleteers by threats, I succeeded in arriving at my own door with the entire thirty-five loads in good order.

Here I was met by two men from the custom-house, who insisted on the whole consignment going

at once to the custom-house, and suggested backshish. This offer I declined, and, at the Hadji's suggestion, I gave them an acknowledgment that I had thirty-five loads of grapes, and that if any duty was leviable I would pay it. With this they had to be contented, and walked off grumbling.

After some hours' work the seventy "lodahs" (or hampers) of grapes were got into the courtyard; then they had to be weighed, a lengthy process; there were exactly twelve hundred maunds Tabriz, or eight thousand four hundred pounds nett of grapes. They were quite ripe, and unbruised, and were carefully packed in the lodahs with leaves and covered with brushwood.

And now commenced the wine-making. Basket after basket was emptied into hasseens, or flat earthen pans. In these the grapes were trodden thoroughly out, and the juice, stalks, and husks were shot into the jars. As each jar was filled within an eighth of the top the cloth was spread over the mouth of it, and the lid placed on it. It then was left to ferment.

The treading-out process occupied forty-eight hours, and I was heartily glad when it was over. Either the Hadji or I was present all the time, to see that the work was thoroughly done, and that *no water*, under any pretext, was brought to the scene of operations. The slightest moisture spoils the wine. The bunches were sorted as they were taken from the lodahs; all the unripe or rotten grapes, of which there were very few, removed; and the examined bunches were then thrown under the feet of the treaders. When each pan was thoroughly trodden its contents were carefully gone over, to see that there were no unbroken grapes. Those that were

discovered were crushed at once by the fingers, and then the panful was emptied into the jar.

The “Cholar” grape is generally white, very few black vines being found. These grapes, being grown on terraces on the mountains, cannot be irrigated; hence the keeping properties of the wine. Probably no other wine would keep, made in such a hot climate as Shiraz is, more than the year. That from the Cholar grape *never* goes bad. The grape is quite globular, and the size of a large marble-taw; they cannot be mistaken for any other kind. They are not nice for eating, having a harsh skin and many stones.

At last all the grapes being crushed and in the jars, or kumrahs, as they are called, the room was carefully swept out again and the door locked. Fermentation had already commenced, as a slight crackling noise could be heard from the jars that had been filled first.

The Hadji now prepared three plungers of wood. Each was made like what laundresses call a copper-stick, but had at the extremity four blades of thin plank at right angles to the stick, about six inches long and two broad. These were for thoroughly mixing and working up the mass of husks, stalks, and juice.

On going to the wine-room fifty-six hours after the process had been commenced, the six first jars were found sufficiently progressed to proceed with. The grapes and husks had come to the surface and formed a compact cake, which floated on the fermenting juice, and nearly touched the lid. A buzzing noise came from most of the jars, caused by the bursting of innumerable small bubbles, and the temperature of the room was considerably raised by

the heat evolved.

The Hadji drew my attention to the fact that the jars were getting hot, which was satisfactory, showing that fermentation had thoroughly set in. With the plunger he now thrust the cake of crushed grapes, etc., that had formed on the four first jars, to the bottom, and a considerable escape of gas ensued. The plunger was spun round in the liquor with both hands, and the contents of the jar thoroughly mixed, the cloth and cover were replaced, and the door locked.

In four hours' time the process had to be repeated on eleven more jars and the four original ones. Again in three hours' time a fresh visit had to be made, and these had to be more and more frequent. Thus great attention was required, for as the room got warmer, from the heat evolved by the fermenting juice, so did the fermentation increase in violence. In some jars it was very furious, and from these the Hadji removed the rushwork lids, leaving the cloths, however, on. The Hadji had with him two of my servants, and he and they crushed in their hands all the grapes that they found in the risen cake that had escaped the feet of the treaders.

I had arranged that the wine when made was to be divided between us haphazard, and now the priest told me that I must make up my mind how I wished to have my wine—fruity, syrupy, dry, or very dry. For though as yet the jars had been treated exactly in the same way, *now* the treatment must differ for making the various different varieties.

He told me that for immediate drinking, *i. e.* after the next summer, a dry variety was best, but that for indefinite keeping the more fruity the wine the better.

The jars were now marked, and from those that were wanted to contain very fruity wine the husks and stalks were removed, and these husks were added to those which were wished very dry and very astringent. For the fruity, the stalks only were removed and thrown away; while for the dry, things were left *in statu quo*, and the stalks removed with the husks on the twenty-first day (at about this time fermentation had nearly ceased).

On the fifth day after commencement the Hadji began to tilt the jars, and after removing any unripe grapes and some stalks from the cake which always formed, but each day grew thinner, he with bare arm and expanded fingers began to stir up the liquor, which he had previously mixed with the plunger. A sweep all round the wall of the jar was taken at the full depth of his arm, and he counted one for each stir that was done with all his strength. As he stirred he counted aloud, and his four attendants had to do the same. When he got to a hundred strokes they all stopped stirring. This was done at first once a day, afterwards twice, and as fermentation was passing away, again only once a day.

It was really hard work, and the Hadji did it and saw it done, never shirking. I was considerably amused at seeing the priest actually carrying on the art of wine-making and *instructing the unbeliever*.

By about the twenty-fourth day the wine was ready for clearing of the husk.

The sweet wine had already no husks in it, these having been transferred to the jars containing the very dry. The stalks, too, of all the various jars had in the process of mixing been gradually removed. These, with all the unripe grapes and husks, which

had been day by day taken out and squeezed, a handful or two at a time, were cast into a jar and preserved for distillation.

A few jars were cleared by being filtered through a coarse canvas bag, which was hung into the interior of a kumrah, being lashed to the rim by a cord, and gradually drawn off by a tap which had been inserted in the bottom. This was stored in sealed carboys. The Hadji, however, strongly advised me to treat the wine I meant to lay down in a different manner, assuring me that I should find it a better plan. I did as he directed, and my men pouring the contents of each jar into a basket, I thus cleared it of the coarser impurities only, such as husks, grape stones, etc., and the fluid, of the colour and consistency of thin pea-soup, was put into the jars, which were now filled to within an inch of the brim; the mouth was tied over with the cloth, on the cloth was placed the rushen lid, and the corners being turned over, the whole was plastered with a layer an inch thick of straw and mud.

In twenty-four hours this was dry, and wine-making was over.

I had ten jars of unfiltered wine, of which about one-twelfth would be sediment; each jar contained forty maunds Tabriz each of seven pounds or pints. I thus had four hundred maunds of wine, or fourteen hundred quarts, of which one-twelfth, or say one hundred bottles, had to be deducted. Thirteen hundred bottles of wine remained, certainly enough for three years. Besides this, I had about one hundred bottles cleared and filtered for present drinking.

Total, fourteen hundred bottles for my share.[20]

When the next autumn-time came, I took the

uncleared wine and put it in carboys. These were sealed up and placed in a dry cellar.

The remnant of my wine, years after, I had the pleasure of seeing sold by auction for the highest price wine had ever fetched in Persia on the spot, viz., two kerans (one and sixpence) a bottle. It had then been nine years in bottle, and was *very* like a virgin sherry, very astringent and light to the taste, but very powerful.

I only once made wine again; one's house is thoroughly upset, and one has wine on the brain. It is very interesting, of course, to do it all for the first time, but it is a ticklish affair, and requires an immense amount of personal attention. The new wine is drinkable, and is like a light Bucellas to the taste by the succeeding May; but it is then exceedingly heady, and most intoxicating; one glass will give the most fearful headache, while to the taste it appears a light wine.

No one who is a connoisseur will drink the new wine, on account of the headaches which follow. These, however, need not be dreaded after the second year, when the wine is thoroughly drinkable. The fine aroma and bouquet only come with age; and the nutty flavour, which is very strongly marked in good old Shiraz wine, is not found until it has attained five years in the carboy.

Of all Persian wines, Shiraz, or rather "Cholar," wine is the most renowned. That made in Ispahan is not to be compared to it; while the stuff concocted in Teheran, of watered grapes and vine leaves, is good only in colour. The Hamadan wine will not keep, and is very heady, though pleasant in flavour. The Kerman wine is rough, and carelessly made, but when old is very good, tasting like a fair specimen of

Caucasus wine.

Persian wine much improves by bottling. I made a point of filling all wine, brandy, and beer bottles with Shiraz wine: a thick crust is thrown down, and it matures more rapidly, strange to say, when in bottle than when in bulk.

As a rule the Persians, when they store it in carboys, merely put a bit of rag or cotton-wool in the mouth, not even trying to keep out the air; but so good is the wine that it stands even this treatment, and this, too, though perfectly pure, and with *no addition of spirit*, or other adulteration!

From the refuse the arrack is distilled by the Jews, and it is a profitable operation; they sell the strong pure spirit at one shilling a quart.

The room where the wine-making goes on is much haunted by wasps, but the exhalations kill them. I fortunately did my wine-making in a separate courtyard, and so was not troubled by them; but they are, unless one takes this precaution, a great nuisance.

The carboys have to be ordered of the glass-blowers. They are well made, and hold from ten to four-and-twenty bottles. A rushworker has then to be engaged, who sits in a corner of the courtyard, and with handfuls of rushes makes a kind of rope. This he sews into an upper and a lower cup. The upper one, having a hole in the middle, is thrust over the neck of the carboy, which is then placed on the lower one; the two edges are sewn together, and the fragile carboy is safely packed, and will travel long distances securely.

Many, for economy's sake, buy the carboys in which rose-water has been stored, for they are to be

had very cheap; but a sort of false bouquet is produced, which is very distasteful to the connoisseur, and puzzles one much on first tasting it.

When wine is to be packed for transport, it is usually packed in baghallis, or native bottles; these, too, have to be ordered from a glass-blower; they are, when empty, very fragile, but of considerable strength when full; they hold a pint and a half. They have a little cotton-wool crammed into the neck, and on this is poured melted beeswax; they are thus securely fastened.

A box of thin planks, three feet by two, is made (the planks sewn, not nailed together); in this four to six dozen are packed in loose straw, a rush mat two inches thick is sewn on the top, and the thing is done.

A load of wine thus packed will travel over the roughest roads by mule or camel for a thousand miles without coming to grief.

I was glad to have made my wine myself, or rather under my own eye, as the same year that made by the Jews for the Governor all turned sour, and was, of course, spoilt.

I did not have to pay any duty, as the English employés of the telegraph in Persia are allowed to escape customs exactions of every kind—by treaty. But, as a rule, the customs people detain our goods, and only give them up on an order being got from the authorities in the capital, which has been obtained by the interposition of the Legation. Thus cases at times lie in the sun spoiling for weeks.

I had always, however, managed to obtain any little things I had from England, till just now, by cajoling the custom-house farmer, which was a

shorter process than writing letters to the embassy at Teheran.

I had been getting some photographic apparatus for the Governor, and the muleteer arrived to tell me that the two cases were in the custom-house. I sent a verbal message to the man in charge, to ask him to let my servant take them, as he knew no duty was payable by Europeans. But I got back a rude reply that unless I had an order I must pay five per cent. *ad valorem* or in kind. Now these particular cases were the Governor's photographic apparatus, for which he was very anxious: and in them I saw an opportunity of retorting on the custom-house people for the continual annoyance given in the clearing our cases. So I went to the custom-house and saw the gumrūkji, or customs-master.

"Where is your order, sahib? I can deliver nothing without an order."

Here the man's eye said, "Give me something, and take your boxes."

I now appeared very anxious to get them, and pretended to try and cajole the man by compliments. I argued, I was flattering; but no. No order, no boxes.

"Of course you can pay the duty, five per cent.; or I will take a twentieth part of the contents *in kind*."

I now pretended to be greatly enraged, and I dared the man to take his twentieth.

He, equally disgusted, gave the order to break open the boxes. This was done in the roughest manner; the tin was cut open, and parcel after parcel piled on the ground. One parcel containing photographic albumenized paper was opened, and the gumrūkji, to the delight of the assembled throng

of loafers and merchants, proceeded to count the quires and take his twentieth in kind. I thought he had now gone far enough, so I pretended to discover, with an appearance of astonishment, that *the things belonged to the Governor*!

Now his air changed.

"Oh, sahib, doctor sahib, do assist me! These things must be replaced. Oh, ashes, ashes on my head, oh, descendant of seven generations of asses" (apostrophising himself). "Sahib, doctor sahib, I will never annoy you any more. I will now, now this instant, give you a writing, which will enable you to always clear your goods on arrival; but do, dear friend, help me to repack these accursed boxes. You have burnt my father, indeed you have. Just smoke one kalian, just one in the shade, and you will, I am sure, help me."

"No, my friend; you are doing your duty in detaining my boxes, and of course the law is the same for all. I will inform the Governor of your virtue, and doubtless he will be pleased to possess a Government servant so just, that he does not hesitate to detain even *his* cases. Besides, how pleased he will be to find them unpacked, and even the parcels examined. These things, too, are easily injured. I even fear you may have to pay for some."

Here I pointed to two large lenses that, stripped of their paper, lay on the stones. The agony of the customs-master was now complete. He was afraid even to touch the various parcels. There they lay. He wept.

Regardless of his entreaties, as he had been of those of various Europeans whose bottled stout lay exploding in the sun, I smilingly retired, telling him

he would doubtless hear from the Governor.

He did. The Governor was furious; when the custom-house master's zeal touched him personally, he was really enraged; though when we had appealed to him to get perishable things given up to us, offering an indemnity, if it could be at any time proved that any duty was due, he had told us he could do nothing.

The customs-master was heavily fined, and at any time during the rest of my stay in Shiraz when I sent for my boxes, they were given up at once, and when my servant, *as directed*, asked if it were wished to examine them or not, the customs-master, pale with rage, would reply:

"Go, son of a burnt father, no; I have opened his boxes once, I never want to do so again."

All this my man would gleefully narrate on triumphantly bringing home my beer, or whatever had arrived.

I had had one other transaction with this customs-master. He had a handsome colt rising three; I had long tried to buy it, but he would never sell, or demanded a preposterous price. At last he sent over one day to me saying, "What will you give me in cash for my grey colt?"

I replied, "Ninety-five tomans" (about thirty-eight pounds). This is really a very high price for a horse only rising three. To my astonishment and delight the horse was sent over. I gave a cheque for the money and tied my purchase up. The next day I was left in peace to admire him; the third day came a letter politely written, the pith of which was, "Return me my colt, I have repented." I looked on the affair as a joke, but no; the man *had not cashed* my cheque.

Had I paid him in specie the bargain would have been concluded; as it was he was in the right, and I reluctantly gave back the horse I had had my eye on for months.

It was the law, and by that one must abide.

A peculiarity of the Shirazi is his fondness for repeating words, *changing the initial* of the second. Use is second nature, and a curious instance of the habit is narrated of the late Kawam-u-Dowlet. When in the presence of the Shah, the Kawam-u-Dowlet was asked by his Majesty—

"Why is it, Kawam, that you Shirazis always talk of kabob-*mabob*, and so on? you always add a *nonsense word*; is it for euphony?"

"Oh, 'Asylum of the Universe,' may I be your sacrifice; no respectable person in Shiraz does so, only the lūti-*pūti* says it."

Pūti is, of course, a nonsense (or meaningless) word, and lūti, as here used, means a "blackguard!"

CHAPTER XXII.
SHIRAZ AND FUSSA.

Cheapness of ice—Variety of ices—Their size—Mode of procuring ice—Water of Shiraz: its impurity—Camel-fight—Mode of obtaining the combatants—Mode of securing camels—Visit to Fussa—Mean-looking nag—His powers—See the patient—State of the sick-room—Dinner sent away—A second one arrives—A would-be room-fellow—I provide him with a bedroom—Progress of the case—Fertility of Fussa—Salt Lake—End of the patient—Boat-building—Dog-cart—Want of roads—Tarantulas—Suicide of scorpions—Varieties—Experiment—Stings of scorpions—The nishan.

A great thing in such a warm place as Shiraz is the cheapness of ice; for about fifteen shillings in dear years and five in cheap ones, ice can be obtained, all through the warm weather, and in fact is used from May to October, as no one would think of drinking anything uncooled. A huge block is thrown down in one's doorway each morning by the ice-seller; it is supposed to weigh two Tabriz maunds, or fourteen pounds.

The Persians well understand the art of making water-ices and ice-creams, and various ices unknown to us are made by them, as tamarind juice, pomegranate and cherry-water ices; iced "mast," or curdled milk, and various ices of pounded fruits, as apricots and cherries, which are very good.

Ices, however, are served with them on a more lavish scale, and a larger quantity eaten, than with

us. When I accompanied Captain St. J—— in a call he made upon the Muschir, four conical ices, the size and shape of an *ordinary* sugar-loaf, were placed in handsome Chinese porcelain basins before each of us. In fact the cheapness of provisions generally causes among the well-to-do a lavishness and profusion (not to call it waste) unknown in Europe.

The Muschir has a "yakhjal," or place for the making and collecting and storing ice, in an open plain some six miles from the town at the side of the Ispahan road. The earth is dug out to a depth of two feet; with this earth a mud wall some twenty feet high is constructed of sun-dried bricks. The excavation is some ten yards by one hundred, and the wall is ten yards high by a hundred long; this wall runs in such a way as to protect the open pond thus excavated, from the hottest rays of the sun.

The delicious Ab-i-Rookhni ("stream of Rookhnabad") is diverted from its course during the first cold night. A few inches of still clear water is collected in the pond, by morning it is frozen; at night the water is again admitted, and another inch or two of ice made. When three to six inches thick, the ice is broken and collected for storage in a deep well on the spot: and so day by day the process goes on during the short winter until the storehouses are full. Should the supplies from these be exhausted by a very large demand, ice, or rather blocks of snow, are brought from the mountains; but as these are some distance, and as snow melts much faster than ice, the weights being equal, the price rises.

An order is generally issued when the ice is running short that each house is to be on half allowance—a wise measure, as it makes the cooks careful, and so everybody gets some.

So common is the use of ice that the poorest are enabled to have it, a big bit being sold for a farthing, and even the bowls of water for gratuitous drinking at the shop doors are cooled by it. Ripe fruit is generally also cooled prior to being eaten.

The water of Shiraz itself—unless that of Rookhni or Zangi, another mountain spring, which has to be brought from a distance—is almost poisonous, being much contaminated by surface drainage, etc. The Mussulman world has a horrible idea that *a certain body* of water, however great the quantity, or disgusting the nature, of the filth poured into it, remains absolutely pure, and the result is that a great deal of serious illness is produced; this is one of the reasons why cholera is so very severe in the East, irrespective of the natural action of the climate. I can only say that I was obliged, while in Shiraz, never to drink water save when from the two springs, or in the form of tea, when it was of course boiled; one glass of sherbet or one tumbler of water making me ill.

My friend the British Agent, Mirza Hassan Ali Khan, C.S.I., used always to send a servant to the Rookhni stream, but the fellow used, I fancy, to fill his water-skins, which were carried on a mule, elsewhere, for although Rookhni water tastes of the wild sage that grows on its banks, and my friend the agent thus had as he fancied an infallible means of knowing it, yet I think the wily water-bearer was capable of having a stock of sage leaves with which he would flavour the water got from the town stream, along the edges of which sat all the laundresses of Shiraz washing (in it) their foul linen.

I met the Prince-Governor one day on horseback, and he asked me if I had ever seen a camel fight. I

replied that I had not; he told me to ride on with him and he would show me sport, as he was going to amuse himself with one. We rode to the back of the royal garden, or “Bagh-i-No” (new garden); here are always encamped hundreds of mules and camels. No sooner did the prince arrive than the camel-men attempted to run away, but the farrashes with their long sticks and a few horsemen soon brought them back.

The prince ordered them to bring two male camels (in a state of *must*[21]). At this they wept and tore their hair, for they did not wish their property to be destroyed or depreciated for the amusement of the young shah-zadeh. However, there was no escape; the courtiers soon pointed out two huge males secured apart from the rest of the animals, and from their continued groanings and roarings evidently in a state of *must*.

By the prince’s orders these were let loose; they “went for each other” at once. At first they danced round one another in a lumbering way; then what appeared like a huge bladder was projected from their mouths: they then knelt before each other, and a sort of fencing match took place; the ordinarily quiet, patient faces of the beasts were changed into ones of savage fury; the mouths widely open, and the retracted upper lips showed the white teeth; and from the open mouths came quantities of foam. The long supple necks were interlaced, and quickly darted from side to side, while now and then the open savage mouths would be locked together. The object was to seize either the throat or leg. The feints and meeting of the mouths lasted some few minutes, accompanied by loud groans and roarings of extraordinary fierceness. At length one beast, the

paler one, seized his adversary by the foot; while the other, a handsome, long-haired animal, only got hold of his opponent's ear. Blood flowed freely, and the poor camel-men, who wanted to separate the animals, were much beaten by the attendants. At last the dark long-haired animal left go, and roared with agony; the victor commenced to drag him about by the bitten foot. After some pressure the prince allowed them to be separated. An awful wound was apparent on the foot of the dark camel, and the efforts of some eight men with bludgeons, ropes, and chains were required to restrain the victor from pursuing his advantage, while the vanquished limped off with his weeping master, roaring with mingled rage and pain. The prince, ordering ten tomans to be given to the camel-men (poor fellows! I doubt if anything ever reached them), rode off.

Camels are mostly not vicious, save when *must*. They can kill a man with a kick; and when they bite, worry; *and they generally bite the piece out*. They are usually tethered apart when in this state, which soon passes off, and secured by bending one or even both fore-feet, and tying the leg in this position, which renders them powerless. This is the same principle as that adopted by Rarey the horse-tamer.

About this time I was requested to go at once to Fussa—this place is some ninety miles from Shiraz—where the Governor of the province (that of Fussa) lay ill. I obtained leave of absence for a week, and made an arrangement to go in one day and night, return in another twenty-four hours, and have five days' attendance on my patient.

The Muschir, to whose daughter Mirza Ali Akbar the *Khan Wakeel*, as he was called, was married, was anxious that I should start at once, and gave me a

handsome fee. I agreed that I was while at Fussa to be the guest of my patient, and that he was to find me in food and house-room; and this was an important stipulation, as in a place where a European had possibly never been seen, it might have been difficult to get a comfortable lodging or even food.

Two wild-looking horsemen and a servant of the British Agent presented themselves, with a little bay pony of dolorous aspect in a halter for my riding. I, knowing that no horses were laid out, asked with scorn how the small pony could possibly carry me ninety miles in twenty-four hours, which I had stipulated for; but all three men assured me that I should certainly arrive, myself and saddle-bags, in the time on the little animal. I confess that I disbelieved them, but we started off at a smart canter, and we cantered for ten hours with short breaks of ambling. We got to a village two hours after midnight, slept for four hours, and arrived in Fussa at four, doing the journey under the time; the small bay seemingly not at all distressed, and prepared to go back to Shiraz at once at the same rate if desired. I was then surprised; I know that any one of my own well-fed big horses would have knocked up. But these little animals, used to the *severest continuous work*, do it in the most extraordinary manner. I am a big, heavy man; my saddle was a heavy English hussar saddle, and my bags and bedding certainly weighed forty pounds or more. Of course the beast I rode was a good one of his kind, and probably a very good one, for when I left, the Governor of Fussa declined to part with him even at a fancy price of three times his apparent value.

We rode up to the door of the Governor, whom I found propped up with pillows in a corner of the room, a huge, fat man about thirty-eight, who was a general debauchee, opium-eater, wine and spirit drinker, and bhang smoker. He was suffering from gout.

An aged Syud, with a long beard and blue turban, was in attendance from Shiraz as his physician. The Governor himself was a strikingly good-tempered, even jovial man, and between the paroxysms of his gout, joked and talked. The village, or rather district, magnates sat round him chiming in with all his observations, and trying to soothe his pains. They were, master and retainers, the fattest set of men I ever saw collected in one room. A long description of the patient's ills ensued, many pipes of peculiar construction were smoked, and I was offered a *tumblerful* of strong spirit as a matter of course, considerable surprise being expressed at my refusing it.

Tea was continually handed round, which everybody, including the patient, swallowed; a native bottle was frequently produced from under his pillow from which he partook of copious draughts of pure spirit, taken from a silver bowl holding half a pint: *this was emptied frequently*. Every two hours my patient swallowed a *bolus* of opium. Though we were in the middle of summer, some thirty to fifty people were always in the room, and every window was shut and curtained; thus a semi-darkness was produced. Smoke from innumerable pipes filled the air, while the heat was rendered greater by a huge samovar, in which water for tea-making bubbled. The temperature was ninety degrees *out of doors at five* P.M. The chatter of conversation was continuous,

and four musicians strove to drive dull care away by playing loudly in a corner. I found my patient had just had an attack of *delirium tremens*, and was going the right way for another.

At seven, after having prescribed for him, I escaped to my quarters under the pretext of dining, and lay down to rest. At nine my servant informed me that my dinner was about to be served; and a large circular tray, having some six dishes on it, with bread and all et cæteras, a huge bowl of iced sherbet and a bottle of wine, was brought in. I was very hungry and anxious to fall to, and I felt a sense of anguish, when, to my astonishment, my servant (whom I had brought from Shiraz), assuming the part of the Governor of Barataria's physician, ordered the whole away in an indignant voice.

As soon as my dinner had disappeared, I demanded an explanation of my man. It was this: "I know, sahib, that the dinner I sent away was quite enough for the sahib, and a good dinner, but here in Persia a man's position is reckoned by the *quantity* of the dinner sent him, and the *number* of *plats*. They have sent you six *plats*. I have told them that you couldn't think of dining on less than eighteen; and if I allowed you to eat the dinner that was sent, good as it was, you would be looked down on. Are you less than the prince's physician? Certainly not. They would send *him*, or rather *he* would demand, at least twelve *plats*. I assure you I am acting in your interest."

I suppose the fellow was right. Dinner for at least twenty-four persons was brought on three huge trays. I tasted some half-dozen well-cooked dishes, and then my servant removed the rest, and I observed him, with the master of the house and

numerous hangers-on, dining in the open air on the very copious dinner that remained. The man was right. Such are some of the ways a Persian has of keeping up his consequence.

About ten P.M. I went, a few doors off, to the house of my patient the Governor. The same stifling room, the same hard drinking, only now *everybody* was drinking. Dancing-boys and singers, shrieking the noisy love-songs of Persia in chorus, were *keeping up the spirits of my patient*. To the few who were not drinking wines or spirits, tea was continually handed. Long conversations on the topic of the patient's illness took place, and on local politics. Wearily, at two A.M., on the ground that my patient *must* try to sleep, I succeeded in getting away. I was accompanied home by a big man with a jet black beard, a Khan who was one of the Muschir's retainers, and a polite fellow. What was my disgust to find his bedding spread in my little room. I told my man to bring him my water-pipe to smoke, and then I remonstrated. I said it was not a "Feringhi" custom to sleep in a room with strangers. But the Khan said it was late, that there were no other quarters, and commenced to disrobe. "If you must have a separate room, take that," said he, pointing to two heavy doors at the end of the apartment.

I opened them, and found a small room, windowless, in which apparently charcoal had been stored. Impossible for *me* to sleep there; but, thought I, "these are really *my* quarters, why shouldn't the Khan sleep there? *he* is the intruder." I pretended to collect my bedding.

"You are never going in there!" said he.

"Why not?" I replied. "Look, look! the huge

scorpion!" I shouted. He jumped up, seized a stick, and ran into the charcoal cupboard, for it was nothing more.

"Where?" said he.

"There! there!" said I.

He was well inside—to slam and secure the heavy doors was the work of a moment. He shouted and swore, kicking at the door, but it was a very strong one, and nobody came to his assistance. He then entreated, promising to go elsewhere; but I couldn't trust him, and so I composed myself to sleep, and soon dropped off. In the morning on waking a melancholy voice entreated liberation; but I could not do it then, as he might have taken vengeance. So I went off to the Governor, and complained of the intrusion on my quarters; my man then liberated the much-begrimed but now humbled Khan; and I got another set of rooms, in which I was more comfortable.

I saw no more of the Khan: the laugh was too strong against him, and he returned at once to Shiraz. Until my arrival the Governor was not aware of the nature of his disorder; with great trouble I got him to reduce his opium and cease his potations. I was happily able to give him relief, and we parted mutually satisfied after I had been five days at Fussa.

The place was much warmer than Shiraz; grain and cattle were cheap indeed here. The soil, though sandy, is very fertile; and the town, or rather collection of villages (for it is more a district than a town), is interspersed with groves of date palms. Oranges are, of course, abundant, and there is great plenty in the place. There had need be, for the exactions of those in power are very great in Persia.

The people were a laughing, careless set, devoid of fanaticism, having indeed very little religion. Nearly all drank wine to excess. The women seldom veiled, and talked with me without any *mauvaise honte*. They indeed seemed to do most of the work; for the field-work was probably not heavy, save at harvest-time, the country being so very fertile. The road from Fussa was a howling desert, except a well-watered village about half-way.

We passed the edge of the big Salt Lake, some ten miles from Shiraz, on which appears an island, or what looks like an island. After skirting this lake, whose shores are bordered by an edge of mud some fifty yards in width, we reached the village of Jaffir-a-bad, and thence, passing small villages and gardens in every direction, got to the plain of Shiraz. The pony brought me in as quickly as I had gone out, and I had had a peep at country life in the south of Persia.

The prince's hakim-bashi, the M.D. of Paris, replaced me, and he, too, had a week's leave. When he left, the old Syud told the patient that he had gangrene, *cut off the gouty toe*, and being unable to staunch the blood, the man died in forty-eight hours.

A year after this, one of the sergeants built a large boat for the exploration of the Salt Lake. This boat-building was an amusement for us, but the boat was found to be so heavy that it required fifteen porters to carry her through the streets. She certainly held eight people, but was very deep in the water, and more a barge than a boat, but as she was flat-bottomed she would not turn over. While I was in Ispahan, where I had gone on duty, she was placed on the large tank of the Bagh-i-Takht, and after twenty-four hours left to the mercy of the populace. I

believe she is at the bottom of that tank now.

Another of the sergeants, a really skilled workman, and fired by the actual boat having been floated, in conjunction with the builder of the first one, resolved to make a real wherry. This they did from various drawings, and they succeeded in building a very handsome boat, having curved planks, which were bent with great trouble with hot water. This boat was also fastened with copper rivets, and really handsomely finished; but though so light that three men could carry it, it held two comfortably, and would probably have been speedy, but it was so terribly crank that no one would venture in it; and though it was ballasted till the gunwale was almost level with the water, it turned over on the slightest movement. This, the second and last boat built by the English in Shiraz, is also at the bottom of one of the tanks. At Ispahan an extraordinary barge was made afterwards by two of the staff for the Zil-es-Sultan, and this could be rowed; but it was a barge, and had no pretensions to be called a boat.

I now started a dog-cart, which I received from Kurrachee, intending it for Ispahan, where there are *good* roads; as fate would have it, when the thing arrived I had been stationed at Shiraz, where there were next to *no* roads. I put my trap together with some difficulty, for the wood had warped in the long land journey, and found it to be a big dog-cart of the largest, heaviest, and (luckily) strongest type. Its weight appalled us all.

Followed by a crowd, our servants dragged it outside the city gates, and I put my chestnut horse in. Of course, he had never been in the shafts before. On attempting to urge him forward he sat down, as a dog sits, and declined to stir; this manœuvre he

constantly repeated. I now in despair tried an old and valueless grey horse. He walked off with the machine at once, and, barring the want of roads, I had no difficulty. Luckily, the trap was built of a solidity I have never seen, save in railway carriages, and so, regardless of roads, I was able to go about. The stony bed of the river, with an occasional bit of hard road, and thence to the sandy plain of Jaffir-a-bad, was about the only drive.

Here, and here only in the neighbourhood of Shiraz, one sees enormous tarantulas. These beasts, some with bodies as large as a pigeon's egg and legs in proportion, are very brave; when attacked with a stick, instead of taking flight, they advance threateningly at the person who molests them, and attempt to bite the stick; they are really formidable-looking brutes, covered with brown hair.

A story was told me by the late Dr. Fagergren, a Swede in Persian employ, who had been twenty-five years in Shiraz, to the effect that scorpions, when they see no chance of escape, commit suicide; and he told me, that when one was surrounded by a circle of live coals, it ran round three times and then stung itself to death. I did not credit this, supposing that the insect was probably scorched, and so died. I happened one day to catch an enormous scorpion of the black variety. In Persia they are of two kinds: black; and light green, or greenish yellow; the black variety being supposed to be much the more venomous. The full-grown scorpions generally are from two to three inches long; I have seen one five inches when extended from the tip of the claws to the sting, but he was phenomenal. The one I caught was very large, and to try the accuracy of what I supposed to be a popular superstition, I prepared in

my courtyard a circle of live charcoal a yard in diameter. I cooled the bricks with water, so that the scorpion could not be scorched, and tilted him from the finger-glass in which he was imprisoned unhurt into the centre of the open space; he stood still for a moment, then, to my astonishment, ran rapidly round the circle three times, came back to the centre, turned up his tail (where the sting is), and deliberately by three blows stabbed or stung himself in the head; he was dead in an instant. Of this curious scene I was an eye-witness, and I have seen it repeated by a friend in exactly the same way since, on my telling the thing, and with exactly the same result. For the truth of this statement I am prepared to vouch.

Of the effects of the sting of the scorpion (generally only the lower orders are bitten, as they are barefooted, and their work may take them to cool and damp places where the insects love to lie) I have had much experience: I consider it is never fatal, save in the case of infants stung in the throat, but it is very painful, the only remedy being liquid ammonia to the wound, which gives speedy relief.

I have never seen a case of serpent-bite in Persia, and hydrophobia is very uncommon, though it is said to exist. The only case of rabies I have seen is that of Pierson’s dogs, narrated previously. Hornets and wasps sting badly, and frequently I have known death occur in a child much stung. The sting is worse than that of the British wasp. As to the Persian tarantula, it merely bites.

A curious custom in Persia is the “nishan,” or token. The token is some secret conveyed by a third party, as a token or sign of the consent of the giver of the token to the request. Thus a man will say, if

away from home, and one wishes to borrow his horse, “Tell my steward to give you my horse, by the ‘nishan’ (or token), that I gave him a present this morning.” As the steward knows that the giving of the present was only known to his master and himself, he hands over the horse at once.

CHAPTER XXIII.
SHIRAZ.—THE FAMINE.

Approach of famine—Closing of shops—Rise in mule-hire —Laying in of stores—Seizures of grain—Sale of goods by poor—Immigrations of villagers to the towns—Desertions of children—Increase of crime—Arrival of money from England—Orphanage—Labour question—Koomishah—Village ruffian—His punishment—Prince's accident—The kalāat—Mode of bringing it—Invitation to the ceremony—Procession—Gala dress of the prince—The arrival of the firman—Assemblage of grandees—The kalāat—The Kawam's kalāat—Return to town—Sacrifice of an ox.

The famine was now setting in in Persia seriously —*for two years not a drop of rain had fallen*; the crowds of professional beggars were reinforced by really hungry people, thefts from shops became common, as did burglaries, and the roads were now very unsafe. In the corn-chandlers' shops very small supplies of grain were seen, and these much adulterated by the addition of dust, stones, etc. The bakers baked as little bread as they could, mixing their dough in as small quantities and as slowly as possible; the loaves became gradually worse and worse, though the price remained nominally the same. The coarse barley-bread ceased to be baked altogether, and at last the bakers refused to sell to the crowds which formed at their shop doors unless they were their regular customers, and then only for ready money, and one small loaf to each person, selling by weight being discontinued altogether. All

who had enough ready money laid in a store of grain and flour.



FAMINE GROUP.

Those who had cheap horses and donkeys sold them, and the price of the cheaper class of horse fell very low, till at last beasts were turned out as worthless, and killed and eaten by the poor.

Meat fell in price, but this did not much help those who had no money to buy even bread. Large establishments were suddenly much reduced; the armies of hangers-on, who live on the leavings of the rich and their attendants, were now thrown upon the streets. Many of the bakers and butchers closed their shops and fled.

Mule-hire rose to an almost prohibitive price, and it must be remembered that this, in a country where all transport is by mule and camel, meant the

paralysis of trade. All the animals, save of the very rich, presented a half-starved appearance. In the waste grounds near the towns, and by the sides of the high-roads, lay the bodies of dead and dying mules and horses.

Flour became adulterated, and was ground at home by the consumers. Grandees, and merchants began to lay in stores of grain from their villages, disposing of none, although an enormous profit could be obtained on the contents of their granaries. The Governors of the towns seized grain, or paid for it at a nominal price, and sealed it up in the public or Government grain stores. Provender on the high-roads became unattainable.

Prices, though steadily rising for all descriptions of cereals, suddenly dropped on the hope of rain, only to rise in a few hours to a still more serious figure. The lower classes began to pledge and sell their copper-ware, tools, arms, and clothing. In the post-houses, where from six to ten horses were generally kept, only two, and at times none, were seen.

Villagers in quest of food began now to pour into the towns, and remained herding in starving crowds in the mosques, having neither the means nor the strength to return to their homes. The charity of the Persians themselves was nearly exhausted, for each rich man had to feed his crew of hungry servants *and their families*. The few unorganised attempts to feed the poor, resulted in the crushing to death of several, and the one loaf of bread doled out to each person on these rare occasions only served to prolong their sufferings. Children now began to be deserted in the streets, the dead and dying to be seen frequently, the greater portion of the bazaar to be closed, typhoid to be rife, and crimes of violence to be frequent.

And now came the first funds from England from the Persian Relief Committee. In each town the money was husbanded and relief given in the way most efficient and economical. Money was found to be the most safe plan, at all events in Shiraz, of which I speak from experience, for any attempt to buy bread in quantities failed, and caused an immediate rise in price. Very many applicants were sent away; relief in the shape of a numbered ticket, entitling the bearer, whose person was described in a book kept for the purpose, to weekly relief in money, was given to the utterly destitute. The difficulty of deciding on the claims of the various applicants was great, and in many cases which had to be denied permanent relief, temporary alms were given.

A large house was rented, and in it were placed all the deserted orphans found in the streets; these were mostly the children of villagers, though some were those of townspeople. These children were plainly but comfortably clothed in the ordinary dress of well-to-do Persian villagers, and well and regularly fed. They were placed under the care of an intelligent and humane Persian, who really did his duty to them, and were regularly inspected by the members of the Relief Committee; also they were frequently seen at unexpected times. The poor emaciated bundles of rags soon developed into strong, healthy children, and the regular food, comfortable quarters, and good clothes did wonders. Most of the staff took one or two into their service.

Seven years after, one of my two, who were taken as stable-helps, was getting pay from me at the rate of thirty shillings a month, and was my head groom, and would anywhere obtain that pay. Two were taken as markers in the billiard-room, and are now

respectable servants. As the famine ceased, the *unclaimed* orphans were apprenticed to good trades, or placed in the houses of wealthy Persians as servants. No attempt at proselytism was made, but a Persian priest was engaged to teach the usual rudiments of reading, writing, and the Koran.

Many villagers came in and claimed their children, and these were often loath to leave their clean quarters and good food, to return to hard drudgery and rags in their native villages.

It may be safely said that no *deaths* from starvation took place in Shiraz after the arrival of the first instalment of relief money from England. Of course, the application of the funds was carried out irrespective of the religion of the applicants; and this application was easier in Shiraz than in Ispahan. The Armenian community in Shiraz were very few, and only some four families needed relief; while, on the contrary, the Jews were many and terribly poor.

As to the labour question, a few of the more able-bodied were set to the nominal work of picking the stones off the high-road, but no heavy labour was insisted on. In the winter, too, the snow having blocked the streets, the poor were employed in removing it for the general good.

I happened to go to Ispahan, and also assisted in the distribution there. The Ispahanis are much more provident than the people of Shiraz, and I do not think the distress would have been so great but for the influx of villagers. At Koomishah, the third stage from Ispahan towards Shiraz, the effects of the famine were very severe, and I was glad to be able to distribute some four hundred kerans of the Poor Fund, both going and coming, there. Of course this amount did not go far, and I was besieged in the

post-house by the hungry crowd of women and children; the sum was too small to permit of giving anything to the men. First we admitted all the aged women, and gave them a keran and a half each; then each child was given a keran, and, when they had secreted it, the whole number were passed out and the gates closed. From the roof of the post-house I perceived a big burly villager, who was employed in robbing the children, as they went out, of their slender store, even throwing them on the ground and taking the coin from their mouths. The other villagers, of whom there was a large mob, merely laughed, but did not interfere. But getting down from the back wall of the post-house by means of horse-ropes, the postmaster, my groom and I succeeded in catching the fellow, and dragging him into the post-house, and then the post-boys gave him a good hiding by my order, and we took the money away. He, of course, complained to the local Governor, who requested an explanation. I called on him and told him of the fellow's misdeeds, and, much to his astonishment, the man in power gave the ruffian a liberal bastinado.

Terrible stories are extant of what happened in certain places, and there is no doubt of the truth of many of these. That the people ate grass and the carrion, that they lived on the blood at the public slaughter-houses, that they, having sold all, also sold their children, is within my personal knowledge. Cannibalism, too, was proved. In fine, had it not been for the exertions of the Persian Relief Committee in London, the ravages of the famine would have only ended in the temporary depopulation of the south and centre of Persia.

Each great personage in Ispahan and Shiraz did his

best to preserve his own dependents from starvation; but there being no kind of organisation among the Persians, and transit-rates being prohibitive, and the roads unsafe, small local famines were frequent, and the ravages of typhoid and diphtheria—the latter previously unknown in the country—were very great.

Just now an accident to the Prince Zil-es-Sultan took place. He was out shooting near Shiraz, and having charged one barrel of his gun twice, the weapon burst, tearing the palm of his hand and the ball of the thumb. I was called in to attend him, and was fortunate enough to preserve the hand. For this his Royal Highness was very grateful, and during the whole of my time in Persia showed me many kindnesses, besides giving me an extremely liberal fee, even for a king's son: he *compelled* his vizier also to give me one. He even insisted on decorating me with the star of the Lion and Sun; but as Englishmen in Government employ are not allowed to accept the decorations of foreign Governments without special permission, the honour, much coveted among the Persians, was not of much benefit to me. I got it in a very public and sudden manner, and as the occasion of giving it was sufficiently curious, I may as well describe it.

It is the custom in Persia to send to all governors, royal personages, and ministers, a yearly present from the king, to show the royal satisfaction. These presents are all termed kalāats (or dresses of honour), even though the gift may be in jewellery, or even specie; a dress or robe of greater or less value, or a jewelled weapon, being the general kalāat. The withholding of the yearly robe of honour to a provincial governor is generally the sign of the royal

disfavour, and the despatching of it often the token of the recipient's confirmation in office, though at times it is what gilds the bitter pill of his recall. The kalāat is usually sent from the capital by the hands of some person of consequence, generally some favoured servant of the Shah, and this man is sent down that he may receive a present, generally large in amount, from the recipient, and may bring back the usual bribe to the Prime Minister for retention in power, or even the same thing to the king himself.

The New Year's festival is generally the time of the despatch of the official dresses of honour from the capital. The bearer, and his two or more attendants, generally come on post-horses, and the etiquette is that the recipient goes out to meet the royal gift. The bringer, on arrival at the last stage, is met by the servants or friends of the recipient, who send off to announce the arrival. He now takes off his travel-stained garments, puts on his finery, and starts on horses sent out for him, bearing the royal bounty at his saddle-bow wrapped in a Cashmere shawl. The recipient, accompanied by all his friends and the greater portion of the populace—for the bazaar is closed by order, and a general illumination *commanded* for the evening; all the shops are visited, and severe fines inflicted on any one disobeying—proceeds to meet the present, and await its arrival. The distance that is gone is regulated by the position of the recipient—the greater the personage, the less distance he goes.

One morning the prince sent for me and told me that a kalāat from the Shah would arrive for him the next morning, and that he wished his hakim-bashi and myself to ride out with the magnates of the place, who would accompany him, to meet it. I of

course expressed my readiness to attend his Royal Highness, and I was told by the hakim-bashi, who was very jubilant, that probably a decoration would be given to each of us. To have declined would have been to give mortal offence, and to have lost the favour of the Governor of the province, whose partiality secured me against annoyance from the natives of any kind. So the next day I presented myself at nearly noon and found the prince in great feather, the head astrologer having appointed two in the afternoon for the enduing of the dress of honour. Every one was in gala dress, the streets were thronged by a holiday mob in high good humour. And out we all rode. First came four yessaouls, or outriders, with silver maces, showing off their horses by capering in circles; then six running footmen, each with his silver-headed staff and clad in the royal scarlet, in the ancient costume of Persia, and with the strange head-dress somewhat like a fool's pointed cap—these men are called "shahtirs;" then grooms mounted, leading the handsomest horses of the prince's stud with gold and jewelled harness and a Cashmere shawl spread over each saddle; then the "mir-achor" (literally, lord of the manger), or master of the horse—a coarse, heavy fellow, the prince's maternal uncle (his mother, they say, was a peasant girl who struck the king's eye while washing linen at a village stream)—the mir-achor riding a big and valuable animal; then the prince himself, on a handsome iron-grey, the tail of which is dyed red (a royal custom permitted only to the sons of the king besides the Shah himself), clad in his best—a handsome shawl-coat of great value and trimmed with sable, an under dress of blue satin embroidered in silver, gold, and coloured thread, a gold belt having a rosette of diamonds with a huge central

emerald, the thing being four inches in diameter, and wearing his various decorations and the portrait of the Shah set in brilliants. His black cloth hat is fiercely cocked, and he smiles at the acclamations of the people, and is evidently delighted at his apparent popularity. After him come the two rival magnates of Shiraz, the Kawam and Muschir (the minister of the young prince); then the two secretaries, the hakim-bashi, and myself; then the principal people of Shiraz and the prince's attendants, all on horseback; then some merchants on mules; then a shouting crowd which follows the procession. Soldiers lined the road, and a battery of artillery is drawn up to fire one hundred and one guns when the royal dress of honour is donned. We ride to about a mile and a half from the town on the Ispahan road. Half-a-dozen horsemen station themselves at distances of one hundred yards along the post-road in the direction whence the king's messenger must come. In a few moments a gun is fired by one of these, then another as he perceives the messenger's arrival, and we see three men, one bearing a bundle, advancing at full gallop. A letter is handed to the prince, it is the royal firman; he raises it to his head and hands it to the Muschir, the principal official present; the messenger rides at the prince's side, who asks him the news of Teheran.

We all ride slowly back towards the town, and so enter the "Bagh-i-No" (new garden), a Government garden where the dress of honour is to be publicly put on.

The prince invites me into an inner room, and I am given coffee. He then tells me that he has requested the Order of the Lion and Sun to be conferred on me, for which I express my gratitude; and the hakim-

bashi, who is also to get it, does the same.

The doctor and I enter the big open verandah, or talár, and are given a prominent place among the grandees there, a few priests and officials also being honoured with places, as are the chief merchant and some others. Vases of roses and common flowers are placed at intervals along the front of the talár, beyond this is the big tank, round which are crowded the merchants, tradesmen, and populace of Shiraz, an orderly crowd. The Muschir who presides is affable, and regales us with sweetmeats, pipes, and sherbet.

The prince enters, followed by the bearer of the kalāat. We all stand up, the royal firman or order is read by the Muschir. The kalāat, a Cashmere shawl-coat worth some eighty pounds, and trimmed with rich furs, having a string of big pearls and a bored but uncut emerald attached to the top button, is put on by the prince amid acclamations, being handed to him by the bearer. Then a jewelled wand or rod of office some four feet long is handed by the Muschir to the Kawam, or mayor of Shiraz; he bows, more acclamations—this is his kalāat. Then the star (having a centre enamelled on gold of the Lion and Sun) is affixed to the breasts of the hakim-bashi and myself; and now we all rush for our horses, and the mob rush for the flower-vases, which are mostly smashed in the struggle.

We return to the town in procession as we came. On nearing the bridge, the Jews, as is customary, behead a little ox at the feet of the prince, and their chief man runs with the bleeding head by the prince's side till driven off by the farrashes or stick-men; then glass jars of sweetmeats were smashed by the tradesmen under the feet of the royal horse, and

amidst shouts, dust, and the reports of the cannon, we enter the town, and I, popping my star in my pocket, canter off to my own house. I have never worn it since, but I could not refuse it, as it was meant in kindness, and I did not wish to offend.

CHAPTER XXIV.
I FALL INTO THE HANDS OF BRIGANDS.

A call to a patient—Start on post-horses—No horses—I carry a lantern—The Bakhtiaris—Fall among thieves—They strip me—And march me off—Mode of disguise of thieves—Attacked by footmen—Division of spoils—Fate of a priest—Valuing my kit—Ignorance of my captors—A welcome sight—My escape—I get a horse—Reach Yezdikhast—Old women get thorns out of my feet—Want of hospitality of head-man of Yezdikhast—Arrive at Kūmishah—Kindness of a postmaster—More robbers—Avoid them—Am repaid for my lost kit—Fate of my robbers.

The roads are not safe, and at night are dangerous; but with a man ill at the one end of the division, two hundred and fifty miles off, and the doctor at the other, the only thing for the doctor to do is to go to his patient as fast as possible.

Had I been going to march, I should have applied to the Persian authorities for a strong guard, and it would have been provided, but in posting this is impossible. It was the height of the famine time; in place of six or eight horses in each post-house, all well up to their work, two or three was the maximum, and these mere living skeletons, and I knew that at some stages *all had died*. I had never been looted, and, trusting to my luck, I sent for horses; but I felt that looting was likely. I took no gold watch, but only an aluminium one, and as little money as possible. Beyond my clothes I had nothing valuable save a case of instruments belonging to

Government, that I required at Ispahan.

By this time I had begun to pique myself on the rate I could get over the ground “en chuppar;” and I had established a rule in my own mind that there were two ways of posting, and two only: going when there was light; and going as long as horses were to be had, day and night. Anything else was of little use, as one could not go faster than the latter mode, and if one wanted to go more slowly than the former, one might as well march. In the famine time nothing but water and firing was to be got, and so the journey was naturally a thing to be got over as soon as possible: also in this particular instance I was going to see a patient, and so was bound to be smart.

Off I went about noon from Shiraz at a sharp canter, preceded by my servant and followed by the guide, for one has to separate them or they lose time in chattering. The servant yelled, whipped, jobbled his horse with his sharp native stirrups, and generally behaved as a lunatic. On emerging from the town he exhorted me frequently to come on, and took as much out of himself and his horse as possible. When we got to Zergūn, six farsakhs, we had done it, over the good road on the plain, under the two hours and a half. The next stage to Seidoon is over a sandy plain, which, in wet weather, is a very bad road indeed, and rough causeways have to be gone over to keep out of the morasses. But we had had *no rain for two years*, and all the way it was good going. We reached Seidoon half-an-hour after sunset, and here my man began to suggest that we should stop to sleep. I made him understand that as long as I could find horses *I* was bound to go on; but he seemed to fail to see that that rule applied to *him*.

On we went still, having kept to our two farsakhs

(or eight miles) an hour, *including* stoppages, and reached Kawamabad at nine at night; here the road was less level, and my man *would* lag behind.

The moon was high, and the scenery is very pretty —long stretches of what in other times is turf and plenty of big trees.

At about six A.M. we got to Moorghāb. Here we had to feed the horses, which caused a delay of an hour and a half, and it was eleven before we reached Dehbeed, having done very badly thirty farsakhs in twenty-three hours. These two severe stages on famished animals had destroyed all chance of a quick journey. We had walked the greater part of the last stage, which, with the one we had done before it, are two of the longest in this part of Persia, being each a good twenty-seven miles, though called six farsakhs. From Dehbeed we cantered over an undulating plain to Khonakhora; the going was good, but the poor beasts constantly fell from weakness, and I could not spare them. Again at Khonakhora there were no horses, and I had to stop two hours to rest the old ones, not getting to Sūrmeh till two hours after midnight, and having to walk and drive the wretched beasts the greater part of the way. Here my man was unable to go any further, the walking of the last stage had been too much for him: there was nothing for it but to leave him to come on as he pleased, and that thoroughly suited him.

At dawn I reached Abadeh, the parting with the servant and consequent wrangle having taken up nearly an hour. I hardly knew the place; generally the approach to Abadeh is through smiling gardens and vineyards, and heavy crops are grown in the neighbourhood; now nothing. The people besieged me in the chupperkhana for money. I was able to get

two broken-down horses; my own fell seven times in the first hour from weakness, and the distance to Shūrgistan—over, happily, a good and level road—is six farsakhs, a good twenty-four miles; it was two in the afternoon before I could leave Shūrgistan, and, as usual, there were no horses.

I was told at this place that the road was very dangerous, but confident in my being a European, and being also armed, I did not think there was much to fear. We crawled into Yezdikhast over an undulating fairly good road at sunset, the horses both lying down on entering the courtyard; they had come the thirteen farsakhs in twelve hours, but were so weak that I doubted being able to start before morning, but the information I had at Abadeh by wire made me desirous of pushing on; my patient's state was critical, and at eleven P.M., finding that the horses could stand, I started.

Yezdikhast is situated in a valley through which runs a small river, and on each side are precipitous cliffs and a bad road, unpleasant to scramble up or down by day, and dangerous on a dark night. The town itself is built on a perpendicular island-like cliff, which stands in the middle of the deep ravine thus formed; it presents a sufficiently striking appearance as viewed from either the cliffs or the valley, impregnable to attack save from artillery; the perpendicular cliff on which it is perched shows up a bright yellow, against what is generally a verdant valley, teeming with corn and grass, though just at the time I was travelling quite bare, save just by the river. There is only one small entrance to the town at one end of the razor-backed cliff; this is a doorway just big enough to admit a horseman stooping in his saddle, or a loaded mule. This doorway is reached by

a small bridge of a few poles, which can be knocked away at once: the cliff, which appears to be of sandstone, is honeycombed with underground granaries and shelters for sheep and goats, as are the cliffs on either side. On one side of the town, in the ravine, is the caravanserai; on the other the chupperkhana or post-house.

The night was pitch dark, the guide couldn't even see the road, and I had to light my road lantern to enable us to get out of the ravine up the rocky track that leads to the high-road; when we did get on the road it was so dark, that I was unfortunately still obliged to keep my light burning, to enable us to keep on the track. And to this I suppose I owe my subsequent misfortunes.

I was coming now to a notorious "doz-gah," or robbing place, Aminabad. Here is a magnificent caravanserai; but no one can live here, for, being the frontier of two provinces, one ruled by the Governor of Shiraz, the other by that of Ispahan, it was a sort of debatable land. A few hours' march, too, brings one to the Bakhtiari country, governed by Houssein Kūli Khan,[22] who ruled with a rod of iron the turbulent tribes of these wild men. All wanderers, they are a brave and untamable people, their customs quite different from the inhabitants of the towns, upon whom they look with contempt. They are practically independent, merely furnishing a large contingent of irregular cavalry. The illustration gives a good idea of the tent-life of the wandering tribes of Persia. The tents are very portable, impervious to rain, wind, and sun, and are woven by the women from the hair of the black goats. They are very durable.

The Shah is here of little authority, the whole

government being vested in Houssein Kūli Khan, whose eldest son remains with the king in honourable captivity in Teheran as hostage for his father's good conduct.

Several times have villagers been placed in the Aminabad caravanserai, that the place might not be without inhabitants; but it is always looted, the ryots beaten or murdered; even in peaceful times the muleteers hurry past the caravanserai, and make the best of their way to Yezdikhast.



TENT LIFE.—WANDERING TRIBES.

The country here on the least pretext becomes disturbed, and robberies and murders in disturbed times are frequent. The last time I passed it, in 1878, I was riding on in front of the caravan, and looked into the huge courtyard out of curiosity; and though the country was very peaceful indeed, there lay the festering body of a murdered man. A few mud walls run along the road, making convenient ambush, and a ruined watch-tower marks the exact frontier line.

My lighted lantern had doubtless put the robbers

of the neighbourhood on the *qui vive*, but I could not have got out of the Yezdikhast valley without it, and I hoped by travelling at an unusual hour (midnight) in the pitchy darkness to slip by unperceived. I had reckoned without my host. As I passed at a slow amble, making as little noise as possible, and flattering myself that no one could see us, I was challenged.

"Who are you?"

I promptly replied: "Be off; I am a European."

"Stand!" said a voice; and I saw a black object in the shadow of the wall. I drew my revolver and placed it on full cock; I stuck my spurs into my wretched horse; but the presence of other beasts was enough for him; he merely swayed with weakness, but did not budge. The black object now rapidly approached, and resolved itself into five horsemen, who surrounded me, and, prodding me with the muzzles of their guns, ordered me to dismount in a series of hoarse whispers.

My thieves were well mounted and well armed; the odds were too great for a fight. I couldn't run away, and the guide had disappeared, having slipped off his horse and run. I used strong language and tried to brazen it out, but it was of no use.

I was lugged off my horse, and several blows were struck at my head, but my topi[23] kept them off. My assailants now stripped me so rapidly as to show they were adepts in the matter. They were evidently in a great hurry. I put my revolver on half-cock and dropped it, thinking that I should be stripped and left; but I had reckoned again without my host. When they had stripped me to my breeches and shirt, one fellow seized the pocket in which was my

money, and with one slash of his knife removed it, slitting the leg of my pants to the knee. As another man was dragging off my shirt, he remarked that it was silk, the fineness of the linen deceiving his touch. I was now ordered to come along, and there being no option, did so; but I felt the cold to my naked back, and asked them for a covering, purposely in broken Persian, thinking that if they did not know I was *au fait* at the language, I might the better get at their intentions. One man, the chief, ordered one of the village felt greatcoats to be flung to me. I gladly wrapped myself in it, and picking up my revolver, concealed it in the sleeve, trusting to have a chance of perhaps selling my life dearly, or ending it if any indignity were offered me. I had not gone many yards, when the thorns began to enter my feet, and render walking painful. I now requested to be put on a horse, but the only reply was an order to come on at once, which was repeated, and a gun put to my head. But I was desperate. I foresaw that if I walked I should be lamed for months, and certainly in no condition to escape. The chief now rode up, and I appealed to him in very broken Persian. He ordered me to be put on one of the post-horses, and to come on at once, adding significantly, “If you don’t, we shall kill you here.” I felt that there would be no chance to escape at present, but that I might possibly have a future opportunity. We now left the road, and pushed on in the direction of the Bakhtiari country. I was glad to see that the two post-horses lagged considerably and delayed us much. I found, too, that there was a mule loaded with grain that these gentry had stolen, which was driven by two men armed with iron-headed bludgeons. Our party was now nine—the five horsemen, well armed and mounted; the two footmen; the guide, who had been

secured, and whose hands were tied behind his back; and myself. By this time I calculated that it was about two A.M. I could see better, now we were on the open plain.

The head of our captors was addressed as Lutf Ali Khan. He kept ahead, and avoided all intercourse with me. His head and face were carefully covered with a long strip of calico, which was wound round and round his head as a disguise. What little I could see of his face was blackened with charcoal.

As dawn approached I was able to make out these details, and to take my bearings to find the road again should I succeed in getting away. The robbers were all well mounted, and their horses were fat and in good condition. I noted the particulars of each man, but the chief gave me no chance to recognize him.

At dawn, as we passed under a high cliff, we heard shots fired, and bullets began to fly about our heads. The horsemen returned the fire, which came from some twenty footmen who were perched in coigns of vantage and under shelter, on the top and face of the cliff. It was now daylight, and the pleasures of being shot at were not increased when I saw that the practice was good, for one of the horsemen now lost a finger. A good deal of shouting took place, but as it was in Turkish, I could not make out its purport. At last they seemed to come to some sort of understanding, for the firing ceased, and the footmen came down from the cliff into the plain. These men were evidently also Bakhtiaris, and were led by a small old man clad in white; he wore zangāl, a kind of leather legging, and had a long, red-dyed beard, and a tall felt hat. From what I overheard, I found out that the second party had outnumbered the first,

and that my spoils were to be divided. The difficulty seemed to be about myself.

The head of the footmen said: “You have looted this Feringhi; with this we have nothing to do. *We* loot not him, but you.”

The man who had lost his finger now came to have it dressed, which I did as well as I could for him. Instead of being grateful, he merely, in most expressive pantomime, drew his finger across his throat. Upon the principle that dead men tell no tales, it was undoubtedly their intention to put me out of the way. And had we not met the second gang, it would have probably been done where we were, a lonely place, safe from all interruption; but there were now too many witnesses to the fact of my having been carried off. We continued our march, accompanied by the footmen, about thirty men, including ourselves. I found out afterwards that the men who had looted me had only the day before robbed a Syud, or descendant of the prophet, a moollah (or priest), and after stripping him, *as he was a holy man*, and they did not like to kill him in cold blood, they laid him on the ground, piled big stones on him so that he could not stir, and left him to die in the desert of hunger and thirst. His body was found half eaten by jackals, and the men confessed the fact when they had no further reason for denying it. So had there been no second party arriving, I should have fared ill. At about nine A.M. we halted. I was placed in charge of the two footmen armed with iron-headed staves; and the guide, whose hands had remained bound, with the two post-horses and the load of grain, remained guarded by them. The rest of the horsemen and the footmen retired to some three hundred yards off, and commenced to

unpack my saddle-bags. I was now quite unarmed, for when the reinforcement came up, I felt that to get away by any act of violence was impossible; and as the finding of the revolver on me would probably cost me my life, I dropped it when I had an opportunity of doing so unperceived.

Several times men came to me from the anxious throng that surrounded my kit and asked me the value or use of the divers objects. To the latter I did not attempt to respond, but I satisfied them as to the former by putting high values on everything, thinking thereby to increase my own importance. I told them my aluminium watch was worth forty pounds, and, as it was very massive, they believed it. My guards insisted on cutting off the brass buttons from my riding breeches, saying to each other that they were gold. The thieves argued and shouted a good deal over the spoil, and one of my guards joined the excited circle formed round my kit, while the other manifested the greatest interest in their proceedings.

The post-boy by a nod now drew my attention to the distant ridges, and, to my delight, I saw a large party of horsemen pricking across the plain in our direction. On they came, but slowly, apparently not seeing us. They got within some five hundred yards undetected by the robbers or my guard, who were intent on the booty; and then, instead of making a charge and taking the robbers unawares, they commenced firing. This, of course, disclosed their presence, and my delight was great when I saw that they were irregular cavalry. The robbers, however, showed no sign of retreating; they returned the fire briskly, and the rescuers were much more in fear of them than they were of the cavalry.

“Bring along the Feringhi,” shouted several, and firing became brisk and promiscuous.

“Help me up with the load of grain on to the mule,” shouted my sole remaining guard in choice Persian, which till now he had not used: the other fellow had joined the rest of the robbers.

I pretended to comply, and affected to be unable to even move it.

With a curse he drew his knife and cut the bonds of the post-boy, and ordered him to assist him, placing his iron-headed stick on the ground. They struggled with the load, and I did a not very brave thing, but it was my only means of getting away—I seized the bludgeon and stunned my guard with it, and then the guide and I ran, under a brisk fire, for the cavalry. These men were now in retreat, and I was adjured by them to come along; but I could run no more, my stockinged feet being my only protection against the thorns; my feet were full of them, and I was now dead lame.

“Give me a horse,” I said.

“Run, sahib, they are on us,” said they.

I could not, however, and I replied, “I’m going back to the robbers,” and sat down. This was too much, and one of them dismounted and gave me his horse, running by my side. I now saw that we were rapidly moving off, pursued by the robbers; vague shooting out of all range was going on in every direction; and also as far as the eye could reach, isolated *footmen* with guns and sticks could be seen making the best of their way to the fight. Fortunately, we were mounted, for I could see two hundred men at least—they were *Bakhtiaris*. Discretion was decidedly the better part of valour.

After some three hours' cantering, we reached Yezdikhast at noon, and I was carried from my horse into a house; my feet, full of thorns, I was unable to put to the ground; my head, used to the protection of a sola topi, was covered only by a small pot hat of nammad, to the edge of which, when he gave it me, finding it did not fit, a friendly highwayman had given a gash with his knife, which enabled me to get it on. As he handed it to me, he made a significant gesture with his knife across his throat—a cheerful joke these men were prone to. I felt really ill after the excitement and exposure; for, though the nights were cold, the sun in the morning was very strong, and my feet were very painful and swollen; I could not walk.

Two old women now busied themselves in extracting the thorns from my feet, and they had three hours' work. My feet were not right for a couple of months, and many thorns remained in. There were no horses in the post-house. I had no clothes and no money, and I was anxious to get on. A nice position!

And now came a curious episode of want of hospitality on the part of the khedkhoda (head-man of the village). Although he had led the horsemen who rescued me, and might naturally expect a handsome present, he would not lend or sell me a rag, nor would he give me any refreshment, though he knew me perfectly well, and was quite aware of my solvency. Neither could I get any food from him. So there was nothing for it but to have myself carried to the chupperkhana, and get what I could from the postmaster, a poor villager. I did get some clothes from him, but they were not over-clean, and I then persuaded him to give me credit for a dinner and my

horse hire, and succeeded, after some wrangle, in a promise of both.

At a couple of hours after sunset, the khedkhoda sent me by a boy the leg of a fowl and a little rice; this I sent away, saying that he knew that was not the way to send me a dinner, and that I should report his conduct. I got some fried eggs and bread from the postmaster, and a few moments after a handsome Persian dinner was sent by the khedkhoda, who had become alarmed. He arrived himself, and smilingly motioned me to set to. I was so enraged at his treatment, that I emptied the dinner—rice, fowls, roast lamb, and melted grease—into his face, and threw the big copper tray after him, and he retreated humbled.

At dawn I started, accompanied by six guards, and passed the spot where I was looted thirty hours before. My guards did not leave me till I got to Maxsūd Beg, which is out of the dangerous part of the country, and I got to Kūmishah, where my patient was, without further adventure, in the afternoon; but I was compelled to ride with my feet out of the stirrup-irons, as I could not bear them to be touched, and they were much swollen. Here I was able to attend to my patient, who was in a sufficiently critical condition; however, I was in time, and he recovered.

In contradistinction to my treatment at Yezdikhast, the post-house keeper at Kūmishah lent me a brand-new suit of clothes, and provided me with food during my stay in Kūmishah; my patient was too ill for me to be his guest, and his servants had deserted him; this postmaster lent me also four pounds in silver. My friends in Ispahan sent me clothes, and on my patient's convalescence I rode in there after five

days.

As I came near Marg and approached a narrow pass called the Orcheeni, the gholam of the telegraph with whom I was riding pointed out, on the face of the cliff at the part where the road narrows, some dozen men with guns, crouched behind boulders and rocks.

“They are stopping the way, sahib; there are probably more in the pass, and if once we go in we shall be caught.”

Vacuus viator is all very well, but even though I had nothing left to be looted of, if I sang, I preferred not to do so *coram latrone*, so we turned off to the right by a camel road that also leads to Marg, keeping on quietly till we were detected, for at first the thieves could not see that we had left the road; but as soon as they did, they rushed out to cut us off; the distance was the same for both, but we were mounted, and we screwed a canter out of our steeds and got safely away. I met with no further adventure on that journey to Ispahan, but my experience of Oriental brigands is not a pleasant one. Of course it is much pleasanter to pose as a hero; but with my revolver, had I fired on being surrounded, I should have been blown out of my saddle.

Captain Pierson, then acting director, wished to send in a claim for compensation to the Persian Government, but this was not done. Had I been a Russian subject it would have been otherwise. The value of all my kit was, however, repaid to me.

Nothing more at the time was heard of the robbers; no effort was made to arrest them. The country was at that time demoralised by the terrible famine, but afterwards four of my thieves fell into

the hands of the king's uncle, the present Governor of Shiraz; he is a severe man, and they (including Lutf Ali) were built up alive in brick pillars on the high-road just outside Abadeh, and left to die gradually, perishing as their victim the Syud did. The pillars and bones may be seen on the roadside, and, like our old gibbets, are a terror to evil-doers.

CHAPTER XXV.
SHIRAZ.

The Muschir—His policy and wealth—His struggle with the king's uncle—He is bastinadoed—His banishment to Kerbela—The Kawam—Mirza Naim—Siege of Zinjan—Cruelties to Mirza Naim—Reply to an author's statement—Cashmere shawls—Anecdote—Garden of Dilgoosha—Warm spring—"Sau-Sau-Rac"—The Well of Death—Execution—Wife-killing—Tomb of Rich—Tomb of Hafiz—Tomb of Saadi—A moral tale—Omens—Incident at tomb of Hafiz.

The two principal men of Shiraz are the Kawam, [24] the calamter or mayor of the town, in whose family the dignity has been for some generations hereditary; and the Muschir,[25] an aged official who has held all the offices of the province of Fars: he has farmed the customs, collected the revenue, been the minister (really responsible Governor) of the young prince during his nonage, he has even been Governor himself; rising from a small official, Abol Hassan Khan has succeeded in enriching himself and at the same time making many friends and dependants; his rivals have generally gradually succumbed to his vigorous policy, and the free system of bribery at Teheran adopted by the Muschir has generally removed them from his path; when that has failed he has not scrupled to have recourse to other measures. Careful to allow himself to be looted, at times nearly ruined, by the powerful king's uncle, the Hissam-u-Sultaneh, he has always thus secured a friend at court, and while feathering his own nest during the

governorship of the Zil-es-Sultan, he has always satisfied the young prince by large subsidies. Having several daughters, all ladies of mature age and all married save the favourite child—for whom he obtained the title of Lika-ul-Molk—on the Muschir's death, the Governor of Shiraz, whoever he may happen to be, will have a gigantic prize. After fifty years of successful official life the savings of the old man must be enormous; besides his own estates, which are very large, he inherited the entire property of his brother, a very wealthy man, and much of that of his son-in-law, the late Governor of Fussa. In 1879 and 1880, however, came an evil day for him. Khosro Mirza, the Motummad-ul-Molk and uncle of the king, was made Governor of Fars. This powerful and politic prince had on a previous occasion been compelled to leave Shiraz, and was subsequently deprived of his governorship by the successful intrigues of the Muschir, whose son-in-law, specially kept at Teheran for the purpose of having access to the royal ear, had administered on the Muschir's behalf bribes to the king, to such an amount as to induce the Shah to deprive his uncle of his governorship, and to appoint a man of straw, thus giving the real power into the hands of the Muschir. And now came the day of reckoning. The Muschir became, as it were, a prisoner in his own house. The Kawam, his wealthy and ancient rival, was at once taken into the Governor's favour, and titles of honour and local governorships conferred on his son, a youth long supposed to be an idiot, but who now showed a capacity for Persian political life which astonished even his own people. The hungry sons of the Motummad, despatched into the richest governorships of the province, proceeded to fleece the dependants of the Muschir. And to be a

dependant, friend, or adherent of the old man became a crime.

Mirza Mahomoud, the secretary of the Muschir, was arrested, his house and property arbitrarily confiscated, and his accumulations wrung from him as the price of his life. And at last the Governor seized the Muschir himself, and actually administered a severe bastinado to his enemy, *now an old man of seventy-five*: the Muschir's life was also attempted by poison. All that could be confiscated was taken, the ready cash and jewels to an enormous amount became the property of the Motummad-ul-Molk (the king's uncle) and his sons, while claims were made against the Muschir for great amounts.

But though Khosro Mirza hungered for the old man's life, he had yet influence sufficient at the capital to preserve it, and an order came that the Muschir should retire to Kerbela (in Turkey), the shrine of the prophets Houssein and Hassan, there to end his life in prayer and repentance. But the Muschir may yet prove a thorn in the side of his enemies; he is now back in Shiraz and apparently inactive.

The Kawam (grandson of the celebrated Hadji Kawam of Shiraz, executed by boiling to death), after being for some years in the shade, through the successful intrigues of the Muschir, is now in the full blaze of power. His son has his foot in the stirrup of success, and he is the only local man in real power in the province of Fars. Rather boorish in manner, the Kawam is kind and honest, liberal and true to his adherents in adversity; it remains to be seen whether he will show the politic moderation of the Muschir, who never made an enemy unless he was able to remove him. The system of the Kawam has been to

strengthen his local influence by marriages of the various members of his family, and his open and honest, if at times obstinate, policy has made him many personal friends, more valuable than those of the Muschir, whose adherents were either mercenary or those who for their safety assumed the name.

The policy of the Governors of Fars has invariably been to play off the Kawam against the Muschir, so taking bribes from both, but never destroying either. However, one thing is quite certain, the Kawam is an old and honoured citizen of Shiraz without a personal enemy save the Muschir, while the latter does not possess a real friend, and being heirless may fall a victim to some unscrupulous Governor, who may take his life on some pretext, secretly or openly, for the sake of the pickings from his still gigantic estates.

Another grandee of Shiraz was Mirza Naim, the paymaster of the forces of Fars, a military officer of high rank and great age. (He was the general who in the time of the Baabi revolt besieged the walled city of Zinjan, the capital of a province of Persia held by those fanatics; the place was obstinately defended, the women even appearing on the walls, and fighting and dying for the sake of their ridiculous creed. On the taking of the city by assault, a kuttl-i-aum, or general massacre, was ordered, and the atrocities committed were too horrible to mention.) The Governor of Fars (at that time, 1870-5), the Zil-es-Sultan, wishing to wring a large fine, and a considerable sum of money supposed to have been appropriated by the paymaster-general, after numerous indignities placed Mirza Naim in a snow-chair—the man was seventy-five years of age—compelled him to drink water-melon juice, to

produce the well-known diuretic effect, and while the sufferer was frozen to the snow-seat, caused a dog to be placed on his lap, thus insulting his aged co-religionist. Although the man had borne these horrible tortures for some hours, he now consented to pay the sum demanded. Of course the result to his aged frame was not long in doubt; he soon succumbed to the effects of the injuries he received.

I am particular in describing his treatment from the Zil-es-Sultan, as it shows the improbability of the story told by a radical politician who recently travelled through Persia, and among other marvellous tales inserted the groundless calumny, seen at page 15, volume ii., of Mr. Arthur Arnold's 'Through Persia by Caravan,' in which he says, "A European doctor, to his shame be it said, talking one day with the Zil-i-Sultan [*sic*] upon the interesting topic of torture, suggested an ancient method which, we were told, at once struck the prince as applicable to the snowy regions of Ispahan. To draw the teeth of Jews who refused gifts to the Government was the practice in days when the civilisation of England was no more advanced than that of Persia; but I never heard before of stuffing a man's trousers with snow and ice as an efficient way of combating his refusal to pay a large demand in the season when the thermometer stands—as it does in Central Persia—for months below zero." Now, as possibly I may be alluded to under the vague title of "A European doctor," not many of whom exist in Persia to speak to the Zil-es-Sultan, and the story is glibly told by this author, yet I fancy that it will not be credited, even on the statement *of the retailer of scandals, said to be heard, through interpreters, from Orientals*; when it is considered that it was hardly needful to *apprise* the Zil-es-Sultan of a means of cruelty, since he was

so ingenious as to use the very same old method on a general of over seventy-five, *some years before—I being in Shiraz at the time, as the prince well knew—and the supposed refinement of cruelty no new thing to the prince*.[26] When an author swallows and repeats such yarns, as that one of our sergeants shot an unoffending Armenian, etc.—the unoffending Armenian and the shooting being alike myths (see vol. ii. p. 167, etc.)—one can only suppose that the capacity for swallowing such tough stories is equalled by the pleasure found in retailing them. Whoever the cap fits—and I do not believe it fits any one—it does not fit me, and I will not wear it. One can only pity a man who travels through a country, *mostly by night in a closed litter*, with his eyes very tightly shut and his ears very widely open, all whose facts are hearsay, and most of whose deductions are mistaken.

One of the means of making presents used by the great in Persia is the giving of Cashmere shawls; the gift of a shawl is supposed to be an honour as well as a money payment to the recipient. Among other presents made to me by the Persians in my professional capacity was a pair of handsome shawls; as it is not expected that these should be retained, and as they were useless to me as dress-stuffs, for which they are used by the upper classes in Persia of both sexes, I disposed of one for eighteen pounds in the bazaar to a merchant, and retained the other as a present to my mother. On taking it to England I was astonished to find that it was unappreciated, and still more surprised to learn that, as it was made in several strips, as are all the real Cashmere shawls that go to Persia, and fringeless, it was nearly absolutely valueless; in fact, one of the large West End drapers offered as a favour to give me thirty

shillings for it. I took it back to Persia, as my mother said it was useless to her, and sold it for twenty pounds, my servant probably making a five pound commission on the transaction.

Under the hills, some mile and a half from Shiraz, is the garden of the Dilgooshah, or "Heartsease," the property of the Kawam; in the middle is a large and solid brick building, having a small tank in the centre, the water flowing into which is warm, about 70° Fahrenheit. Above the tank is a dome, once decorated with a large picture of a battle; this was painted on plaster, but all, save a few pieces, has crumbled away. The garden is planted with orange-trees, and is very large.

Above the garden is the "Sau-sau-rac," or sliding-place; here for centuries the young of both sexes were accustomed to resort; the rocks slope sharply down, and generations of sliders have polished the stones till they have become like glass. After a breakfast at Dilgooshah, whenever there are children or young people, the whole party adjourn to the "Sau-sau-rac," and the juveniles, and not unfrequently the elders, run up the edge and, squatting at the top, slide rapidly down in strings, the whole tumbling over pell-mell at the bottom; the more adventurous slide down on their stomachs head downwards, but they generally squat and go down in strings for mutual safety; all, however, thus conduce to the polishing of the "Sau-sau-rac."

A difficult climb of three-quarters of an hour brought one to the Chah Ali Bunder, a well cut in the surface of the living rock; a huge square aperture yawns in the surface. The well was probably originally constructed to supply a mountain fastness with water (which was, I think, never reached); the

shaft is of great depth, and is popularly supposed to be without bottom. I have attempted to measure it by dropping a stone, but the echoes thus produced render it impossible. One hears no sound of water on throwing objects into it, and I have lowered six hundred yards of string, and the cord has remained still taut.[27]

There are no ruins round it, and this points to an unsuccessful boring for water. Such a position in the times previous to artillery—and it is only of very modern introduction in Persia—would have been, *if* supplied with water, almost, if not quite, impregnable, for the road up is very steep, and could easily be rendered quite impassable.

The use to which the Chah Ali Bunder is now put reminds one of the 'Arabian Nights'; it is the place of execution of faithless women. I am not sure whether it has been used within the last ten years for that purpose, I believe it has. But some seventeen years ago a friend of mine was present at such an execution. The woman was paraded through the town bareheaded, with her hair cut off, on an ass, her face being to the tail. She was preceded by the lutis or buffoons of the town singing and dancing, while the Jewish musicians were forced to play upon their instruments and join in the procession. All the rabble of the town of course thronged around the wretched woman. The ass was led by the executioner, and it was not till nearly dusk that the place of punishment was reached. The victim had been mercifully drugged with opium, and was probably unaware of her fate; she was ordered to recite the Mussulman profession of faith; this she was of course unable to do. Her hands were bound behind her, a priest recited the profession of faith in

her name, and the executioner, saying “Be-ro!” (“Get thee gone!”) by a touch of his foot launched her into eternity. Such executions are getting less common in Persia than formerly.

In Shiraz, where intrigues among married women are very rife, the husband’s relatives—and often the woman’s make common cause with them—generally take the matter into their own hands, and either fling the woman from a roof or into a well, or administer a dose of poison; the adulterer generally taking refuge in flight, or getting off with a severe bastinado if the affair is brought home to him; generally, however, such things are hushed up. In any case no notice is taken of them by officials, and no punishment is visited upon the actors in these private tragedies.

I had a man-nurse for my children, one Abdul Hamid, by trade a gold lacemaker, a native of Shiraz; he was the quietest and most humble of little men—nearly a dwarf. I was told by him a curious incident in his history. Marrying his cousin, a young and handsome Shirazi, she was not long faithful to him; and his mother, who is usually the master-spirit and guardian of her son’s honour in a Persian household, finding that the lady’s amours were becoming notorious, at length informed her son; there was unfortunately no room for doubt; the husband ran with his woes to his mother and brothers-in-law, respectable artisans; one of these the same evening brought some corrosive sublimate, and the girl’s own mother, her mother-in-law, her brothers, and her husband compelled her to swallow a fatal dose of the drug.

Although in a few days the affair was common bazaar talk, no notice was taken of the matter, the

thing being looked on as a natural ending to the woman's intrigue. I asked my man one day if the story were true; he replied, "Oh yes, sahib, it was her fate," and proceeded to inform me that he was on the best of terms with the family of his late wife.

In the garden of Jahn-i-ma (my soul) is the grave of Rich the traveller; he died in Shiraz when on his road home. Close to this garden, in a small cemetery having a mud mosque, is the monolith covering the grave of the poet Hafiz; it is a huge block of Yezd marble beautifully carved with verses from the writings of the poet. The Yezd marble is very similar in appearance to alabaster. It is a favourite place of resort of the literary, who may be frequently seen reading the works of the poet, and smoking or meditating over his tomb. Around him are buried many who look on his works as religious and inspired writings; some, and the major portion of educated Persians, simply consider Hafiz as an Anacreontic dreamer, and his works the ways of wickedness made bright.

A mile off is the tomb of Saadi, another poet, the author of the moral tales upon whose teaching the mental course of most Persians is guided. The first story forms the keynote to this system, and explains the otherwise mysterious course pursued by most Orientals, who usually prefer the crooked to the straight. The tale is well known, and I may be permitted to quote it from memory. All these "moral tales" are very concise. It is as follows:—

"Once a great king, having overcome his enemies in battle, caused the principal captives to be brought bound into his presence. On their arrival they commenced to revile him. The monarch, being ignorant of their language, turned to his minister and

requested him to explain their speech. The minister, instead of faithfully repeating their sentiments, said, that overcome with the magnificence of the king, they were expressing their astonishment at his greatness, and imploring his clemency. The king, pleased, ordered their release. The moral is, '*It is better to tell a lie that produces good, than to tell the truth which produces evil.*'"

Thus the tenets of the Persian sage and those of the Jesuits are similar. To do evil is lawful, if a greater good be the result. I fear the evil is often done without the expected good resulting.

A visit to the tomb of Saadi, or that of Hafiz, is common among the Shirazis for the taking of omens or "fal," as they are termed. For a few coppers the dervish who usually acts as guardian to the tomb produces his well-thumbed manuscript copy of the poet, and, after an invocation to the Deity, he thrusts his knife into the closed volume between the leaves. Taking the passage at the top of the right-hand page, he recites it to the anxious inquirers, and, if they be ignorant people, he generally manages to recite a passage favourable to their wishes. Nothing serious is done in Persia without the taking an omen, "fal," the casting of lots, "istikhara," or the decree of an astrologer. It was a common thing for a patient to tell me that the reason he consulted me was, that he had put all the names of the doctors of the town in a bag, and mine had been drawn. I also was commonly told that a man had refused his physic because the omen was against it. They will close a bargain or not by an omen, start on a journey or refrain from the same reason; and their action in such little doubtful points as the staking in games is ruled in the same manner. A common way to take an omen (in this

case “istikhara,” for “fal” is generally confined to the omen by the book, be it Hafiz, Saadi, or the Koran) is to grasp the rosary haphazard (every Persian man or woman carries a rosary) and count from the bead grasped till the end is reached—good—doubtful—no; the last bead reached being the decisive one.

On a taking the “fal” at the tomb of Hafiz by Captain T——, R.E., who was a gold medalist in Persian, a curious incident occurred. The old dervish, taking the book of poems between his palms, muttered the usual invocation to God, and opening the book proceeded to recite some stanzas highly favourable to Captain T——’s proceeding on his journey. But T——, taking the book from his hand, and looking only at the first line, closed the volume and recited from memory that line and some fifty that followed it. The dervish certainly was nonplussed. Here was a Feringhi, who could not make himself understood by even the servants (so different is the Persian of books and that learnt in India from the colloquial), reciting correctly, and with appropriate gesture, the poetry that he, the dervish, prided himself on being familiar with. His eyes rolled, he looked with astonishment on the gifted European, put his spectacles in his pocket, bowed, and disappeared, not even waiting for the present that he knew he could be sure of. We were naturally much surprised, but we were cognisant of Captain T——’s being well versed in the Persian classics; for did he not address my servant as “cupbearer,” “sorki”? and did he not request, to the man’s astonishment, when requiring beer, that he should bring “the soul-inspiring bowl”?—which phrases, being poetical, were quite as Dutch to the servant as if a London waiter were ordered to “fill high the bowl with Samian wine.”

Saadi, though more influencing the actions of the people, is less read by the upper classes than Hafiz, to whom are paid almost divine honours; and the humble tomb of the one, in its little unkept garden, is little visited, while the handsome stone over the grave of the other has generally a few reverent idlers round it.

CHAPTER XXVI.
SHIRAZ—PERSIAN CUSTOMS.

The Tazzia—Persian pulpit—Prince's flirtations—Month of mourning—Details of performance—Breast-beaters—Hymn in honour of the king—The performers—Processions—Detail of the tragedy—Interludes—Rosehkhaneh—The Ramazan—The Fast—Hospitalities—Zalābi—Religious affectation—Reading poetry—A paraphrase—A quotation—Books and their covers—Calamdans—Writing a letter—Sealing—Specimen of an ordinary letter—Apparent piety—The evil eye—Talismans—I procure one.

While in Shiraz I made my first acquaintance with the Tazzias, or religious representations, given by the grandees of the town, of the various histories from the Koran leading up to the climax, the tragedy of the saints Houssein and Hassan[28] and their wives and children.

Almost all of the wealthy did some public act or other in the Mohurrim, the month of mourning for the martyred saints. The tazzia, or dramatic representation, was given by the Zil-es-Sultan, the Governor, in the garden of his palace, on a very large scale indeed, and in a smaller way by the Muschir and the Kawam and others.

To the prince's tazzia I went by his invitation each day, and the young prince took great interest in the getting-up of the various scenes in the story.

A platform, some thirty yards square, was formed by placing together a number of takhts, or wooden

platforms. These were planked over, and a level stage made by placing on them big doors and planks. The whole was carpeted with thick felts, and at one corner was placed a pulpit, draped in black. This pulpit, like all Oriental ones, is merely a flight of wooden steps, some eight feet high, leading to a platform some two feet square, on which squats the preacher or reader, as the case may be. The stage is placed some twenty feet from the principal front of the prince's palace, the rooms of which thus form private boxes.

To the left spaces are roped off to accommodate the women, who pour in in hundreds; they are all closely veiled. In the lower room, also veiled, and facing the crowds of women, sit the prince's ladies. Above their apartment, at a large open window, is the prince himself, and during the waits, and sometimes even during the most pathetic parts, the young fellow amuses himself in ogling the ladies, the better-looking of whom seize these opportunities of raising their veils and casting coquettish glances in his direction. I have even known him, when very young, to have a basin of frogs handy, and he would toss the animals out among the thickest throng of the tightly-packed women, and shriek with laughter at the cries and confusion produced.

To the right of the platform were dense crowds of men, the common people of Shiraz, while several large rooms opening towards the stage were devoted to the invited of the better class, officials and courtiers.

The whole crowd were protected from the sun, rain, and wind by a huge tent provided for the purpose, and the raising of which had taken a hard week's work, all the soldiers of the two regiments in

the town being employed to aid an army of professional tent-pitchers. This tent was without walls, thus permitting the free ingress and egress of the performers of the tragedy and interludes, and the many processions of horses, soldiers, camels, etc. It was sustained by four huge masts.

During this month the whole of the community go into the deepest mourning. Black is the only wear, and the poor seize the opportunity to have their old clothes dyed, and so get an extra bit of wear out of them, the more ceremonious going into mourning some days before the commencement of Mohurrim, and remaining in black the whole even of the following month.

Behind the stage is raised a huge scaffolding, covered with red cloth, and hung with Cashmere shawls.

On this are arranged all the glass and crockery that the prince possesses, and all he can borrow by hook or by crook, all his mirrors, lamps, and chandeliers, and the whole are set off by rows of brass candle-lamps hired from the bazaar, the general effect being that of a very miscellaneous broker's shop. Considerable care is, however, devoted to this display, and its grandeur, or the reverse, is one of the subjects of town talk for a week.

The women having been crowding in from an early hour, the wives of the grandees and officials are accommodated with seats with the princess and her ladies, while the less favoured have places retained for them in good situations by their servants, and according to rank. As noon approaches every seat is taken, and the stage surrounded on all sides by a sea of faces, a path being, however, left all round it for the processions to advance and make the circuit of

the stage. All being now ready the band plays a march, a gun is discharged, and the Prince-Governor takes his place at his window.

A priest now ascends the pulpit, on the steps of which others are seated, while a crowd of lesser moollahs squat at the base. In a clear voice, every word of which is plainly heard in this assembly of many thousands, the priest recites the facts of the death of Houssein and Hassan. At the mention of these names the audience become overwhelmed with grief, and, baring their breasts, smite them, crying, "Ai Houssein, Wai Houssein, Ai Houssein jahn!" ("Oh, Houssein, Woe for Houssein, Oh, dear Houssein!") or at times join in the choruses led by organised mourners, who, with clenched fist or open hand, strike their breasts simultaneously at each mention of the names Houssein Hassan, Houssein Hassan, till they are out of breath, and their crimson and bruised chests force them to desist, with one final shout or shriek of "Houssein." Half-a-dozen volunteers (these generally dervishes), as the sainted names are pronounced by the hundreds of voices, strike themselves over each shoulder with heavy chains. All the beholders are gradually worked up into a state of excitement and enthusiasm, and the descriptions of the saints and their children's sufferings make even the heart of the European listener sad.

And now a curious chant in honour of the king is sung by a band of youths; after this the priests leave the stage, and the professional exponents of the drama make their appearance dressed to sustain the characters of the day. Small boys, chosen for their clear and sympathetic voices, from among the singers of the town, sustain the little parts of the

granddaughters and grandsons of the prophet.

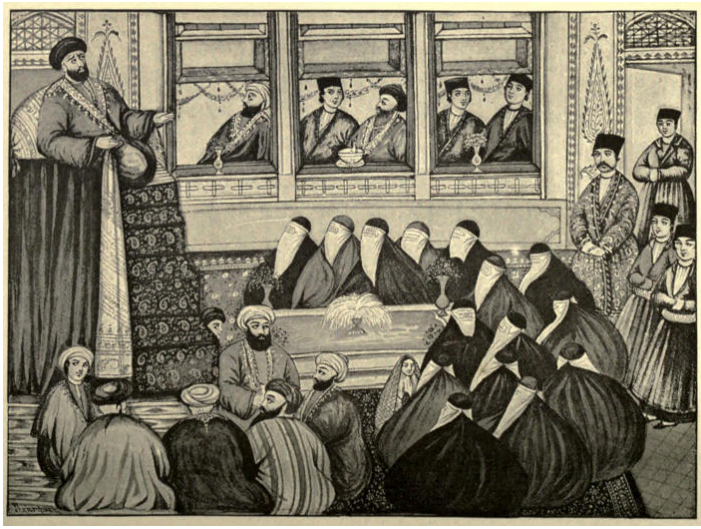
The wives are veiled, and these characters are played by bearded men, as are the angels and prophets, who are also veiled by glittering handkerchiefs.

Yezeed, the infidel king, and Shemr, the actual slayer of the saint, are clad in gay attire, booted and helmeted, and, with shirts of chain-mail on, rant as do the heroes of a Surrey melodrama; but the language is effective, the action rapid, and the speeches, though often long, accompanied by vigorous pantomime.

There are no actual acts, no scenery, no curtain, but as each scene terminates the actors leave the stage; and a long procession of horses, camels, and litters and biers, on which are carried the kotol (dummies) of the dead saints, enters with much noise, music, shouting, and drumming; followed and preceded by the volunteer mourners and breast-beaters, shouting their cry of Hous-s-e-i-n H-a-s-san, Houss-e-i-n H-a-s-san, and a simultaneous blow is struck vigorously by hundreds of heavy hands on the bared breasts at the last syllable of each name. Continual flourishes are played by the band, and the noise is deafening, the excitement contagious.

The actors are mostly well up in their *rôles*; many of those sustaining the principal characters have come from Ispahan, where the tradition of the tazzia is handed down from father to son; and year by year they have played the mournful tragedy, making it a business as well as a religious act. They are fed, dressed, and paid by the Governor. The numerous bands of well-drilled supernumeraries who combat on the stage are eager volunteers. Each speaking

actor carries his part written out on a small scroll on the palm of his hand, and calmly reads it when memory fails him. Each act lasts from two to four hours. The drama itself goes on for from a week to twelve days, and various interludes and acts of it are performed; the most popular being the wedding of Kasim, from the great amount of spectacle, the death of Houssein, the death of Ali Akbar, and the Dar.



A ROSEH KHANA, OR PRAYER-MEETING.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

This latter is more than usually comic, and relates to the supposed conversion and immediate martyrdom of a Christian ambassador; the former of which is effected by the sight of the head of Houssein. The deaths of the various saints (imams) are portrayed with a ridiculous minuteness, but so excited are the audience that they do not appear to cause amusement. Thus, on the death of Ali Akbar, he enters wounded and thirsty, and beats off some

thirty assailants, then after a long speech exits; then enter more assailants; re-enter Ali Akbar, covered with arrows sewn on his clothing to the number of sixty or so. He puts his assailants to flight, killing several, is wounded, exit. Re-enter Ali Akbar, long speech; he has now only one arm, puts assailants to flight, speech, exit; re-enter *armless*, his sword *in his mouth*.

Enter a murderer. They fight. The murderer is slain.

Enter thirty assailants. At last Ali Akbar, after rolling up and down the stage, is killed, to the immense relief of everybody.

His head is stuck on a long spear, the band strikes up, the mourners shout *Houssein! Hassan!* for ten minutes, and the drama for the day ceases.

There are other irregular interludes, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, etc. Some of the scenes are very comic; as that between Yezeed the tyrant and his physician.

On the day when the martyrdom of Houssein himself is portrayed, the place is thronged. The cruel Shemr, generally very vigorously represented, is at times roughly handled by the mob. The crowd are often regaled with sherbets by the personage at whose cost the tazzia is given, also pipes, and even coffee; and the amount expended in pipes, coffee, tea, etc., to the numerous guests is very considerable indeed.

Almost every house has its rosehkhaneh, or reading of prayers and Scripture. These are generally given either to men or women; and in the latter case, female readers and singers are employed. When given to men, the moollahs officiate; and the reading

takes place from a pulpit hung with black, the roofs being crowded with rows of veiled women.

The tazzias are not approved of by the higher classes of the priesthood, but custom has made the people cling to them, and each small village has its local tazzia. Wherever a tazzia or rosehkhaneh is held, small black flags are exhibited at the door, and any one walks in. By the performance of the tazzia the commemoration of the death of Houssein and Hassan is annually brought home to the Shiah Mahommedan, and the more fanatical yearly hold a sort of Guy Fawkes day, when a *comic* tazzia, in ridicule of Omar, is held, and the (from their point of view) usurper is finally conducted to the infernal regions by the devil in person.

During the greater part of Mohurrim bands of boys visit the houses of their quarter singing a long chant commemorative of the death of the martyrs, and collecting a few pence at its conclusion.

The month of Ramazan is the fasting month of the Persians, and the great majority of the people rigorously observe it, tasting no food *nor water*, nor even smoking, from sunrise to sunset. Of course when the month falls in the summer the penance is much more serious.

The more ascetic go “peishwaz,” that is, observe the fast a few days before it is really in force.

Only the sick, very aged, young children, and travellers are exempt, and no one dares to openly break it, though, of course, many of the more advanced or irreligious do so in secret.

In the night, an hour before dawn, the cry is, “Oh, water, water and opium!” This is the warning given

to the people to take their last snack, the farewell cup of tea and pipe; and a copious draught of water and an opium pill are generally swallowed just at the gun-fire which announces daybreak.

Now the fast commences, and all compose themselves to sleep. At nine or ten the usually early rising Persian gets up and prepares to maunder through the day. He does no business save that which it is absolutely impossible to avoid. Half the shops in the bazaar are shut, or only opened for a few hours; the Government offices are closed the greater part of the day; everything is put off "*until after Ramazan*."

Towards the latter part of the afternoon the streets become thronged; as sunset approaches every one gets more lively, and at the fire of the sunset gun the longed-for pipe is seized, a cup of tea taken, and in half-an-hour every one sits down to a heavy meal.

Many parties are given in this month, the guests generally spending the night at the host's house.

A peculiar form of eatable, called zalābi, is prepared during Ramazan. A thin paste of starch and sugar, mixed with sesamun oil, is poured in streams upon heated copper trays, and a kind of fritter produced, which is delicate-looking and rather appetising. When eaten it is served cold.

A particular Mahommedan will not swallow his own saliva during this month; and riders may be seen during Ramazan with their mouths and nostrils carefully covered by the end of their turban, or by a handkerchief, thus in their idea preventing the breaking of the fast by the swallowing of dust, or animalculæ invisible to the eye. Generally, however, this is merely affectation of religious scruple.

The most severe trial, however, setting apart the *thirst* produced in hot weather, is the abstention from smoking; and a merchant or shopkeeper, who has the tube of a water-pipe between his lips eight hours out of the twenty-four, really suffers considerable inconvenience from a fourteen hours' abstention.

The long nights of Ramazan are enlivened by numerous festivities; dinner-giving takes place throughout the month, and the number of pipes smoked till two A.M. is considerable. The story-tellers are now in great request, and drive a roaring trade going from house to house. Poetry, too, is much recited and read aloud, the favourites being Saadi, Hafiz, and Firdūsi. Story-books, cheaply printed and roughly illustrated, are much read. They mostly contain short tales.

Here is one paraphrased, with a facsimile of the rude woodcut illustrating the tale. I must premise that Mortaza Ali, the fourth successor and son-in-law of Mahomet, was assassinated by a fanatic; the caliphate having been previously usurped by Omar and Abubekr, an old man the father-in-law of Mahomet, who succeeded the prophet on his death. (So say the Shiah sect.)

Abdul, a lazy peasant, lay
A-snoring half the livelong day;
His thrifty wife to scold began—
"Arise, and work, O lazy man."
Yawning, he rose, and, stretching, spake,
While half asleep and half awake,
"Ah, little wife, why should I rise?"
"To earn our bread," the girl replies.
"Know, woman, if we work or not,
In winter cold and summer hot,
Great Allah feeds his slaves, and he

Will surely feed both you and me."
The youthful peasant kissed his wife,
Then sallied forth in dread of strife.
With merry song and joyous lay,
Abdul beguiled the dusty way.
At length he reached a spreading plane,
"Beneath thy shade I will remain;
A brooklet and a shady tree,
There is no better place for me."
He laid him down prepared to doze;
But suddenly he quickly rose,
And clambering the plane in fear,
Espied a dervish drawing near.
The dervish had the dullard air,
The maddened look, the vacant stare,
That bhang[29] and contemplation give.
He moved, but did not seem to live;
His gaze was savage and yet sad,
What we should call stark-staring mad.
All down his back his tangled hair
Flowed wild, unkempt; his head was bare;
A leopard's skin was o'er him flung,
Around his neck huge beads were hung,
And in his hand—ah! there's the rub—
He carried a portentous club,
Which Abdul's eye had caught, you see,
And this is why he climbed the tree.
The dervish stopped and gazed around,
Then flung himself upon the ground.
"I ne'er have seen in God's creation
A fitter spot for meditation."
Smiled at the turf which 'neath him lay,
And said, "Yes, here I'll spend the day."
This Abdul heard, and shook with fear,
While from his eye there fell a tear.
"Oh, heaven!" exclaimed the trembling wight,

"He may, perhaps, too, stop the night."
...
The dervish, squatting in the shade,
Five puppets small of clay has made;
And to the first he spake: "To thee
I give the name of Omar. See,
The second's Ali Mortaza,
The mighty prophet's son-in-law.
You, Abubekr, are the third"—
Abdul craned out his neck and heard;
"The fourth the prophet's self shall be"—
Abdul here groaned, and shook the tree.
The dervish paused, then gave a nod,
"The fifth one—yes—the fifth one's God."
Poor Abdul heard the blasphemy,
And shook with fear and agony.
"Ah," quoth the dervish, "Omar; well,
You doubtless grill in deepest hell;
You robbed our Ali—I have smashed you;
Had Ali pluck he might have thrashed you.
Ali; could you do naught yourself to save
From murder and an early grave?
Ah! Islam's head too weak to rule,
I fear you were a torpid fool—
Half-hearted idiot—bah—pooh"—
He raised his club—"I smash you too.
And you, old Abubekr—triple ass,
Could you not aid him? I'll not pass
You over,—there, take that!"
And Abubekr got a spiteful pat.
"While as for you," the dervish cried—
Here Abdul's ears were opened wide—
"Oh, prophet, you at least did *know*,
Why didn't you avert the blow?
In highest heaven you sat and saw;
But didn't help your son-in-law."

Down came the club with heavy thud,
The prophet was but flattened mud.
The dervish turned him, bowing low,
"Allah," he cried, "from you I'll know
Why *you* did nothing; like the rest,
You were a lazy God at best.
When all mankind are in Thy hand
Why not despatch an angel band?
Or bid the earth to open wide
And swallow Omar in his pride?
What, silent too! ah, senseless clod!"—
The dervish raised his club to God.
Here Abdul screamed, and shouted, "Hold!
Ah, had you smashed *Him*—over-bold
And brainless dervish—as before,
Chaos would come again once more."
The dervish heard—"Azraël!"[30] he cried,
Stared, and sunk back, and, shuddering, died,
And gave up his reluctant breath,
Thinking he heard the voice of Death.
Then cautious Abdul reached the ground,
Looked on the dervish, gazed around,
And softly to himself did cry,
"'Tis certain there is no one by."
He searched the corpse, a purse appears,
And Abdul dries his frightened tears,
Hies to his smiling wife, says, "See!
From Allah, love, for you and me."
"Husband," quoth she, "God helps us all,
Both prince and beggar, great and small."
Abdul replied, "But, girl, you see,
God would have perished but for me!"



FACSIMILE OF RUDE PERSIAN WOODCUT.

The reading of poetry is much in vogue among the upper classes to *promote sleep*! and even the most ignorant can rattle off long recitations. So common is the habit of introducing poetry, that Europeans are looked on as very ignorant, because their conversation is prosaic; and one of the staff obtained quite a reputation as a well-read man in a curious manner. He was acquainted with one (*and only one*) verse of Persian poetry, a very well-known one. It was this:—

> "For the mole on the cheek of that girl of Shiraz
> I would give away Samarkand and Bokhara."

Now the gentleman, on the mention of the word mole, cheek, girl, Shiraz, Samarkand, or Bokhara, would instantly introduce the quotation; and as Shiraz was the town we lived in, and Central Asian affairs are continually on the tapis, Samarkand and Bokhara, unlikely words as they were for general conversation, were invariably introduced, and the inevitable quotation made. Unfortunately another member of the staff, jealous of his rival's reputation, betrayed him, and Othello's occupation went.

Books are treated with consideration in Persia. They are generally bound in boards, and these are

elaborately hand-painted, generally with representations of birds and flowers. From two kerans to two hundred may be paid for a pair of these boards. Sometimes a book is bound in leather. This is, however, less common, save for account-books. A sort of outer envelope of cloth or chintz is made, and the book enclosed in it, thus preserving the binding and work at the same time.

Great expense, too, is lavished on the pencase (kalam-dān); it is nearly always of papier-maché, about seven inches long, one wide, and one and a half deep; it draws open and contains the pens, which are reeds, an ivory or bone block for nibbing them on, a tiny spoon for moistening the ink, and a penknife, also the peculiar scissors for trimming paper. At one extremity is a small box of silver or brass containing a skein of silk, which absorbs a quantity of Chinese ink, and is wetted with the tiny spoon as it dries up. A roll of paper is also carried at the girdle, and a few adhesive strips of thin coloured paper are provided for the closing of letters.

When it is wished to write a letter, the Persian sits if he can, but this is not a *sine quâ non*; he tears from his roll of polished paper (made in the country) a piece of the needful size, and commencing in the right-hand top corner, he proceeds to fill his sheet, writing from right to left, and leaving at the left-hand side of his sheet a large margin of at least an inch; should he reach the bottom of the page, and have still more to say, he turns the paper round and proceeds to fill the margin. He then concludes, reads the letter, and with his scissors carefully trims off the torn edges, and cuts off all needless paper. If it be an important letter he now seals it at the right-hand bottom corner, or at the end; the sealing is often

repeated on the back, and is equivalent to our signature. He damps the paper with his tongue, inks his seal, breathes on it, and presses it sharply on the paper. A permanent and very distinct impression is the result. He now cuts a tiny piece off one corner, for to send a *four*-cornered letter brings ill-luck, the Persians say. The letter is either rolled up and squeezed flat, or folded as we should fold a spill; it is thus about three to four inches long, and half an inch to an inch wide. A strip of adhesive paper is rolled round it, and the end of this is sealed in the same manner as before. The letter is now addressed.

Titles are continually used in writing letters, and the language is usually high-flown and even bombastic. Thus an ordinary invitation to dinner would be couched from one merchant to another:—

"To the high, the great, the influential, the descendant of the Prophet Lord Ali Baba; please God you are in health. It is my representation that to-morrow your slave will be delighted to be honoured, in the house of your slave, with your illustrious and pleasant company to dinner. I trust your Excellency's health is good. I have no further representation to make."

Or after a long string of compliments and inquiries after the health of the correspondent, comes the "mutlub," or *essence* of the letter, which is expressed thus:—"and please send by bearer your horse. I have no further petition to make."

A Persian is apparently very pious in his conversation, the name of God being continually introduced, but these phrases have merely the meaning of affirmatives or negatives.

Thus:—"Inshallah (please God), you will ride out

to-morrow."

"Alhamdillillah (thank God), I have nothing to do. Inshallah, I will."

"Bismillah" (in the name of God), handing a pipe.

Friend admiring it: "Mashallah" (God is great). And so on.

Many of these phrases in which the name of God is used are with the intention of avoiding the evil eye. Nothing must be admired, *in so many words*, without one of these invocations.

Thus, one must not say, "What a fine boy!" on seeing a Persian son, but "Mashallah" (praise God). In fact, the word "Mashallah," engraved on gold or silver and ornamented with pearls, is commonly worn sewn to the caps of young children, and the word is often written and worn as an amulet to protect a fine horse. For the same reason a blue bead is often put in the tail of a horse, or sewn on the caps of the children of the poor. Cats' eyes are frequently worn for this protection from the evil eye, and a hand[31] with one finger extended I have seen used. This hand was, of course, quite different from the metal open hand which surmounts religious buildings and banners, all the fingers of which are extended. Talismans ("Telism") are constantly worn; they are generally enclosed in metallic cases and affixed to the arm ("Bazūbund"). They are often verses from the Koran, at other times merely figures rudely drawn, or a collection of letters placed in some eccentric figure, as the well-known Abracadabra; often the repetition of some of the names of God being simple invocations.

A Persian is very loath to let these talismans be seen. They are generally obtained from dervishes,

priests, or old women.

During the cholera time in Shiraz I was attending the daughter of the then high priest. I happened to see the old gentleman, who was sitting surrounded by a crowd of friends, petitioners, and parasites. He was writing charms against the cholera. I, out of curiosity, asked him for one; it was simply a strip of paper on which was written a mere scribble, which meant nothing at all.

I took it and carefully put it away. He told me that when attacked by cholera I had but to swallow it, and it would prove an effectual remedy.

I thanked him very seriously, and went my way. The next day he called on me and presented me with two sheep and a huge cake of sugar-candy, weighing thirty pounds. I did not quite see why he gave me the present, but he laughingly told me that my *serious* reception of his talisman had convinced the many bystanders of its great value, and a charm desired by an unbelieving European doctor must be potent indeed.

“You see, you might have laughed at my beard; you did not. I am grateful. But if I could only say you had eaten my charm, ah—then.”

“Well,” I replied, “*say* so if you like,” and our interview ended.

CHAPTER XXVII.
SHIRAZ.

Bagh-i-Takht—Jews' burial-ground—Christians' cemetery—Its desecration—Sergeant Collins's murder—Capture and execution of the robbers—How it was brought home to them—Memorial to Collins—Health of the staff—Persians as servants—Persian cuisine—Kabobs, varieties of—English dinners—Confectionery—Fruits—Vegetables—Pickles, etc.—Cook-shops—Trotters—Mode of selling meat—Game—Eggs—Wild vegetables—Potatoes—Disinclination to use new seeds, and its cause—Narcissus—General use of flower decoration—Tame birds—Wild birds—White ants—Damaging the line—Hamilton poles.

Behind the town of Shiraz, under the hills, lies the Bagh-i-Takht, or "throne garden." In addition to its large size, it is remarkable for a peculiar building on terraces, once very magnificent. These terraces are faced by a wall of glazed tiles, white, blue, black, and yellow. Placed behind a tank so large as to be almost a lake, this curious construction is reflected in the water, and presents a sufficiently strange appearance. On some of the terraces are rows of orange-trees, and on others a succession of fountains; these, alas! play no more. The terraces are very narrow, and do not at first strike the eye as such, and appear a many-coloured wall with rows of trees, apparently growing out of it, and the whole crowned by a lofty building, having more large trees within its walls, and then the sky; the reflection of this and its consequent doubling forms a very striking, if rococo,

picture. At either side is a lofty summer-house of several stories, and at the further corners of the tank are low towers, which serve as points of vantage from which the curious view can be admired.

The whole is more like a representation made upon screens of canvas than a solid structure, and it looks like the pictures exhibited at the Surrey Gardens in old days, from which the beholders were delighted with the fireworks and siege of Badajos, or the storming of Chusan. The place is indeed often used for the display of fireworks, and a really grand effect is obtained, of course doubled by the reflection in the water.

To the right of this garden lies the Jews' burial-ground, marked merely by a few small flat stones with Hebrew characters on them. The grass and weeds grow luxuriantly, and one has almost to search for the place, but it is a large and ancient graveyard.

Behind the garden, on the surface of the hill, is the place used by the Christians as a cemetery. Here lie Captain Chambers and Mr. H. V. Walton, the maid-servant of the latter, and several children of the staff; also some Armenians. The place, like the Jews' burial-ground, lay open, on the face of the hill, unremarked and unvisited; but unfortunately a subscription was raised, and a huge mud wall with four towers was erected, also a small doorway and a stone door. Then followed what was certain to take place—the graves were desecrated by the Persians; every little tombstone and memorial was broken into pieces; even the bricks were torn from the bricked graves and flung about, and the Christian burial-ground became the favourite drinking-place of the loafers of the town. Away from all habitation as it

was, and surrounded by a high wall, it was a place of security for the holding of the drunken revels of the worst of the rabble; and this was all caused by the unfortunate wall. In this ground also lies Sergeant Collins, who was murdered about fourteen miles from Shiraz, while I was in the place.

Sergeant Collins was one of the inspectors of the line, and of great personal bravery. He was an old soldier of the best type, rough, but honest and thorough, and ever doing his duty. He had had a hard life as a sapper, having been through the China war, and had nearly completed his service for pension. Sergeant Collins was upon the road, accompanied by his wife, with two servants, a man and woman, and a muleteer and his boy. The country was disturbed, and he should doubtless have been accompanied by a guard, but this precaution was not taken.

The sergeant, who was weak and ill at the time, was lying upon the bedding thrown on a baggage-mule, being too weak, from a recent attack of fever and ague, to sit his horse. His muleteer suddenly shouted to him, “Sahib, they have blocked the road.” Collins sat up on his mule and saw some men in front of him covering him with their guns. These commanded him to get down; the only reply that he made was to tell them to be off, and to fire his revolver twice at them. It appeared that the second shot slightly wounded one of the men. The thieves now rushed in, firing as they came; more thieves closed in from behind and also fired. Collins was hit in two places, and death must have been instantaneous, as a *post-mortem* examination I made two days after, when the body was brought in, showed that one bullet passed into the brain, and

another fired from behind entered the chest. He fell at once, and the ruffians rushed in and beat the body with their iron-headed bludgeons, breaking one arm. They then blindfolded his Armenian wife and his two servants, and carried them some distance off the road, where they detained them till after midnight. The dead body was also dragged off the road itself. Some time elapsed ere the murderers could be brought to justice.

Five of these came to a dismal ending. One died in some weeks from a gunshot wound; it was said that this was from one of the shots fired by Collins. One committed suicide when the Persian authorities had made the pursuit very hot. This is a most unusual thing in the East. Three others were after considerable trouble arrested, and thrown into the jail at Shiraz.

Mirza Hassan Ali Khan, C.S.I., then British Agent at Shiraz, had to bring considerable pressure on the Persian authorities to get justice done, but was at last successful. Of course there was no moral doubt as to the guilt of the three murderers, but to bring it home to them definitely was no easy matter. To cause the men to be executed was simple enough; the Governor of the town would have been quite pleased to oblige in such a trifling matter; but no example would be made, and the men would be looked on as martyrs, who had suffered from pressure brought by the English Minister at Teheran. In a civilised country these men would doubtless have escaped, but in Persia, justice, though at times very blind, is never slow, unless her palm is greased. Great dissatisfaction was felt among us all that these men should be allowed to escape, yet there seemed no way of bringing the matter home to them. At last

artifice was used by the Governor. I was not present, but substantially what took place was the following, and my informant was well posted, and said he saw it all. The three men being brought into the Governor's presence, he smilingly asked them how they liked prison. Of course they immediately began to assert their innocence, and to call heaven to witness it. "Ah, my friends," said the Governor, "I, too, am a Mussulman. We are all Mussulmans here—an unbeliever more or less does not much matter. I shall not really punish but reward you. That you killed the Feringhi there is no doubt; I *must* punish you *nominally*. I shall cut off a joint from a finger of each of you; but your dresses of honour are ready. Clothed with these you will be immediately liberated; and now, my children, tell me all about it; how did you manage it, eh?" The astonished and delighted prisoners fell into the trap, and vied with each other in giving the details. "The European fired twice from one pistol—may we be your sacrifice—and we all fired at once, rushing in on him. He was but a European. We trust in the clemency of your Highness—may we be your sacrifice," etc. The Governor had now succeeded in bringing the murder home to the three men. From this they did not deny it, but gloried in the fact, gloating over the details. In a few moments they were taken into the public square and their throats cut.

A red granite tablet was subscribed for by the engineer officers and non-commissioned officers in Persia, and placed in the Armenian church at Shiraz, to commemorate the death of Sergeant Collins while gallantly defending his life against long odds. Probably had he not been weak and ill at the time the result might have been widely different, for he was pluck personified, and a dead shot with gun or

pistol, and he had both.

Subsequently we lost another of the sergeants, who was shot in the Ispahan section, but as he was almost insane at the time, and his assailant was unaware of his derangement, there is nothing to be said but that it was a misfortune. It says much for the Persians and also for the staff, that these were the only two deaths by violence that occurred in a period of seventeen years. Although nearly all of the staff were much on horseback during the whole of this time, no accidents occurred worthy to be called so. And the general health has been remarkably good.

Fever and ague, and at times dysentery, have been common, but otherwise the health of the staff has been wonderfully good; far better, in fact, than it would have been in Europe, for the mortality has been very low indeed. A peculiar immunity from the attacks of intermittent fever, to which we were nearly all subject, was seen in the cases of European females, who seldom suffered from it. But the climate was not favourable to young children, who were much affected by the sun, against which sufficient precaution was rarely taken.

The ordinary run of Persians make very smart servants, and, unlike the Indians, they are ready to turn their hands to anything; their strong points are their power of bearing fatigue, their capabilities as cooks under adverse circumstances, and their honesty as to the property of their masters. As in other countries, the fewer they are the more work they do. The native mode of cookery is extravagant, and possibly a little greasy, but it is very varied. Rice is the basis of at least three-fourths of the dishes, and as this seldom exceeds a penny a pound, a little money goes a long way. Pillaw, or rice boiled and

served with clarified butter and containing lamb, mutton, venison, fowl, or partridge; seasoned with herbs, spices, orange-peel, raisins, pomegranate juice, plums, or unripe grapes, form a curious variety; while chilaw, or rice plain boiled, and served with the various kūrusht, or *entrées*, consisting of much-flavoured plats as "ghari" (curry), boiled lamb, or mutton, or fowl, or partridge; with sauces of pomegranates, unripe grapes, plums, young almonds, apricots, or lemon-juice; and the concentrated gravy covered with a layer of melted fresh butter, form another section. All kinds of meats are also served roast.

Then there are the varieties of Dolma; these consist of meat finely minced with raisins, almonds, spices, and rice, and packed in a case of boiled cucumber, or marrow, or tomato; and served hot with some rich sauce or gravy.

Then come stews or ragouts in infinite variety. Then meat balls or cakes fried or served in pillaws with pungent vegetables, as the nohl-kohl, forming the Kalam pillaw.

All English vegetables are found except the parsnip.

There are numerous dishes with eggs for a basis; fried sweetmeats and baked ones whose names are legion; *petits pâtés*, or "boorak," containing highly-flavoured mincemeat; and confections, jams, and sweetmeats without end. Delicious but cloying, these dishes give a wonderful choice, and they are very ornamental.

The different pillaws are fragrant steaming heaps of rice of varied colours, from pure white to the bright green of the Schevid, and the yellow of the

orange, and the parti-colour of the Palangi pillaw, whose red and yellow steaming pile delights the Shirazi.

But the real triumph of the Persian cook is in his kabob. No eater of juicy steaks, no consumer of mutton-chops done to a turn in famed coffee-houses off silver gridirons, can in the wildest flight of fancy approach the idea of the succulence of the kabob. Tenderness and digestibility here approach their highest pitch, and the acme of *roasts* is reached.

Small pieces of lamb-meat are cut from the little lamb of six weeks old, either fresh slaughtered or well hung, both being equally tender; these are thrust upon a flat sharp skewer previously rubbed with an onion, with a tiny piece of the delicate tail fat between each; the skewers are rapidly rotated over a fierce charcoal fire until the kabobs are browned; then, still smoking, they are placed before the diner and eaten with bread and salt. This is the real kabob, it is the king of viands, and above praise. It can be obtained at any time, and only requires a lamb, a fire, and a skewer.

Numerous modes of painting the lily are in use amongst the Persians. The meat is sauced with lemon-juice and onions overnight, or dusted with pounded figs, or dipped in lemon-juice and saffron, or packed in ice to produce a certain crispness.

The *bazaar-kabob* is simply a paste of chopped meat, very finely divided and flavoured with onions; this is pasted over the flat skewers, toasted, placed on a hot flap of bread, the skewers withdrawn, and the whole eaten with mint, sorrel, or cresses and salt.

A fair road cook, *when posting*, will give his master a dinner of three or four courses, and on the march

the meals are little inferior in variety and goodness to those served at the home. Most of the cooks in good European employ can cook an ordinary English dinner; my own man had some two hundred receipts from Acton's book, and used to give us all the usual English viands as well as Persian dishes.

Persian confectionery has attained a high pitch of excellence, everything being pretty to the eye; but they have little idea beyond the flavour of lemon-juice, so that most of their efforts are sickly sweet. Toffee ("sowan") is well made and like our own. Their ices and sherbets (syrups in iced water) are excellent. Jams are numerous and good; conserves of melon and cucumber, also citron, are made. Dried fruits are abundant; cherries, apricots, peaches, apples. Pickles are made in all the varieties, similar to English ones, but in addition grapes, oranges, apples, lemons, aubergines, chillies (green), and tomatoes are common pickles.

Dried and salted fish are much used, but fresh-water fish are little valued, except the salmon and the trout.

Dried prawns and shrimps are carried all over the country from the Persian Gulf.

Dates are the *staple* in the south of Persia, and form a large portion of the food of the poor all over the country. Fresh and preserved dates are a dessert luxury. Melons, pumpkins, water-melons, are much consumed, while all the common English fruits, save the gooseberry, currant, and medlar, are cheap and within the reach of all; as are also grapes, in endless profusion, peaches, nectarines, and apricots.

The bamiah (lady's finger) and aubergine are additions to the usual English list of vegetables, and

the nohl-kohl is in common use, while radishes the size of a fist are a common food of villagers.

Cheese and butter are cheap, being about twopence a pound, while flour in the great cities seldom exceeds a penny a pound (bread is the same price), and in villages is much cheaper.

With all these things to be got, Persia is really the poor man's paradise; in fact, *to live in, the cheapest country in the world*.

Tea and coffee are much drunk; the prices are those of Europe for tea, but the best *Mocha* coffee is only a shilling a pound. The only dear necessaries are lump-sugar and European candles. Good wine may be got for from threepence to one shilling a quart, and native arrack is from one-and-threepence to one-and-ninepence a bottle.

In the bazaar are cook-shops where the labouring people resort; here are sold bowls of soup, pillaws, kabobs (a separate trade), and a cut off a sheep roasted whole may be had in Ispahan. The trade of kalleh-puz, or cooker of sheep's heads and feet, is a common one; the head and feet of sheep are slowly simmered for some twelve hours, and the liquor sold as soup; the feet, tongues, and heads being retailed to peripatetic vendors. The butchers sell by weight, and have no idea of joints; the buyer is allowed to hack off a large or small portion, and price is the same, irrespective of part. The liver, lights, and kidneys, with the heart, are only eaten by the poor, while the suet is carefully removed for the candle-maker, and can only be had at a higher price than the meat. The huge tail of the Persian sheep is looked on as a delicacy, and a portion is allotted to each buyer.

The sheep are well slaughtered at the public slaughter-houses outside the town, and nowhere else; a tax of ninepence is levied on each carcase. When hung outside the shops of the butchers, the carcases are decorated with strips of Dutch foil and bunches of grass.

The oxen, being used as beasts of draught in the fields, are only slaughtered when worn out, and beef is consequently only eaten by the poor, being as a rule half the price of mutton. It is hard and indigestible, and as the Persians never hang their meat it is deservedly despised. Lamb is twice the price of mutton. Among the Christians of Julfa, however, good beef is at times to be obtained, but the animals are seldom larger than Alderneys, save when buffalo-meat is had, and this is hard and dark.

Game is frequently sold alive, being netted by the villagers, quails and partridges being thus disposed of; the usual price is four for ninepence. Wild ducks and geese are sold for a few pence; also sand-grouse. Sparrows, too, are particularly valued for soup for invalids, and are sold alive by the hundred. There are no rabbits; hares being what is termed machrore, or uneatable, in contradistinction to nejis, or unclean, are only eaten by the irreligious; the price is usually fourpence to sixpence.

Of course pork is not seen, pigs not being kept, and the flesh of the wild pig is black and indigestible. Pork, however, is looked on as an aphrodisiac, and the Europeans are constantly asked for small pieces of it.

Tame ducks, save in Teheran, are unknown, and turkeys are also very scarce.

Eggs, generally forty to sixty for the keran

(ninepence), are brought in by the villagers; the prudent Ispahani always tests his eggs by dipping in water—a very sure test—those that float being addled. Wild rhubarb (rivend), celery (jai-sheer), and chardons, also a kind of truffle, are hawked by boys; the wild onion, too, is looked on as a delicacy.

Mushrooms are found of large size, and are much appreciated. Potatoes are now coming into common use among the Persians; they cost a farthing to a halfpenny per pound for very fine samples of the tuber. Some fourteen years ago they were only cultivated for sale to Europeans, and were very rare and dear. Strawberries are gradually coming into cultivation near the capital. There are no raspberries. The Persians are loath to try new seeds or vegetables. Although I grew green peas in Ispahan, and offered to give the seeds to market-gardeners there, they would not take them. For, said they, “If the prince hears that I grow peas, I shall be obliged to present them to him, and he will never pay me anything, and when the crop is over, probably beat me because I have no more.” The yield of vegetables from native seed is generally very large: the Turkish cabbage grows to a size of twenty-eight pounds per head and quite white, close, and tender.

The Persians never reduce the amount of fruit or vegetable crop to produce a *fine* product; all things being sold by weight and at a standard price, quantity, not quality, is what is aimed at.

The narcissus and cyclamen grow wild; huge bouquets of the blooms of the former are brought in in early spring, and sold for a few farthings: every room at this time, even that of the poorest labourer, is decorated with this flower. The moss-rose and common pink are also everywhere sold; most of the

stalls of the bazaar-men are decorated at least with one, sometimes with many, bouquets of common flowers. These men, too, have talking larks, nightingales, or parrots hung in cages over their shops, or, at times, turtle-doves.

A favourite pet among the Persians is the red-vented date nightingale. This bird lives on dates alone, and is brought from Southern Persia, below Kazerān. The owner places a date and water in the cage, and after a day or two leaves the door open. The bird flies away, but returns several times in the day, and always sleeps in his cage, for nowhere else will he find his food of dates.

Rats, save the Jerboa rat of the desert, are unknown; the arid plains probably preventing their immigration. Mice, of course, swarm, and the many ruins which appear all over the country are full of owls, ravens, and foxes. Choughs abound in certain places, notably on a high rock near Sivend, between Shiraz and Ispahan, on the high-road. Each town has its special bird that teems there, as in Ispahan, magpies, and in Hamadan, doves.

Fly-catchers of many hues are seen hanging on the telegraph wires in hundreds, and the oriole is common in Shiraz; the nightingale in the gardens of Shiraz is literally as frequent as the sparrow in a London street.

The marshes teem with water-fowl—grebe, mallard, ducks, snipe, snippets, cranes, some very large, herons, flamingo, cormorants, geese, and teal, are common; while eagles of various kinds, hawks, some of immense size, and vultures are seen on every march.

In some places the white ant is common, and when

the telegraph-line was of wood, considerable damage was done; it is now, however, iron. Great diversity in the character of the natives is seen in the amount of damage done to the line. The turbulent native of South Persia always carries a gun, generally also pistols, and he has a peculiar delight in aiming at telegraph-poles, which he seems to consider as marks put up for his convenience. The pole is made in three pieces—a foot-plate (underground), a socket or holder of cast-iron, and a standard of wrought-iron. The marksmen soon found out that their bullets glanced harmless off the wrought-iron standard, but that a third shot, piercing the cast-iron holder, infallibly brought it down; of course its fall brought the wire with it, and frequent interruption was the result. From Kazerān to Bushire the poles were being continually replaced at great expense, and at length it was considered expedient to replace the ordinary iron telegraph pole by the ingenious “Hamilton” pole in places. This “Hamilton” pole consists of a strip of spiral wrought iron, exactly like a paper-spill in construction; these foil the marksmen: the bullet goes in one side and out the other, but the pole does not fall. I saw one five years ago with seventy-three holes in it, and it was as firm as ever, and is doubtless still standing.

This was one of the apparently trifling difficulties that had to be overcome in keeping up constant communication between England and India.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
BEASTS, BIRDS, FRUITS, AND FLOWERS.

Tamed pigs—"Marjahn"—Mongoose—Persian cats—Their value—Van cats—A fierce cat—How to obtain a Persian cat—Greyhounds—Toolahs—Watch-dogs—Monkeys—Tame lions—Tame and cage birds—Superstition concerning house-snakes—I kill a clockwinder—Wild ass—Fighting rams—Tame partridges—Gardening—Ordinary flowers—The broom-plant—Vine-culture—Quinces and pomegranates—Orchards—Garden parties.

Among the curious ideas that the Persians have, is that the presence of a pig in the stable is good for the horses' health. They say the "breath of the pig" does the horses good, and makes them thrive. I fancy that the real fact is, that the tame pig turns over the "pane," or dry horse litter, a great deal, and so prevents its rotting, and consequently saves the groom a large amount of work, for he has daily to spread the bed of "pane" used at night in the sun so as to thoroughly redry it. A good groom has always a large supply on hand, so as to give all the beasts warm, thick, and dry beds; a bad groom sells it off to the bath-keepers, and it is burnt by them as fuel.

Almost as soon as I had arrived at Shiraz my groom asked permission to buy a little pig; a tiny squeaker was brought and carefully nursed by him. These wild pigs are strangely thin, and as active as a terrier; they are very affectionate, and show it strongly to the horses and groom, all answering to the name of "Marjahn" or "Coral;" this is the

universal appellation of tame pigs—much on the principle that all waiters are William, all boots (or bootses) George, and all chambermaids Mary.

When the horses leave the yard they are accompanied by the pig, who is inconsolable if left alone in the stable, and shows his grief by piercing screams and attempting to scratch his way out. As long as even one horse is in the stable piggy is perfectly happy, and goes on sedulously rooting and turning over the “pane,” which is his continual amusement and occupation, and from which he removes any stray grains of barley.

I marched, when we all camped out on account of cholera, some twenty-eight miles: “Marjahn” never left the heels of my horse, and was able to keep up when I galloped, but anything over half a mile was too much for him; he was not, of course, in such high training as his wild relatives, and when distressed he would commence squeaking and looking up in an appealing manner. He remained with us in camp, never leaving my horses, with whom he was on the best of terms. I often used to put the horse to speed when out for rides, and on “Marjahn’s” beginning to squeak the horse would look round and attempt to slacken his pace, and “Marjahn,” if really left behind, would show great distress. The pig would bathe in the river, and show delight in wallowing and swimming. As he got bigger he used to charge strange dogs who chased him, and was always more than a match for them, generally turning aggressor, and obstinately pursuing them with many grunts and shrieks. “Marjahn,” when a fine young boar of three years, was following my horse one day as I raced him against a friend, forgetting in the excitement the distress of the pig. Our gallop being over, I saw a

black spot far away on the plain; it was poor "Marjahn," who had burst a blood-vessel in his attempts to keep up with us; when we reached him he was quite dead. I never cared to keep another pig, and the groom's grief was very great.

Another pet I had was an ichneumon, or mongoose; this was one of the large reddish variety, and had been brought from the Persian Gulf; I saw a boy dragging the poor beast along by a string; I gave him a shilling and possessed the mongoose. After the first two days, during which he was very timid, he became very friendly, and soon learnt to come to call.

His antics were most extraordinary; he would climb almost anywhere, and he killed all mice, scorpions, flies, beetles, and moths, also small birds and snakes when he could get them; his great delight was to get into any cranny or hole, and his activity and fearlessness were surprising. I had a large white Persian cat; this poor beast the mongoose was never tired of pursuing; he would erect all his hair and *follow* the cat, whose steps he would dog for hours; the cat was not allowed by him to eat, for did he once take his eye off his stealthy pursuer, the animal would spring on him, give him a severe bite, and disappear like a ghost under the fender, or in some convenient hole. I had to give the cat away, as he faded to almost a skeleton, being nearly *haunted* to death. The aspect of the mongoose when on the war-path was sufficiently terrific, the erected hair increased his size three times, while the bushy tail appeared part of the body, and was like a gauzy wedge: every now and then he would give a low growl, and when making his spring, emit a sharp rattling cry that was very startling.

He exhibited great affection to me personally, and would allow me to do anything with him; would cling on my finger by one paw and swing, or sleep on my shoulder as I read. At bedtime he would jump on the table and emit a plaintive cry, attempting to attract one's attention to the fact that it was time to retire, and on my rising would precede me gambolling to my bedroom, sit on a chair when I undressed, and on my finally retiring jump into his little kennel. The animal was much cleaner than a cat, and made an interesting pet. He never would make friends with the servants, who teased him, or with the dogs, who, after all being smartly bitten in the muzzle, went in deadly fear of him. So tame did he get that on my leaving Shiraz for Ispahan I carried him the fifteen marches *in my holster*, turning him loose while I breakfasted on the road; at night he slept on the bedding, and when a stranger entered the post-house rooms he used to bolt up the chimney (these chimneys had no soot in them). He had a great fancy for warmth, and would sleep for hours under the fender. On one occasion this desire for warmth was nearly the cause of his death; he jumped into a brazier of live charcoal, doubtless deceived by the white appearance of the ashes on the top; of course the poor beast was much burnt, but I managed to save him, and his affection was, if possible, enhanced. I am sorry to say that his fate was a sad one: the Armenians caught him and killed him for his skin. I was happily able to cause the fellow who did it to be punished. On reaching England I obtained a mongoose of a similar kind from the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park: he too became a great pet with us all, but he used to terrify the neighbours, in whose houses he would suddenly appear, and on several occasions I had to rescue him

from the clutches of a mob of British boys. He had an epileptic fit, to which he was subject, and died. He too manifested the same extraordinary affection far exceeding that of the dog, and while we had him we never had a mouse or black-beetle. These animals, like the weasel and ferret, are inordinately fond of meat, and it is dangerous to attempt to take it from them, especially if the beast be hungry. Neither my wife, myself, nor my English nurse was ever bitten, and the mongoose, as I knew it, showed far more affection and intelligence than most pets.

Something in an account of Persian life must be said of Persian cats. The fact is, that long-haired cats are very seldom seen; the usual cat is similar to the regular London cat of the leanest variety, and the village cat resembles most the half-starved beasts found in empty houses. Long-haired cats are generally only seen in the houses of the rich, and they are eagerly purchased for ten to fifteen shillings, when good specimens and *white*, by the horse-dealers, who take them to India in cages; they there find a ready market for them.

The best cats are Van cats, which are not really Persian; these, *if well bred*, are deaf, and also have eyes of different colours—a pink and a yellow eye, or a blue on one side and yellow on the other. They will not catch mice, show no affection whatever, their hair sticks to everything in spring, and they are in every way objectionable. A few long-haired cats are ash-coloured—these are rare. I saw one belonging to the wife of the late Major Pierson. While Pierson and I looked on, we saw this cat, which was a male, fight with and *kill* another cat upon the roof. But the cat was tame and almost affectionate to his mistress. The fact is, if you want a Persian cat of the finest kind,

you can best get one in Paris, at any of the numerous bird-shops on the quays.

Dogs are not kept as pets by Persians, though they are used for hunting and as sheep-dogs. The greyhound is an exception; the Persians will pet and fondle these animals, and even pay a long price for one. They are of two kinds, the Arab dog, similar in all respects to a small English greyhound, but deficient in bottom: the Persian dog, with longer hair and feathered ears, feet, and tail, with immense bottom, but deficient in speed: these are often crossed with each other. The ears, feet, and tail of the Persian variety are often dyed magenta or yellow, and a sufficiently ludicrous appearance is the result. The "tazzies," or greyhounds, are not looked upon as unclean, and the term of sag or "cur-dog" is never applied to them. The "toolah" is any kind of dog that is not exactly a pariah, and is much affected by sporting Persians, who attempt to hunt game with him; he is never of any use, and generally is only kept as swelling his master's importance. These "toolahs" remind me of a curious definition I once heard from a well-known dog-fancier, now dead.

Years ago I, with many other of my fellow-students, used to keep bull-dogs and terriers; it was a common foible enough in those days. My landlady, of course, would not permit a dog of apparently ferocious breed to be kept on her premises, so I boarded my dog with a dog-fancier. This man constantly used the term "tyke" when he wished to speak disparagingly of an animal. I asked him what the word "tyke" really meant: and his definition of a "tyke" comprehends the Persian "toolah." "A tyke," he replied, "is a dawg as ain't no sort of breed, and ain't no sort of use!" What a number of tykes we see

in England, and why do people keep and pay tax on them?

Watch-dogs are kept and kindly treated; they are let loose on the roof at nights. The wandering tribes have some fine dogs—short-haired, tawny, with black muzzles, having all the characters of mastiffs; they are very fierce, and it is difficult to obtain them. Near Hamadan, and also at times near Ispahan, are found big sheep-dogs, of no particular breed, generally long-haired and tawny with black muzzles. These are a match for wolves, and are often savage; of this kind was our big dog “Jarge.”

Monkeys and baboons are kept and trained by the lutis, or professional buffoons, as are bears, and even lions. It is usual when the wife of a man of any substance brings him a son, that these men should bring the lion, with song and music, to the house. The delighted lady invariably gives a present. Should there be any disinclination to give it, the buffoons threaten to loose the lion, which generally has the desired result: if this be ineffectual they carry out the programme, and themselves simulate terror.



LION AND LUHLIS.

They brought the lion to me in Shiraz, and played me the trick of loosing him in my courtyard.

As I had not been presented with an heir, and the joke was very unpleasant, I simply told my groom to let loose my dogs. These flew at the lion, and he put his head in a drain and roared. I afterwards found that he had been starved, and teeth and claws drawn. The lutis were glad to apologize, and quickly removed the king of beasts.

Of pigeons I have previously spoken. Nightingales, goldfinches, talking larks, parrots, singing larks, and starlings, are all seen in cages.

Snake-charmers are not often seen, and then with only a few harmless snakes in a box. The Persians do not like to destroy house-snakes, for two reasons: first, because they say they do no harm; and secondly, because they suppose them to be tenanted by the spirit of the late master of the house. In my first house in Shiraz—an old and handsome one—I was continually annoyed by a buzzing, as of the winding of clockwork. This, I was told, proceeded from the snakes. I, however, never saw one, though the buzzing was frequently heard in all parts of the house.

One morning I heard a great twittering of birds, and on looking out, I saw some thirty sparrows on the top of a half-wall. They were all jumping about in a very excited manner, and opening their beaks as if enraged, screaming and chattering. I was at first at a loss to understand the cause of the commotion, but I saw a pale-yellow coloured snake deliberately advancing towards them from the ornamented

wooden window from which he hung. They *all* appeared quite fascinated, which much surprised me, and none attempted to fly away. The snake did not take the nearest, but deliberately chose one and swallowed him. I, too glad to get rid of one of my buzzing annoyances, got my gun, and, notwithstanding the entreaties of my servants, some of whom wept, assuring me that the reptile was inhabited by the spirit of the late master of the house, I gave him a dose of duck-shot. He was a big snake, some four feet long. I cut him open and extracted the sparrow. After some ten minutes' exposure to the sun, the bird got up, and, after half an hour, flew away, apparently unhurt. The snake was not a venomous one, nor do we find venomous ones in houses in Persia.

Shortly after, a servant of my landlord came, and took away the snake's body, and all my servants sulked and looked black for a week. But, on speaking to my landlord, an educated man, he laughed, and simply congratulated me, and told me that the clock-winding snake had annoyed him for years. They are supposed to live in pairs, but I only saw the one, and never heard the noise again.

The wild ass ("goor-khur") has been kept as a pet, and even ridden; but they generally begin to be very wild before reaching puberty; of course the adults are quite untamable. They are very rare, and do not generally live long in captivity; they are also very fleet indeed, and a very fine mule is produced by their union with a mare.

Rams are kept as pets, and trained to fight, as are bulls. These rams may be seen chained outside the shops of the owners, and on Thursday evenings they are fought, generally for a dish of pillaw. They

charge each other with great fierceness, and the one driving the other from the field is proclaimed the winner. The fights are often for considerable sums. The rams wear large leathern collars, having bells attached to them; the collars are ornamented with cowries.

Partridges are often allowed to run in gardens, being fed like fowls; they become very tame; they are the red-legged variety.

There is now a close time for game generally enforced throughout Persia; this is a wholesome measure of the present Shah's.

One of our pastimes in Persia was gardening, but the dryness of the climate and the great heat of summer render one's previous experience in England nearly useless.

On getting into a new house, the garden is usually found in a very neglected state. It consists of a number of beds, which are sunk to a greater or less depth in the bricked courtyard.

These gardens are at times of considerable size, the one in my Ispahan house being a regular parallelogram, some fifteen yards by twenty. The place had nothing in it but three or four fine apricot trees. I turned it over to a Persian gardener from the town, who commenced operations by making a raised path six feet wide, lowering the garden itself to get the earth; this path was in the form of a cross, and divided the large plot into four equal beds. These were mapped out into ornamental flower-beds, and sown with various seeds; each bed, containing a different kind, was carefully sprinkled with strong manure, and then the whole was flooded with water from the town watercourse.

Each bed communicated with the other by a narrow trench; some six inches of water was let on to the bed, filling it to the top of the little bank of mould surrounding it; then the opening was closed, and the water allowed to proceed to the next bed. In this way each bed got thoroughly wetted once or twice a week.

The seeds were generally soaked for some days before sowing, often being tied up in a damp rag till they germinated; and, as a rule, seeds sown dry, save very minute ones, did not germinate.

The flowers sown were of the commonest description. They were scattered very thickly, and never thinned.

Convolvulus (Lulufer, or Neelufer), Marvel of Peru (Lalah basi), aster, zinnia of a uniform brick red, wallflower (or Gul-i-Kher, lit. asses' flower), portulacca (Gul-i-naz-nazi, flower of coquetry), a kind of common cockscomb (Zūlf-i-aroos, bride's locks), the dahlia and *Lilium candidum* (Gul-i-Mariam, Mary's flower)—these two latter were looked on as rare flowers, and of great price—the larkspur and the sweet-William, the China rose (or Gul-i-Resht, flower of Resht), the nastorange, a lovely whitish, orange-scented, single climbing rose, the moss-rose (or Gul-i-Soorkh), of which the rose-water and attar of commerce is made, blooming only every other year, and the single orange and yellow rose, with the narcissus, pink, and the wild Lallah or tulip, formed the principal garden ornaments; while a useful background and edging was made of the Jarroo or broom-plant. This sows itself, and when cut in autumn and allowed to dry, it makes the usual carpet-broom of Shiraz and Ispahan.

The iris, both white and purple, are great

favourites; the edges of the trenches had broad beans pricked in in twos and threes, forming the earliest green leaf of spring. At irregular intervals would be a pumpkin or gourd vine, or a vegetable-marrow; here, there, and everywhere were inserted fruit trees; while a few planes and poplars were planted to give shade and rest for the eye. The lilac and vine, too, were planted freely, but without any attempt at symmetry; while little patches of herbs, as mint, aniseed, fennel, parsley, etc., were grown in shady corners. No attempt at thinning out was made; the things came up, and the larger plants grew, while the smaller ones were dried up by the sun. The whole place was flooded once or twice a week.

At Shiraz the gardening was still more primitive; a few orange trees, the border planted with narcissus and a thick jungle of convolvulus, with an occasional rose tree, was all that one could manage.

In Teheran there is a French gardener, and was an English one, to the Shah, but their influence had not been of much avail. Mr. Finn, our consul at Teheran, was very successful with geraniums, which flourish in Persia; but the natives are too careless to preserve them through the winter, or to take cuttings; a flower, in fact, having no real commercial value.

Taking cuttings, save for the tobacco plant, is unknown; but the grafting of fruit trees is practised, also budding.

The Persians well understand the culture of the vine, and large harvests of fine grapes are the almost invariable rule; they never thin the fruit, but keep the vines very closely cut, resorting to a new vine in a very few years.

Manuring in some parts of the country is done on a

very liberal scale, particularly in Ispahan, where the traditions of market gardening have been handed down from father to son. The profitable opium crop is now, however, engaging the attention of the Ispahani to the exclusion of almost everything else.

Persia has particularly fine quinces and pomegranates. The latter I have seen of four pounds' weight. The Ispahan quinces are sent all over the country, packed in cotton, as presents. They give forth a very strong and agreeable perfume, which is much delighted in by the natives; and they are passed from hand to hand, and savoured like a sweet-scented flower. The Attar-beg pomegranates have no perceptible seeds, and their flavour is very delicious. Their variety is great—sweet, sour, or sour-sweet; they vary, too, from white to almost black in the pulp. As the pomegranate flourishes throughout Persia, it seems strange that it is not cultivated in England. It is very handsome as a shrub, and the scarlet bloom most effective as a garden ornament. The fig is small, but luscious, and innumerable varieties are found. Gooseberries and currants are unknown.

In Hamadan the vines are grown on the edges of deep trenches; the snow filling these trenches preserves the roots, while the vines themselves are often protected with earth during winter.

In the south of Persia, and also in the north, the very slightest cultivation is employed, yet in good years the harvests of every kind are very heavy. In all cases it is the abundance, or the reverse, of the supply of water that regulates the amount of harvest. Given plenty of water, the harvest must be large.

The melon has been spoken of in another place. The water-melons and the white-fleshed melons of

Gourgab, near Ispahan, are the finest in the world. I have seen melons weighing twenty-eight pounds of the former variety; these were, however, phenomenal.

In the orchards of Ispahan clover is sown under the trees to break the fall of the fruit, which is only plucked when a choice dish of it is required as a present. The usual way is simply to pick up the droppings. The Persian never thins the fruit. I have often recommended their doing so, but on two occasions when I tried the experiment and marked the trees, it did not succeed: the trees where the fruit had been thinned merely giving fewer fruit, *of the same size* as the unthinned trees under the same conditions and of the same variety.

Nothing can be more delightful than these cool and silent gardens in the summer in Ispahan. The thick foliage keeps out the sun, and the deep green of the short clover refreshes the eye. Tea in a garden, with pipes and fruit, is a pleasant way of spending a warm afternoon. Unfortunately the Persian or Armenian usually looks on a fruit garden merely as a good place to get drunk in, and the frequent sounds of music and singing show the passer-by that this idea is being carried out.

Garden parties are, however, often given by Persians who never touch liquor, and they are as enjoyable a form of entertainment as may be. An invitation to one is generally given without any preparation, as during the paying of a call; it is accepted, and forthwith an immediate start is made. A few carpets and pillows are rolled up and placed on a mule, with the samovar or Russian urn in its leather case, and the tea equipage in its travelling box. The cook, on his pony, takes his whole *batterie*

de cuisine, and hurries to the garden indicated by his master, probably buying a lamb and a couple of fowls, as he passes through the bazaar. The entertainer, his wife and children too, if we are very intimate, the former on his horse, the latter astride on white donkeys, proceed at a leisurely pace in the direction of the garden; while the servants, all smiles, for they enjoy the outing as much as the family, accompany them on foot or horseback, carrying water-pipes, umbrellas, and odds and ends. On reaching the garden, fruit is eaten; then the whole party roam unrestricted among the shady paths while tea is prepared. This is partaken of, and then a musician, or a singer, or perhaps a story-teller, makes his appearance and diverts us all. Or some servant, who has a good voice, sings or plays on the flute to us.

Often a grave and reverend merchant will produce a “tarr,” a species of lute, or a “santoor” (the dulcimer), a kind of harmonica, and astonish us by really good Eastern music. Few will consent to sing; it is *infra dig.* The nightingales sing merrily, and dull care is effectually banished. In these thoroughly family parties, wine or spirits are never introduced. Chess or backgammon (Takht-i-Nadir, the camp of Nadir Shah) are constantly played for a nominal stake of a lamb or fat pullet.

The party is collected on a raised daïs in the open air, and sit on carpets or lean on huge pillows. Candles are lighted in the lallahs or Russian candle-lamps; these are convenient, as they are not extinguished by wind. At about nine dinner is brought, after innumerable kalians or water-pipes have been smoked: this is eaten in comparative silence; host, guest, wives, and children, all sitting

round the leathern sheet which represents a table, and dipping their hand in the platters. At about ten all retire, the bedding of each is spread in a separate nook, on one's own carpet—all of course being in the open air—and at dawn one smokes a pipe, drinks a little cup of black coffee, and takes one's leave.

Our host and his guests go about their several businesses, while the women and children and servants generally breakfast in the garden and return home together in the cool of the evening, bringing back fruit and huge bouquets of the moss-rose with them.

These impromptu entertainments are most enjoyable: there is no sense of restraint, and their absolute suddenness, absence of formality, and true hospitality, form a remarkable contrast to the more formal pleasures of European life and the regularity of entertainments which hang over one, till their very thought becomes insupportable. Of course, such entertainments are only possible in a country where the gardens are freely thrown open to everybody.

CHAPTER XXIX.
PERSIAN CHARACTER, COSTUMES, AND MANNERS.

Character of the Persians—Exaggeration—Mercifulness—Anecdote—Costumes of men—Hair—Beards—Arms—Costumes of women—Jewellery—Glass bangles—Nose-rings—Painting of the face—Tattooing—Hair—Outdoor costume—Dress of children—Their manners—Strange custom—Love of mothers—The uncle—Cousins—Slaves—Servants—Slavery.

The character of the Persian, as it appears to me, is that of an easy-going man with a wish to make things pleasant generally. He is hospitable and obliging, as honest as the general run of mankind, and is specially well disposed to the foreigner. He is very kind and indulgent to his children, and as a son his respect for both parents is excessive, developed in a greater degree to his father, in whose presence he will rarely sit, and whom he is in the habit of addressing and speaking of as “master;” the full stream of his love and reverence is reserved for his mother; and an undutiful son or daughter is hardly known in the country. Home virtues among the Persians are many.

No act of serious import is ever undertaken without the advice of the mother; no man would think, for instance, of marrying contrary to his mother’s advice; and by the very poorest the support of their parents would never be looked on as a burden. Respect for the aged is universal; “this grey

beard" is a common term of respect; and an aged man or woman will frequently give an opinion unsolicited, and such advice is often requested, and always listened to as valuable.

The peculiar honesty of the Persian servant towards his master in respect to his goods and chattels has been previously remarked; and in commercial morality, I fancy that a Persian merchant will compare not unfavourably with that of the European generally, if he does not always attain the high standard theoretically adopted by the Englishman.

To the poor, Persians are unostentatiously generous; most of the rich have regular pensioners, old servants, or poor relations who live on their bounty, and though there are no workhouses, there are in ordinary times no deaths from starvation; and charity, though not organised, is general.

The Persian is, I regret to say, a liar, but Oriental exaggeration and a tendency "to run into poetry," as Mr. Wegg said, perhaps accounts for much of this. After a time one learns to mentally discount the statements made by the natives, and habit generally enables one to do this correctly. All ranks of society exaggerate and draw the long bow; a curious instance of this occurred in Shiraz. I was conversing on the subject of hunting with the king's son, and a large circle of courtiers and priests filled the room.

The prince narrated his exploits in hunting the antelope the previous day, and gravely stated that while pursuing a pair of "ahū," when riding a very restive horse that he had, his head-stall broke.

"What should you have done, doctor?"

"I should have tried to stick on as long as the ground was good, and, expecting an accident, have awaited it."

"Ah, that was because *you* were not a prince," he said. "*I* leant forward, and unclasping my belt, placed it in the horse's mouth as a bridle, and thus directing him, pursued my game and killed both antelope."

All the circle applauded (as of course they were bound to do). I was silent.

"You don't mean to say you don't believe that?" said the prince.

I smiled.

"Speak out if you don't; I shan't be offended in the least."

"Well, your Highness, I don't believe it."

"Quite right, darogh bood" (it was a lie), unblushingly replied his Royal Highness, and burst into a fit of laughter quite unabashed; the circle of courtiers, of course, were convulsed.

The giving of the lie is no insult in Persia; among the natives a common expression is, "You are lying," and the general reply is merely to asseverate the statement by an oath, no indignation whatever being shown at the charge.

Procrastination is the attribute of all Persians, "please God, to-morrow," being ever the answer to any proposition, and the to-morrow means indefinite delay. A great dislike is shown generally to a written contract binding the parties to a fixed date; and, as a rule, on breaking it the Persian always appeals for and expects delay and indefinite days of grace.

Only the upper classes and the natives of towns,

among the military and servant class, are in the habit of indulging in intoxicants, and unchastity is confined to the females of these classes; this vice among young women *prior to marriage* is very unusual; and the Persian woman compares favourably with her European sister in this respect.

Persians are clean in their persons, washing themselves and their garments frequently, differing in this habit from the Armenians, who never wash more frequently than once a month, and consider it *unhealthy* to do so; these people have great fear of taking cold, and dread water like cats.

I will not trust myself to give my opinion on the character of the Armenian. Of course I have known brilliant exceptions; but when I say that I endorse all that Morier, Malcom, Lady Shiel, and the standard writers on Persia have said of these people, I need not add that my impression is unfavourable in the extreme. They possess one good quality, however,—thrift.

The Persian always makes the best of his appearance; he is very neat in his dress, and is particular as to the sit of his hat and the cut of his coat They are all fond of animals, and do not treat them badly when their own property. Of course hired horses and mules are often over-ridden, and a good deal of cruelty from ignorance, in the way of riding animals with sore backs, is seen; but as travellers must proceed, and are frequently unable to give their horses or mules a rest, because they must keep with their caravan, this is not to be wondered at. The Persian, however, generally saves his animal as much as possible, and frequently dismounts and walks, leading his mule or horse. Much of the frequency of sore backs must be put down to the badly-made

saddles and pack-saddles, the latter of which are merely stuffed with “kah” (cut straw).



MIDDLE CLASS PERSIANS.



PERSIAN BOY.

Cruelty is not a Persian vice; torture and punishments of an unusual and painful nature being part of their judicial system. There are no vindictive

punishments, such as solitary confinement, penal servitude for long terms of years, etc. Seldom, indeed, is a man imprisoned more than twelve months, the rule being that there is a general jail delivery at the New Year. Royal clemency is frequently shown, often, perhaps, with want of judgment; still, it is very frequent. A cook I had, was years ago one of the Baabi rebels, and was seized and conducted to Teheran. (His guilt was undoubted; he himself acknowledged it; and these men had made an attempt, nearly successful, on the Shah's life, actually wounding him.) This cook, "Mehdi," was chained by the neck, with eleven others, and led out in the Shah's presence for execution. The eleven men had their throats cut. "Enough," said the king, "let *that* poor rascal go!"

He was taken back to prison and his life spared; but though the Shah had meant that he should be released, *there being no formal order*, he remained in prison *for several years*, making a good living by selling savoury messes to his fellow-prisoners.

The costume of the Persians may be shortly described as fitted to their active habits. The men invariably wear an unstarched shirt of cotton. This is sewn with white *silk*, cotton as a sewing material being unknown; it is often, particularly in the south of Persia, elaborately embroidered about the neck. It fastens in front by a flap, having two small buttons or knots at the left shoulder. It seldom comes below the hips. There is no collar, and the sleeves are quite loose, and are not confined at the wrist. The lower orders often have it dyed blue, particularly the villagers; but the servant and upper classes invariably wear a white shirt. Silk shirts used to be worn, but are now seldom seen on men. Among the

very religious, during the mourning month ("Mohurrim"), the shirt is at times dyed black.

The "zerejumah," or trousers, are of cloth among the higher classes, particularly those of the military order, who affect a garment of a tightness approaching that worn by Europeans. But the ordinary "zerejumah" is of cotton, white or dyed blue, or at times red, cut very loose, and exactly similar to the "pyjamas" worn by Europeans in India. They are held up by a thin cord of red or green silk or cotton round the waist, and the labouring classes, when engaged in heavy or dirty work, or when running, generally tuck the end of these garments in under the cord, which leaves their leg bare and free to the middle of the thigh.

The amplitude of these loose garments enables the Persian to sit without discomfort on his heels, *his usual mode of sitting*, for chairs are only used by the rich, great, or Europeanised; and it is a common thing for a visitor, if on familiar terms, to ask to be allowed to sit on his heels, as the unaccustomed chair *tires* him.

Over the shirt and "zerejumah" comes the "alkalūk," generally of quilted chintz or print. This is a closely-fitting garment, collarless, with tight sleeves to the elbow, whence to the wrist are a number of little metal buttons; these are fastened in winter, and left open in summer.

Above this is the coat, or "kemmercheen," a tunic of coloured calico, silk, satin, moiré, cloth, Cashmere, or Kerman shawl, gold embroidered silk, satin, or velvet, according to the time of year and the purse or position of the wearer. This, like the alkalūk, is open in front, and shows the shirt. It has a

small standing collar at times, and is double-breasted. It has a pocket-hole on either side, giving access to the pockets, which are always in the alkalūk, in which garment is the breast-pocket, where watch, money, jewels, and seals are kept. The length of the "kemmercheen" denotes the class of the wearer. The military and official classes and the various "noker," or servants, from the king's valet, who may be also prime minister, wear them short; that is to say, to the knee, while fops and lutis (sharpers) wear them shorter even than this. The priests, and merchants, and the villagers, especially about Shiraz, and the townsmen and shopkeepers, with doctors and lawyers, wear them very long, often nearly to their heels.

Over the kemmercheen is worn the kolajah, or coat. This is as a rule cast off in summer, save on formal occasions, as when the wearer is performing his functions or making a call, and is often borne by a servant or carried over the shoulder by the owner himself. They are of cloth, shawl, or camel-hair cloth, and are invariably lined throughout with either silk or cloth, flannel, or even fur. They are like the Turkish frock-coat, made with a very loose sleeve, and with many plaits behind. They have lappels, as with us, and are trimmed with gold lace (derbeeri), shawl, or fur, or at times worn quite plain; they have a roll collar and false pockets.

Besides these garments there are others, as the long juba, or cloth cloak. This ample and majestic garment is affected by mirzas (secretaries), Government employés of high rank, as ministers, farmers of taxes, courtiers, physicians, priests. The wearers carry a staff as a rule. The jubas are made of the finest cloth, very amply cut. They have a

standing collar and long sleeves. These sleeves are from one to two feet longer than the arm, and are often allowed to hang down empty when the garment is worn out of doors; but when in the actual presence of guests or a grandee, they are used to keep the hands hidden (a token of respect to those present), and the many wrinkles formed by the excessive length of these sleeves are supposed to be their beauty.

The abba, or camel-hair cloak of the Arab, is often worn by travellers, priests, and horsemen. The priests particularly affect it; it is a very picturesque garment, warm, and waterproof, also very light. Some of these abbas are very expensive, though plain; while others, much embroidered in gold, are given as dresses of honour to the middle classes and priests, and are used at weddings, etc.

Among outer garments worn by travellers and the aged are the well-known poosseen, or Afghan skin-cloak. These are full length, only used by travellers and the sick or aged; and the “neemtan,” or common sheepskin jacket, with short sleeves, used by shopkeepers and the lower class of servants, grooms, etc., in winter. They are mostly seen at Ispahan. The Afghan poosseen is a wonderful garment for travellers, as it is so very warm, and forms bed and bedding, but it has to be kept dry. The skins are dyed yellow; the fur is generally a natural brown. An ample cloak is made with very long sleeves, which act as gloves, the hands not being protruded. They are often elaborately embroidered with yellow silk, and are worth in Teheran, where they are very common, from four pounds (ten tomans) to sixteen pounds (forty tomans).

Besides these “balapoosh,” or overcoats, is the

"yapunjah," or woollen Kūrdish cloak. This is a kind of felt, having a shaggy side, of immense thickness. It looks like a bear-skin, and is of great weight. It is a half-circle in shape; a strap at the neck holds it on. The wearer, generally a shepherd, uses it as great-coat, bed and bedding. It is quite waterproof, and very warm. The thing is worn slung, closed side to the wind, and is used as a shield against the wind or snow.

There is also the felt coat of the villager, before described, a very warm and inexpensive garment, which wears well. It is from half an inch to one inch thick, and enables the villager to defy the severest weather. The cost is from five to fifteen kerans.

The kemmerbund, or belt, is also characteristic of the class. It is made of muslin, shawl, or cotton cloth among the priests, merchants, traders, and bazaar people; shawls and muslin are also affected by the secretary class and the more aged or old-fashioned among the great Government employés.

In it is carried by the literati and merchants the pencase and a roll of paper, and its voluminous folds are used as pockets: and by the bazaar people and villagers, porters, and merchants' servants a small sheath knife is stuck in it; while by "farrashes," the carpet-spreader class, a large canjar, or curved dagger, with a heavy ivory handle, is carried; less for use than as a badge of office.

The headgear, too, is very distinctive. The turban is worn by the priests. These use generally a white one, consisting of many yards of muslin, unless they be "Syuds," or descendants of the prophet, when a *green* one is worn. This at times is a very deep colour, nearly black; at others a grass-green.

These Syuds, too, usually wear a kemmerbund, or girdle of *green* muslin, shawl, or cotton cloth. Merchants also affect the turban, usually of muslin, embroidered in colours; or of a yellow pattern on straw-coloured muslin, or of calico, or at times of shawl.

The waist of the Persian is generally small, and he is very proud of his fine figure and broad shoulders.

The distinctive mark of the courtier, military, and upper servant class is the *belt*, generally of varnished leather, black in colour, with a brass clasp, usually of Russian manufacture. The princes and courtiers often replace the brass clasp by a huge round ornament of cut stones, the favourite one of his Royal Highness Zil-es-Sultan being of diamonds, of large size, a huge emerald being in the centre.

The “kola,” or hat, is of cloth or sheepskin, on a frame of pasteboard. The most expensive are made of the black skin of the fœtal lamb. Strange to say, these skins usually go to Europe to be dyed—I believe to Leipzig. The commoner people wear coloured lambskin hats, as grey, or even sheepskin, with the wool long. The fashions in hats change yearly; they are generally affected by the military and noker (servant) class, by courtiers and beaux, and are usually worn with a knowing cock. The Ispahani merchant, and the Armenian, at times wear very tall ones.

The hair is generally shaved at the crown, or the entire head is shaved, a karkool, or long thin lock, being at times left, often two feet long from the middle of the crown. This is kept knotted up and hidden. Its use is to enable the prophet Mahommed to draw up the believer into paradise. The lower orders generally have the hair over the temporal

bone long, and this is brought in two long locks, turning backwards behind the ear; they are termed "Zūlf;" the beaux and youths are constantly twisting and combing them. The rest of the head is shaven. Long hair, however, is going out of fashion in Persia, and the more civilised affect the cropped hair worn by Europeans, and even have a parting in it.

The chin is never shaved, save by "beauty men," or "Kashangs," though often clipped, while the moustache is usually left long. At forty, a man generally lets his beard grow its full length, and cherishes it much; part of a Persian's religious exercises is the combing of his beard.

Socks, knitted principally at Ispahan, are worn: they are only about two inches long in the leg. The rich, however, affect a longer sock: white cotton ones are worn in summer, and coloured worsted in winter. The patterns of these worsted socks are often very pretty and effective. The villagers only wear a sock on state occasions, as at a wedding, the New Year, etc.

Shoes are of many patterns; the Orūssi or Russian shoe, similar to our children's shoe without the strap, is the most common. Next, the Kafsh, or slippers of various kinds. The heel is folded down, and remains so. The priests affect a peculiar heavy shoe, with an ivory or wooden lining at the heel. Green shoes of shagreen are very common at Ispahan. Blacking is unknown to Persians generally, but a European's servant may be always recognised by his polished shoes. Boots are only used by horsemen, and are then worn much too large, for ease. Those worn by couriers often come up the thigh, and are similar to those used by our sewer-men.

With boots are worn shulwar, or baggy riding

breeches. These are very loose, and tied at the ankle by a string; a sort of kilt is worn by couriers. Pocket-handkerchiefs are never used, save by the rich or the Teheranis.

Most Persians affect a “shub kola,” or night hat, for wear in their homes. This is a loose, baggy cap, of shawl or quilted material: it is often embroidered by the ladies, and presents of “night hats” are as frequent with them as our ones of embroidered slippers.

As to arms, these are usually carried only by the tribesmen, who bristle with weapons. The natives of the south of Persia and servants—these latter generally, particularly in Shiraz—carry a kammer, or dirk, which is, however, seldom used as an offensive weapon, save in drunken rows. The soldiery, on or off duty, always carry one of these “kammers” or their side-arms, sometimes both. They hack, but never thrust with them. Of course on the road the carrying of weapons is the rule, and it is needed, as there is no police, save the ephemeral phenomena introduced by Count Monteforte at Teheran. These men, who are really efficient, are too good to last.

The costume of the women has undergone considerable change in the last century; it is now, when carried to the extreme of the fashion, highly indecent, and must be very uncomfortable.

The garment doing duty as a chemise is called a perhān; it is, with the lower orders, of calico, white or blue, and comes down to the middle of the thigh, leaving the leg nude. Among the upper classes it is frequently of silk. At Shiraz it is often of fine cotton, and elaborately ornamented with black embroidery: among the rich it is frequently of gauze, and much embroidered with gold thread, pearls, etc. With them

it often reaches only to the navel.

The head is usually covered with a chargāt, or large square of silk or cotton, embroidered. These chargāts are folded, as were shawls amongst us some years ago, thus displaying the corners, two in front and two behind; it is fastened under the chin by a brooch. It is often of considerable value, being of Cashmere shawl, embroidered gauze, etc.

A jika, a jewelled, feather-like ornament, is often worn at the side of the head, while the front hair, cut to a level with the mouth, is brought up in love-locks on either cheek. Beneath the chargāt is generally a small kerchief of dark material, worn to set off the complexion, and preserve the chargāt; only the edge of this is visible. The ends of the chargāt cover the shoulders, but the gauze perhān, quite transparent, leaves nothing to the imagination. The breasts and chest are very visible, and the abdomen is quite bare.

On state occasions, or with women who aim at beauty, the face is always painted more or less, and a profusion of jewellery worn. This is of the most solid description, the gold some twenty-three carats fine, and quite flexible: no hollow jewellery is worn, intrinsic value being what is aimed at.

Silver is only worn by the very poor: coral only by negresses.

Necklaces and bracelets are much worn, and numerous chains with scent-caskets attached to them; while the arms are covered with clanking glass bangles, called “Alangū,” some twenty even of these hoops being worn on an arm.

Jewelled “Bazūbund,” containing talismans, are often worn on the upper arm, while among the lower orders and South Persian or Arab women nose-rings

are not uncommon, and at times bangles, or anklets of beads, on the ankles.

The face on all important occasions—as at entertainments, weddings, etc.—is usually much painted, save by young ladies in the heyday of beauty. The colour is very freely applied, the cheeks being reddled, as are a clown's, and the neck smeared with white, while the eyelashes are marked round with kohl (black antimony). This is supposed to be beneficial to the eyes, and almost every woman uses it—very needlessly, as the large languishing eye of the Persian belle needs no adventitious aid. The eyebrows are widened and painted till they appear to meet, while sham moles or stars are painted on the chin and cheek—various in their way, as the patches of the eighteenth-century belles: even spangles are stuck at times on the chin or forehead. Tattooing is common among the poor and villagers, and is seen among the upper classes.

The hair, though generally hidden by the chargāt, is at times exposed and plaited into innumerable little tails of great length, while a coquettish little skull-cap of embroidery or shawl or coloured silks is worn. False hair is common. The Persian ladies' hair is very luxuriant, and never cut; it is nearly always dyed red with henna, or black with indigo to a blue-black tinge; it is naturally a glossy black. Fair hair is not esteemed, and I have been asked to condole with ladies in their grief in being the possessors of fair locks. At Ispahan so universal is this feeling that a young half-caste lady having beautiful golden hair, dyed it on her marriage to a pre-Raphaelite auburn, to please her Baghdadi husband.

Blue eyes are not uncommon, but brown ones, like those of the full-blooded Jewess, are the rule: a full-

moon face is much admired, and the possession of a dark complexion termed “nummak” (salt) is the highest native idea of beauty.

Most Persian women are small, with tiny feet and hands. The figure, however, is always lost after maternity, and they wear no support of any kind.

A very short jacket of gay colour, quite open in front, and not covering the bosom, with tight sleeves with many metal buttons, is usually worn in summer: a lined outer coat in cold weather.

In winter a pair of very short white cotton socks are used, and tiny slippers with a high heel; in summer in the house ladies go often barefoot.

The rest of the costume is composed of the “tūmbūn,” or “shulwar;” these are simply short skirts of great width, held by a running string; the outer one usually of silk, velvet, or Cashmere shawl, often trimmed with gold lace, according to the purse of the wearer; or among the poor, of loud-patterned chintz or print. Beneath these are innumerable other garments of the same shape, and varying in texture from silk and satin to print.

The whole is very short indeed; among the women of fashion merely extending to the thigh, and as the number of these garments is amazing, and they are much *bouffée*, the effect of a lady sitting down astonishes the beholder, and would scandalise the Lord Chamberlain. As the ladies are *supposed*, however, to be only seen by their lords in these indoor dresses, there is perhaps no harm done.

Indecency, too, is very much an idea, for a Persian lady, who will thus expose her extremities and the greater part of her trunk, will carefully veil her face, showing nothing but the eyes. The ladies of rank,

however, have no shame of any kind, and display very redundant charms. The indoor costume of the Persian lady is in fact exactly that of the *corps de ballet,* but shorter: while in winter, an over-mantle like the “kolajah” or coat of the man, and with short sleeves, lined and trimmed with furs, is worn; this gives the costume a peculiarly graceful appearance.





OUTDOOR DRESS OF PERSIAN WOMEN.

(*From a Native Drawing.*)

Leg-coverings are now being introduced, and the last princess of the blood royal I saw added to her comfort, though she destroyed the poetry of her appearance, by a tightly-fitting pair of black cloth "pants" with a gold stripe! This garment will doubtless soon become general.

In ancient days the Persian ladies always wore them, as may be seen by the pictures in the South Kensington Museum. In those times the two embroidered legs, now so fashionable as Persian embroideries ("naksh"), occupied a girl from childhood to marriage in their making; they are *all sewing* in elaborate patterns of great beauty, worked on muslin, in silk.

The outdoor costume of the Persian women is quite another thing; enveloped in a huge blue sheet, with a yard of linen as a veil, perforated for two inches square with minute holes, the feet thrust into two huge bags of coloured stuff, a wife is perfectly unrecognisable, even by her husband, when out of doors. The dress of all is the same; save in quality or costliness, the effect is similar. And yet with such a hideous disguise, a Persian coquette will manage to let the curious know if she have a good face and eye, by lifting her veil in a sly and half-timid way. The only thing I know exceeding in folly the chimney-pot hat, is the outdoor dress of the Persian woman. Expensive, ugly, uncomfortable, hot in summer, cold in winter, words fail to express its numerous

disadvantages; it has one positive quality—as a disguise it is perfect, and its use favours the intrigues rife in the country.

As for the children, they are always when infants swaddled: when they can walk they are dressed as little men and women, and with the dress they often, nay generally, ape the manners; a Persian child of the upper class being a master of etiquette, an adept at flattery, and a mirror of politeness. It is a strange custom with the Persian ladies to dress little girls as boys, and little boys as girls, till they reach seven or eight years; this is often done for fun, or on account of some vow, oftener to avert the evil eye.

Persian women are very fond of their children, and pet them greatly. The love of the Persian for his mother is very great; he never leaves her to starve, and her wishes are laws to him, even when he is an old man, and she an aged crone. The mother is always the most important member of the household, and the grandmother is treated with veneration. Mothers-in-law are not laughed at or looked down on in Persia; their presence is coveted by their sons-in-law, who look on them as the guardians of the virtue of their wives. The uncle, too, is a much nearer tie than with us, that is to say, the paternal uncle: while men look on their first cousins on the father's side as their most natural wives. Possibly this is because their female cousins are the only women they have any opportunity of knowing anything of personally. Black slaves and men-nurses, or "lallahs," are much respected and generally retained in a household, while the "dyah," or wet nurse, is looked on as a second mother, and usually provided for for life.

Persians are very kind to their servants, and try to make their people look on them as second fathers; a

master will be often addressed by a servant as his father, and the servant will protect his master's property as he would his own, or even more jealously.

A servant is invariably spoken to as "*butcha*" (*child*). The servants expect that their master will always take their part, and never allow them to be wronged; if he does not do so, he cannot obtain a good class domestic, while if he sticks to the man, he never leaves him.

The slaves in Persia have what Americans call "a good time;" well fed, well clothed, treated as spoiled children, given the lightest work, and often given in marriage to a favourite son, or taken as a "segah," or concubine, by the master himself (and respectable Persians only take a "segah" for ninety-nine years, which is equivalent to a permanent marriage), slaves have the certainty of comfort and a well-cared-for old age. They are always looked on as confidential servants, are entrusted with large sums of money, and the conduct of the most important affairs; and seldom abuse their trust.

The greatest punishment to an untrustworthy slave is to give him his liberty and let him earn his living. They vary in colour and value: the "Habashi" or Abyssinian is the most valued; the Souhāli or Somāli, next in blackness, is next in price; the Bombassi, or coal-black negro of the interior, being of much less price, and usually only used as a cook. The prices of slaves in Shiraz are, a good Habashi girl of twelve to fourteen, forty pounds; a good Somāli same age, half as much; while a Bombassi is to be got for fourteen pounds, being chosen merely for physical strength. They are never sold, save on importation, though at times they are given away. Strange as it may appear,

to the mind of any one who has lived in Persia, slavery in that country to the African is an unmixed good. Of course the *getting to Persia*, and the being caught, is another thing. But I have never seen a Persian unkind to his own horse or his slave, and when overtaken by poverty he first would sell his shirt, *then* his slave.

CHAPTER XXX.
TRAVELLING—ART WORK—FOODS.

Travelling—Difficulties of posting—Saddles and bits—Cruel joke—Old stories—Pastimes—Enamels—Persian pictures—Curio-buyer—Carvings—Metal-work—Calligraphy—Kahtam—Incised work on iron—Embroideries—Silver-work—Washing of linen—Ironing—Needlework—The bath—Washing the hair with clay—Bread and baking—Unleavened bread—Other kinds—Travellers' food—Inordinate appetites—Food of the poor.

Of marching with a native caravan I have no experience—Europeans as a rule avoid it—and having usually enough luggage and servants to occupy a string of mules of their own, generally travel by themselves. A specimen of daily life upon the road when marching will be given in my journal on our road home, when we did twenty-eight days' marching over some twenty-five to thirty miles a day, with only two days' rest.

Of travelling post I have said enough: I have ridden myself from Ispahan to Teheran, seventy farsakhs, in thirty-nine hours twenty-five minutes, the horses being mostly full of grass: taking three miles and three-quarters to the farsakh, this gives two hundred and sixty miles as the distance, or a continuous speed of over six and a half miles an hour, allowing for stoppages, sleep, etc., *in that time*. Probably the actual rate is an average of eight miles, but it requires some resolution to keep it up. When it is remembered that the roads are vile in the extreme,

being mere mule-tracks, and that *horses can only be changed every twenty to twenty-six miles*; that a heavy kit is carried; also that saddling, to be done well, has to be done by oneself, the horses paid and haggled for, half the time being at night, and that the post-people have to be awakened; it is not perhaps, after all, bad going. Much faster journeys than this however are made when the rider is *expected*, or prepared to liberally grease the palms of the post-people.

As a rule the European always outrides the native, the baggy "shulwars" of the latter rendering the wearer sore after prolonged cantering, and the native saddle and short stirrups being unfitted for long and rapid journeys. How a Persian can ever be thrown, as they are frequently, is very wonderful. Packed into the deeply-forked saddle, with a tremendous pommel, to which they cling, a fall ought to be impossible.

The native bits are "ab khori," or watering-bit, a common snaffle; and "danah," a most severe ring-bit. These are made like the letter H, very small, and having a plate, to which a ring is attached, affixed to the middle of the centre bar. This ring acts as does the curb-chain; a horse can be *certainly* stopped with one, but they are cruel though effectual; being made *square*, they cut like a knife, and are the frequent cause of very hard mouths. In fact, when one buys a horse he is always a puller, and, if an old horse, it takes a long time to accustom him to the snaffle. Of course in posting the native bit is the best to use, unless one wishes to be quite powerless.

Endless yarns are told in Persia of the road and its vicissitudes, every one has had his special experiences; a few sweet, many bitter, and each man

starts fully determined in his heart to make the fastest time on record, but a succession of bad horses, an ugly fall, or a very wet day, often upset the most careful plans; or the dearness of grain, or a series of couriers, may provide the rider with a number of half-starved or tired horses, or he may lose his way and find himself "on the road to nowhere." I travelled once with one Malek Mahommed Beg, one of the couriers of the English Legation: this man was a celebrated rider, and I well remember my astonishment at seeing him get down from the saddle and deliberately place a sharp stone under it, in order to get an extreme turn of speed out of a wretchedly knocked-up post-horse. On going into Teheran I was horrified to see the post-house guide deliberately whip a bit of cord round his knife-blade, thus making a goad of three-quarters of an inch in length, with which he urged on his wretched steed; remonstrance was useless, and, as he went on ahead, he called to me to follow his example.

Among the stock yarns told amongst Europeans in Persia is that of the most cruel and elaborate hoax I have ever heard of. One of the Teheran residents was in the habit of snubbing a quiet little man, who had come to the country as private secretary to the manager of an enormous scheme for the regeneration of Persia; the little man bore the rough jokes and rudeness of his tormentor for a year, and then, as even worms will turn, got huffy and vowed revenge. Unluckily for the habitual snubber, he had revealed in a moment of confidence that he was proprietor of some tickets in an Austrian lottery scheme, and that a drawing was imminent: also he gave some of his numbers, even exhibiting the bonds or tickets. One morning the monotony of Teheran life was broken with the news that X—— had won a fortune. It

appeared that a bogus telegram was brought to a gentleman in Teheran requesting him to ascertain if the holder of a certain number in the lottery was in Teheran, as he was believed to be a Mr. X——.

No sooner was the news communicated to X—— than he went to his strong box to verify the number, and, to his delight, found that he was the actual holder of the winning bond.

A castle, one hundred thousand gulden, and the territorial rank of Count was, I believe, the prize, as stated in the telegram.

X—— sent an immediate invitation to his friends to come to his house, and was congratulated generally on his good fortune; no one being taken into the secret, everybody's pleasure was sincere, and they became accomplices unawares, in the carrying out of the elaborate trick. Just as the excitement was at its height, and the clock was five minutes to twelve, the perpetrator of the hoax arrived; he was received by the victim with open hands, and bursting to tell his news: this was heard, and the expected congratulations given. "I have made up my mind to return to Europe at once," said the doomed one: "we shall buy a two hundred ton yacht and live a good deal abroad," etc., etc. "By the bye, what is to-day?" said the hoaxer.

The FIRST OF APRIL!

Tableau! I regret to add, though, that this very cruel joke caused an attack of hysterics to the victim's wife.

X—— was the hero of many tales, one of which was too good not to be perpetuated. An American missionary at a large breakfast party was suddenly accosted by X——, from the other end of a long

table, with—"I say, P——, I don't believe in hell." The parson took no notice, but the remark was repeated in a loud tone after a dead silence.

"I say, P——, I don't believe in hell."

The pale Yankee drew himself up, and, in the national drawl, quietly replied, "Waal, for your sake, X——, I hope you're right." That parson was more than a match for his opponent.

Another Persian tale of these latter days is the answer of a lady as witty as she was prepossessing. On the high-road to the capital from the Caspian, the members of the expedition sent by the German Government to observe the transit of Venus met a lovely vision in habit and hat, on a prancing steed. They halted, saluted, and declared their errand.

"To observe the transit of Venus, ah—well, you can go home now, gentlemen; *your duty is done*; good-bye;" and the pretty vision disappears at a smart canter "away in the ewigkeit," as Hans Breitmann says. *That* joke dawned on those Germans after some hours.

There was once a little paper published in the Persian Gulf, called the *Jask Howl*, to which I was a contributor, but it died a natural death, after becoming very personal.

Theatricals, too, had their day, both in the capital and down country. Lawn tennis, played on a ground of prepared mud, was the great amusement when I left Teheran.

Riding, however, is the never-failing pastime, and the poorest European can afford a horse.

Photography was to me a pleasant way of

beguiling the tedium of Persian down-country life. I spent many hours a day, and obtained a fair proficiency; but finding myself becoming a slave to it, I gave it up, though reluctantly. In the meantime I had taken innumerable likenesses, and some two hundred types. I had also had the barren honour of having large photographs reproduced in the *Graphic* and *Illustrated*.

I patronised art in Persia to the extent of having some enamels painted on small gold plaques. This art is rapidly being lost, and the continued marring of an otherwise pretty picture by errors of drawing and perspective is very annoying.

I also commenced having illustrations to the wonderful novel of 'Hadji Baba,' by Morier, executed by native artists; but the men I employed raised their prices in almost geometrical progression as each fresh picture was executed. They are, however, very spirited, and well exhibit Persian life.

While I was in Ispahan, M. P—— was sent by the 'Magazin du Louvre' to buy curios, china, etc., of every description.

He bought with a vengeance, doubtless knowing what he was about. All was fish that came to the net; and to see the little Frenchman gesticulating to a crowd of excited Persians, each anxious to dispose at a fancy price of his own wares, was very amusing. Since that time it has been difficult to get anything really good in the curio way in Persia, each man thinking his own article an unappreciated treasure.

The Abadeh carvings, generally ornamental sherbet spoons and boxes, carved from pear-wood with a common knife, and very beautifully done, are still to be had; but the work is deteriorating, and the

attempt to copy European drawings is destroying its originality.

Very beautiful carving, or rather engraving, on metal is still done in Ispahan; and I have some cups of brass, and others of silver, that are probably unique in this kind of metal-work. But that, too, is deteriorating; the good artists find it pays them better to do a quantity of coarse work for the exporting curio-dealers than finer and more delicate engravings, which are paid for at a higher rate, but which tax their sight and skill to the uttermost.

Calligraphy as a high art is dying the death. A single line by a great calligrapher was worth a fabulous amount, and large sums were often paid for a good manuscript of Hafiz or the Koran. Printing has destroyed all this, and the cheap volumes from Bombay presses tend to eradicate calligraphy as an art.

A kind of inlaid work similar to our Tonbridge ware is made in Persia; it is to be seen at both Ispahan and Shiraz; though not so chaste as the Indian work, it is much more varied in pattern, and the effect is good. Metal is freely used with the coloured woods, but brass, and not silver, is employed. It is called “Kahtam.” Glove and handkerchief boxes are made for the European market, and tables, chairs, chess and backgammon boards, and mirror frames for the wealthy Persians. The Shiraz work is the best.

Ispahan is celebrated for its incised work on iron. This “pūlad,” as it is termed, is beautifully veined and cleverly damascened, being inlaid with thin plates of gold. The specimens are, however, very expensive; as the work is the monopoly of a family, prices are almost prohibitive. This, too, is a dying

art.

Of painters and paintings I have spoken. The copying of doubtful European works is their bane, and they fail in their rendering of the nude, in which they delight. For pretty faces and good colouring, the Persian artist has a deserved reputation. He is especially great in miniatures, some of these being almost microscopic.

The embroideries of Resht, on the Caspian, are too well known to need description. They are very florid, but cheap and effective. The price is about two pounds a square yard for *very* elaborate ones, if a large one is ordered, and paid for by instalments as the work proceeds. Aniline colours, used to dye the silks employed, are the curse of the modern work, the showy tints of which soon fade. These, however, can be avoided by specifying that they are not to be used.

The gold and silver work, except that of Zinjan, is poor in the extreme, but solid; while, for filigree-work especially, Zinjan rivals Malta. There are, however, *some* great artists. Stones are clumsily set, and often even strung and bored. A few clever gem-setters have come from Constantinople to the capital.

The use of starch is unknown in Persia, and the laundresses very bad. As in most Eastern countries, the washing is done at the side of a stream, the minimum amount of soap and the maximum of beating being employed. Such rough washing rapidly destroys one's linen. Nowadays most Europeans keep a laundress, or what is called a washerman, of greater or less skill, and their shirts are "got up" as in Europe.

The Persians understand ironing, and the trade of

ironer is a common one. The dresses of the common people are ornamented by lines drawn on them parallel with each other, by means of a kind of iron. The garment is laid on a large jar of clay, and, holding this between his knees, the ironer ("ūtū-kesh") makes his pattern upon the new garment of silk or cotton.

The same means are used to mark the stuffs for quilting, which is much in fashion. A Persian wears always at least one quilted garment, and his quilts ("lahaf") are simply large sheets of thick quilting. New cloth clothes are also carefully ironed, a box-iron, filled, with live charcoal, being generally employed.

The needlework of the Persians is very beautiful, silk being used for sewing to the total exclusion of cotton. Some of the patterns of embroidery, particularly those on silk, are very original; while the networks of white silk, done with the needle on the "rubanda," or veils, at the part covering the eyes, being done wholly with the needle, are almost monuments of art work.

Women as well as men smoke the kalian, and the aged ladies are often opium-eaters to a large extent.

The great amusement of the Persian women of every rank is the bath. Generally three or four hours in the week are passed by the very poorest in the "hammām."[32] As for the wealthier, they have baths in their own houses, and use them almost daily. The middle classes make parties to go to the hammām, and assist each other in the various processes of shampooing, washing with the "keesa," or rough glove, and washing the hair with pipe-clay of Shiraz —a plan, by the way, which it is worth while to follow, for the hair is rendered thereby cleaner than

when eggs are used. The pipe-clay is made up in little round cakes much resembling biscuits.

A traveller of the pessimist type, who was posting through the country to India, once showed me a pocketful of these cakes of clay, and drew my attention to the “beastly native biscuits, that a fellow couldn’t eat!” He had got a large handful for a copper as he passed through a roadside bazaar.

Serious matters are the dyeing of the hair and beard, the use of the depilatory, and the smoothing of the soles with pumice, and, lastly, the dyeing of the soles and palms of the hands with “henna.” The very poor seize the opportunity to wash their rags in the public bath at the same time that they bathe. These public baths are open free of charge and without distinction to rich and poor. A few coppers are given to the “delaks,” or bath attendants, male and female. These pay for fuel, hot water, etc. Certain hours are appropriated to each sex. The whole bath can be always exclusively hired for a few kerans.

As to bread, it is of three varieties, and is all made from leavened dough. The “sangak” is of the thickness of a finger, some three feet long and a foot wide. This is baked in a peculiar manner, and from the word “sang,” a stone, it obtains its name. A huge arched oven is half filled with small pebbles from the river. Upon these pebbles is placed a pile of brushwood; this is fired and fed till the stones are sufficiently hot; the fire is then pushed into a corner, and the flaps of dough are placed on the heated stones by means of a peel, as many as twenty loaves being put on at a time. Batch after batch is baked in this way, the stones being stirred occasionally when they get too cool to bake well, and the fire is raked

forward and fed again, and so on. Or at times the fire is simply shifted from place to place in the oven, the loaves being placed on the stones as they are heated. Thoroughly good bread is the result, crisp, appetising, and satisfying. Eaten hot with butter, it is the finest of breads after the Russian. Of course it is absolutely pure. The term “flap-jack” is applied to this form of bread by the Europeans in Persia.

The next variety is mostly baked by the smaller bakers of the various suburbs of the towns, who have a slower sale. Your Persian likes his bread hot from the oven, save the thrifty Ispahani, who prefers it cold, thus gaining in the weight. This is the “tannūr” bread. The “tannūr,” or oven, is simply a huge jar fixed into the earth, and usually placed against a wall. This is constantly fed with pieces of camel-thorn, which catch from the flames at the bottom, and keep the walls of the jar hot, as well as maintaining a high temperature inside. The loaf is the same thickness as the “sangak,” and about two feet by one, oval in shape. They are flung against the inside of the heated jar by a peculiar motion of the hand of the “shartir,” or baker’s oven-man. In a few seconds they are thoroughly done and browned. They are then quickly removed by a fork, and others placed in their stead.

The third kind of bread is that usually baked by villagers or tribesmen. It is a thick circular loaf, some foot or more in diameter, and is a sort of griddle-cake.

It is baked on a hot plate of iron, or at times a pot-lid covered with live ashes is placed over it, or the cake is turned over.

The unleavened bread, which is best prepared by Armenians and Kūrds, is merely a paste of flour and

water, rolled to the thinness of a wafer, and of great size. It is baked on a hot plate, and is hung out to air and dry; it is then folded, when not quite dry, into four. It will keep for several months if kept dry, and is damped prior to using, when it loses its brittleness, and becomes easily rent, but unbreakable. It is a capital bread for the road, and is invariably carried by Persians when marching, being very portable, and as palatable after a couple of months as on the day it was made.

Rusks, biscuits, and a peculiar form of very dry bread, called "twice-fired," are specially made for travellers; and the Armenians prepare a kind of bun, which is made with flour and ghee, slightly sweetened and sprinkled with sesamum seeds. Sesamum and poppy seeds are often used to ornament and flavour the breads, especially the "tannūr" variety. Hard-boiled eggs are also sold, dyed red or yellow, for the use of travellers. A lump of cheese, a few raisins, and a dozen of eggs are, with some of the "twice-fired" bread, a sufficient and cheap provision for the native traveller.

The appetite of some of the lower orders for bread is very extraordinary. I have often been surprised to have a servant ask for an increase of wages, *because* he had a large appetite. Persians invariably pay their servants so much in cash, so much (by weight) of bread, two suits a year, and what is left at meals divided among them. This the European does not do; he gives it all in coin. I have seen a boy eat fourteen pounds of new bread and, as a sauce to the bread, a dozen hard-boiled eggs. I *saw* this, and I left him—*still eating*.

Bread, eggs, "mast" (curds), and cheese form the staple food of the labouring classes in Persia;

occasional onions, eaten in chunks as a boy eats an apple with us, render the *menu* tasty, and the eater insupportable.

Meat the poor seldom eat. When they do get it, they make soup of it, pounding up the meat after it is boiled to rags, and mixing it anew with the soup; they dip bits of bread in the mess till it is consumed. Of course, in the fruit, lettuce, cucumber, grape, and melon seasons, these form a large portion of their diet.

CHAPTER XXXI.
EDUCATION. LEAVE, AND RETURN VIÂ INDIA.

Education—Schools—Punishments—Love of poetry—Colleges—Education of women—Religion—March to Bushire—Extremes of cold and heat—Good luck—Go home to England—Leave *viâ* India—The "Boys"—Lisbon—Algiers—Port Said and Suez—Jeddah—Donkeys—Coral reef—Sea-slugs—Aden—Madagascar oranges—"Grimes"—Kurrachee—Drives—Visit to the alligators at Muggerpir—Disgusting scene—A legatee—Black-wood furniture—A lost bargain—Persian Gulf—Bushire—Leave for Shiraz.

As to education in Persia, reading, writing, and the rudiments of arithmetic are general among the merchant and bazaar class; and each small village has its school, which is generally held in the mosque. The usual sum paid for instruction to the "moallim," or schoolmaster, is from sixpence to a shilling a month. The letters are taught, and then the reading in Arabic of the Koran. Of course the boys do not understand what they read, and as they all read at once in chorus, the noise is deafening. The discipline is severe, and a boy who is idle, *or whose parents are backward with the monthly stipend*, has a rough time of it. The bastinado on a miniature scale is always ready in the corner, and a rope and pulley is kept, in which a troublesome boy's hand and foot may be placed, that he may be hoisted on high, a terror to evil-doers. This, however, is not a painful punishment; it is a sort of substitute for the standing

on the form as practised with us. No attempt is made to teach anything more than the three R's; particular attention is devoted to calligraphy, for a good writer is sure of his living, if merely as a clerk.

Those who aspire higher, to the post of mirza or secretary, generally obtain a knowledge of phrase, trope, and compliment from the writings of the poets; and the intricacies of detail on these matters are endless—in fact, they are a science.

The tales of "Saadi," and a smattering of Arabic, form the climax of what is learnt at school.

At many village schools a few only of the boys learn to write, all to read. This power of reading they soon lose, but a villager has little occasion for it, and the repeating from memory of a few prayers, and passages from the Koran, with some verses of poetry, is generally all that remains to the villager of his education.

The quoting of poetry in Persia is universal; it is in every man's mouth from highest to lowest, and is introduced into the most unpoetical conversations. The servants would often pass their evenings listening to the declamation of the poet Firdūsi as intoned by my cook; and certain hackneyed quotations are ever on the lips of even the most ignorant.

A few boys, after leaving school, proceed to college ("medresseh"). These are intended for the priesthood, the law, or medicine.

There seem to be no regular courses.

The student studies Arabic sedulously, and reads a good deal in a desultory sort of way, much time being devoted to poetry and commentaries on the

Koran, while he fills up the rest of his time in literally “sitting at the feet of the local Gamaliels,” regularly presenting himself at the receptions of the heads of law and religion; he is seen at their “medjlisses,” or assemblies; ever ready with a quotation, or a smooth affirmative, or a sigh of astonishment at the erudition of his patron; the student swells the throng of his numerous hangers-on, accompanying him on visits, and to the mosques; ever ready to write a letter, run with a message, give an order to a servant; in fact, to do everything that is not exactly menial.

After a few years of assiduously imitating the great man, the young priest or lawyer is, perhaps, sent to a small village, where he may become pedagogue and parson, or he elects to follow the fortunes of some grandee, as secretary on no wages, with possible opportunities of modakel (peculation).

Or, if a doctor’s son or relative, he compounds his drugs for a year, and then is a full-blown hakim, or physician, and, setting up in some distant town, on the principle that “no man is a prophet in his own country,” he may earn a very comfortable living.

In Teheran there is a college where the rudiments of a liberal education are taught by English and French professors on an ambitious scale. From this college are recruited the courtiers, diplomats, and Government employés of the Shah, also the principal officers of the army.

The daughters of the rich and learned are the only women who are at all educated; some of them are good readers and reciters of poetry, and can even write verse themselves; but most of the educated women can merely write a letter and read the Koran, or an ordinary Persian story-book, the former *without*

comprehension, it being in Arabic. A great deal of their time is given to poetry, and they are all of a very sentimental turn. About one woman to fifty educated men are found, the policy of Mahommedanism being "not to open the eyes of a woman too wide."

Among the educated classes many are infidels, others pure theists, while communism *as a religion* is followed by the numerous secret sectaries of the "Baab;" among whose tenets is undoubtedly, though the Baabis deny the fact, that of community of wives and property.

The great portion, however, of the merchants, traders, and villagers are *really* Mahommedans, a practical and work-a-day religion, when stripped of mummery and bigotry. The Persian is not prone to fanaticism, though he is easily excited to it, and dangerous when in a state of religious fervour. They are very particular as to prayers and forms, as fasting, etc., and many carry them out at great personal inconvenience.

Among the higher servants—military and courtier class—however, irreligion is rife. These say no prayers, keep no fasts, have no belief, and are utterly dead to everything but what they believe to be their own interests. Many openly boast their disbelief in anything, *and this is done with impunity*.

In the year 1874 I had occasion to march down to Bushire. The journey was without incident, but shows the extraordinary variety of the climate. We went down on our own horses in five days.

The first night we lay covered with all our rugs in a small room, four of us, with a huge fire, and it was impossible to sleep for the intense cold. The next day

we rode through heavy snow, having to blunder through drifts on foot up to our waists, dragging our horses, and glad to drink raw curaçoa to keep any warmth in us when freezing on our horses, where we *were* able to ride. The fourth night we slept in the open air at Dalliké, under some palms, with next to no covering; and as I was the only one of the party who had taken the precaution to keep my head wrapped up in a handkerchief, and my gloves and a pair of socks on, so I was the only one who was not terribly bitten on face, feet, and hands by mosquitoes. That day and the next we suffered from the heat.

The only memorable event in Bushire, which we left after a week's stay, was the good fortune of one of the cable employés. He had bought a ticket in the big Indian Derby sweepstakes for nine rupees, the original price being ten. It was sold to him rather against his will, the seller being a married man, and feeling it wrong to gamble. The ticket won five thousand pounds, which was duly paid to the lucky buyer. What must have been the feelings of the other man? Mr. S—— (the purchaser), however, salved them by generously giving him five hundred rupees.

Being now entitled to two years' leave I made up my mind to return home, and posted up to Teheran and Resht; thence by Russian steamer over the Caspian.

On the Caspian I met the Rev. R. B——, of the Church Missionary Society, who had been stationed at the Armenian village of Julfa, near Ispahan. He was returning with his wife, after a stay in Persia of some years. This companionship made a tedious journey more agreeable. We had fine weather on the Caspian, and reached Zaritzin without incident.

When passing through Russia a French lady, Madame O——, authoress of 'Impressions of Life in Russia,' came into our train. She was accompanied by a crowd of friends, who had provided her with supplies of food and drink, fruits and sweetmeats, on a most extensive scale.

These she most kindly insisted on our partaking of. She proved an amusing companion, but differed on religious matters with the clergyman, who at length expressed himself as shocked with her very liberal opinions. The lady then ceased to argue, and asked for a cigarette. My friend gave her one, but it was of Teheran manufacture, and not at all to her taste.

"*Tiens*," she said, handing a silver case to him, filled with *Russian Laferme cigarettes*, "my opinions are like your cigarettes, execrable, but *my* cigarettes are undeniable;" *and they were*.

I took my two years' leave, married, and made up my mind, very reluctantly, not to return to Persia; but the English climate did not agree with me, and at length my wife and I determined to go out, and, at all events, see if it were preferable to England or no.

I fancy it was rather against my own previous ideas, as we were shown a letter of mine by a married French friend, who had, when personally unknown to me, written to ask what was the needful outfit for Persia. I had replied, so many shirts, boots, etc., such saddlery, and, above all, NO WIFE.

After five years' experience we both think my advice to my friend was correct.

In September 1876 we got on board the British India Steamship Company's ship *Arcot*. Our friends and relatives went with us as far as Gravesend, and

we went through all the usual weepings and farewells. My wife was very ill till in the Bay of Biscay; I insisted then on her coming on deck, and after that, though she couldn't stand the saloon, which was stuffy, for the first week, she enjoyed the voyage, which, as she had never left Europe before, had all the charm of novelty.

We were lucky in our ship, and lucky in our captain, and we had only one fellow-passenger, a youth of nineteen; save a Portuguese doctor, who got in at Lisbon, and out at Aden, whence he was bound to Mozambique. There was an enormous staff of Portuguese (half-caste) waiters, and, with so few passengers, of course we received great, almost oppressive, attention from them.

The captain had a small dog, of the curly variety called "Tiger," and one "boy" looked after him, and another after our little black-and-tan terrier, "Pip."

Of this arrangement I was unaware till one day I asked a "boy"—they were much alike—if he had seen the dog about. "Don't know, sah; I Tiger's boy, sah; I go ask Pip's boy, sah."

There being so few passengers we got a state-room for four to ourselves, which opened into a bathroom. This was specially convenient, and the bath of hot and cold water very refreshing in the hot places we had to pass on our long seven weeks' voyage.

At Lisbon we stayed two days. The entrance to the mooring-place was very fine, and the site of the old town—that destroyed by earthquake—was pointed out to us. The wine trade seemed to absorb the principal energies of the inhabitants, who were a bustling lot, and the reverse of prepossessing. As it rained the whole time we were there, we saw

nothing of the place. We got a box of Bucellas, containing two dozen, for two pounds, for use on our march up country, and found it a clear light wine, but not strong enough for the ordinary English palate. It did not seem to be sophisticated.

Algiers, the next port we reached, was a delightful break in the voyage. We went ashore, saw the lions, and here my wife had her first glimpse of Oriental life. The Arabs in their white burnooses, looking in the gloaming like so many freshly-risen Lazaruses, the negroes, veiled women, camels, etc., all astonished and delighted her. We went for several long drives (in the sun and dust); we sat under the palms of the "Place," in the dust, and heard the band; lunched at a café in the dust; bought many lovely photographs, and were very sorry to continue our voyage. We here got fresh sardines; very far superior to tinned ones we thought them.

Of Port Said and Suez there is little to be said. A kind of *café chantant*, with roulette on disadvantageous terms, seemed to wake into extreme liveliness on the arrival of the P. and O. boat at the more cheerful of these two towns, I really forget which; and syrens, of an elderly Teutonic type, sang and played on various instruments; while a roaring temporary trade was done in beer and syphons. The canal is too well known to need description.

At Jeddah we had two days. The first one was diversified by an invitation to the house of the consul, whose nephew was acting, and in the afternoon we went for a *gallop* on donkeys in the desert—*such* donkeys, nearly fourteen hands high, pure white; groomed within an inch of their lives, full of spirit, and worth forty pounds apiece. I forget if these animals were Bahrein donkeys, or, in fact,

where they did come from, but they were the equal of any hack I ever rode—soft-mouthed, spirited, of free action. They kept up with our host's horse with ease, and our ride in the desert was certainly an enjoyable one.

The next day the captain was good enough to give us a day on a coral reef. We went by boat to the reef, and saw Nature's superb aquarium, where *all* the vegetation and fishes were in good condition—*such* zoophytes, *such* seaweeds, and *such* gorgeous fish, sponges of all sorts and sizes, and coral of all sorts of shapes and colours; lovely, indeed, as seen through the clear water.

The boat was run aground on the reef, and the men got us many specimens, which we carefully treasured in a foot-bath for twenty-four hours, but the great heat killed them all then. Huge sea-slugs were very numerous; they are eaten by the Chinese, and are dried and sold in large quantities.

We did not call at Hodeida, the port of Mocha.

At Aden we lay three days, and of course went to see the tanks; very wonderful, but so often described that it would be presumption to attempt it. We were presented by Captain Hansard, of the B.I.SS. Co., with a large basket of the biggest and sweetest oranges we had ever tasted; they were from Madagascar. Only those who have been in the Red Sea can appreciate the delights of such a present at its full value.

Captain Hansard's vessel, the steamer for Zanzibar, was moored alongside ours while cargo was trans-shipped, and there was quite a congregation of British India steamers. Captain Hansard brought on board for our amusement his pet, a rare species of

lemur; this *being*—he was more human than a monkey—constantly accompanied the captain over his ship; he was a dullish white, save the body and arms, which were covered by a bright brown-coloured fur, giving the animal the appearance of having on a sort of "cardigan;" the bright yellow eyes, and noiseless, rapidly graceful movements were strange; the term lemur being a very appropriate one, for the animal was very ghost-like.

Quite different in habits from the common gray lemur, "Grimes," for so Captain Hansard named him, was a most gentle and affectionate animal, clinging to his master like a baby, and quite like a child in his affection.

But "Grimes's" temper was uncertain; he got loose and would have severely bitten a youth who teased him had he not been with difficulty secured, and this he never would have been had not Captain Hansard just then luckily come aboard; to his master's whistle he came at once. More agile than a monkey, the creature, when pursued, flew over the rigging and awnings, taking long bounds without apparent effort, like an exaggerated Spring-heeled-Jack; and coming down to the ground noiselessly, as if devoid of weight. "Grimes" was altogether a notable animal; his master was much attached to him. We were presented with a monkey by another of the captains; he was amusing, as all monkeys are, but his light paled before the superior attractions of "Grimes."

Leaving Aden, we ran straight for Kurrachee, which we reached after nearly five weeks from London. We knew no one in the place, and we should have been glad to have seen a little of India by taking a tour by rail, but Captain Burke assured us that he might be ordered off at any moment by

telegram; and as we did not feel disposed to chance being separated from our kit, we had to forego it.

Each day we went ashore after tiffin, and were driven about in a landau and pair; it was much too hot to walk.

Since we reached Jeddah we had been sleeping on the skylight platform; this was each night fenced in by tent walls, but here the damp drove us below. On this skylight, too (a big awning covered the whole deck), we lunched and dined.

One day we diversified our drive by an excursion to Muggerpir; it is some twenty miles off, most of the way on a good road, but a terribly dusty one; we had to take four horses, and as soon as we arrived, were glad to take refuge in the travellers' bungalow and lie down to escape the heat. After lunch (tiffin I may say, as we were in India) we went to see the muggers (alligators).

Behind a low mud wall was a muddy pool having some twenty snouts exposed: apparently lifeless, they looked like bits of driftwood; under a tree lay a big alligator quite motionless. On the guardian being interviewed, he suggested our regaling the muggers with a kid, and one was brought by a villager, paid for, and killed. The priest in charge now advanced close to the pool, the eyes of the owners of the snouts opened, but the heads hardly moved; we saw several other smaller reptiles among the bushes. The man now called to them, a few wagged their heads slightly, but otherwise did not notice him; then he brought the kid, and all now were instantly alive; those who had been hidden in the bushes slid into the muddy water hole, and all began to swim vigorously, while the big gentleman under the tree actually opened his eyes; but *he* did not stir. The

body of the kid was tossed in, and was instantly torn in pieces and struggled for; in two minutes it had disappeared; it was a horrible sight. In another five minutes the pool was still, the motionless heads lay sweltering in the sun, and all was as quiet as death.

The guardian now advanced to the big alligator, and informed us that he was a legatee, and regularly fed under the terms of a will, and so independent of the votive kids. The brute allowed the man to open his jaws, and gave no signs of life, save that when called his eyes opened. He was a fine animal, but the rest of the muggers were what Americans would call "right mean little cusses." We satisfied the priest and returned to Kurrachee, having seen its one sight.

One other thing, the oysters at Kurrachee are not bad, particularly when you know you won't get any for five years to come.

We were much struck with the beauty and cheapness of the *black*-wood furniture here. This beautiful carved furniture is now, so they told us, out of fashion in India, and may be had for a song; the worst of it is, it is brittle and bulky. We went to one of the dealers and bought a hundred pounds' worth, and for this sum our Persian home would have been sumptuously furnished; we made a contract with the seller, *in writing*, to pay him ten per cent. extra for the whole to be delivered free on board, in cases not weighing over three hundred pounds each, and not measuring more than four by three feet; if otherwise as to size and weight, the bargain to be off. The afternoon before the *Arcot* left, we, on our return from our drive, found the dealer on board, and he smilingly informed us that the furniture was all *in the hold*; he then presented his bill. I smelt a rat, as I had told him *I must see* the cases and weigh them before

shipment. Luckily I did not trust the fellow, for some of the cases weighed eight hundred pounds, and of course could not have gone up country in Persia. I refused to take delivery, and was threatened with the law. But it appears that the dealer, on showing his contract to a solicitor, was told he had no case, and reluctantly removed his packages. I was sorry the man lost by the affair, but packages of huge size and weight were useless for mule carriage. So we lost our black-wood furniture.

We had ten days of the coast of Belūchistan and the Persian Gulf, stopping at Linga, Bunder Abbas, etc., though we did not go ashore, having no desire for some hours' pull, *in the sun*, in an open native boat on a very rough sea.

At length Bushire was reached, and after a seven weeks' voyage from the time we left London, we landed in Persia; and were hospitably entertained at the Residency, where Colonel Prideaux, one of the whilom captives of King Theodore, was Acting Political Resident in the Persian Gulf; Colonel Ross being at home on leave.

I was anxious to draw pay again, which I could only do on reaching my station, Shiraz; and to escape the rains: so I engaged a muleteer, and finding two of my old servants and a boy in Bushire, we started with thirty mules, ourselves riding muleteers' ponies.

Our stay in Bushire lasted only four days, and at some personal discomfort we started, hoping to avoid the rains which were due in a fortnight.

CHAPTER XXXII.
FROM THE PERSIAN GULF TO ISPAHAN.

Our start for Shiraz—Camp out—Borasjūn—Spring at Dalliké—Kotuls—Kazerūn—Buy a horse—A tough climb—Place of Collins's murder—Arrive in Shiraz—Hire a house—Settle down—Breaking horses—Night marching—Difficulties of start—Mūrghab—Find our muleteer and loads—Abadeh—Yezdikhast—Koomishah—Mayar—Marg—Arrive in Julfa.

We ourselves, our small dog "Pip" in a cage, and our canaries—almost unknown in Persia—and seventy-two tiny "avadavats" (bought at Kurrachee for three rupees), left in a boat for Sheif, on an estuary of the gulf, thus avoiding the Macheelah plain, a dreadful march of mud and water, and shortening the journey to Shiraz by two stages.

After four hours' pull and sail in the burning sun we reached Sheif. This appeared simply a mud hut on the beach. There may have been a village, but we saw nothing of it. Here we mounted our sorry steeds.

Some three hours after we caught up with the rest of our loads, which had struggled out through the Macheelah the day before. All the mules were knocked up, and my wife was fatigued with the unwonted exertion of riding a muleteer's pony. This is at any time hard work for a *man*, for the beast does not answer the bit, bores continually on it, and strokes with a light-cutting whip are quite unfelt. There is also a struggle among the riding ponies, more used to loads than riders, as to who shall be

last of all; in which a lady's pony is generally the victor.

It had been impossible to buy a hack suited to a lady in Bushire. I had been asked English prices for the ghosts of steeds—quite honestly, however, for Bushire prices are much higher than Shiraz ones. So after my wife's trying my pony, the cook's, and the head muleteer's, I got one of our escort, a good-natured fellow, clad in rags and smiles, to lend her his. This "yabū" (common pony) was at all events easy, and had a canter in him at need.

At sunset the muleteer informed me that we were twenty miles from our halting-place, Borasjūn, and that the mules could do no more. It was hopeless to attempt to go on, as my wife was as tired as the mules. Night (happily a warm one) was coming on; there was no sign of any shelter for miles, the only thing visible on the sandy plain being the distant date-groves, and these are of course no protection. The road was dry, which was something, and we had plenty of food with us; so we halted, spread our carpets, had tea, and later on dinner, and camped out—rather a dreadful first day's travelling in Persia for a lady, to sleep without shelter, and in her clothes, in the middle of the road, after travelling since ten A.M. However, there was nothing else for it. The Sheif road is a very unfrequented one, and the country was safe and undisturbed. It was a lovely night, not a breath of wind. At four A.M. we had tea, and started at five, getting into Borasjūn at ten.

For the time of year the luxuriant vegetation near the village was extraordinary; it was now late in October, the heat was great, and the amount of moisture in the air somewhat oppressive. We found capital rooms in the caravanserai, and the clerk at

the telegraph-station made us welcome to high tea, being rather indignant that we had not come straight to the office. After that we started again, and reached our halting-place at midnight.

At Dalliké is a rest-house maintained by the Department for the use of the employés. A short distance from the rest-house at Dalliké is a hot spring of clearest water; the temperature is about one hundred degrees, and being in a circular natural basin, some four feet deep in the centre, and in a place where no warm bath can be had, it is a favourite halting-place for travellers. Besides giving a comfortable bath, there is a peculiarity that I have seen nowhere else; the basin is full of myriads of fish about the size of whitebait. On dipping the hand in, they at once cover it, and in a minute it is quite hid from sight by crowds of tiny fish: they have no fear, and can be removed in handfuls. On stripping and entering the basin a curious effect is produced by one's limbs becoming black with the fish, which nibble at the skin, and only leave it when you plunge violently. On becoming still, one's body is again entirely covered with fish.

From thence we travelled by day only. At each village I tried to get a pony for my wife, but nowhere could I succeed, though I was ready to buy anything not absolutely vicious.

Mr. M—— kindly gave us quarters at the telegraph-office at Kazerūn, and here we rested a day.

The kotuls, or passes (literally ladders), well known throughout the country, had astonished my wife: they are terrible places to ride up, and nearly impossible to ride down: she, however, was determined not to be beaten, and had ridden them

all. We had been especially fortunate in our weather; no rain, though we saw many clouds, and it was imminent.

As I was looking out of window at the Kazerūn telegraph-office, I saw a man mounted on a handsome grey mare. I hallooed, and he stopped. I went down and parleyed. The mare was sound, and six years old, fast, light-mouthed. I felt that, if free from vice, she was what my wife wanted. I rode her, and succeeded in getting the man to close for seven hundred and fifty kerans, about thirty pounds. I gave him fifty kerans in cash, and a bill on Shiraz for the remainder. I never regretted the purchase. The mare was all that a lady's horse should be. She was tall for Persia, being fourteen three in height, no goose rump, and very handsome. Her mouth soon got very light, and her only fault, a very trifling one, was that she carried her ears badly. My wife and I constantly rode her for four years, and after marching twenty-eight stages from Ispahan to the Caspian on her with a side-saddle on, I handed her over in good condition, having sold her for a fair price.

Of course the journey to my wife became now a pleasure. She had a horse *of her own* that did not jolt, and who at a word or a shake of the rein would canter or gallop, instead of the thwack, thwack of the muleteer's yabū. By fancying the troubles of a lady compelled to cross the Rocky Mountains on a small Hampstead donkey, with a tendency to fall, one might form some faint ideas of my wife's trials in getting over her five days' climb from the coast to Kazerūn. We here left the date-groves, which had been numerous till now.

Two more passes remained to us—the Kotul Dokter and Kotul Peri Zun (the Passes of the Virgin

and the Old Woman). That of the Old Woman is very bad indeed, and it is a wonder how loaded mules do get up it—miles of awful road among loose rocks and stones, and then steep zigzags of paved road up a perpendicular cliff. Awful work! We did it, however, and did it in the night; for we had been stopped by a great firing of guns and alarm of thieves in the beautiful Oak Valley, and so lost the daylight. We avoided a great part of the pass by scrambling up "Walker's Road," a straight path under the telegraph-line, well enough to walk *down*, but almost impossible to ride up, particularly at night; fortunately, we had a moon, and the weather was fine. My wife, however, was compelled to dismount twice, and we lugged, shoved, and dragged the horses up, the mules, of course, going by the high-road: at last we did get in, but all tired out.

Next day a longish march brought us to the hill leading down into the plain of Desht-i-arjeen. It was on this hill, some eleven years before, that Major St. John[33] was riding, when a lion suddenly sprang upon his horse's hind-quarters. St. John had only a very small Colt's revolver with him at the time, when suddenly he saw a lioness some thirty yards in front; he cracked his whip and shouted at her, thinking that she would bolt. She charged; sprang, and came down under his foot. With so small a pistol it would have been useless to fire, so he spurred his horse, which, however, would not move. The lioness now attacked from the rear, standing on her hind-legs, and clawing the horse's hind-quarters; he then jumped off, getting, however, one slight scratch.

The horse now plunged and reared, knocking over the lioness on one side, and the man on the other. The horse now was moving away. The lioness stared

at the horse, the man at her; then St. John fired a couple of shots over her head to frighten her, but without effect; she sprang again on the horse's hind-quarters, and both were lost to view. After an hour St. John found his horse, who, however, would not let him mount. He drove the animal to the little hamlet, where he found a single family, but the fear of beasts would not let the head of it come out to search for the horse; however, next morning he was found quietly grazing; his quarters and flanks were scored in every direction with claw-marks, and one wound had penetrated the flesh, which St. John sewed up. In a week the horse was as well as ever, but bore the marks for the rest of his life.

I have taken the liberty of abridging Major St. John's own account of this *real* lion story from his note to the article "Leo," in the work on the 'Zoology of Persia,' volume ii., edited by Mr. W. Blandford, the well-known naturalist. At the time the affair took place, Major St. John was superintendent of the Persian Telegraph Department; shortly after, I had the honour of serving under him in Shiraz for some time, and was indebted to him for many kindnesses. I saw the horse some two years after the affair, and the scars were very apparent. I did not tell my wife this story till we had passed the stage, and there was no more lion country.

Our next march brought us to Khana Zinyun, where a handsome caravanserai has been built by the Muschir, the great man of Shiraz. Before reaching it we passed a pole, marking the place where the body of Sergeant Collins was found, after his murder by highway robbers in the famine time.

The next morning we rode into Shiraz, and had no sooner reached our house than the expected rain,

which had happily held off during our journey, began to fall, the sky was overcast, and continuous storms took place, which lasted for a fortnight. Thanking our lucky stars, we prepared to make ourselves as comfortable as possible, and set to to unpack and arrange our quarters.

When we arrived at Shiraz, the superintendent's house, which was in a garden just out of the town, was kindly placed at our disposal. In a few days I succeeded in hiring a good new brick-built house. We bought a few carpets, and moved into it.

My colleague, Dr. Odling, kindly gave us the loan of his furniture for the six months he expected to be away on leave, which was a good thing, as one cannot get furniture made in Shiraz, and everything has to be ordered in India or Ispahan. In the latter place there are fairly good carpenters.

Our house was the property of the superintendent of the Government powder mills, and for ten tomans, or four pounds a month, we hired it for the six months that we should have to stop in Shiraz during my colleague's leave of absence. On his return it had been arranged that we were to go to Ispahan, where we were to be permanently stationed.

The house was formed of a quadrangle, having rooms on three sides, and a dead wall at the end.

The greater portion of our kit being in tin-lined cases, and intended for our permanent abode, we did not unpack. After about a week we had settled down into working order, obtained a fair cook, and old and respectable servants; put our little "Crescent" car together, a small low dog-cart, built by McMullen, of Hertford, which has the great advantage of taking to pieces, being easily put together, easily packed in

small and light parcels, and was thoroughly seasoned; and stood the extraordinary dryness of the climate without cracking or warping, which is saying a great deal.

The next thing was to get a trap-horse. The roads are mere tracks, and very rough and heavy, and a strong animal was required. I managed for twelve pounds to pick up a cobby pony of thirteen two. I had him gelded, as even in Persia it is considered unsafe to drive an entire horse; and he with another animal I gave seven pounds for, were handed over to the coachman of the Muschir to be broken. I had vainly attempted to break them myself with a gun-carriage, for my little dog-cart was too light and pretty to risk a smash with. After a fortnight the Muschir's coachman informed me that both were quite broken. I suggested that he should drive them in his master's trap, a big brougham; but he evidently feared an accident, and gave up the job in despair. Another fellow, however, took it in hand, and after a few days I rode out some five miles, and was delighted to find that one of the ponies was fairly broken, the little grey one. The other one was hopeless; he, however, answered well as a servant's drudge.

We were able now to take frequent drives, though a long one, from the heavy state of the roads, generally kept the pony in the stable for a couple of days. Still it was nice driving over the plain, when once outside Shiraz and its environs.

My wife found the life amusing from its novelty; and as we were not to remain in Shiraz during the summer, which is the unhealthy time, our stay was enjoyable enough.

As Shiraz has been previously described, there is

nothing more to be said than that the winter soon slipped away, and the spring, the most enjoyable part of the year in Shiraz, arrived, bringing the jaunts to gardens so usual there.

My colleague, anxiously expected, did not, however, arrive till July, and the weather had then got so hot as to necessitate our marching up to Ispahan *by night*. As I have not noticed this mode of travelling before, I cannot do better than quote my wife's diary, which gives her experience of the matter.

"On Tuesday, July the 17th, 1877, everything being ready, we were informed that our muleteer was unable to start, his mules being a hundred miles off; so after much delay we found another, and engaged with him for forty mules, each carrying three hundred and fifty pounds, at the rate of seven hundred pounds, from Shiraz to Ispahan, for two pounds eight. Besides this, our cook had three mules for himself and his family, and with our own three horses, we shall form quite a respectable cavalcade.

"Shiraz to Zergūn, 24 miles.—On Wednesday the 18th, after weighing all our cases and tying them up with the charwardar's ropes, at six P.M. we rode out, accompanied by Mirza Hassan Ali Khan (our friend the British Agent here); having started all our servants, bedding, and road-kit, on six mules. We kept one servant with us, and a gholam (or irregular cavalry man), having an order from the Governor of Fars on all the chiefs of villages to vacate their houses if needed, and to find us with food and forage, of course being paid for them. No sooner had we cleared the town, than, to our disgust, we found our pantry-man surrounded by his weeping relatives, his wife and our cook's lady being unable to tear

themselves from their sympathising friends. This, of course, did not matter, but, alas! the mule-load with our bedding was with them.

“My husband, by a free use of threats, compelled Abdul Hamid (the pantry-man) to start, the gholam following in charge of the mule which carried Hamid’s wife and the cook’s wife and daughter, a girl of nine; all closely veiled, and weeping copiously.

“On getting about a mile out, the cage containing eight canaries, two goldfinches, and eighteen avadavats, which we had got at Kurrachee, was given to Hamid to carry in front of him; but as it was his first journey and attempt at riding, after about a couple of hundred yards he and the cage came crash to the ground, some avadavats escaping; so we gave the cage to a villager to carry on his head; we then bid good-bye to Mirza Hassan Ali Khan; and my husband now was occupied in whipping on the mule of helpless Abdul Hamid, to get him up to the other servants, in which he succeeded after we had gone twelve miles. From the packing, and excitement about getting mules, and not having had anything since breakfast at one P.M., we were very tired; as were the horses, which we had been from peculiar circumstances obliged to keep on grass for the last three weeks.

“The road was a good one, but the moon gave very little light, and we could not canter on that account, and for fear of the servants lagging. This stage was formerly a very bad one, but the road was made good last year, when the king was expected in Shiraz.

“At last, at eleven P.M., we reached the chupper-khana (or post-house) at Zergūn, where we took the bala-khana (or upper room); we drank some milk,

and lay down till our dinner—a roast fowl and potatoes, and custard pudding—was ready, which was not till nearly one hour after midnight.

"After that we slept heavily till seven A.M., when we were glad of our tea and devilled fowl. We had breakfast at twelve, and vainly expected the mules all day; and after seeing our horses groomed and fed, we dined at seven on soup, boiled fowl, and caper sauce, Irish stew, custard pudding, figs, and grapes; ice, of course, was not procurable; our wine we brought with us, and we always have a flask full of it for the road.

"Just before starting, at half-past two A.M., *in the dark*, we had a basin of soup; and having got all our servants off, started for our second stage.

"At three we got off, and after nearly missing the road, we marched along with our mules till dawn, when we cantered over a good and level road, and feeling tired at sunrise, got down and had some cold fowl and wine. Another hour brought us to Hadjiabad, where we found two comfortable rooms occupied by some small official, of whose carpets and water-skin we took possession (by means of a few kerans), and slept till breakfast. We again rested till five P.M., when we had soup, and started, reaching Sivend at nine P.M., seven hours' journey, thirty-two miles from Zergūn.

"To our disgust we found that the inspector had locked every room in the telegraph-office, he being on leave; so we took up our quarters on the verandah, which was fairly cool. In the morning still no mules, so we moved over to the best house in the village, where we are very comfortable. We were glad to give our horses a rest, for the sudden exertion after grass had done them no good. We passed our

day in seeing our saddles cleaned, the washing of 'Pip,' and writing letters.

"At night, the place being full of cats, who attacked the birds, C—— shot two and missed two more. They, however, ate one canary, and the wires being broken, C—— had to pursue another bird over many roofs, catching him at last unhurt.

"*Sunday.*—Still no news of mules; sent a 'kossid' (or foot-messenger) with a letter to Shiraz asking for steps to be taken to get them out. The man is to get half-a-crown for walking the fifty-six miles in eighteen hours, and to bring back an answer!

"*Monday.*—Venison for breakfast. We got a welcome present of snow last night, and by laying the top of the table on the bird-cage, succeeded in defying the cats.

"At twelve P.M., Wednesday, having no news of our mules, we engaged two muleteers, started, and in two hours marched to Kawamabad, eight miles, fording the river Bendamir half-way. A fair road. The weather changed here; it was very chilly on arrival, and cool and windy all day.

"Left Kawamabad at six P.M., Thursday, and reached the tomb of Cyrus at twelve, where we rested a little, and ate some fowl, and found the night very cold. The monument is like a huge dog-kennel, of great squared stones, on a stone platform. Ussher states the tomb itself to be forty-three feet by thirty-seven. There are seven stone steps, which diminish in thickness as one ascends. The kennel-like edifice at the top is twenty-one feet by sixteen only; the thickness is five feet. The interior dimensions are ten feet long, seven wide, and eight high. There are no inscriptions. The door is four feet high only.

There are the remains of twenty-four columns, six on each side.[34]

"Got to Murghāb, twenty-eight miles, at two A.M. A very long and fatiguing march; several passes. This place is celebrated for carpets, but we failed to obtain any. In the centre of the village there is a large piece of turf like a cricket field—the only piece of turf I have seen as yet.

"Left at six P.M. A bad road, with several passes, till half way, when it became a sort of steppe; here we came on a number of mules grazing: we fortunately sent a man to ask whose they were, and they turned out to be *our* loads and the missing charwardar,[35] who had passed us when we halted at Sivend.

"Our difficulties will now be much less, as with lots of muleteers we shall get loaded and off quickly, and our bedding mule (which at present carries my fortnightly box, C——'s portmanteau, a carpet, two heavy chairs, and a table, a champagne box full of wine, an india-rubber sack full of odds and ends, my little black bag, a heavy cage for Pip, and the birds' cage a yard long, besides our bedding; and its pack-saddle weighing thirty pounds) will go much lighter: we shall also get our bath, which had gone on with the loads.

"We reached Dehbeed, twenty-six miles, at two; we had soup and fowl on the road, and were very glad to get in. There is nothing here but a chupper-khana, a caravanserai (in ruins), and a telegraph-office. It is delightfully cool and windy, the water, too, is like ice, and very good. Nothing to be got but bread; but we had supplies with us. Left at nine P.M., and over a fair road with two small passes to Konar

Khora, twenty-four miles. This is a more lonely place than the last; water only and cucumbers to be got; a post-house and caravanserai (in ruins) the only houses, and nothing nearer than twenty-four miles. The flies so hungry here that they bite and *hurt*.

"Left at six P.M., over a level plain and splendid road; stopped at Faizabad, twenty-four miles, at twelve midnight, and taking the best house, a very good one with two rooms overlooking a garden, slept again in the open air; much warmer here; meat to be got again; we are now out of the wilderness; had a really comfortable rest here; left at ten P.M.

"Reached Abadeh, sixteen miles, at two A.M. Our groom had lagged behind with the horse-clothing, and the other two men had lost their way; so we, the cook and the bedding, arrived alone. C—— had to tie up the horses as best he could, and we took an hour to get to bed. The road was good, and in the morning we got a fair mutton steak, but no fruit was to be had. Left at ten P.M. Abadeh is a large place enclosed in a mud wall, the post-house being outside; it is celebrated for spoons carved in wood in a wonderful manner, but they are useless and dear. Here Mr. Carapet, of the Department, hospitably entertained us and gave us a capital dinner, and a leg of mutton for the road.

"Over a long plain, twenty-four miles to Shūrgistan; put up in the guest-house of the shrine; arrived at half-past three. Nothing to be got here; so hot that we had to go downstairs—the lower rooms are cooler. Left at half-past eight P.M., and over a long plain to Yezdikhast, twenty miles, where we arrived at one. A fine caravanserai; got a good room on the roof. People here report the king's death, and there is a panic. The place is peculiar, being built on

a high cliff which is in the middle of a deep gorge nearly a mile wide, a small river running down the middle. Our gholam left us here, this being the frontier of Fars.

"Left at six P.M. with three guards on horseback, the road reported to be not safe. This stage is where C—— was robbed, and where the Bakhtiaris make their incursions. Twenty-six miles to Maxsud Beg: a long road. Arrived at two A.M. Took the guards the whole way, or we should never have found the chupper-khana, which is off the road. Got some good bread here at a small village. Found a load of ice sent us from Kūmishah; a welcome present from the inspector there. A good room twice the usual size, very cool; a high wind all day and night. Left at half-past seven for Kūmishah, sixteen miles, a fair road, wind very high and cold. Arrived at half-past eleven, after much trouble in a rocky valley, servants losing themselves and coming to grief. The brown horse went lame (from a projecting nail) and had to be led. Were hospitably entertained by the inspector, Sergeant McIntyre, who gave us a breakfast of many dishes. A large place, but in ruins; very cool; a fine shrine and resting-place for pilgrims, accommodating some thousands.

"Left at half-past five; twenty miles over a dreary plain to Mayar, a large caravanserai, and a village which is the Shah's personal property (in ruins); arrived at half-past eleven. No beds, as we had got in two hours before the loads. I was so tired, I lay down and slept in my habit. We were all too tired to eat, and the servants were dead beat; so we went without dinner, ordering a good breakfast to be served as soon as we should wake. Being determined to try and get into Ispahan (or rather Julfa) to-morrow, an early

move was necessary; we started at five P.M., and reached Marg caravanserai, twenty-eight long miles, at two A.M.; here my husband determined to halt for a few hours, and I slept till dawn in a wretched hole. There were good quarters in the chupper-khana (post-house), and the post-house and caravanserai are all that Marg consists of; but we were told that glanders had been rife there, and we were afraid to trust our horses in the place.

"At dawn our caravan arrived; the muleteers and servants swore they could do no more, but a little persuasion and a promise of a present got them off, after feeding their mules, and we cantered on, reaching our quarters at ten A.M., after a hot ride in the sun. By this forced march we escaped the meeting with new friends, who otherwise, had we arrived the next day, as was calculated, would have ridden out to meet us. I lay down at once, and the mules and their riders dropped in one by one, each man on his arrival seeming to shout louder than his predecessor.

"But our journey was over, and I trust I may never again have to march three hundred miles at night."

CHAPTER XXXIII.
JULFA.

Hire a house—Coolness of streets—Idleness of men—Industry of women—Stone mortars—Arrack—Hire a vineyard—A wily Armenian—Treasure-trove—The "Shaking Minarets"—A hereditary functionary—A permanent miracle—Its probable explanation—Vaccination—Julfa priests—Arrack as an anæsthetic—Road-making—Crops of firewood—Fire temple—Huge trees—The racecourse—Disappearance of ancient brick buildings—Donkeys—Healthiness of Julfa—Zil-es-Sultan—His armoury—Prospects of the succession to the throne—Bull-terriers—Mastiffs—Politeness and rudeness of the prince.

After a considerable amount of diplomacy, we managed to secure a fine large house with a good garden and stabling, in the principal and best street of Julfa. My wife was pleased with the cool climate of Ispahan, the abundance of water, and the rows of trees with which each street is planted.

The Armenian is a thrifty fellow, and plants the Zoban-i-gūngishk, or sparrow-tongue, a kind of willow, on either side of the small ditch which runs down the side or centre of the streets; this ditch brings the water for the irrigation of the gardens, and by planting the trees he obtains shade and fire-wood; for the "Zoban-i-gūngishk" is the best of all woods for fuel, and the roots keep the ditch-bank solid and in good repair. Cool and pretty as the streets look from the unaccustomed masses of foliage, one soon finds that one is in a *Christian* village. Sheep and

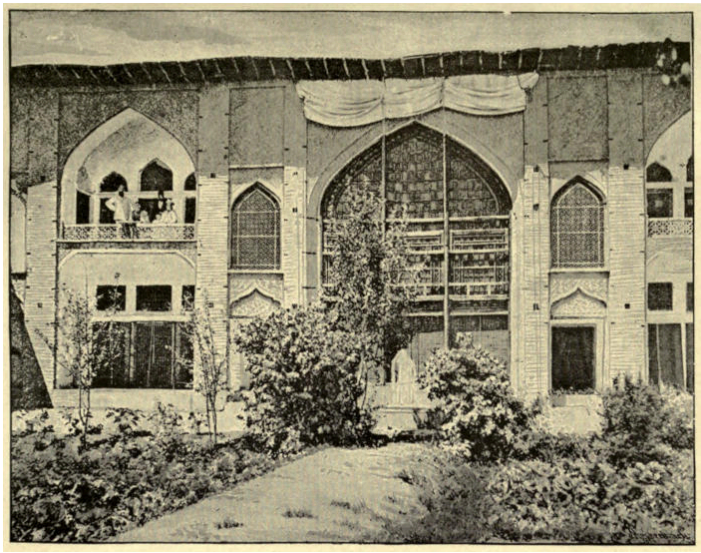
oxen are slaughtered all down the principal street, in the most public manner; and on Saturday night especially drunkards are common, while swarms of loafers, generally men who live on small pensions from relatives in India, lean with their backs against the wall, basking in the early sun, or sprawl in the shade during the heat.

In each doorway sit or lounge the women, but their hands and tongues are busily employed; they knit socks as long as daylight lasts; some widows even maintain a family by this industry. With nose and mouth hidden, poorly fed, but well and warmly clad, the Armenian woman makes up by her industry for the laziness of her husband; she sweeps the house and yard, cooks the food, makes the clothes, bakes the bread, makes wine, arrack, flour—for this is generally ground in a hand-mill by the poor; and the rest of her time is filled up by knitting. These Armenian women are notable housekeepers, and though generally ignorant and ungraceful—a girl is never even fairly good-looking after seventeen—they are hard-working and very virtuous.

In most of the quarters of Julfa may be seen at the roadside huge stone mortars for the pounding of rice, by which means it is extracted from the husk; these are the remains of the teeming Julfa of other days, when it was a large city with twenty-four crowded parishes, each with its church, the ruins of most of which are now all that remain of the parishes. You seldom see a Julfa man pounding at one of the huge mortars; he prefers to hire a Mussulman or villager to do the heavy work for him, and as he does not care to part with his money—“Thrift, thrift, Horatio!”—the payment is generally a glass of spirits. These spirits cost nothing, as each man makes his

own wine, which he sells, and from the refuse his arrack, which he drinks. Armenians seldom drink wine; it is not strong enough for them, and arrack is much more to their taste. All the refuse, after clearing the wine, is put in a big pot, a head and worm is fixed on with mud, and distillation by means of a very slow fire of big logs is proceeded with. The product is redistilled once, and even a third time. A strong rough spirit is the result; it is generally coloured green, and flavoured by thrusting a handful of leaves of anise (rasianah) into the receiver. Of course the spirit is quite pure, being after a third distillation simply strong spirits of wine. What the Armenians *sell*, however, is much adulterated and drugged; it is known as “fixed bayonets,” and is simply made to produce intoxication.

I secured a fine house in Julfa for forty-eight pounds a year. One side of this house—it formed two of the four enclosing sides of a big garden—is shown in the illustration. The immense window indicates the great size of the huge T-shaped summer room, or Orūssee, the floor of which was tiled. The fountain is seen playing in the hauz, or ornamental tank, in front of the Orūssee.



DR. WILLS'S HOUSE IN JULFA.

My landlord had a fine vineyard at the side of my house, and for a yearly payment of one hundred kerans I secured the right of entry, and the privilege of eating as many grapes as we pleased. The landlord, however, made mud bricks, and covered over *all* the paths with the freshly-made bricks laid to dry; it was only, finding remonstrance ineffectual, by calling our five dogs in with us, and letting them run over the soft bricks, that I could get him to clear the paths. I found, too, that I was waterless directly water became scarce and dear, the man having sold our water. Fortunately the lease specified the water, so I *took* the water, and referred the purchasers to my landlord. They beat him, and got back their money. I saw the three arguing and fighting for several days; how the matter ended I did not inquire. I got my water.

Twice in my house concealed treasure had been

discovered; once to a large amount by the grandfather of my landlord, and a second time to a smaller value by his father.

On this second occasion, the well running dry, men were sent down to deepen it; a door was found in the wall, and a quantity of arms and clothing were discovered in a small chamber in the wall, but no money or jewels. I found a secret chamber in this house, but it was empty.

Of course my wife had to be taken to that terrible fraud, the *Shaking Minarets*. Why, no one knows, but every one has heard of the Shaking Minarets. “You went to Ispahan. What did you think of the Shaking Minarets?” is constantly asked by those who have not been there. Even those who have, much on the principle of the bumpkin, who, on paying his penny, is triumphantly shown the biggest donkey in the fair, *in a looking-glass*, and urges his friends to go and see that show: so does a feeling of having been defrauded cause people to advise their friends to see the Shaking Minarets. The mere name is poetical and mysterious.

Upon a gentleman high in the diplomatic service being asked what was the use of the British Agent at Ispahan, he replied:

“Oh, it is an hereditary office; he shows British travellers the Shaking Minarets.”

But then that “excellency” was a humorous man. He it was who, on being troubled by a pertinacious clergyman with many grievances, and told by him (the parson) that “he was but a humble member of the Church Militant,” replied, “Church Pugnacious, you mean.”

Dearly did the British Agent love to perform his

"hereditary function." The new-comer, full of desire to see the Shaking Minarets, and really pleased with his visit to the town of Ispahan, would make the appointment for *the* sight, and, seeing the "hereditary functionary's" enthusiasm, not liking to damp it, would acknowledge that he *had* seen the eighth wonder of the world.

An hour's sharp canter through bridle-paths and shady lanes, after crossing the river by the old Marnūn bridge, would bring one to the little shrine, through the power of whose "Pir," or saint, there interred, the *miracle* of the *Shaking Minarets* is daily on view. As one approached the village where the shrine is, the labourers in the field would begin to run towards it, each eager to be the holder of a European's horse, and their shouts would bring a crowd to the scene.

There is nothing particularly wonderful about the shrine; it is under a lofty arch of modern construction, and is the usual rectangular chest, under which reposes the body of the saint. On the whole lies an open Koran and reading-stand. The chest is covered by a ragged pall of cotton cloth; and a few strings of copper "kendils," or votive offerings, in the shape of small copper cylinders constricted in the middle, attest the popularity of the saint with the villagers. The guardian, also the village schoolmaster, is a Syud, or holy man; no information can be obtained from him, save that the dead saint has great power, and that the shaking is a miracle. Proceeding to the top of the shrine, a good view of the Ispahan valley is obtained, and here one sees the celebrated *Shaking Minarets*. A lusty villager ascends each, and by dint of strong shaking, both vibrate considerably. The "hereditary functionary" used *to do*

this himself with great gusto, but, having visited England, has become too important for the personal exercise of his "functions." When one man ceases to shake the vibration continues in both, and a peculiar sensation of insecurity is felt when one is inside the minaret.

The *minarets* are some twelve or fourteen feet high above the roof. They are of brick; and the fact is, that being continuous with a long thin wall which connects the two at the base, the vibration caused in one is communicated to the other. This is the *miracle*, which will probably some day cease by the vibrator being propelled into space, and then the office of the "hereditary functionary" will be really a sinecure. The place, however, has been repaired, and the minarets rebuilt, within the last thirty years, so the guardian says. I fancy that the explanation of the miracle lies in the hypothesis I have suggested, the long wall on which the minarets are built having probably settled, and so, having no communication with the side walls, being no miracle, but merely bad building. We saw the miracle, expressed our wonder, thanked "the hereditary functionary," and went home sadder and wiser than we came.

Vaccination is now happily appreciated in Persia. On my first arrival it was unknown, and inoculation was regularly practised. Another plan, too, was common, and the future native pastor of the Protestant Armenians lost a child by its practice. He put his own child in bed with a child having small-pox, that it might take the disease in a benign form; confluent small-pox of the most virulent type resulted, and the poor child died, to the great grief of the parent, a most deserving and honest fellow.

This man and one other are the only teetotalers of

Julfa, which may dispute the palm with any Scotch town for capability of swallowing liquor on a Sunday.

So common is drunkenness here, that an old cook of mine, an English-speaking Armenian, used to say to me on Sunday night—

"Dinner finished, sir; if you no orders, I go get drunk with my priest." Needless to add, that they both did get drunk, and that it was at the cook's expense. Happily, there are some few exceptions among the Julfa priests, for all India, Persia, and Batavia are supplied with priests for their Armenian communities from Julfa.

Spirits are supposed to deaden pain, and a Yezdi, a guebre (fire-worshipper), who had lodged some slugs and iron in his hand, prior to my removing them, swallowed a quart of strong spirit without my knowledge. I supposed him to become suddenly delirious, but he was only suddenly drunk.

Our first care was to make a road for our little dog-cart. The gates separating the parishes were mostly too narrow to let it pass, and we finally made one six feet wide at the narrowest, having three bridges without parapets (which we widened), and one was at a sharp angle, *and a deep ditch the whole way on one side, and a wall on the other*. This was capital for a small two-wheel thing, as long as the horse didn't jib or shy, or we didn't meet any one. Happily, it did not in our time, but when we got a bigger trap, a park phaeton, with a pair of horses, the pleasure of our drive was somewhat damped by the possibility of a capsize at night in the dark! But the cherub that always keeps a watch over poor Jack must have been on duty, for we never did have an accident. It was Hobson's choice, that road or none.

Crossing the river at Marnūn became our favourite ride, and here one could canter for miles on a good road, the greater part of which was shaded by the gardens and orchards on either side. A great deal of firewood, too, is grown in this neighbourhood, water is plentiful, and so firewood is a staple crop. Getting out beyond the gardens, on a small mountain standing by itself on the plain, was the ruin of an ancient fire-temple. It was merely built of mud bricks, but here at Ispahan these remain for centuries, and it was only on climbing up to it that one perceived that it was not all quite modern, and a small portion built of very large bricks on an ancient wall. A grand view was got from it, as it commanded the entire plain.

Several large plane-trees are to be seen in the villages, many with platforms built round them, where the villagers sit and smoke in the evenings. A sort of semi-sacred character is attached to some of them, particularly to one which is called the “plane of Mortaza Ali.”

A striking feature at Julfa is the so-called racecourse at Ferhabad. A couple of walls enclose a straight run of over a mile. These walls, which are in ruins, and of mud, have at intervals various pavilions, some of the rooms of which are still almost perfect. At the end is a large square, having many rooms round it in a still better state. The road turned at a right angle towards the village of Julfa; but as this is intersected by wells and watercourses, it is not used as a cantering ground. The place is supposed to have been the summer palace of the Afghan conquerors.

Ruins and ancient buildings, when built of burnt bricks, rapidly disappear in Persia. It is for a very

simple reason. It is cheaper to demolish an old building, and carry off the good *seasoned* bricks by donkey-loads, than to make and burn new ones, which often crumble.

In my own time a large and handsome college near the Char Bagh of Ispahan has utterly disappeared, the prince having given an order for its demolition, and that the material be used in making the new one he has now completed. The very foundations were grubbed up. In Ispahan itself every third house is a ruin, and in Julfa the walls of gardens and orchards often contain the bare inner walls of ancient houses, which retain the brightness of their painting and gilding in the dry and pure air.

Donkeys, as beasts of burden, are much employed in a country where there are no carts or wheeled vehicles; save in the capital, the donkeys do all the ordinary work of vehicles. Earth, manure, produce, firewood, charcoal, grain, are all carried on these beasts or on mules. Each animal has his pack-saddle, in which he lives and sleeps. It is only removed when the donkey gets a rare and very occasional curry-combing from a very primitive sort of instrument, having jangling rings, which produce a music supposed to be soothing to a donkey's soul. Every villager has his donkey; if more than one he is well-to-do. The ordinary wage of a man is one keran, a man and donkey one keran and a half, and each additional donkey half a keran. They work from sunrise to sunset, with an hour's interval for feeding.

Julfa is a particularly healthy place, for the cesspools are constantly kept clean by the market-gardeners, who pay for the privilege of removing the manure. By mixing the contents of the cesspools with ashes, a dry and portable manure is produced of the

highest efficacy, and odourless. It is removed on donkeys, and stored in the fields until required.

In the very depth of the winter, when snow and ice had rendered the ride to the town highly dangerous for horses, I was summoned in haste to see my old patient the Zil-es-Sultan, now the most important man in the kingdom next to the king. I went, though risking my horse's knees, and was rather disgusted to find that I was sent for *to see if he was ill or not*, as he was not sure. I found him in a hot room, temperature eighty (by the thermometer), wrapped in furs, being shampooed by three attendants, while a fourth was reading poetry to him. He was, I told him, in a fair way to get ill, and that air and exercise were all he needed. He took my advice, and returned to his usual very active life.

He showed me an armoury of some eight hundred rifles, with a proportionate amount of fowling-pieces and pistols. I expressed the desired amount of admiration. I suppose the time will come when his Royal Highness will make an effort for the throne, probably on the present Shah's death. It will be a lucky day for Persia if he succeeds, as he is clever, tolerant, and a good governor. His personal popularity is very great, and his luck as a governor proverbial. He has a dislike to deeds of blood, but is a severe governor, like his uncle, the late Hissam-u-Sultaneh, whose virtues he emulates.

The Valliāt, or heir-apparent, on the contrary, is physically weak, and mentally imbecile, being a bigot in the hands of a few holy men, and as impracticable as he is obstinate. No doubt if he ever does reign a black time will set in for the country, for religious persecution on a gigantic scale will commence, and the future of Iran be very sad.

The Zil-es-Sultan had just got two bull-terriers from England. He was convinced of their ferocity; and certainly the dog, very short-faced, and almost a bull-dog, was of terrific appearance. His Royal Highness caused them to be let into the courtyard, cautioning me to be very still, as not knowing me they might attack me, and providing me with a lump of sugar to appease them. Of course nothing of the sort took place, but the dogs ran about and smelt the various grandees, to their great disgust. The prince made great pets of them, feeding them with sugar. I was surprised to find that though these dogs had not seen an Englishman for months, yet on my speaking to them in English they followed me about, fawning on me, and neglecting the prince, and the dog-man who was their valet.

Since this time the prince has procured two huge half-bred Dutch mastiffs, in which he greatly rejoices, and these animals, though not fierce, are certainly very powerful dogs. Strange that the love of animals in a man like the Zil-es-Sultan should so overcome the Mussulman dislike of the unclean beast. The dogs were in the habit of licking the prince's hand.

This particular winter was an unusually severe one. There was much snow, and it was impossible to get out for rides for a fortnight; and two store-rooms of my huge house fell in, from the heavy mud roofs being soaked with water, and breaking their supports by the enormous increase of weight.

On one occasion in the early spring we had ridden out to the garden palace of Haft Dust, and were preparing to take tea, when with great noise the Zil-es-Sultan rode into the place with some fifty horsemen. No sooner did he see and recognise my

servants than he asked if I was alone. On hearing that my wife ("my *house*," as my man put it) was with me, he rode out, taking all his followers with him, and sending me a message to "go on with my tea, that he trusted I should enjoy my visit, that the place was mine as long as I pleased," etc.

Europeans avoid the Persians when with ladies, as very ridiculous scenes are at times the result. One gentleman, whose wife was not in her first youth, on meeting the prince when riding with her, instead of avoiding him, stopped to speak.

It was one of his rude days, for he calmly asked, in defiance of the rules of Persian politeness, which demand the ignoring of the existence of any female:

"Is that your wife?"

"Yes, my wife."

"Well, I wouldn't have a wife so old and ugly as that. Get a young one."

The situation for both lady and gentleman was embarrassing.

CHAPTER XXXIV.
JOURNEY TO AND FROM TEHERAN.

Proceed to Teheran—Takhtrowan—Duties—Gulhaek—Lawn-tennis—Guebre gardener—A good road—The Shah—Custom of the Kūrūk—M. Gersteiger—Cossack regiments—Austrian officers—New coinage—Count Monteforte—New police—Boulevard des Ambassadeurs—English Embassy—Tile gates—Summer palaces—Bazaars—Russian goods—Demarvend—Drive to Ispahan—Difficulties of the journey—Accidents—Danger of sunstroke—Turkeys—Keeping peacocks—Armenian tribute of poultry—Burmese and Japanese embassies—Entertainment and fireworks—Cruel treatment of Jews—Oil paintings—Bahram and his queen—Practice makes perfect—Pharaoh and the Red Sea—Pharaoh and the magicians.

After an eighteen months' stay in Julfa (Ispahan) I received orders to proceed to Teheran "to act" (for my chief).

We started, my wife travelling in a "takhtrowan" (moving bed). This consists of a box with doors and windows, six feet long, three feet wide, and four feet high. A thick mattress is placed in it, and plenty of pillows. Where the road is fairly level, as from Ispahan to Teheran, it is not a bad way of travelling for a lady. The great cause of satisfaction to her was that she had her baby with her. Water was kept out of the machine by a waterproof sheet being tacked to the top, and a thick carpet was lashed over the roof when travelling in strong sun. At each end of the box

are shafts, and between each pair a mule. The movement is at first rather sickening, but this is soon got over, and the traveller sleeps the greater portion of the stage.

Although we travelled as lightly as possible, we were forced to take twenty-four mules, and were heartily glad when our journey, which was twelve long stages, and without incident of any kind, was over. I hired a little house at Gulhaek, the village where are situated the summer quarters of the English Embassy, and where lives the *chief* of my Department, *in the summer*.

In addition to my own work I was in charge of the staff of the Indo-European Telegraph Company's line who lived in Teheran. Our own signalling staff too lived *in the town*. As however we had an exceptionally healthy summer, the duties were very light.

I was also placed in medical charge of the Russian Embassy by the Russian Ambassador, M. Zenoview, for the greater part of my six months' stay, their own physician having gone to Russia for a time on private business.

Gulhaek is one of the villages at the foot of the mountains bounding the Teheran valley, and by prescriptive right the English Legation go to Gulhaek, the Russians to the next village, Zergendeh, and the French to another a couple of miles higher, called Tejreesh. These places are delightfully cool, and if the *signallers* of the Department and of the Company could be moved to them, it would be a great boon to the men, for it is terribly hot and unhealthy in the town, and the expense would not be great: *in fact it ought to be done*.

Lawn-tennis, when we arrived, was in high vogue, and was played every afternoon on a level ground (a *lawn* in Persia is nearly impossible) mudded over with what is termed “kah gil,” a mixture of “kah” (cut straw) and “gil” (mud). This forms a sort of sheet of smooth and springy ground, which gives a good foothold, and dries rapidly. The tennis was justly popular, and was the most pleasant means of obtaining exercise, and consequently health.

Our own comfort was increased by the arrival of an English nurse, whom we had engaged to come out for a certain three years.

I was enabled to buy a small park-phaeton and a pair of well-broken horses from a German, the master of the Shah’s mint, who was leaving because he declined to debase the coinage, which was contrary to the terms of his agreement.

In the garden next to ours lived a Guebre. A few of these men have been under the protection of the English Embassy time out of mind. He kept us supplied with strawberries at tenpence a plateful; and as we had not tasted them since leaving England, they were a great luxury, particularly in a warm climate.

The greater part of the road from Gulhaek to Teheran, being the way to the Shah’s favourite summer residences, is planted on both sides with trees and shrubs. These give a grateful shade; and as the road is in good order, it is pleasant driving; but, when thronged, the dust rises and covers everything, so that it is like a very dusty return from the Derby, but with no excitement, *and hotter*. Still, a good road in nearly roadless Persia was a thing to be taken advantage of.

Several times when out driving we met the Shah, and invariably drew on one side to allow him to pass. His Majesty was always very polite, and returned our salutes. On our passing the first time he sent a man to inquire who we were. The Prime minister, too, was particular in behaving in a civilised manner, but the ragamuffin attendants on the royal ladies always used to shout “Begone,” “Be off,” and their postilions would always drive as close as possible, and pass one as if they wished a collision, or to take a wheel off.

The custom of the kūrūk is dying out. It used to be death for any man to be in the neighbourhood of the royal wives when on their numerous outings. The people always fled, or stood with faces to the wall; and Europeans, when they saw the eunuchs’ procession approaching, and heard the cry of “Gitchen” (Turkish “Begone”), to avoid unpleasantness and possible rows, used to turn down the first street. A very eccentric Austrian, the Baron Gersteiger Khan (the latter title being, of course, a Persian dignity; for many years instructor to the Persian army, and at last general; principal officer of engineers, and constructor of roads, in which latter work he has really left some striking marks of his success), on meeting the ladies when he was on foot, turned his face to the wall like a native, and as each carriage passed, deliberately *saluted from the back of his head*. This delighted the ladies, and they informed the Shah. The Shah sent for Gersteiger, and made him repeat his salutes, and after laughing a good deal, gave him a handsome present.

The king generally travelled in a carriage very like a sheriff’s, with eight pairs of horses harnessed to it, with postilions. They went at a fair pace, were

always preceded by the royal runners (“shatirs”), clad in their ancient Persian dress of red, with the curious turreted hat, like a fool’s cap and bells, and each bearing a gold baton. These men were all good runners, and some six or eight ran in front, while one or two always kept at his Majesty’s side.

When we were in Teheran a number of Russian officers were engaged in forming some so-called Cossack regiments. They engaged horsemen, whom they regularly paid, and seemed to be teaching these men their drill successfully. These so-called Cossacks were the Shah’s favourite toy of the moment, and he was never tired of reviewing them. They were well but plainly dressed, well horsed and well armed, and the Russian officers were very popular both with Shah and soldiers.

A large contingent of Austrian officers had also arrived to instruct the infantry and artillery; but though these gentlemen were well paid, they did not find Persia the El Dorado they expected. Some of them resigned while I was there. They also fought among themselves; and all have now, I fancy, left the country. The capital was ever rather a rowdy place; murders and burglaries were common; and, as in other towns of Persia, the “darogas,” or police-masters, and their dependants were so mercenary, that the townspeople preferred being robbed to complaining to them, on the principle of two evils to choose the less.

The manufacture of false money had become a national evil, and forgeries of the royal seals were frequent. The first evil was sought to be got over by calling in the old rough coinage, which was hammer-struck, and substituting a handsome series of medals in gold and silver, having milled edges. These were

introduced with great success, and the new coinage was handsome and popular. But it was soon counterfeited, and when the nuisance had attained its height the Count Monteforte arrived with special credentials from the Emperor of Austria, and was installed as head of police. This gentleman seemed to be exactly the right man in the right place. He got on with the natives, in a few weeks established a character for honesty and shrewdness, detected many offenders, recovered much stolen property, and established a regiment of policemen, well drilled, well dressed, honest, polite, and who REFUSED BRIBES. As bribes are to the Persian what beef is to the Englishman, these phenomena have probably ere this been either shelved or corrupted; but when we were in Teheran in 1880, they were in full swing, and the wonder and admiration of foreigners and natives.

Just one street in Teheran is very much Europeanised; it is fairly paved, and lighted by lamp-posts containing candles. It is called the Boulevard des Ambassadeurs, and as it is a wide street, the view from the bottom is somewhat striking, ending as it does in the green hills and black mountains covered on their tops with snow.

At the top, approached by an ornamental gate of great size, is the palace of the English Ambassador. This has been recently erected at enormous cost, partly from designs by the late Major Pierson, R.E. It is surrounded by trees, and the edifice meets the requirements of the country, and is very original in appearance. It stands in a magnificent garden of great size, in which are placed the houses of the secretaries, built like English villas of the better class. The interior of the Embassy is furnished with

great splendour with English furniture, and our ambassador to the Court of Persia is lodged as he should be, *en prince*.

The rest of the town is wholly Oriental. Dead walls of mud and brick are seen in every direction. The streets are mud in winter and dust in summer.

The principal feature in Teheran is the numerous tiled gates. These structures, covered with floridly-coloured tiles in elaborate patterns, mostly geometrical, having centre-pieces of representations of scenes from the mythology of Persia, were certainly novel and curious. As a rule, the modern tile-work is in striking contrast to the ancient, which is much chaster, and in better taste.

Of the many palaces none were worth description, of those that I visited, which were all mere summer retreats. They were gaudy, much painted and gilt, and the white plaster-work, decorated with mirrors, was the only kind of ornamentation having the slightest pretence to be artistic. The dry climate, however, enables this effective style of decoration to be used for *exteriors*, and it retains its pristine whiteness in the clear air for many years. Many large buildings seen from a distance in Teheran have a great appearance of magnificence, and it does not strike the beholder at first that they are merely plaster-of-Paris over mud bricks. To them the term “whitened sepulchre” is particularly appropriate; but the insecurity of property must be considered, and a man would be unwise to build an expensive edifice which would expose him to jealousy.

The bazaars are good, and sufficiently curious; of course much inferior in size and richness to those of Stamboul (Constantinople). Most of the goods exposed, not of native manufacture, are Russian.[36]

The Russian goods are liked in the Eastern market. They are *very cheap*, and *very strong*; in fact, are suited to the country; they are also, alas! very ugly. The tremendous land journey from Trebizonde, or that from the Persian Gulf, or the alternative from Baghdad *viâ* Kermanshah, closes the Persian market at Teheran to the English. Fortunes, however, are made there, an importer of French goods (which are particularly appreciated by the Persians) having retired with a large one. About four hundred per cent. is generally charged, which covers the heavy freight and the duty, and leaves about cent. per cent. profit.

We found a great deal of gaiety at Teheran. A weekly dinner at the Embassy, generally a daily drive, and the society of many Europeans of different nationalities, was of course a great break in the monotony of our life in Persia. But our pleasures after four months were interrupted by the serious illness of my wife. Our second little boy was born, and we were lucky in having a reliable nurse.

The view of Teheran is made very unique by the great semi-extinct volcano, Demarvend, in the distance, which gives it great grandeur, towering, as it does, over the valley, with its top covered in eternal snows, and taking innumerable lovely tints at the rising and setting of the sun.

We came to Teheran by the longer way of Natanz, thus avoiding the great Kohrūd pass, a particularly unpleasant stage when there is much snow; and as my wife was really an invalid, we determined to return to Ispahan driving—a thing no one has done before, and I fancy no one will do again. I had a new set of wheels made specially strong and heavy, and with very strong tyres. I succeeded in buying a

second pair of half-broken horses, in case my own pair came to grief, and we left in the autumn for Ispahan, the nurse and babies occupying the takhtrowan, while my wife and I went in the trap.

We drove through the town with some trouble, and as soon as we were clear of the fortifications the road became broad and level, and we reached Hadjiabad, a garden, where we stopped the night.

The next day we crossed a rocky mountain, having to drag the phaeton by hand some miles, and then, locking the wheels with ropes, we got it down a very steep place. The rest was plain sailing; the roads were generally fairly good. My wife had to get out only some four times on a fifteen days' journey, and it was only on getting into or out of villages, where there were at times deep ditches, but plenty of willing helpers, that we had any difficulty.

On our last stage but three we mistook the road, and came forty-eight miles instead of twenty-four. We, however, only used our second pair once, as they were very unsafe; and our horses, strange to say, did the whole journey well, and arrived in fair condition.

At the last stage but two a ridiculous accident occurred. We had frequently snapped the heads of bolts, and even the bolts themselves, by going over very rough places, the jolt breaking the heads off, as they were steel. These we generally detected and replaced by others, which we had caused to be made in Teheran. But Mūrchicah is a big village, with numerous twists and turns between dead walls ere one gets to the post-house. We had come a long stage, were very tired, and very anxious to get in, and, instead of going over a deep dry ditch which we had to pass, and which was very narrow, in a careful

way, I was foolish enough to try to pass it quickly. The result was a snap of all three bolts that fixed the trap to what is, I fancy, technically termed the fore-carriage. The thing hung together till we had got the hind wheels out of the ditch, and then the horses, pole, and two front wheels went on, the carriage itself remaining behind and falling forward; and, had not the apron been up, we should have been shot out. Fortunately the reins were long, and the horses easily pulled up. They were probably unaware of the accident. Though we were in the village there was no one about. The servants were either in front with the bedding, or behind with the loads, yet in five minutes the bolts were replaced by fresh ones, and we were proceeding on our way.

At this stage our little boy was taken very ill, and we both felt that another march in the sun in the "kajawehs," with his man-nurse, might be fatal to him. So next morning we started very early, and taking him in the trap, which had a hood and an opening with a cut leather curtain behind, that made it very cool: we hurried over the twenty-two miles, and did it in two hours and twenty minutes through deep sand.

The next day's stage was a very bad one, as, though short, we had to pass through the town, and had to take the horses out twice, and I dreaded our own very narrow and dangerous road to the house. However, we got in without accident, by starting at dawn, before ten; and the child, by rest and nursing, was soon himself again.

The sun in Persia is a very insidious enemy. Many cases of sun-apoplexy each year are seen, and I had a fixed rule that, except for evening rides, my wife and I always wore an Elwood's sun-helmet, and this is the

only real way to preserve oneself. All other things but the topi are valueless, unless one uses the hideous pith hat, or resorts to the turban. Of course in India these precautions are still more necessary. I don't know if these sun hats are made for children. They are very necessary if children are allowed to go at all in the sun, and they *will* go, and natives *will* let them. But really good-looking riding-hats are turned out for ladies. My wife had a solar riding-hat *à la* Gainsborough, that was almost becoming; so that ladies at least have no excuse. I was constantly warning those under my care of the danger of little caps, billycocks, etc., but in many cases I was looked on as a "Molly," though I felt it my duty to press my warnings. Of another thing I am convinced, that the powerful effect of the sun is much lost sight of *in Europe*, and I look on a bright helmet of metal, *unless air-chambered*, as an invention of the devil, and pity the poor Life Guards, etc.; the horsehair, however, happily saves them a little.

On our journey down, at a place called Sinsin, we saw a big turkey, and succeeded in buying a pair for fifty kerans, supposing them to be the *only* pair. We found afterwards that the head-man of the neighbouring village had a hundred birds, and the price afterwards fell to eight shillings a bird.

We were very successful in the rearing of the young turkeys, the hens sitting on their own eggs, and proving good mothers. So many poults did we have, that, when we left Ispahan eighteen months afterwards, we ate two a week for nearly six months. The turkeys were of two varieties, the ordinary black ones, as seen in Europe, and of large size, and a smaller bird, of lighter colour, and more delicate, some of which latter were almost pure white.

Peacocks are much valued in Persia, and supposed only to be kept by royalty: the English Minister has several fine birds, and the *privilege* of keeping them is jealously guarded.

We brought a quantity of tame ducks down from Teheran; these increased and multiplied amazingly, and bred with some wild ducks of the common kind. We brought also three geese. Geese, ducks, and turkeys were common long ago in Julfa when Ispahan was the capital, but the Armenians, finding that they had to pay a yearly tribute of fat birds, allowed them to die out, and so escaped the exaction. However, when we left Julfa, all the Europeans had turkeys and ducks, and there were plenty of geese at Soh, three stages off: so, doubtless, by now (two years) they are plentiful.

We were glad to get back to our own home, for though Teheran gave us most of the joys of civilisation, still we felt that our home was in our big house at Julfa. And how we did enjoy not having to start as usual the next morning!

Our stay in Ispahan was not chequered by any very exciting events, save those personal to ourselves.

During our sojourn, two ambassadors passed through it. One, the Burmese, an old and cheery man with huge ears, accompanied by a staff of attachés, one of whom spoke English well, and had been educated at King's College. He was supposed to be carrying rubies for disposal through Europe. He had a ring with him as a present from the King of Burmah to the Shah. Hoop, collet, and all, were cut out of one solid and perfect ruby of the first water—a truly barbarous present. These Burmese all wore the national apology for unmentionables—a handsome sheet of silk, termed a "langouti." This is wrapped

around the waist, and depends nearly to the feet; their heads were bound with fillets of muslin. The Zil-es-Sultan gave an entertainment in their honour, to which we were all invited. A fair dinner was followed by fireworks; these in Persia are always fairly good, the only thing being that Persians do not understand *coloured* fireworks, otherwise their displays are very good. One very good feature is, that the public are always freely admitted. All the walls are marked out with clay oil-lamps, and festoons of the same hang from wires affixed to high poles: these are lighted after sunset, as soon as it is dark. Music of a promiscuous character is played, all the musicians and singers joining in to *different* airs. The military bands strike up, each man playing his loudest at his own sweet will. A gun is fired, and the huge golden rains from earthen cones light up the whole scene, disclosing the shouting throng of good-tempered Persians of the lower orders; all people of condition having been provided with rooms and seats. All the roofs are thronged with crowds of veiled women, flights of rockets are continually let off, and the set-pieces soon commence. These are supplied in great profusion, and, save for the want of colour, they are quite equal to any effort of European pyrotechny.

A row of wretched Jews are now pushed into the tank—a proceeding which always accompanies any official display of fireworks. I know not why, unless it is to let the poor Jews feel, even in times of rejoicing, the wretchedness of their position. Dancing boys dressed as girls twirl and tumble, buffoons dance and pose grotesquely, the noise of music and singing is at its loudest. “Kūrbāghah” (frogs), a kind of water firework, are thrown in the tanks in every direction, and, as the set-pieces are fading, the whole concludes with a tremendous bouquet of fire as in

Europe.

The Japanese ambassador, or rather commissioner, was received with less ceremony, as he was proceeding *incog.* on his way to Europe, having a mission to introduce Japanese goods to the notice of Europeans generally. His attachés, too, spoke French and English, and were funny little fellows; but, as the Persians put it, “too ugly to have any value, even as slaves!”

We patronised art in Ispahan by having oil-paintings, executed by native artists, of incidents in Persian life; some of these were sufficiently curious. Among the subjects illustrated were “The Sticks,” a very tragic picture indeed, where the expressions of pain, terror, supplication, and ferocity were well shown.

Another amusing series were five pictures representing the history of Bahram and his queen. The monarch is shown as pinning, with a master-shot from his bow, the foot of an antelope to its side while it was scratching itself.

“What do you think of that?” says the exulting king.

“Oh, practice makes perfect,” coolly remarked the lady.

They naturally separate; for it is a dangerous thing for a wife to disparage her husband’s shooting. And here a curious parody of an ancient classical legend occurs. Bahram hears of a *lady* of great strength, who is in the habit of carrying a full-sized bull to the top of a tower!

He goes to see the prodigy, and sees a lovely woman perform the feat (scene depicted); his

astonishment is manifested by his placing his finger to his mouth—the typical gesture for this sensation in Eastern art.

"Oh, that is nothing," says the triumphant queen, "practice makes perfect." She then explains that she had commenced her feat when the bull was a little calf. The king smiled, and took her back.

Many of the subjects illustrated were the histories from the Koran. Thus the passage of the Egyptians, and their subsequent fate in the Red Sea, is shown; Pharaoh and his host drowning, while a green-winged angel exhibits to the sinking monarch a divine scroll, on which his sentence is written. The expiring Egyptians are good, and the look of horror on the face of Pharaoh is well done. *But a small steamer is seen in the distance!* Another picture was "The staff of Aaron changed to a serpent, having devoured the serpents of the magicians of Egypt." Here the winged dragon (or serpent) of Aaron is so tremendous, that Wagner would have been glad of him at Bayreuth: he is vomiting fire, and is a bogey of the first water. Pharaoh, his eyes starting from his head, is depicted in horror, while Moses has the satisfied expression of a conjurer after a successful *tour de force*. Another represents Iskender (Alexander the Great), who, having conquered the world, proceeds to the regions of eternal night, as according to Persian legend he did in fact. The conqueror and his warriors are well and carefully drawn, many of the figures carrying torches and cressets; but the eternal night is shown by painting the whole of the figures, trees, etc., *on a black ground*, and a curious effect is thus produced.

Solomon in all his glory (see Frontispiece) is a favourite subject. Solomon, who had the power of

speaking the languages of animals and all created things, and who could command the spirits of the earth and air, is seen seated on his throne. Above his head is the fabulous bird, the simūrgh; to his right, on a perch, is his favourite the hoopöe, below this are two tiny efreet. The Queen of Sheba is seated in a chair of state, behind her are her female servants and slaves, and two gigantic jinns (genii). To the king's left, are his Vizier Asaph (the author of the Psalms of Asaph, or possibly the person to whom they were dedicated), and Rūstam, the Persian Hercules, armed with his bull-headed mace. Behind them are four jinns of terrible aspect. The air is full of birds; and the foreground of beasts, reptiles, and insects. The tiny figures with crowns are angels, servants of Solomon; the turbaned figures are courtiers and servants.

CHAPTER XXXV.
WE RETURN VIÂ THE CASPIAN.

New Year's presents—Shiraz custom—Our cook's weaknesses—He takes the pledge—And becomes an opium-eater—Decide to go home—Dispose of kit—Start for Europe—Our own arrangements—Diary of our journey home—Arrival.

A severe winter, diversified with occasional fine weather, when the days were even hot in the sun, brought the No Rūz (or Persian New Year) and the commencement of spring. Our servants brought their plates of sweetmeats to mark the day, and duly received a month's pay, or clothes to that amount. The woman-servant Bēbē brought her mistress an earthen water-bottle, around the ledge of which was sown barley, the grains being held on by a bandage, and the porous jar keeping them constantly wet; the result was a number of rings of bright grass, the whole forming a very pretty and original, if useless, present. It is a common custom to do this in Shiraz at the New Year, and even the poorest has his water-pot covered with brilliant green.

Our cook is giving some trouble just now; for though a capital *chef*, and though he has been with me fourteen years—having begun at eight shillings a month, and arrived for the last five years at forty *and the spending of all the money*—yet he has his vices. When he was first with me as a youth of nineteen, he was perpetually getting married, and as frequently getting divorced; then he took to getting continually

arrested for debt; next drink became his foible, and this endured for about four years; dismissal, the bastinado (by the authorities), fining, were all tried without avail: at length, in despair, I sent him to the head of religion in Ispahan, with a note to the Sheikh, in which I apologised for troubling him, but stated that the man was a very old servant in whom I had a great interest, and *would he make him take the pledge*? The cook, who took the note himself, had no idea of the contents. He told me that the Sheikh read it and told him to wait; when the large assembly that always throngs the Sheikh's house had disappeared, the old gentleman produced a Koran, and proposed that the cook should take the pledge. He dared not refuse. After swearing to take no wine or spirits, a formal document was drawn up, to which the cook attached his seal. The Sheikh wrote me a very polite note, and assured me that the man would keep the pledge.

It appeared that he exhibited a tremendous "taziana," or cat-o'-nine-tails, to my man, as what pledge-breakers are punished with.

The cook now was for weeks as sober as a judge, but he was *becoming a fool*; the dinners were spoiled, or incongruous, or both: in fact, as he must do something, he had become an opium-eater. Opium, though habitually used by the aged of both sexes, is seldom taken to excess, save by "lutis," or confirmed debauchees.

At last, finding it impossible to cure this determined offender, I gave my reluctant consent to his proceeding to Kermanshah, his native place, where he wished to stay at least a year. I never saw him again.

I don't know if the last straw was the loss of our

cook, or if we had come to the conclusion that definitely Persia was not the place for a lady, but we decided to go home on two years' leave, to which I was now entitled; and as we felt that it was very probable we should never return, we determined to sell off our entire kit. We accordingly drew out a catalogue of our worldly goods in Persia, and distributed it among the telegraph officials. By a couple of months everything was disposed of but the rubbish. This was sold by auction, and produced a keen competition among the Armenians.

I was enabled to get rid of our phaeton without loss, for a Persian of wealth, the "Mūllavi," gave me within forty pounds of what I gave for it and the horses; and the severe work we had had out of trap and horses for two years was well worth the difference.

Captain W——, who was expecting his sisters out, *viâ* Russia, took all our road kit and saddlery, and my wife's mare and the "takhtrowan," all to be given over at Resht, on the Caspian, so we were quite free to start.

OUR JOURNEY HOME.

March 28th, 1881.—ISPAHAN JULFA.—At last I hear that a muleteer is found who will go direct to Resht, by way of Kūm, Hajeeb, and Kasvin, avoiding the capital. I go to the house of a Baghdad merchant in Julfa, and find the muleteer, who is being regaled with pipes; he is the head-man of the neighbouring village of Se Deh (three villages), and the proprietor of a hundred mules. I am told that his son-in-law will go with the mules, and am introduced to a young fellow some six feet high and thickly built, who is a

Tabrizi, and speaks good Turkish and bad Persian. He is wearing the large heavy sheepskin cap of Tabriz, with the wool long. The merchant informs me that he thinks the hire should be sixty kerans per mule. This is said in English, and he then turns to the elder man and says:

"You will, of course, give this sahib mules at forty kerans per mule?"

The old man replies: "I have, after much persuasion, got Jaffer Kūli, my son-in-law, to agree to eighty."

The young man, with many vows, raises his hands to heaven and demands eighty-five. "Why do you throw words into air, Jaffer Kūli? as I am this merchant's friend let us say eighty, and the sahib will have had mules for *nothing*. Of course we get a present?"

I here get up, saying, "These fellows are quite mad; let us talk to *men*."

They in turn rise and say, "Our last word is seventy-five."

So we talk for an hour. Then, and not till then, the ceremony of agreement is gone through, and the articles strictly drawn up by the merchant, after much chaffering. At last he begins to read in a sing-song drawl, for our mutual edification, the following:

"'I, Haji Mahomed, of Se Deh, and I, Jaffer Kūli, his son-in-law, give and let, for the journey to Resht, from Ispahan, *viâ* Koom, Hajeeb, Doong, Kasvin, to make twenty stages and halt four days at our own expense, and at the wish of the sahib; twelve mules, four for the mule litter, two for the kajawehs (covered mule paniers), and six for loads; we hereby

acknowledge five hundred and fifty kerans, and two hundred more are to be paid in Resht; our hire is sixty-two and a half kerans per mule; we will start to-morrow, and have affixed our seals.'"

Here they all call on the prophet; and both muleteers seal, and the merchant witnesses the document, which is handed to me. I give them a cheque for five hundred and fifty kerans, and we all go off to my house to look at the loads. On seeing these, both men begin to vociferate. "Ah, loads, such loads, no one ever took such loads; on no account will we go."

"All useless, Haji," we reply, and a pipe is given them.

They then proceed to sing their own praises, and we (the merchant and I) profess to love them like brothers. They now retire, and I and my wife and servants begin to pack up our road-kit seriously; the travelling gear, got ready long ago, is dragged out and re-examined; tarpaulin is nailed firmly on the roof of the takhtrowan (horse litter), and the same is done to the kajawehs; then thin red covers are put on and patched, new straps and buckles are added to the bedding-bags, and the bedding packed so as to get each side one weight; movable curtains are hung in the takhtrowan and its harness is renewed. In the morning the assistant muleteers arrive, and proceed to cord each box with heavy ropes, leaving the ends loose; these ends are afterwards tied together; and so each half load hangs on a side of the pack-saddle; a long broad band with an iron ring at each end is flung over the mule and his load, and gradually tightened. Thus loaded, the mule and his burden seldom, or never, part company.

The muleteer, having had some of his hire, signed

his agreement *and roped some of his loads*, is by Persian law *bound to go*, and we calmly prepared to start on the morning of April 4th.

April 4th.—No sign of muleteer. We use our road kit, and are in the same plight as when marching.

April 5th.—Muleteer arrives, and requests us to take back our money. Mutual threats and curses deep. Muleteer refuses to salaam. Muleteer is threatened with the Governor. Muleteer demands a present. Muleteer is offered a thrashing. Muleteer is insolent. Muleteer is pursued. Muleteer flees.

April 6th., eight A.M.—Muleteer arrives at six A.M. Harnesses the takhtrowan to two beasts, who shy and kick, and can't be made to move. Again offers to return money. Is again threatened with the Governor, and called a Jew. Retires in violent passion.

Four P.M.—Arrival of muleteer with fairish horses (by the way, the man's beasts are all yabūs or horses). They are tried and found satisfactory. Assistant muleteer addressed as "Hadji" ("pilgrim," a title very agreeable to the lower class of Persians), and regaled with pipes. Head muleteer addressed as "That."

Muleteer declines definitely to start, and offers to refund, *but will go for increased hire*. Muleteer publicly threatened with Governor, and called "That wind-bag."

Muleteer retires, swearing he will die rather than start.

April 7th., eight A.M.—No muleteer. Nine A.M.—Arrival of muleteer and nine mules (*i. e.* ponies), four assistants, and a donkey. Assistant muleteer is

secretly promised twenty kerans if he becomes the slave of hirer, to be given in Resht. Eleven A.M.—Mules at last loaded; they start. The wives of the servants come and weep on them. The takhtrowan is carried to the high-road. Twelve noon.—I take N—— (our English nurse), Frank, and the baby to the starting-place, and put them into the takhtrowan, placing Charlie, our eldest, with a nurse-boy, in one kajaweh, the woman-servant Bēbē in the other. They leave.

Half-past twelve.—I go round my rooms for the last time.

A—— (my wife) and I mount, with our table-servant, last of all. We leisurely walk our horses out. When we have got a quarter of a mile, our servant swears he has dropped his whip. I refuse to let him go back, as I don't want to lose sight of him. Scene with him. Grumblings, threats.

We pass the Missionary house. We bid them all good-bye at the door. While this is taking place Ibrahim, the head-man, disappears. I gallop after him, leaving A—— to come on with the bedding and the groom. After a chase of two miles I catch him. He swears I told him to get up to the takhtrowan. Threats. Whispered curses. I shout myself hoarse. We cross the river, pass through the town, four miles out of which we reach the caravan. On over a sandy and muddy plain to Gez. Four farsakhs. Time, half-past four P.M. Tea, five P.M. Rest of caravan arrive. Eight, dinner. Nine, bed.

April 8th.—Leave Gez at nine A.M. Over a sandy plain, six farsakhs, twenty-three miles, to Mūrchicah. Cold wind, dull day, rain threatening. Arrive at "chupper-khana" (post-house) at five, having breakfasted among some ruins on the road, about

half-way. The post-house keeper at this place was the man who behaved so well to me, and lent me clothes when I was robbed, so I gave him a double present, as usual, and a bottle of wine.

April 9th.—Left this morning at seven for Soh, six long farsakhs; left the plain, half-way breakfasted, and at the dam, a long farsakh from Soh, were met by Sergeant McG——. After ten minutes it began to rain heavily, and though we cantered for two miles, we got pretty wet ere we got our rugs. On their reaching us it left off raining. Mrs. McG—— gave us a magnificent high tea. Soh is a terribly cold place. We were hospitably entertained and well fed, but it is impossible to get warm, even with huge fires.

April 10th.—In the morning at five A.M. the ground was *covered with snow*, and the weather was severe; it also rained till seven, when it cleared a little. Started the caravan at eight, selves at nine. Rain and drizzle till we got to the Kohrūd Pass, when it suddenly came on to snow heavily.

The track was through snowdrifts half melted, and before we had got a dozen yards up the steep ascent, A——'s mare was off the track, trembling with fear, and up to her girths. A——, too, fancied, I think, that it was all over with us. The muleteers began to call on God, Ali, and the other saints, but we blundered along, one mule only falling. The snow got very thick, but our goggles protected our eyes, and we were heavily wrapped up. One side (the windward) soon got white, and A—— appreciated the big, old-fashioned, silk handkerchief which I gave her, to keep her sun hat on, and protect her face from the snow. After an hour and a half of this, we cleared the pass, the takhtrowan having got over in safety, and N —— and the babies *not* having had to get out, which,

if they had been obliged to do, would, with knee-deep snow and two feet of mud, have been a serious matter.

The snow melted into drizzle, and in a quarter of an hour we were in a sheltered valley, in a strong sun, and entering the village of Kohrūd. We got to the post-house, and there took off our wet wraps and hung them up. About two hours before sunset. Six farsakhs. Seven hours in the saddle, all but the last two being severe work for a lady.

April 11th.—Started early, as we have seven farsakhs (twenty-six miles and a half) to do. Though we expected to feel the heat, we had soon to take to our wraps, as a strong Scotch mist, with occasional cold showers, followed us all through the mountains to the caravanserai of Guebre-abad (which is supposed to be haunted). We found it empty, and breakfasted with our horses there, but the weather was too awful for N—— and the children to get out, so we sent them on.

Half-way to Guebre-abad we had to pass down the causeway cut in the side of the mountain, which skirts the reservoir fed by the Kohrūd torrent, where is stored the water for the town of Kashan. It is simply a valley, closed at one end by a huge wall of masonry. This retains the waters, the surplus falling over the top, like the Staubach on a small scale.

Within two farsakhs of Kashan the climate changed; our faces seemed on fire. We found wheat two feet high, clover the *same height*, and the little rain that fell was warm and refreshing. We got to the telegraph-office at five-thirty, and were immediately regaled with tea by Mr. S——, the clerk there. An hour and a half afterwards the caravan came in. Here

the men went to the bath, Bēbē started washing clothes, and after dinner we inaugurated the new hot bath, just built in the Government quarters (a great luxury).

Here at Kashan we determined to halt a day, and enjoy the genial warmth, doors all open, and the luxury of *not* having to start in the morning.

Kashan is celebrated for silk and velvet weaving, but the silk is generally of very sad colours, and the objects useless to the European, so we could merely buy a few handkerchiefs and some velvet curtains.

The water supply from the Kohrūd torrent is collected in the reservoir we passed, and on reaching Kashan is stored in "ab umbars," or water-cellars, and when they are emptied they are regularly re-filled, thus getting a supply of fresh and clear water.

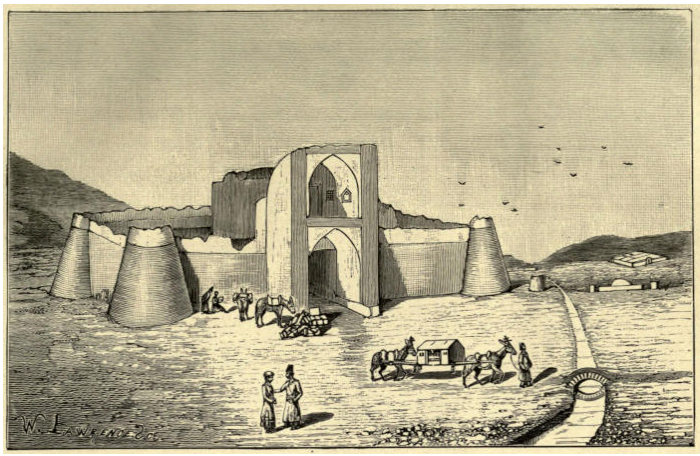
All about are curious, conical buildings of mud, some ten and twelve yards high. They have small terraces a few inches wide at top, others a foot or two wide at bottom. These are the grain stores of the place, and seem peculiar to Kūm and Kashan.

I tried to pick up some curios in the bazaar, but found it hopeless. The copper bazaar was particularly good and fine, but all of the work was useful, not ornamental. Was bothered by visitors the greater part of the afternoon, most of whom came for advice gratis. Near this place is Feen, one of the royal palaces, well worth a visit, but as our horses needed a rest as well as ourselves, and it is a four-mile ride, and I had seen it, we did not go.

April 13th.—Bid good-bye to Mr. S——. He had most hospitably entertained us. Left Kashan for Sinsin, six farsakhs. Found the immediate neighbourhood of the town well sprinkled with

villages; they however soon ceased, and we came to a sandy desert, where it was very hot. Arrived about half-past three. Directly we got in we poisoned the kanaat (the underground canal for irrigation) in order to get a dish of fish. In about an hour the fish came to the surface quite intoxicated, and were caught and gutted at once. They were very good, and the poison did not affect us. I used six berries only of cocculus indicus, and we got about six pounds of fish. We got a good dinner at nine—soup, fish, roast lamb, *pâté de foie gras*, tinned peas, apricots and custard, Ispahan wine, port, coffee, cherry-brandy. This gives some idea of what a good road-cook can do. Directly we arrive in a place, our "farrash" and table-man (who keep up with us) drag out our carpets, sweep the little dirty rooms out, spread the carpets, fill our bags with chaff for beds, make our beds, prepare tea, and bring me a water-pipe. Then when this is completed, the "takhtrowan," loads, children, tables and chairs arrive; N—— and the children go to their room. We get chairs and have tea and biscuits, or bread and jam (of course we have already had *déjeuner à la fourchette* with three or four dishes and tea on the road). In the early morning we have a slice of bread-and-butter and a "snack," with chocolate and milk. After afternoon tea we doze, read, write, and stretch ourselves, or go for a little walk near the chupper-khana, or caravanserai, as it may be. The little sketch of the chupper-khana at Sinsin I made on the spot, and it gives a good idea of the regulation Persian post-house. In these post-houses the traveller in Persia passes a good deal of his time: they are all built upon this plan, and pretty much alike; the wall at the top is seen to be crumbling; most of them are in varying stages of dilapidation. They are all built of sun-dried bricks,

except in the extreme north, and plastered with mud and cut straw (kah-gil). In the front is seen a takhtrowan or horse-litter, in which ladies of rank, or invalids, usually travel.



A CHUPPA KHANA OR POST-HOUSE. (SINSIN.)

April 14th.—Leave Sinsin at seven A.M. for Passanghūm, seven farsakhs (twenty-six miles and a quarter). Half-way, breakfasted, at Shūr ab (Salt Water), where Sergeant McL—— was killed, a wretched, ruined hole. The name is a good one, as nothing but salt water is to be got here. Heavy showers caught us in the afternoon before we could get into Passanghūm. From this place to Kūm is only four farsakhs, and the gold dome of the great shrine can be seen from here. Road all monotonous but good, with an undulating country perfectly bare.

April 15th.—Left at eight for Kūm, as we are to breakfast with Mr. J——, the clerk there. Half-way, two farsakhs, a pretty village, Lengarood; then a muddy plain; then, after many twists and turns, sacred Kūm. Through ruined bazaars, past ruined shrines and tombs, close past the great shrine,

through a short but prosperous-looking bazaar to the big bridge; then along the river in the open, sandy, but cultivated plain for a mile, to the telegraph-office. On the first view of Kūm, on leaving Passanghūm, the great gilded dome sparkles and reflects in the strong Persian sun. Kūm contains the tomb of "Fatmeh," the sister of Imām Riza, who lies at the shrine of Meshed. Imām Riza is the eighth imam, and Fatmeh is considered a very holy person indeed. Many of the kings of Persia are buried in the immediate neighbourhood of the shrine, and numbers of both sexes visit it yearly. Out of every hundred people on the two stages before we arrived at Kūm, eighty were pilgrims.

Unlike the Meccan, this pilgrimage can be made at any time of the year. Among Persians, *after* the great pilgrimage to Mecca, which gives the title of "Hadji," that to Kerbela ranks next, and the man who has been there, for the rest of his life is termed "Kerbelai." This title too is generally *given* to one of the lower orders when one wishes to stroke him the right way, as is also that of "Meshedi," or "he who has visited Meshed" (as a pilgrim). This is the second great place of pilgrimage; next comes Kūm, and though it carries no title, yet many thousands go there yearly as pilgrims.

The tomb itself, *I am told* by my muleteers and servants, is, as are most graves of holy persons in Persia, covered by an ark; this in its turn is covered by a sad-coloured shawl. Of course it is exactly under the great dome. Round the tomb are laid shawls of considerable value as carpets; then comes a wooden trellis-work, next a row of steel railings, inlaid with gold, and, outside all, a row of solid silver rails surround it: they are six feet high, and the thickness

of a London area-rail. The interior of the shrine is hung with European chandeliers of various patterns (unlighted), and various votive offerings are hung about.

Of course no Christian is admitted. The great dome is covered with small copper sheets, each having a layer of *pure* gold an eighth of an inch thick, on the outer surface: the gold never dulls in the pure air of Persia. The top ornament of the dome is also of pure gold, and reported to weigh one hundred and forty pounds; this is probably *not* an exaggeration.

The bridge over the river, which save in spring and winter is dry, has nothing remarkable about it; there are a few gaudy columns on it covered with blue and yellow tiles; the bridge itself is steep and narrow and also badly paved, as are most bridges in Persia.

Kūm lives entirely on the pilgrims, and is also a centre for muleteers. This journey is the first occasion of my getting them (the muleteers) to start on the *next* morning, as they and the servants generally find a strong attraction in the shrine.

Here, too, is a favourite place to make “tobeh,” or a vow of abstinence from some particular sin; the vow is registered, solemnly made at the shrine, and generally, for a time at least, kept.

In the afternoon I sold my last pony to the muleteer, and have now no horses of my own in the country; my wife’s mare is already sold to be given up at Resht, and my other pony on the same condition.

Here, too, I discharged my groom, an ill-conditioned fellow, who was lazy and useless, as I had only one horse to be looked after, and the under-groom could manage that.

April 16th.—Left at eleven for Pul-i Dellak (the Barber's Bridge), so called because it was built by the court barber of the day. We should not have gone to Pul-i Dellak, but the road to Mejdabad is blocked, the river being unfordable, so we have to come to this place (the third stage from Teheran) to cross the river at the Barber's Bridge. This gives us a stage more.

The bridge is the usual thing but longer, and an artificial causeway has been built where the Kūm river and another join our bridge, crossing the other stream (name unknown), while a few broken arches only are left of a continuation to the right of the causeway, of a bridge which once crossed the Kūm river. At sunset, as is *usual at this place*, it blew great guns. When we woke it was raining hard; it cleared at eight A.M.

April 17th., eight A.M.—At the time we started the caravan we got off ourselves in a drizzle, which at half-past nine became a shower, and then heavy rain; this continued till half-past eleven. It came down in buckets full, our puggeries got wet and so heavy that we had to remove them. A—— over her heavy jacket put a so-called waterproof cloak, and over that a thick wool shawl; her knees she kept warm by one of my overcoats, but the bottom of her habit ran water. I had a blanket with a slit in it, and a big plaid kept my legs dry and warm.

It then cleared, the sun got hot, the wraps were hung on the loads to dry, and at three we arrived at Shashgird, an outlying village, very poor, as all such villages are. Four walls, a turret at each corner, a ruined room over the doorway; the three sides within were mostly surrounded by hovels of the bee-hive order of architecture; two of these we cleared out,

our servants took a third, while my wife's mare got a fourth. The rooms are small but clean and comfortable; a hole in the roof lets out smoke; there is even the luxury of a door.

In the centre of the village square is a small pen; we inspect it: it contains some five-and-twenty lambs three or four days old. At sunset on the arrival of the mothers (*after having been milked*) the bleating and noise is something awful; the pen is opened, and the lambs distributed. Some of the mothers find it difficult to recognise their offspring; soon, however, with the help of the villagers of both sexes, and much laughter, all are given to their own mothers.

Weather fine and warm, no need of fire. We dine and sleep.

Villagers polite and good-humoured, quite ready to turn out. Many chattels left in our rooms with perfect confidence. Of course they expect a little present. Shashgird is four farsakhs from Pul-i Dellak over a sandy road very heavy from rain. A choice here of clear water which is salt, muddy water which is sweet; chose the muddy. No insects in our humble lodging, which was clean and comfortable.

Villagers civil and very obliging. Present on going, three kerans (two shillings and threepence)! They are delighted.

April 18th.—We left at nine A.M. in fine weather for Bagh-i Sheikh (Garden of the Sheikh), five farsakhs; after a long two farsakhs we came to a large and prosperous-looking village on the edge of the salt-plain. Here outside the walls was a large and good disused hammām (or bath); we breakfasted there, in it, as it was cool and quiet; after two hours, at two, started again, entered salt swamp, fortunately

dry. After two miles came on good road, and made the large Shah Abbas caravanserai[37] at five P.M.; a mile before reaching it we struck the high-road from Kūm.

A large caravanserai in good repair; no doorkeeper; took four rooms—one for us, one for N —— and boys, one for servants, one for mare. Not a soul in the place.

About four or five miles before getting into this place, one of the ponies I had sold to the muleteer dropped as if shot; he didn't hurt me beyond pinching my ankle a little; he dropped so suddenly, his foot giving way, that I was not quick enough. I am sorry for the charwardar, one leg is evidently gone.

Some hundred mules now in the caravanserai, noise of their bells all night long; country fertile, lots of villages all down the valley; we passed several on our left only.

In lighting the kalian or water-pipe, the way of preparing *burning* charcoal on the road without a fire, and with speed and economy, is ingenious; a light is put to a bit of charcoal, that is placed in a wire basket the size of one's fist among other pieces of charcoal; the basket is then swung round at the end of a piece of string, and a handful of glowing charcoal is produced in three to five minutes.

Difficulty in getting our chaff beds filled here: man would only *sell* chaff, not *lend* it.

Told me he was ill. Told him I had the exact remedy for his disease. Delight of chaff-man. Told him I never gave away medicines, demanded fifty kerans. Rage of chaff(ed)-man. He gave chaff, and I physic.

April 19th.—Left at half-past eight for Doong; weather fine; road an uphill one. Saw heavy storms going on in the mountains, and one passed us about two miles off; much forked lightning in the mountains; at half-past twelve one was coming straight down on us. The sun was overcast; suddenly, when our man was getting out more rugs, a few drops came, then a shower of hailstones all the size of the *largest cherries*, some larger. The noise was terrific; the horses got frightened and rushed off the road; one mule threw his load. I got off and got hold of A——'s mare, and it was as much as I could do to hold both horses and get her off; the servant's pony broke loose and *kicked at the hail*; none of the beasts would face it; fortunately the muleteers held the takhtrowan and kajaweh mules. Down it came, *and it hurt*; the ground got white, a heap formed to windward of each bush and stone. In five minutes all was quiet, and we started again after reloading the wine boxes which had been kicked off by the mule.

In speaking of the size of the hailstones, *I do not exaggerate*, and certainly I never saw any like them; they were all quite spherical, and more like balls of hard snow than hail, but very hard.

I asked the muleteer if he had seen anything like them. "Oh, they are nothing," he replied; "in the neighbourhood of Ararat I have seen them as large as eggs (!), and they killed lots of sheep." I thought him what the reader may think me.

At half-past three we got into Doong, after six hours and a half in the saddle.

We found a big caravanserai with only one room, the other places being merely stables, which were full.

However, some camel-men politely vacated it, and we, after some half-hour's sweeping, made it very warm and comfortable. Fortunately it was a large one, twenty by ten, and sheltered, being built at the end of a recess.

While at dinner something fell on the table; it was a *camel-tic*, and I expected what followed.

A camel-tic is a flat insect, which is active when not distended and hungry, but very sluggish when full. We caught a small one in the bedclothes, but saw no more. In the night, however, one bit N—— on the top of her head, and the wound bled freely. This place was painful for a month.

In the morning, on walking over where some two hundred camels had lain, it was difficult to avoid treading on the sluggish and gorged beasts, who looked like smallish cockchafers. I mean the tics.

April 20th.—Started at eight for Hajeeb, six farsakhs. On getting to a big caravanserai, half-way, got down to breakfast, muleteer going on; but in an hour he returned, saying Hajeeb was not safe to stay in at night, so he advised stopping where we were. We took three rooms; they seem comfortable. Sleet storm in the afternoon.

The name of this place is Koshkirūd (Dry River). I don't think there are any tics here, but we shall see.

One tic found. No one bitten.

A tremendous wind blew all the twentieth, making it very cold out of cover.

No robbers, which was lucky, as the caravanserai has no doors.

April 21st.—Started at seven A.M. Went through

undulating hill tops, with only a few black tents in them, but plenty of grass. Saw four troops of antelope. On getting to Hajeeb (three farsakhs), found that one side of the caravanserai wall had fallen down, and the place was really not safe from night thieves.

Got breakfast of grilled mutton and maccaroni. Sent some on hot for N—— and the children, who do not stop on the march.

After one and three-quarter farsakhs of same sort of country, got to a descent and came to a large plain (the plain of Kasvin?), thickly sprinkled with villages. Though the wind continues, it is much warmer here, and the sun stronger.

The muleteer says that we shall have this wind to Kasvin, or a stage beyond it.

The first village, Allah Sung, five farsakhs from Koshkirūd, we did not stop at, but went a farsakh farther to Bōween, a large village. Here we got a good carpeted room in the large house of a villager, and another room for N—— and the children. In our room are the man's carpets and all his valuables, boxes, etc., but they are left to our mercy without the slightest hesitation—his bedding, his clothes, and all his earthly goods.

The people of this place are very well-to-do. They speak Turkish, and do not understand Persian. The women do not hide their faces.

As we are having a cup of tea, we get astonished at not hearing of the arrival of our caravan.

I had ordered the servants to stop it as it passed the door. I suddenly hear that it has passed the village. Ibrahim (my head-man), at a crab's run, goes

to stop it. I saddle a horse and gallop out. At the other side of the village I find Ibrahim calling “Hoi, hoi!” to the caravan, which is a mile off. He calmly informs me that they don’t hear him. I reply, “Ass!” and canter after them and bring them in.

On nearing the house, a mob of boys, headed by a youth of eighteen, amuse themselves by hooting me, and calling out, “Dog of a European!” in Turkish. I remonstrate in Persian. Delight of boys, who hoot more. I produce two of my four words of Turkish, “Kupak ogli!” (“sons of dogs”). They throw stones. I ride at them, and give my village youth the lash of my crop across his face. They flee, and throw stones from a distance.

Arrival of my muleteer, who remonstrates in Turkish with some elders. Informs them that I am a *European ambassador*! (Elchi Feringhi), and dangerous to tamper with. They apologise. I reply, in a lordly manner, “Chok yakshi” (Turkish for “very good”), my other two words.

Have tea.

Ten P.M., dinner.

April 22nd.—Started at eight A.M. Gave our landlord two and threepence, with which he was satisfied. Of course, as we had bought grain, bread, wood, etc., he had made a good thing of us.

Wind still blowing very hard; lots of villages and cultivation, the sun being stronger. The wind is not so troublesome as yesterday, and we need no wraps. Still, it is difficult to talk. After two farsakhs pass through a salt swamp, which is fortunately dryish. Arrive at Kherrah, four farsakhs from Bōween, at two-thirty. Caravan gets in at three forty-five.

Find a fine caravanserai, but no rooms, the villagers having built up the entrances of the eight rooms there are. We find the shopkeeper, and take possession of his shop and the two next rooms. We have a door once more!—a real door! *All his commodities are scattered about, and he does not remove a thing!*

It appears this caravanserai is very little used, save by those who stick in the salt marsh. This, in *wet weather*, though only eight miles, must be a good day's march, and sometimes even impassable in places. There is a causeway of big rough stones, but *all* the bridges were broken. At five P.M. wind went down to nearly nothing. All to-day (over the swamp) the weather seemed dull, from dust storms in the distance. We, however, fortunately did not get into one.

A——'s saddle will give her mare a sore back if she rides her, so she is compelled to ride one of the ponies, a hard trial after the easy and willing mare.

I had the benefit of the mare, as my saddle doesn't gall. The back was better on arrival than when we started.

Our mules (yabūs, *i. e.* pack-ponies) are in fair fettle, considering that we have only halted one day at Kashan. To-morrow we strike the great high-road, and we left robber-land yesterday.

The children, the baby included, as yet have not had a day's illness, and we are all in robust health.

All our rooms have been as yet wind and water tight, and save at Soh (that very hyperborean place) we never had or needed a fire.

We are hurrying on, as the steamer (so they say)

leaves Enzelli on the second; and if we do not halt we can get a day there to repack and wash clothes, pay off the servants, hand over my road kit, which Captain W—— has bought, get money from Messrs. Ziegler, and start comfortably—INSHALLAH (please God).

Talking of doors, when we have no doors we nail up two curtains overlapping, if a big entrance, with an extra one crossway over the top if high, and at bedtime we put crossways over the bottom of the curtain our table-top and frame and two chairs, built up so that, if any one attempts to get in, the whole *must* come down on to a big copper bath with a crash, and so wake us.

I rather pride myself on this arrangement, which is, I fancy, very efficient, and keeps out wind and thieves too.

All the people here are big-headed, big-hatted, big-eared, small-eyed, stupid, chibouque-smoking, Turkish-speaking people, quite different from the smart and polished Persian of the South and Ispahan; but they are *honester*, not grasping, and in *reality more obliging*. Instance this morning, my cook asked a man to help him load his mule (*i. e.* give him a lift with his big saddle-bags).

He replied, “Load him yourself!”

On my asking the fellow if he called himself a Mussulman, he grinned, and helped at once.

April 23rd.—Started at seven for Kasvin. Lovely day, no wind, but after the first hour a good deal of sun. After three long farsakhs, came in sight of Kasvin; another farsakh, arrived at one P.M. People well-to-do. Heard that there is an *hotel* (!) here, but distrusted it.

Went to a fine new caravanserai, where we got a courtyard to ourselves.

Our muleteer says our beasts cannot go on, so we must perforce halt a day.

We have a grand clothes-washing and child-bathing to-day.

Settle our trunks for the sea voyage.

In the afternoon I go to see the *hotel*. I find what I expected, a very fine house, with bare walls, enormous charges, and impudent and dishonest servants. I should be very sorry indeed to put up there. I thrashed one fellow as it was for putting out his tongue; the rest at once became polite.

They say that the steamer goes *twice* a week—Sunday and Thursday.

I shall inspect the *hotel* again to-morrow.

There is a big tiled shrine, in which is the tomb of the son of Imām Riza. It seems in good repair, but not in good taste; also a Musjid-i Juma (big mosque), much ruined.

April 24th.—I find, after seeing the Russian telegraph clerk, that the steamers go only once a week; so we must hope to catch that of Sunday, the first. It will be very doubtful if we do it.

To-day I went through the bazaars to try and get a piece of Yezd silk (Houssein Kūli Khani) for A——, but failed.

I, however, found biscuits for the children, which the servants said were not to be had. They had been brought from Ispahan, where they were made.

When in the "chupper-khana," I found a Russian locksmith, who had come to Persia in search of work.

He found none, and was returning on foot from Teheran. He left this morning to catch the steamer of the first. Turkish is here more spoken than Persian, and the people seem quite another race, quiet and industrious, and more honest, but rougher.

A good many of the houses are built somewhat after Russian style, and our caravanserai has doors (and also big windows to some of the rooms).

Everything but the bedding is packed ready for a start in the morning early.

I say little of Kasvin, having had too much to do to see a great deal of it.

Kasvin has no special production; it is merely a mart. It is, however, a very populous town, and misrule is not so rampant as in other places.

We each wrote a letter home; found no one at the post-office and no letter-box, so had to entrust our letters to the Russian telegraph clerk. They arrived in due course. The place seems much larger than it really is, owing to large plots of waste ground, which are unbuilt on.

April 25th.—Left for Masreh. Passed in lovely weather through a grassy plain for two farsakhs; then two more to Akabah; breakfasted in the village gateway; then a tremendous two farsakhs through the hills to Masreh. Started at seven-thirty, got in at three-thirty. Seven hours in saddle, one hour halt.

Found a good room in chupper-khana, but the room for the children is full of camel-tics. Moved them to the roof room, which is supposed to be free. Our room is not safe from them, and at night it is too cold to go outside.

A—— will not allow me to sleep in the

takhtrowan, so we shall all have to sleep in the room on the roof.

Masreh is a village of merely a few hovels, in a lovely grassy valley. Since Kasvin nothing bare; all grass or cultivation.

All night long we were awake at fits and starts looking for tics. We must have killed twenty. They are ordinary sheep-tics.

They seem exactly the same thing as camel-tics, but smaller, and the bites merely cause a spot (of effused blood) the size of a split pea at biggest.

The camel-tic that bit N—— on the top of her head at Doong has caused great soreness, and the blood flowed down all over her face. I was once bitten on the foot, and tenderness lasted two months. Frank and the baby were bitten, each in two places; so was A——. I was a little bitten, but not by tics; they leave a round black mark the size of sixpence.

April 26th.—Half-past seven A.M., left for Pah Chenar, a steady ascent for eight miles, then tremendous descents of steepness and difficulty. We had to get off our horses frequently for comfort's sake, and the baby and N—— had three times to get out of the takhtrowan, while the children had twice to leave the kajawehs.

The takht horses were continually with their hind-quarters within three inches of the ground at the descents, and sliding along.

The scenery was grand in the extreme, and the weather, fortunately, fine. Small shrubs and wild roses now begin to be frequent. When at the top of the mountain, two farsakhs from Masreh, the view was gigantic. One saw far beyond Kasvin, over the

plains and into deep valleys, which reached for miles, and were of every shade of grey, red, green, and brown; some hills even were bright orange; and such a bird's-eye view was it when we commenced the descent that I, who have seen many places, never certainly saw anything so vast and magnificent.

It could not be called pretty till we got within a farsakh of Pah Chenar. Then it was all green in the bottom of the valley, in which ran a small, swift, and turbid river, or rivulet at the present time, doubtless a month earlier a swirling torrent.

The entire stage has been one continuous descent. Got in at half-past four; eight hours in saddle. Half-an-hour lunch. The people plough the almost perpendicular sides of many of the hills, so we were constantly coming on patches of various greens.

The climate has become *tepid*, and full of moisture; lots of flies. A fine chupper-khana, with a new water-cellar close by, from which I attempted to sketch the valley. We are all very tired, and have walked a good deal of the way perforce.

A curious thing happened this morning when we left Masreh. I had given the postmaster my knife to cut something; when I left I forgot it, and only thought of it when a mile away. I cantered back, and found my servants just leaving. I immediately said to the head-man:

"Have you got my knife, as *directed*, from the postmaster?"

He took the hint, and said:

"No; I forgot it."

"Give it me."

The postmaster put his hand in his pocket, and gave it up; *but* had I said "*Where* is my knife?" or "*Have* you got my knife?" I should never have seen it again.

To get on with Persians it is necessary to be smart and unscrupulous to a *certain extent*. Their own proverb is; "Better is a lie which causes joy, than truth which produces grief." See the first tale in Sāadi. I am afraid my "as directed" was an *acted lie*. But then Sāadi is a high authority.

There is lots of water here, as the frogs are croaking all night in bursts: a croak, a chorus; silence, a croak; then "Berek ity kix, squax, squax," etc.

Dinner at nine. Hotch-potch and mock-turtle soups, *mixed* (the cook's idea, and a good one); fresh salmon, leg of lamb, mint-sauce, custard and plums, cheese, coffee, cherry-brandy, Persian wine, port, Madeira, kalian.

The climate here being humid, is very feverish. The people coming up get bitten by tics at Masreh, then get fever, and put it down to the tics. May not this theory account for the *Bug of Meana*? We are all taking quinine to-night, to avoid it (fever and ague). The grimaces, as each man takes it pure from a teaspoon, are grotesque, but all know its value, and are glad of the dose.

April 27th.—Left at half-past seven A.M. for Rūdbar, an up-and-down road, but fairly good, between mountains, by the bank of the big river (Suffid Rūd, White River). Vegetation plentiful; a few trees, barley in the ear. Came to Munjîl, after several bits of very bad road, up and down hill. Munjîl and Rustumabad are close together. There is a large

olive-grove, lots of springs, trees, and corn about the village. After a mile came to a junction of three rivers, and on turning a corner came to a bridge of six arches.

The bridge is new, and well built. By its side, attached to its piers, is a wooden bridge, so placed that if (as is sometimes the case) parts of the bridge be washed away, there may still be a way over.

The wind was blowing a gale up-stream, and, though there was lots of sun, it made it chilly, and the wind under the arches blew up sheets of spray. As soon as we had crossed the bridge we began a series of steep ascents along an awful road, from one and a half to three yards wide, cut in the side of the cliff, often having a sheer drop (and never any parapet) of several hundred feet, to the rushing river. The wind was tremendous—the horses at times *unable* to march against it—*full in our faces*. The ascents were, it is no exaggeration to say, often of forty-five degrees. One had to hold the mane firmly to keep the saddle from going over the quarters, and we could not get down, as the horses would not face the blast riderless. Arrived (the last farsakh being the longest and worst I ever saw in Persia) at Rūdbar at half-past three, a lovely village, embosomed in olive-groves at the brink of the stream, in a wooded nook. Forest and olive-groves on the other side of the stream, which is still shut in by high mountains.

We put up at a good, but small, caravanserai in the village. Here saw the dress of the Ghilān working class for the first time. Also Ghilān shoes made of raw hide, with the hair on; the fronts lace up with hempen string or thong, tying over the ankle.

To-day up to Munjil, and for the last two days we met large parties of “chardūr nisheen,” or “dwellers

in tents," with their wives, children, oxen, sheep, tents, dogs, horses, etc., quite in patriarchal style. Everybody carried *something*, according to size, *all save the men*. The cows were all laden. One little thing of five was carrying on her head her father's hat; all busy in some way or other. We bought a live lamb for dinner, two and threepence.

The wandering tribes' tents are pitched as follows, and we saw so many, that we had an opportunity of seeing each stage. Stakes are driven in the ground in pairs. Between these stakes a piece of very stiff reed-work, like huge matting, is placed on its edge, in the form of a square; this forms the wall. Strong poles are put at the four corners, and cross-poles are attached to these. The whole is fixed to a centre pole; then cloths of black goats' hair are stretched over them. The ground is carpeted, and the whole is wind-proof, rain-proof, and sun-proof. The wealth of the owner can be well guessed from the size and newness of his tent furniture. We noticed that they always had with them a primitive sort of plough, the share being wooden.

April 28th.—Left Rūdbar at eight, for Imāmzādeh Hāshem. Country more and more beautiful; wild flowers plentiful; all the hills and mountains covered with trees to their summits. Rode through olive-groves, each tree having a big excavation in the ground by its side, which is filled with water frequently, and so the tree is watered. Road very bad, and in many places very steep, almost precipitous. We keep by the left bank of the Suffid Rūd (or White River), which is at present the colour of *café au lait*. After three farsakhs we enter woods; the usual English trees, also yews, firs, box, wild vines, figs, and pomegranates (these latter in bloom),

ivy, convolvulus. The ground is covered with red and white clover and ferns, violets, forget-me-nots, huge anemones, and most English wild flowers. Nothing bare; trees overhang the road, and we ford frequent small streams, constant runnels and watercourses. Lovely weather, temperature about eighty degrees Fahr. At half-past four we came on a large chaussée, which is perfectly flat, and at half-past six we get in —eleven hours (half an hour's halt at breakfast), or ten and a half hours in the saddle! A stiff march for a lady.

The scenery has resembled the most wooded parts of Switzerland, and at times the "Iron Gates" of the Danube, *only much more grand than either*.

We have been in the forest since two P.M., and shall be in it till we get to Peri-bazaar. From within a farsakh and a half of this place there have been constant swamps, but even in them the trees are dense.

We manage to get all in by daylight, having come certainly thirty miles. We fortunately brought chaff (straw) with us, but no barley is to be got. Mules nearly done up. Happily this chaussée lasts to Resht.

We both agree that we have never seen anything so varied or so lovely as to-day's march, though it was long and fatiguing.

I hope we may get dinner at half-past ten; it is now ten.

The people here have a miserable, agueish appearance; doubtless fever is very rife. We all again take quinine; the servants decline to do so. I insist. They yield.

Half-past ten.—Have happily got barley for my

wife's mare; trust to *make* the muleteer buy some for his mules, but price very high. We pass a nearly sleepless night *from warmth*.

April 29th.—Leave Imāmzādeh Hāshem at half-past seven; ride over the smooth road to Resht. The forest continues, but the trees smaller and more sparsely scattered; a big ditch at either side of the road keeps it dry; fields, or rather cultivated swamps, begin to appear in the forest and gradually become more frequent; at either side of the road, on the bank, are ferns of all sorts, including maiden-hair, common male fern, and ox-tongue; orchids of all colours, buttercups, forget-me-nots, poppies, anemones, violets, myrtle, all blooming luxuriantly: not a bit of bare earth to be seen—*everything verdant*. Quantities of snakes, tortoises, and green lizards (very tame), small and large.

At twelve we arrive at the town, and I send on a man to M. Schwab, agent to Ziegler and Company (to whom, Ziegler and Company, I have a letter).

M. Schwab puts us up in his huge house with great hospitality, gives us a good double-bedded room, and gives his own room to the children, telling us to make ourselves at home: we do so.

We find at M. Schwab's, M. Vassiliardes, a Greek, formerly one of Ralli's people whom I had known in Teheran, and a young American traveller, Mr. Doherty, who says he is a naturalist, and "hopes to find curious bugs" in Persia. *He will!* He tells me bug is *American* for beetle.

We breakfast. The rest of the day is occupied in paying off servants, giving over Captain W——'s purchases, handing over the mare, giving present to muleteer, repacking for the ship, getting money, etc.

April 30th.—We start after breakfast. A—— and I, with N—— and the children, in a rough cart on the mattresses and pillows; the luggage in another, the servants on its top. After one farsakh (*the last one*) we reach (passing through forest and swamp) "Peri-bazaar," in the midst of swamps. Here is the wharf. In a few minutes we get on a boat manned by six rowers and haulers, a bow-man and a steersman; we take three servants with us, and the woman Bēbē. As soon as we push off from the bank, a rope is attached to the top of the mast and we are towed for an hour, by the haulers, through the swamp.

They then get on board and row; they row very badly with oars like long-handled spades, and when the steersman calls out "Mohammed," they reply "Allah saklassān," in a yelling chorus, and spurt. We passed through a narrow natural canal, and then came to the "Mūrd ab," or "Dead Water," a large estuary; we row for three-quarters of an hour and then the sail is set. We left Peri-bazaar at three, and reach Enzelli at seven.

The canal and estuary were teeming with fish and water-birds, and we saw cranes, herons, cormorants, and unknown water-fowls in thousands, flying up from the reeds, or rising as we neared them. We also saw a huge vulture who was eating a fish (or was it a big fish-eagle?), *but no boat or human being.*

At each side of the boat are fixed sticks tied in a bundle; these serve as fenders and rowlocks, really the latter being a small ring of rope.

We land just at the door of the prime minister's harem, a tumble-down place. We find the governor of Ghilān in the berūni, or men's apartments; he has laid down carpets in our rooms, and gives us tea, lights, dinner, and breakfast, *i. e.* he does so for his

friend M. Vassiliardes, and we reap the benefit. Our beds are full of fleas. Weather *hot* and damp.

May 1st.—Lovely weather; have all ready by eight A.M. No steamer. Breakfast from Akbar Khan, Governor of Ghilān. Walk in the gardens, orange-trees with lots of oranges (of last year) on them, and at same time in full bloom quantities of roses, the iris too—very large and fine flowers. Everything very damp; rather too hot in sun, but nice breeze.

Four P.M.—*No steamer.* Go over the six-storied tower of the Shah, built when he went to Europe, a gew-gaw place going to ruin from damp; protected by mats. We inspect his bedroom, salon, etc. Walk in town; like a Russian suburb of, say, Astrachan.

Seven P.M.—*No steamer.* Bed at ten.

May 2nd.—Get up at five. *No steamer.* At six the steamer is seen; we cram in a few odds and ends, cushions and blankets, and make the final distribution of clothes, etc., to servants. We go down to the shore and get into our last night's boat.

Half-past eight, arrive on board the steamer. Give my servants their presents: they kiss our hands and weep; we weep, the children weep. I send them off by saying their boat is leaving. Our boat is the *Tzarovitch Alexander*, one of the newest and best boats. N—— has *all* the ladies' cabin; we have a state room below. We take in cargo.

Eleven, breakfast. Vegetables very well done come after the zakooska, or snack, then stewed steaks with carrots, then a sweet sort of omelette with jam—and very little jam. We drink piver (beer) of Astrachan. One P.M. Still taking in cargo.

Ten minutes to two.—We start, leaving some

cargo-boats still unloaded; our principal cargo seems to be raisins, eggs, and cotton, and a little dried fish; but the captain tells me that this is the largest cargo he has ever got from Enzelli. We have been loading busily, both fore and aft, with steam cranes, since the vessel's arrival. We run along the coast, no motion to speak of; strong sun, weather lovely. At half-past five we dine, and we took tea at half-past three. Ship's tea undrinkable; we use our own. Dinner is stchēe (one of the national cabbage soups), cutlets, roast duck, and a sort of Bavaroise. We pass (without stopping) Astara at ten P.M., sea getting up. Stop at Lenkoran at one A.M., take eight passengers for Bakū.

They talk in cabins and wake A——. I remonstrate in German, French, and Persian; dead silence. Leave at three *A.M.*, sea going down. Tea at eight; lovely sun, pass between islands; no sea on.

May 3rd.—Half-past ten, breakfast. Four P.M., arrived at "Bakū;" went on shore, bought photos of Russian types of Bakū, etc., changed all my Persian money into paper roubles; exchange, three roubles forty-seven copecks to one toman (or seven-and-sixpence).

May 4th.—Again went on shore. There is nothing to see; the usual cheap imitation of French fashions, much business, principally in naphtha (Bakū, owing to this, has in twenty years risen from nothing). There is a good natural harbour, lots of Russian officers about; Armenians, Persians, Lesghians, more numerous than the actual Russians. Deep water full of fine fish close in shore; our big steamer is warped up to a wooden pier 300 yards long. Only four other steamers lying here, all smallish, one barque, and lots of small crafts like galliots. Oranges plentiful and

bad, also tobacco from Riga (?). I got a pair of Tartar enamelled earrings here, and a big turquoise.

Noon (twelve).—Sudden rush of the beauty and fashion of Bakū to breakfast on board; it appears that doing this, and the club, are *the two amusements of the place*. The naphtha trade and the steamer depot, with the garrison, form the society of this place. Festive Russia drinks bad champagne, at one pound a bottle, after breakfast. First whistle, half-past one. Second whistle, a quarter to two. Embracing, weeping, departure of Festive Russia, leaving some ten men-passengers, one Georgian lady very uninteresting, and one young lady with a quantity of fair hair and a fat baby. "Fair one with golden locks" is kissed freely by every one.

Third whistle. Final rush; we are warped out. The deck passengers are dissolved in oily and spirituous tears. At ten minutes past two we paddle off. No sea in the bay. Half-past four, tea. Half-past six, dinner. Heavy swell on. A—— and N—— go below; so does fair one with the golden locks, at end of dinner. A —— lies down, and escapes. Quarter to nine we all retire. Heavy swell on.

May 5th, seven A.M.—No swell. We make Durbend, said to have been fortified by Alexander the Great. We anchor half a mile off. I make a rough sketch. Arrival of "fair one with the golden locks," with the locks done into one huge yellow plait; it is one foot from the ground exactly. I save the fat baby's life, who had made for the staircase, and shot into my arms. At ten leave Durbend. Half-past ten, breakfast. Half-past four, tea. Reach Petrovsk. A fine natural harbour. Within this the Russians have made a second one, formed by two horns of blocks of rough stone, tossed in pell-mell, and masses of

concrete, eight feet by four feet, which stand in a row seawards on the loose stones. They have a tramway for horses, and five men. Each mounts a horse and drags a truck full of stones out (tandem). When they get to the right place they dismount and throw out the stones. Simple, not pretty, but effectual. They were doing this when I was here ten years ago. They are doing it now.

The place is hardly Russian—full of Lesghians, who seem prosperous. I did not go ashore, as it was getting chilly, and there is nothing to see. The town covers a large space of ground, but is sparsely scattered, and looks better from the sea than nearer. As we had one thousand sacks of rice to discharge we did not get off till half-past nine P.M. Weather fine all night.

May 6th.—Up at eight. Did up rugs and bedding, as we get on the "flat" at the six-foot channel in the afternoon, and are towed in it to the Volga boat. We are at present in the boat in which the Shah made his last voyage to Europe. Of course he had it to himself, and the engineer tells me he slept on the floor of the ladies' cabin, and *put his shoes on the table*. So much for the civilisation of the "Asylum of the Universe," "The king of kings!" The stewards, after a little remonstrance, are civil and obliging, the food good and plentiful; the fish particularly good; while the Astrachan beer is a great treat, fourpence-halfpenny a bottle only. We had a lot of port with us, which, *as we had to drink* or throw away, we preferred the former. The corkage is charged fivepence. Many Russians bring their own liquor.

Children and ourselves all in robust health. The rest has done us good. The officers are all very obliging and friendly, two speaking English, all

German, and one some French; but the stewards were, alas! Russians of the real *vielle roche*. The bill had to be gone carefully through. I cut off one-fifth of it; they merely smiled; and not finding that we were the sheep who before the shearer was dumb, were very civil.

Quarter to one.—Nearing the nine-foot channel. Not a ripple. We have been very fortunate, as the Caspian is at times *very* rough! Half-past four, arrived at the "Nine-foot," as it is called. We go on board the "flat" This is a huge barge, some two hundred feet long; forward and aft are the holds; in the centre twenty cabins, each for four persons, and the saloon; over these another saloon, and a hurricane-deck on top. The sea is like oil, and we leave at ten P.M., being towed by a small tug.

May 7th.—Wake to find ourselves in the Volga. At eleven A.M. we *reach Astrachan*. Here I go on shore to the office, and complain that I have been forced to take a ticket for my two children, and that I ought only to pay half-fare for one. This, however, I put in a veiled manner. I find that children under ten *travel free*, and forty-one roubles are immediately *refunded*! Officials of company most civil. Our luggage is merely formally examined. I find all this is because my passport has a favourable mark from my friends of the Russian Legation in Teheran which signifies "treat the bearer well:" so they tell me. We are even provided with a private cabin, although every berth has been taken in advance. I and "Charlie" drive in a droschy through Astrachan, a hideous but flourishing, large town, evidently rich. I buy a pair of Russian salt-cellars, ugly, but good. I had fever yesterday. I have it again to-night. At ten P.M. we leave.

The current is very strong here, and the long shallow boats very fast and powerful, but the vibration is tremendous, worse than a railway carriage. There is every comfort, convenience, and luxury on board. The scenery of the Volga above Astrachan, as we see it on

May 8th, is very tame: a low sandbank, a little brushwood. River two miles wide. A few villages; country quite flat; consequently we see nothing. Here and on the "flat," we have had "sterlet," the celebrated Volga fish—fairly good, nothing wonderful. Here the police tell me not to wear my grey wideawake, as, if I did, I should be mobbed as a Nihilist. The Emperor just assassinated, and mob very excitable.

May 9th.—Tsaritzin, seven A.M. Go ashore and drive to railway station, a very fine building. We dine, and at half-past three P.M. start in a compartment of a first-class saloon carriage; this we have all to ourselves. About every half-hour we stop for five minutes at least. One gets in and out as one likes, and the guard takes care that the train does not leave without us. On every platform is a big vessel of clean drinking-water for the peasants. Bottled beer, hot pies, and vodka (a very raw spirit) to be got everywhere: the beer sixpence a bottle, and very nice bread, quite a luxury, and so good that the children eat it all day long, calling it "cakey." Travel with windows open all night; pace, seventeen miles an hour, without stoppages.

May 10th.—Reached Griazi at noon. Sleep in the *sleeping-room*, and after a bath leave at half-past six P.M. We have with us sheets, pillows, and blankets, and at eight P.M. we all go to bed, undressing and making ourselves quite at home. Start at midnight.

May 11th.—Arrive at Orel ten minutes to nine A.M. Drive round town with "Charlie" and A—— in droschy. Buy a gilt silver salt-cellar of Moscow work. Nothing to see in the town, which seems well-to-do and substantial. Get a bath, or rather wash, and four hours' nap in the waiting-room. Leave at three P.M. Carriage to ourselves.

In this part of Russia a train consists of one first-class, one second-class, and, say, fifteen third-class carriages. We find that it suits us to go first, as we can lie down and go to bed, which is of great moment in so long a journey. All the seats draw out to form beds, and the carriages are lined with velvet, have double windows, and every comfort on board. Pace, twenty miles an hour. *No charge is made for the children!* Witebsk at eight P.M.

May 12th.—Dunaberg at half-past five A.M. Here we find a wretched station and buffet. They try to persuade us to go to an hotel. We breakfast at the buffet, and then go by rail some two miles, to the Dunaberg station of the Warsaw-Riga line. *This move was an inspiration.* Here we found a really magnificent station and buffet. Nothing leaves till to-morrow at half-past three A.M.—an unearthly hour. We dine at the buffet, and take one of the bedrooms in the station provided for travellers *by the Russian Government*. We get a magnificent *appartement* for three roubles, with two *beds*! with blankets and pillows and a sofa. Fortunately, the beds are in alcoves, so I take the sofa, and we all sleep till three A.M. of the *13th*. We get up, go down to the station, and at twenty minutes past four A.M. (awful time) start for Berlin.

Arrive at Wilna at eight A.M. Get to Eydtkuhnen, the Prussian frontier, at eighteen minutes to two.

Here a form of custom-house examination is gone through. Leave at twenty-two minutes past two, and reach *Berlin* on May 14th at ten minutes past six A.M.

We are all dog-tired, dirty, woebegone in the extreme, our luggage eccentric-looking; and on our arrival in the Hôtel de R——, Unter den Linden, a new and handsome building, we humbly ask for rooms in French. The head waiter patronisingly informs us that he *hopes* to give us rooms, and informs the manager in German that we may be put *anywhere*.

We are taken into the lift and brought to the *third floor*. Two good rooms are shown us for six and a half marks each room—in all, with extra, *i. e.* children's beds, fifteen marks.

When the head waiter sees our piles of luggage arrive, and is asked for hot coffee, he becomes polite and servile, and tells us he can give us better rooms on the second or first floors; but we decline to move, sleep being our first object. We do sleep, but *miss* the vibration of the carriage. We go to the *table d'hôte*, and, as we dread strange liquors, order a bottle of a well-known brand of dry champagne. It appears without label and without cork carefully frozen. The head waiter glides up, and remarks in English—

"You will find this a ver fine wine, sar."

I taste it, and reply—

"You have brought me sugar-water; I asked for wine. Take it away." Astonishment of head waiter, who retires with wine, and presently returns with same sweet mixture in an old labelled and capsuled bottle. I taste, and point out that the label says "*très*

sec," and the wine is sweet, in fact, the same as before. He then tells me that the "pore waitre" has made a mistake, and will have to pay for the wine if I return it. I retort "that that won't injure him, as it can't cost much, and that it would injure *us* to drink it." This to the intense delight of some German officers.

The waiter then tells me that *he finds* that they are out of the wine I want, but *he* recommends ——. I decline to drink it, saying, "I don't care for '*Schloss weis nicht wo*,'" as I feared getting a second succedaneum. After a sitting at the lengthy *table d'hôte* of one hour and a half, we leave for more sleep. The table was plentiful, but common, and required a youthful appetite. This we did not possess, and we were both decidedly seedy for the rest of our stay in Berlin. We merely had our morning coffee at the hotel, and dined and breakfasted at "Dressel's," a restaurant of European celebrity. The cost was the same, but the wines and cook were undeniable, the attendance good, and the place select and quiet, and only some three hundred yards from our hotel in the Unter den Linden. This evening my neck was cricked, and gave me great pain. We still could not sleep, missing the jarring of the train. A—— and Charlie quite knocked up. We all are feeling the cold.

May 15th.—All of us quite knocked up: headaches and sleeplessness, and want of appetite; in fact, we are getting ill. I went to see the National Gallery and Altes and Neues Museums. Much pleased with what I saw, but my cricked neck annoyed me. A—— too ill to go out. Our eldest boy, Charlie, still quite done up.

May 16th.—Saw the Galleries again, and the wax-works (to which I took Charlie, who seems nearly himself again)—far better than Tussaud's.

In the evening we went to the Friedrich Wilhelm's Theatre, and saw the 'Piper of Hammelin,' a so-called comic opera. The singing and acting were good, but serious in the extreme. The orchestra stalls cost only three marks (three shillings). Began at half-past seven, over at half-past ten. The players very respectable, and the audience very quiet and appreciative; dresses good, *mise-en-scène* fair, acting equal to that of English provincials.

May 17th.—A—— much better. Went for drive in morning. Had a good deal of business to do to get money, and start luggage, etc. At five went to Zoological Gardens, a fine collection and magnificent gardens, a concert; fairly good dinner there, price very moderate: lots of guests. Much pleased. These gardens are open till ten P.M. We returned home by eight.

May 18th.—Had coffee. Started at ten. Breakfasted at the station. *Again no charge for the children.* Secured a *coupé*, with washing-place, etc., to ourselves, after some wrangle with the guard, having to appeal to the station-master, who decided in my favour against another claimant, I having placed my hat in the carriage, and so retained it by travellers' law, but the guard had removed it and put other people in. Started at twelve noon for Calais. Speed, forty miles, including stoppages. Lovely country till we got to the iron region, Essen (Krupp's?). Minden particularly pretty.

May 19th, one P.M.—Arrive at Calais. Half-past one leave by the Calais Douvres. Fair sea on, no pitching, but considerable roll. None of our party sick; only some dozen ill in all on board. A great improvement on the little boats as to motion. Time, one hundred minutes. Half-past three leave Dover.

Half-past five arrive at Charing Cross Station.

Home! “Alhamdulillah!” (“Thank God!”)

FINIS.

APPENDIX A.

Table of Post Stages and Ordinary Marches from Bushire, Persian Gulf, to Teheran.

		Farsakhs (3½ to 4 Miles).	
Bushire to	Ahmedi	6	
Thence to	Borasjūn	6	Telegraph-office.
”	Daliki	6	Guest-house.
”	Khonar Takhta	5	
”	Kamarij	4	
”	*Kazerūn*	4	Telegraph-office.
”	Mean Kotul	5	
”	Desht-i-Arjeen	4	Telegraph-office.
”	Khana Zinyūn	6	
”	Chenar Rahdar	6	
”	*Shiraz*	2	Telegraph-office.
”	Zergūn	6	
”	*Seidūn*	7	Telegraph-office.
”	Kawamabad	4	
”	Mūrghab	6	

”	Dehbeed (the coldest place in Persia)	6	Telegraph-office.
”	Khana Khora	7	
”	Surmeh	7	
”	*Abadeh*	4	Telegraph-office.
”	Shūrgistan	6	
”	*Yzedkhast* (or Yezdicast)	6	
”	Maxsūd Beg	5	
”	*Kūm-i-Shah*	5	Telegraph-office.
”	Mayar	5	
”	Marg	6	
”	*Ispahan*	3	To Telegraph-office, *Julfa*.
”	Gez	3	
”	Mūrchicah	6	
”	Soh	7	Telegraph-office.
”	*Kohrūd*	6	
”	*Kashan*	6½	Telegraph-office.
”	Sinsin	6	
”	Passan Ghūm	6	
”	*Kūm*	4	Telegraph-office.
”	Pul-i-Dellak	5	
”	Hauz-i-Sultan	6	
”	Kanarigird	6	
”	*Teheran*	7	

Teheran to the Turkish Frontier, *viâ* Hamadan and Kermanshah.

Teheran to	Robad Kerim	7	
Thence to	Khaniabad	6	
”	Kūshkek	6	
”	*Noberand*	7	
”	Zerreh	7	
”	Marahkraba	6	
”	*Hamadan*	6	Persian Telegraph-office.
”	Syudabad (or Assadabad)	7	
”	*Kangawar*	5	Persian-office.
”	*Sana*	6	
”	Besitūn	4	
”	*Kermanshah*	5	Persian-office.
”	Myedusht	4	
”	*Harūnabad*	7	
”	Kerind	6	Persian-office (two stages from Turkish frontier).

Teheran to Resht (Caspian).

Teheran to	Meanjūb	5	
Thence to	Sangerabad	6	
”	Safarkoja	6	
”	Abdūlabad	5	

”	*Kasvin*	3	Persian Telegraph-office and so-called Hotel.
”	Masreh	7	
”	Pah Chenar	6	
”	Menjil	6	
”	Rustumabad	5	
”	Kudum	6	
”	*Resht*	4	
	Resht to Peri-bazaar	4	

Peri-bazaar to *Enzelli* (on the Caspian Sea).
5 to 12 hours by boat.

N.B.—Towns and large villages are in italics.

APPENDIX B.

Duration of our Journey from Ispahan to London.

Time.

	Days.
Ispahan to Resht (488 *miles*) (including one day's halt at Kashan and one day at Kasvin)	23
Resht to Enzelli	1
Halt in Enzelli waiting for steamer	1
Enzelli to Astrachan (including 22 hours in Bakū)	5
Astrachan (halt of ten hours) to Zaritzin	2
Zaritzin to Berlin	5
Berlin to London, including halt at Berlin	5½
	42½

Possible time for a horseman to do it, including stoppages but *hitting off* the steamer, and riding day and night.

	Days.
Ispahan to Enzelli (488 *miles*) (including six hours' delay and rest in Teheran)	4
Enzelli to Berlin	12
Berlin to London thirty-six hours (including delay in Berlin)	1½
	17½

APPENDIX C.
TRAVELLING IN PERSIA.

In taking servants, take men who have travelled before: men who know their business, and to whom travelling is no trial, soon learn *their* duties and *your* ways, and after the second stage do all that they have to do with great regularity. Men who may be good servants in a city, on the road if they have never marched are *quite* helpless—they are for ever tumbling off their mules, dropping and leaving things behind, always tired, always asleep, and ever grumbling. Drop them as soon as you find them out, let some one else have the pain of breaking them in and making men of them. An old man (or middle-aged one) who has never travelled is hopeless; a boy *may* learn.

The cook should be a good one and one who is used to the road, and a man of even temper. Pity and spare him, for his trials are many—all day on his mule, the rest of the twenty-four hours in the smoke and blowing up a fire of, as a rule, damp wood, he barely gets his well-earned rest of four hours. Promise him a good present on the arrival at destination, humour him, let him make a little profit, and let him give *you* his accounts. Make him *always* have hot water and soup ready, and always cold fowl or meat in his bags, and he should be prepared to cook a hot breakfast at an instant's notice in twenty minutes on a bare desert plain, with the wood and water he has with him, and *without shelter of any*

kind.

In choosing a horse for the road it must be remembered that beauty is nothing. Great strength and health with *quick and easy walking powers are needed, and a smooth action*; the beast should be in good health, with a *healthy back* and clean feet, and a good feeder; he above all things should have a long stride and no tendency to trot; his paces being a walk, an amble, and a canter, he should not be lazy or a puller; his temper should be good, that he may be taken near the mules; and unless he be sure-footed, and *never cuts*, he is useless for marching purposes. He should not be too young or at all delicate, the more of a cob he is the better; greys should be avoided, and above all white hoofs, or even one white hoof.

He should be shod the day before leaving, but *the hoof left as long as possible*. The Dayrell bridle, being also a head-stall, is good for marching.

In starting it is very needful to secure a respectful and respectable muleteer, and having got him, to protect him from the exaction of ten per cent. of his total hire by the servants; let him feel that you are his friend.

All the kit *that is required on the journey*, as tables, chairs, food, clothes, and liquor, should be on one or two mules, not all mixed up *on many*, with things that are not needed till the journey's end.

On the groom's mule (which should be a good one in order to come in with the master's horses) should be all the horse-clothing, head and heel ropes, etc., and *full* nose-bags, so that the horses may get a good feed on arrival (of chaff).

With the cook's should be *all* their kit, a little *dry* fire-wood, knives and forks, and tea: with the head-man on a *good horse*, a snack, water, wine, matches, money, and a big whip, and the rugs and wraps. A whip is needful, as one is liable to be mobbed or insulted.

A good supply of tinned provisions should be taken, dried fruits, rice, flour, sago, tinned milk, and chocolate and milk, and some soups and vegetables in tins. The wine should be strong, to bear dilution. One bottle of brandy we took as a medicine; it arrived unopened.

In the foods the great thing is to get variety. Butter should be melted and run into a champagne bottle for cooking purposes, while fresh and good butter may be bought in each large town and carried in tins *salted*, for four stages, or more if in winter.

Small tent carpets are needed, large ones are useless, and two small ones are better than one of larger size, as they fit in better, or carpet two rooms. A small broom is needful. Copper pots for cooking, and enamelled iron cups and tin plates as being less bulky than copper are required. Bottles when emptied should be *repacked* to avoid smashes; all bottles should be in straw envelopes. Short carriage candles are good and need no candlesticks—being thick they stand upright.

A table should be made of a board three feet long by two and a half wide, with a cross piece near each end underneath; this is merely laid on cross trestles held together by a string.

Folding chairs, *not camp stools*, should be taken, and they should be strong and covered merely with canvas; thick stuff gets wet, and keeps so. The best

chair is with a buckle, so as to raise for dining, or lower for lounging; by putting on a movable foot-piece of two small iron rods and a bit of canvas, a fair and very comfortable bedstead is produced, and no mattress needed. No mattresses should ever be used, but as coarse chaff is procurable everywhere, large bags should be taken, the size of a mattress, half filled with it, and shaken down; these beds are warm (and cool in hot weather), fairly soft, and hold no insects. Pillows must be carried; linen pillow-cases are best.

All "jims," such as naphtha stoves, spirit lamps, air cushions, cork mattresses, iron bedsteads, are practically useless, as they are either so light as to smash, or so heavy as to be a nuisance. *Everything should be of the commonest and strongest materials.*

Bullock trunks are the best kind of clothes box, but should have no straps (the straps are always stolen), but strong brass hasps for two padlocks for each trunk are a very good thing, as locks sometimes open from a severe jar. As for bed-clothes, sheets are a great comfort; I never travelled without them; they should be also carried through Russia. Red or Vienna coloured blankets are the best, and should be carried in a "mafrash band," or big carpet waterproof trunk; the carpets should be laid over all, and these with the man on top of them keep the bedding dry. These mafrash bands serve also to hold all odds and ends.

Bread should be taken on from each stage, as it may not be got or be very bad at the next, and when not wanted is gratefully accepted by the servants. A double supply should be got at each large town, as it is always good there.

At the big towns, too, very good "bazaar Kabobs" of chopped meat (they are eaten hot), also biscuits

and dried fruits, may be had. The tea must be Indian, as that sold in Persia is very inferior.

Milk, as a rule, can only be got at sunset, and a tin or two of it is useful.

It is always better to go to a post-house, or chupper-khana, than to a caravanserai, as the noise of mules and camels is avoided, and the loud cries which resound on the arrival or departure of a caravan, which generally takes place at midnight or dawn.

Avoid night travelling if you can, but if you must do it, *always start before midnight*. When alone and unarmed keep within hail of your caravan, or keep at least one servant with you. It is easy to miss both caravan and road. If you have a swift horse it does not much matter.

See that your horses get their corn, and *that they eat it*; also that they are rubbed down when unsaddled, and are properly groomed two hours after feeding; also watered night and morning. Examine their backs, shoes, and hoofs each morning, *and never take your groom's word as to backs*.

Insist on your saddlery, stirrups, and bits being bright each day.

Carry a big hunting crop and lash; even if you don't mean to use it, the sight of it prevents rudeness. Unless the part you are in is disturbed, arms are as a rule needless.

Boots and breeches are only needed in autumn and winter, otherwise Bedford cord trousers, or pantaloons, and shoes are better; no straps. Boots, if worn, should be *very large*, with low heels, and well greased daily with resin ointment, or Holloway's.

Spurs save one's temper and arms with a very lazy horse, but otherwise are a nuisance.

A knife with corkscrew and straight blade, a tin-opening blade, and a leather-borer, is a good and needful thing.

Money should never be carried; one's servant should keep it, save a few kerans.

In very cold weather it is as well to put on a big pair of coarse country socks *over* one's boots, and to twist a bit of sheepskin, with the hair on, round the stirrup iron; these precautions keep the feet warm.

A sun hat or topi is of the first necessity; also thick and strong *loose-fitting* gloves (old ones are best) of buckskin.

A change of trousers or breeches, in case of a soaking, should be kept with the head servant, who should always have matches. Bryant and May's are the best, and with three of their matches a cigar or pipe can be lit *in any wind*: they sell a tin outer match-box which is very useful, as one cannot crush the box; this, with one's knife, pipe and pocket-handkerchief, should be one's only personal load.

Oxford shirts, grey merino socks, and a cardigan of dark colour, complete the equipment; the last is a *sine quâ non*.

A Norfolk jacket is best for outer garment. No tight-fitting thing is of any use.

On arrival tea should be the first thing, the kettle being got under way at once; then carpets spread, chairs and table brought, mattresses filled and laid, beds made, and fire lit if cold. Make tea *yourself* in your KETTLE, and make it strong; never let your servants make it, as they either steal the tea or put it

in *before* the water is boiling, so that *they* may get a good cup, and *you*, of course, get wash.

A Persian lantern should be taken of tin and linen (this shuts up) for visiting the stable at night, and another for the cook to use.

Water should always be carried both to quench thirst, and for a small supply lest at the next stage water be bad or salt.

Smoked goggles are a necessity.

A puggree of white muslin should be used for day marching.

A big brass cup can be taken in a leather case on the head servant's saddle-bow; it acts as cup or basin.

No English lamps should be used, as they always get out of order.

It is wise before starting to see that the cook's copper utensils are all *tinned* inside. A copper sponge-bath and wash-basin are needed. Plates and dishes all of *tinned copper*.

A few nails are required to nail up curtains, stop holes, etc.

APPENDIX D.
RUSSIAN GOODS VERSUS ENGLISH.

THE KARŪN RIVER ROUTE—THE BEST MEANS OF REACHING THE COMMERCIAL CENTRES OF PERSIA—OPINIONS OF EXPERTS—WISHES OF MERCHANTS.

Colonel Bateman Champain, R.E., in a paper read before the Royal Geographical Society, January 15, 1883, after estimating the population of Persia at six millions, gives among the products of the country, "grains of all kinds, cotton, tobacco, silk, opium, fruits, dates, wool, hides, carpets, rugs, and an immense variety of the luxuries and necessaries of life. There is, on the other hand, a large demand for cloth, cotton fabrics, sugar, tea, coffee, and all the innumerable comforts called for by a moderately civilised community." He then goes on to state, "that the great proportion of these articles are imported *from or through Russia*" and that "it is but too evident that Russian manufactures are steadily superseding British wares at Ispahan, and even in the Persian markets south of that centre." Colonel Champain then proceeds to notice the various proposed means for reaching the commercial centres of Persia; and after pointing out their disadvantages, draws the attention of the Society to the proposed route *viâ* the Karūn River.

General Sir F. Goldsmid, after corroborating the statements of Colonel Champain as to the roads, spoke of railways in the future through Persia, particularly a complete railway between England and

India; said that "failing the project of the great Indian railway, which could not be carried out *for many years, nothing could be better* than the proposed communication, partly by water and partly by road, *viâ* Ahwaz to Ispahan and Teheran" (the Karūn River route).

Mr. G. S. Mackenzie, after some prefatory remarks, recounted how he started from Mohammera (to which place goods may be taken by *ocean* steamers), on the 27th July, 1878, in the steamer *Karūn* of 120 tons, built for Hadji Jabar Khan, Governor of Mohammera, at a cost of 6000*l.*; in twenty-three hours Mr. Mackenzie arrived at Ahwaz, without the steamer either bumping or grounding, and he ascertained that at the lowest season the river is navigable. At Ahwaz the river is blocked by rapids for about 1100 *yards* as the crow flies, but (a canal *or*) a tramway of some 1600 *yards* would reach the open portion of the river; thence Captain Selby, in the Indian steamer *Assyria*, succeeded in ascending to within five miles of Shuster (and also he steamed up the Diz River to within one mile of Dizful). From Shuster to Ispahan is 266 miles, or twelve ordinary mule stages.

The time taken by *goods* in reaching Ispahan from Mohammera *by river is*,

	Days.	hrs.
By steamer to Ahwaz	0	23
By transshipment by (*train* or) mules	0	4
Thence to Shuster by river, say fifty miles	0	12
By caravan to Ispahan (allowing one day's *detention*)	13	0
	14	15

The present route is from Bushire to Ispahan (while from a week's to a fortnight's delay at Shiraz is generally experienced in getting fresh mules)	23	0
Certain difference	8	9
Or probably (on account of delay at Shiraz)	18	0

The land journey (the chief of the Bakhtiaris being favourable, of which there is no doubt) resolves itself to a journey over an ordinary Persian mule track, no worse than the old one from Bushire to Shiraz, while *as it passes through a good grazing country, hire would be cheaper*.

After some remarks in praise of Russia from Col. C. E. Stewart, Mr. Russell Shaw, having a general experience of railways, and having actually surveyed a proposed line from Baghdad to the Persian frontier, disposed of the various costly and ideal schemes of railways for Persia; and suggested the feasibility of reaching Persia from India.

The President, after a few general remarks, in which he wished well to large schemes of railway extension through Persia, *in the far distant future*, "thought it had been CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE, AT A VERY SMALL COST, TO GET A ROUTE INTO THAT PART OF PERSIA WHERE ALONE ENGLISHMEN COULD HOPE SUCCESSFULLY TO COMPETE WITH RUSSIANS."

The President stated that, "It was clear that if she (Persia) would offer no obstacles, the route up the Karūn would very soon be made practicable; and he could not but think that if it were steadily pressed upon the Persian Government, the desired result would be obtained."

He concluded with well-deserved compliments to Colonels Champain and Smith, and Mr. Mackenzie.

It is a question whether the valuable commercial interests of this country in Persia receive the attention they deserve. Why do we not try to imitate Russia in opening the marts of Persia? She has done so till the word "Russian" has come to mean "*anything foreign*"! Why do not we insist on the *Karūn River* being thrown open to British enterprise? Russia is a civilising influence, a rough one, perhaps, but still a civilising influence: and she is civilising the Turkoman.

The export of opium alone in 1881 was 924,000 lbs., which at 16*s.* a lb.—an ordinary price—is 739,200*l.*; and *were Persia thrown open to English enterprise*, this sum would have been sent there, not in specie, *but in Manchester manufactured goods, etc.*

I have good authority for stating that England is the only country admitting the produce of Persia duty free; as opium, wool, cotton (and good cotton), carpets, grain, dates, galls, gums.

Persia gives nothing in the way of facilities in return, for Russian influence is too strong, and under that influence, or from her own tortuous policy, she keeps the southern route, *viâ* the Karūn River, closed to English enterprise.

But the principal difficulty that the English merchant has to contend against, is the difficulty he has *as an Englishman* to recover debts, and whether this be impotence or policy on the part of those in authority, the fact remains, and has necessitated the withdrawal of important English establishments from Ispahan and Shiraz. The tact or energy of Her Majesty's representatives at Teheran and Bushire is

not to be doubted; but Downing Street seems to order a “masterly inactivity” or “an expectant attitude.” At Teheran we have a Minister Plenipotentiary and a Vice Consul, with the usual staff of a Legation; at Tabriz and Bushire, Consuls-General: but at Kermanshah, Hamadan, Ispahan, Shiraz, Yezd, and Kerman, *all great commercial centres*, we have only *native* agents; these men *exercise no influence*, and are held in contempt by natives and Europeans alike, *as powerless*. At times, however, the *native* (or British) agent has real influence, mostly personal: as in the case of Mirza Hassan Ali Khan, C.I.E., our late agent at Shiraz. WE WANT *English Consuls* to protect us and our trade, say the merchants, and then the opening of the Karūn River: without these Persia as a mart is closed to English enterprise, and becomes *the monopoly of Russia*.

GLOSSARY OF PERSIAN WORDS,

HAVING THE TRANSLITERATION OF THE ORIENTAL SCHOLAR JOHNSON AFFIXED IN PARENTHESES TO MOST WORDS. WHERE NO PARENTHESES OCCUR, THE SAME WAY OF WRITING THE WORD AS THAT SCHOLAR IS EMPLOYED.

ABBA, ABBAH (*abā*).—A long, sleeveless, square-cut cloak, generally of camel-hair—much worn by priests.

AB-I-RŪKHNI (*ābi rukni*).—The Spring of Rukhni (Rooknabad, Moore).

AB KHORI (*āb khūrī*).—A watering bit.

ACHŌN (*ākhūn*).—A schoolmaster.

AGHA, AGA (*āghā*).—A lord, a master.

AHŪ (*āhū*).—An antelope.

AID-I-NO RŪZ (*aidi naw roz*).—New Year's Day.

ALANGŪ.—A bangle (of glass).

ALEPH, ALEF (*alaf*).—A grain, grass, or forage-seller.

ALHAMDULILLAH (*al hamdu li'llāh*).—Thank God. Praise to God.

ALKALŪK, ALKALŌOK (*alkhálik*).—An inner quilted tunic.

ALŪ BALŪ (*ālū bālū*).—A cherry.

ALŪ BOKHARA (*ālū Bokhara*).—A kind of small acid plum.

AMĀN, AMAUN (*amān*).—Mercy!

ANDERŪN (*andarūn*).—The harem. Women's quarters.

ASP-I-NO-ZIN (*aspi naw zīn*).—A horse just fit for the saddle.

BADINJON (*bādinjān*).—The aubergine or brinjal.

BADRAGHA (*badraka*).—A riding out with a departing guest.

BAGGALI (*baghalī*).—Native glass bottles.

BAKKAL (*bakkāl*).—A general dealer.

BAMIAH.—The ladies'-finger (a vegetable).

BALA KHANA (*bālā khāna*).—An upper room, hence balcony.

BANDER (*banda*).—Literally, a slave. I (by courtesy used).

BAZAAR (*bāzār*).—A collection of shops (the road between which is usually covered).

BAZAAR KABOB (*bāzār kabāb*).—Minced and seasoned meat toasted.

BĀZĀRCHA BULAND.—The lofty bazaar.

BAZŪ-BAND (*bāzū-band*).—An armlet (generally containing a talisman).

BAZZAZ.—A shopkeeper.

BELLI (*balē*).—Yes.

BERO (*bi-ro*).—Go! (Imperative).

BERŪNI (*birūni*).—The outer (or men's) apartments.

BEZUN (*bi-zan*).—Beat! (Imperative).

BHUTA (*bota*).—Camel-thorn, brushwood.

BISMILLAH (*bismi'llāh*).—In the name of God!

BORIO (*būrīy*).—A kind of coarse matting.

BRILLIĀN (*biryān*).—Minced and spiced meat sold cooked in the bazaar.

BULBUL (pronounced *Bull Bull*).—A nightingale.

BŪRAK.—A small meat pie.

BUTCHA, BATCHA (*bacha*).—Child! (Mode of addressing servants, equivalent to the Anglo-Indian, boy!)

CAFSH-DOOZ. *See* KAFSH-DOOZ.

CAH (*See* KAH).—Cut straw.

CAJAWEH. *See* KAJAWEH.

CALAAT. *See* KALAAT.

CALAM-I-RUMI. *See* KALAM-I-RUMI.

CANAĀT. *See* KANAAT.

CANJAR. *See* KANJAR.

CARAVANSERAI. *See* KARAVANSERAI.

CHADŪR (*chādar*).—An outer woman's veil.

CHAI (*chā*).—Tea (used throughout Russia and the East).

CHARGĀT (*chargāt*).—A square headkerchief.

CHEHEL SITOON (*chihal-sitūn*).—"The Forty Columns."

CHEKMEH-DOOZ (*Chakmah dūz*).—A boot-maker.

CHENAR (*chanār*).—A plane-tree.

CHERRAGH (*charāgh*).—A lamp (in form and principle that of the early classic one).

CHICK (*chīgh*).—A fly blind.

CHILLAW (*chulāw*).—Plain boiled rice.

CHOCOLAH (*chaghāla*).—Green fruit when very small.

CHUPPAO (*chāpū*).—A raid on horseback.

CHUPPER (*chār pā*).—A mounted post (a quadruped), posting.

CHUPPERKHANA (*chār pā khāna*).—A posting-house.

COLAH. *See* KOLAH.

COORJIN. *See* KOORJĪN.

COORSHID. *See* KŪRSHID.

COSSIB. *See* KOSSIB.

DANAH (*dahanah*).—A curb-ring bit.

DAR (*dār*).—A gallows, the execution pole.

DELAK (*dallāk*).—A barber, a bath attendant.

DELLEH.—A kind of weasel (? *Mustela sarmatica*).

DEYEEREH (*dayyīrah*).—A tambourine.

DILGOOSHA (*dil-ku-shāy*).—"Heartsease," name of a garden at Shiraz.

DOLMA (*dūlmah*).—A kind of sweet or flavoured pudding of rice or meat.

DOOGH (*dogh*).—Buttermilk, curds and water.

DOZD (*duzd*).—A thief.

DOZD GAH (*duzd-gāh*).—A place of thieves.

DUBBEH (*dabbah*).—A repented and repudiated bargain.

DYAH (*dāya*).—A wet nurse.

FAL (*fāl*).—A lot, an omen (*sortes*), pronounced fahl.

FARNOOSE (*fānūs*).—A cylindrical lantern.

FARRASH, FERASH (*farāsh*).—A carpet-spreader.

FARRASH (*ferash*)-BASHI.—Lit. chief carpet-spreader.

FARSAKH.—A distance of from three and a half to four miles, the hour's march of a loaded mule, the parasang of Xenophon.

FARSH.—A carpet of any kind.

FELLAK, FELLEK (*fallak*).—A pole having a noose attached to hold the feet for the application of "the sticks" (or bastinado).

FERAMOOSH-KHANA (*farāmush khana*).—The (lit.) house of forgetfulness, a masonic lodge.

FIZINJAN (*fizinjān*).—A dish flavoured with condensed pomegranate juice and pounded walnuts.

FURDER INSH'ALLAH (*fardā Insh'allāh*).—"Please God to-morrow."

GELAS (*gelās*).—A white-heart cherry.

GELIM (*gilīm*).—A common kind of carpet.

GERMAK (*garmak*).—A small early melon.

GEZANJABINE (*gazangubīn*).—Manna, or nougat.

GHEVA (*gewa*).—A summer shoe described at p. 190.

GHOLAM (*ghulām*).—A mounted servant, lit. a slave, an irregular cavalry-man.

GOJA (*gaujah*).—A small green plum.

GŌMPEZAH (*gōmbeza*).—A dome.

GOOR KHUR (*gor khar*).—The wild ass.

GŪL (*gul*).—A flower.

GŪL ANAR (*guli nār*).—Pomegranate flower.

GŪL-I-SOORKH (*guli surkh*).—The moss rose from which the attār is made.

GŪMRŪK (*gumruk*).—A custom-house.

GŪMRŪKJI (*gumruk-chi*).—A custom-house officer, or farmer of customs.

GUNGE (*ganj*).—A treasure.

GUNGIFEH (*ganjīfa*).—Playing cards.

HAKIM (*hakīm*).—A physician.

HAKIM-BASHI (*hakīm bashi*).—The chief physician.

HAMMAL (*hammāl*).—A porter.

HAMMAM (*hammām*).—A bath similar to the Turkish bath.

HARRH (*harr*).—Rabid.

HASSIN or HASSEEN (*hasīn*).—A pan.

HASSIR (*hasīr*).—A kind of fine matting.

HAUZ (*hawz*).—A tank generally of stone and raised above the ground-level.

HENNA (*hinnā*).—A vegetable dye used on hair,

hands, and feet.

HINDIWANA (*hinduwānah*).—A water-melon.

HISSAM U SULTANEH (*Husām us Sultana*).—The *Sharp Sword* of the State (a title that was given to the late uncle of the Shah).

HOOJRAH (*hajrah*).—An office, or bureau.

HUC (*hak*).—A share, the dervishes' cry.

HUKHM (*hukm*).—An order.

IMĀD-U-DOWLET (*Imad ud Dawla*).—A title, viz. the Pillar of the State.

IMAM (*imām*).—A saint.

IRAN (*Īrān*).—Persia.

ISTIKHBAL (*istikbāl*).—A riding out to meet an arriving guest or personage.

ISTIKHARA (*istiharat*).—Omens (taking), chances.

ITIZAD-U-SULTANEH (*Itizād us Saltanah*).—A title, viz. the Support of the State.

JAI-SHEER (*jayshīr*).—Wild celery.

JEJIM (*jājim*).—A thin kind of travelling carpet.

JIKA (*jīgha*).—A jewel worn on the head by women. The royal hat ornament of feathers and diamonds.

JŪL (*jall*).—A portion of horse-clothing.

JŪNIVER (*jānwār*).—A wild animal, an animal.

KABAB or KABOB (*kabāb*).—A roast or toasted meat.

KAFFIR (*kāfir*).—An infidel (a term of reproach).

KAFSH.—A shoe.

KAFSH-DOOZ (*kafsh-dooz*).—A shoe- or slipper-maker.

KAFTEH-BAZI (*kaftār*).—Pigeon-flying.

KAH (*kāh*).—Cut straw.

KAH GIL (*kāh gil*).—Clay and straw mixed for plastering.

KAHTAM (*khātam*).—Inlaid work like Tonbridge ware.

KAJAWEH (*kajāwa*).—A covered horse pannier.

KALAAT (*khalat*).—A robe (or other token) of honour.

KALAM-DAN (*kalamdān*).—A pen-case.

KALAM-I-RUMI (*kallami-Rumi*).—Lit. Turkish cabbage.

KALI (*kālī*).—A carpet having a pile.

KALIAN, KALLIAN, CALIAN (*kalyūn*, *kalyān*).—A water-pipe or hubble-bubble.

KALLEHPUZ (*kallapaz*).—Sheep's head- and trotter-boiler.

KANAAT, KANAT, CANAĀT (*kanāt*).—An underground channel for irrigating.

KANARA (*kanāra*).—A side carpet.

KANJAR (*khanjar*).—A curved dagger.

KARAVANSERAI (*karavān-serai*).—A public rest-house for caravans; a khan.

KARBĪZA (*kharbuza*).—A melon.

KARKOOL (*kakūl*).—A long lock of hair by which Mahommed is supposed to draw the

believer up into paradise.

KASHANG.—A beau, lit. beautiful.

KAWAM.—A prefect.

KEEAL (*kayal*).—A cucumber.

KEESA, KEESEH (*kisa*).—A hair glove used in the bath.

KEISI (*kayzi* ?).—Dried apricots.

KEMMERBUND (*kamar-band*).—A belt, or sash.

KENDIL (*kindīl*).—A votive offering of peculiar shape, generally of copper or other metal.

KENNEH (? *kannah*).—A camel- or sheep-tick.

KETKHODA (*kat-khudā*).—The head-man of a parish or village.

KHAN (*Khān*).—A conferred title, which *descends to* all children—*now* very common: in the second generation equal to Esquire.

KHĀNUM (*khānam*).—A lady.

KHOK BER SER UM (*khāk bar sar-am*).—Ashes on my head.

KHOLAR (? *kolar*).—A kind of wine of Shiraz.

KHYAT (*khayyāt*).—A tailor.

KOHL.—Black antimony, eye paint.

KOLAH (*kulah*).—A hat.

KOLAJAH (*kulījah*).—An outer coat for men or women.

KOOMPEZEH, KUMBIZA (*kumbīza*).—A species of cucumber.

KOORISHT (*khūrish*).—A savoury dish, a ragout.

KOORJIN, COORJIN (*khwur-chīn*).—Saddle-bags.

KOSH GUZERAN (*khwush guzārān*).—A free liver.

KOSSIB, COSSIB (*kasb*).—A craftsman.

KOTOL.—An effigy.

KOTUL (*kutal*).—A mountain pass, lit. a ladder.

KUMMER, KAMMER (*kammah*).—A straight hiltless sword or dirk, with a broad blade.

KŪMRAH (*khumra*).—A wine (or other) jar.

KŪRBĀGHAH.—A frog.

KŪRSHID (*khūrshīd*).—The sun with rays of light.

KŪRSI (*kūrsī*).—A small platform used to cover a fire-pot, a chair.

KUTTL-I-AUM (*katli ām*).—A general massacre.

LAHAF (*lihāf*).—A quilted coverlid.

LALLAH (*lālā*).—A male nurse.

LANJIN, LANJEEN.—An earthen pan.

LATIFEH (*latīfeh* ?).—A courtezan, a Persian court card.

LODAH, LODEH (*lawda*).—A pannier for grapes.

LŪTI (*lūtī*).—A buffoon, a scamp, a thief.

MACHRORE (*makrūh*).—Lit. detestable, but yet not illicit; things not to be eaten, but yet *not* unclean; *i. e.* not an unlawful thing, but one which had better be avoided.

MAIDĀN (*maydān, mīdān*).—The public square. A distance about a furlong.

MAKHMŪN SHUD UM (*makhmūn shudam*).—I am deceived.

MALLAGH (?).—A tumbler pigeon, a summersault.

MAMBAR (*mimbar*).—A pulpit.

MANGAL (*munkul*).—A brazier.

MASH'ALLAH (*Māshā'llah*).—Lit. What God pleases! A phrase used when praising, to avoid *evil eye*.

MAST (*māst*).—Curdled milk (Turkish, yaourt).

MAUND (*man*).—A Persian weight of nearly seven, or nearly fourteen pounds.

MEANA (*miyāna*).—The middle. The middle tube of the water-pipe.

MEHDRESSEH (*medresseh*; Arabic, *madrasat*).—A college.

MEJLIS (*majlas*).—An assembly, a reception.

MIL, MEEL (*mayl*).—A column, a watch-tower.

MIR-ACHOR (*mīr-ākhur*).—Master of the horse, the.

MIR-SHIKAR (*mīr-shikār*).—Chief huntsman, the.

MIRZA (*mīrzā*).—One who can write, a clerk, a secretary, a gentleman. As an affix equals "Prince."

MOAALIM (*mwallīm*).—A schoolmaster.

MODAKEL (*mudākhil*).—*Illicit* percentage, "cabbage."

MOHULLA (*mahallah*).—A street, a parish.

MONAJEM (*munajjam*).—An astrologer.

MOR (*muhr*).—A seal, a piece, as at draughts, etc.

MŪLLA, MOOLLAH (*mūllā*).—A priest.

MŪNSHI, MOONSHEE (*munshī*).—A secretary, a clerk.

MURSHED (*murshid*).—A chief of dervishes, or of a sect or guild.

MŪSCHIR (*mushīr al mulk*).[38]—The principal revenue officer of Fars.

MŪSHTAHED (*Mujtahid*).—A teacher of law.

MUST (*mast*).—Lit. drunk. The state of excitement of the camel, etc.

MUTLUB (*matlab*).—The pith, or meaning (of a letter).

NAIB (*naīb*).—A deputy, a post-house keeper.

NAKSH.—A kind of embroidery. *See* p. 131.

NAMMAD (*namad*).—A felt (of various kinds).

NAMMAK (*namak*).—Beauty of a brunette, high colour.

NARGHIL (*nārjīl*).—A cocoa-nut, a kind of water-pipe.

NAWALLA (?).—Balls of flour given to horses and camels.

NAZIR (*nāzir*).—A steward.

NEH (*nay*).—A reed, a spear, a flute.

NEH-PEECH (*nay-pīch*).—The flexible tube of a water-pipe.

NEJIS (*najīs*).—Unclean.

NOBER (*nawba*).—First-fruits.

NOKER (*nawkar*).—A servant.

NUFFUS (*nafs*).—Breath.

OOTOO (*atw*).—An iron.

OOTOO KESH (*atw-kash*).—An ironer.

ORŪSSĒE (*ūrūsī*).—Lit. Russian, *i. e.* foreign. A Russian (-shaped), *i. e.* foreign shoe, a *raisable* window, a room having a raisable window, etc.

PALENG (*palank*).—A panther.

PALLIKEE (*pālkī*?).—A mule pannier to *ride* in.

PANE (*pa-in*).—Dried horse-dung.

PEILEWAN, PEHLIWAN (*pahlevān*).—A wrestler.

PEISH-KESH (*pīsh-kash*).—An offering to obtain favour (a nominal present).

PEISH KHIDMUT (*pīsh khidmat*).—A head table-servant.

PEISH-WAZ (*pīsh-wāz*).—Lit. a going out to meet.

PERHĀN, PERAHĀN (*pīrahan*).—A shirt (for man, woman, or horse).

PIDER-SAG (*pidar sag*).—Son of a dog! (Lit. O dog-fathered one!)

PILLAW, PILAW (*palāw*).—Rice boiled with butter.

PŪLAD (*pūlād*).—Art steel-work. Damascened iron.

RAMMAL (*rammāl*).—A conjuring mountebank and finder of treasure, a diviner. *See* p. 120.

RANGRAZ (*rang-rez*).—A dyer.

RASSIANAH (*rāziyānah*).—Anise plant, the.

REICH-I-BABA (*rīsh-i-Baba*).—A grape called "Old man's beard."

REIS-I-SEEM (*rais*).—Lit. master of the wire, *i. e.* Telegraph superintendent.

RESHT-I-BEHESHT (*Risht-i-Bihisht* ?).—Glory or brightness of heaven.

RIVEND (*rīwand*).—Rhubarb.

ROSEH KHANA (*rosah-khānah*).—A prayer-meeting, etc.

RUBANDA (*rū-band*).—A (face) veil.

RUSHWAH (*rishwat*).—Lit. manure, *i. e.* a bribe.

RYOT (*ra-īyat*).—A subject, a tiller of the earth, a villager.

SAG.—A dog, a cur, a term of abuse.

SAHIB (*sāhib*).—Lit. owner; Sir, Mr. (to an European).

SĀLE AB (*sayl ab*).—Rise of the waters.

SANDALLI (*sandalī*).—A chair.

SANG.—Lit. a stone, *i. e.* a weight.

SANGAK.—A kind of bread. *See* p. 334.

SANTOOR, SANTŪR (*santīr* or *santūr*).—Harmonicon.

SARHANG.—A colonel.

SEGAH (*sīgha*).—A concubine.

SER-ANDAZ (*sar-andāz*).—That (carpet) laid over the head (of the room).

SER-KASHIK-JI-BASHI (*sar-kashīkchi bāshī*).—Chief of the guard.

SEROff (*sarrāf*).—A banker, a money-changer.

SHAH (*Shāh*).—The King.

SHAHZADEH (*Shāh-zāda*).—Lit. born of a King, *i. e.* Prince (or descendant of a Prince or King).

SHARGIRD-CHUPPER (*shāgird-chāpār*).—A posting guide.

SHATIR (*shātir*).—A running footman.

SHATRUNJ (*shatrang*).—Chess.

SHATUR.—A wrinkle.

SHEERA (*shīra*).—Condensed grape sugar.

SHEMR (*Shimar*).—The slayer of the martyr Houssein.

SHERBET (*sharbat*).—Syrup—generally fruit syrup—syrup and water.

SHERBET-DAR (*sharbat-dār*).—A servant who makes ices, etc.

SHIKARI (*shikārī*).—A huntsman.

SHIREH-KHANA (? *shīra-khāna*).—A wine-factory.

SHITŪR (*shatūr*).—A wrinkle (of a carpet, etc.).

SHUB-KOLAH (*shab-kulah*).—A night-hat (or cap).

SHUKKER PARA (*shakar-pāra*).—A kind of very sweet apricot (lit. a lump of sugar).

SHUL-BERF (*shal [?] bāf*).—Loosely woven.

SHULWAR (*shalwār*).—Trousers, breeches,

petticoats.

SHUMA (*shumā*).—You.

SOORKI, SORKI (*sākī*).—(Classical) a cupbearer.

SUFRAH.—A sheet of stuff or leather spread on ground to dine off.

SUNGAK. *See* SANGAK.

SYUD, SEYD (*sayyid*).—A descendant of Mahommed.

TAGER (*tājir*).—A merchant.

TAKHJA (*tākchah*).—A recess in the wall a yard from the ground, a niche.

TAKHT.—A throne, a bedstead, a sofa, a platform.

TAKHT-I-NADIR (*takhti-Nadir*).—Backgammon. (Nādir Shah's favourite game.)

TAKHT-I-PUL.—A kind of backgammon.

TAKHT-ROWAN (*takhti-ravanda*).—Lit. a *flowing* or *running* bed, *i. e.* a horse-litter.

TALÁR (*tālār*).—A lofty verandah, an arched room open at one end.

TAMASHA (*tamāsha*).—A show, a sight, a spectacle.

TANNOOR, TANNŪR, TANDOOR (*tannūr*).—An oven.

TARR (*tār*).—A guitar-like banjo.

TATAR (Turkish).—A gholam, a post rider, a courier.

TAZZIA (*Ta-ziyah*).—The religious dramas or miracle plays.

TAZZIE (*tāzi*).—A greyhound.

TELEET (? *talīt*).—A mixture of grass and cut straw for horse feed.

TELISM (*tilism*).—A talisman.

TERIAK (*tiryak*).—Opium.

TERIAKDAN (*tiryak-dan*).—An opium pill-box.

TERIAKMALI (*tiryak-māli*).—Rubbing (*i. e.* preparation of) opium.

TERKESH-DOOZ (*tarkash-doz*).—A quiver-maker, a saddler.

TOMAN, TOMAUN (*tomān*).—Ten kerans (7*s.* 6*d.*), a gold coin.

TOOLAH (*tūla*).—A sporting dog.

TOORBESAH, TOORBIZA (*turbuza*).—A radish.

TOOTOON (*tūtan*).—Tobacco for the chibouque.

TŪMBAK (*tumbak*).—A kind of drum.

TŪMBAKU (*tumbākū*).—Tobacco used for the kalian or water-pipe.

TŪMBŪN (*tumban*).—Petticoats (made as very loose drawers).

UMBAR (*ambār*).—A cellar or store-room, a go-down.

ŪTŪ or OOTOO (*atw*).—An iron (flat or otherwise).

UTU-KESH (*atw kash*).—An ironer.

VAKEEL-U-DOWLEH (*wakīl ud Dawlah*).—An agent of Government; the empty title given to native newswriters, who are *supposed* to act as English Consuls, and whose offices

are *sinecures*.

YABŪ (*yābū*).—A pony, a common horse, a horse.

YAHŪ (?).—A kind of common house pigeon.

YAKHJAL (*Yakh-chāl*).—An ice-store; a pond (and wall) for making ice.

YAOURT (Turkish).—Curdled milk, (Persian) "mast."

YASHMAK (Turkish).—A kind of veil, or face covering.

YAWASH (Turkish).—Gently, slowly.

YESSAOUL (*yasāwal*).—A mounted mace-bearer.

ZALĀBI or ZALĀBIEH (*zalībiyā*).—A sweet cake or fritter eaten in Ramazan at night.

ZAMBŪREK (*zambūrak*).—A tiny cannon carried on and fired from a camel's back (from Zambūr, a wasp).

ZANGAL (*zangāl*).—A legging.

ZENDA-RŪD, ZENDARŪD (*Zanda-Rud*).—The river at Ispahan.

ZIL-ES-SULTAN (*Zill us Sultan*) (title).—Shadow of the King.

ZOBAN-I-GUNGHISHK (*zabāni gunjishk*).—Lit. sparrow's tongue, a kind of willow.

ZŪLF (*zulf*).—A long love-lock, a curl.

FOOTNOTES

[1] See Appendix D, page 417.

[2] Turcomanchai was the place where the treaty between Persia and Russia was signed, February 22, 1828. Erivan and Nakchewan were ceded to Russia, and two millions agreed to be paid to her.

[3] The form of these was very various, though the principle of action was always the same: the smoke was conducted to the bottom of a pint or more of water and then sucked up in bubbles through it, a gurgling noise being produced. Some used the long “snake” or nehpeech, a spiral of copper wire covered with coloured leather, and forming a flexible air-tight tube some four yards long; this was the more old-fashioned way, and required good lungs. A servant held the pipe itself at the side of the master’s chair. Others affected the wooden stem with the pipe; this as a rule is held by the smoker himself, and no great effort is required in smoking, as the tube is only eighteen inches long and air-tight, which the “nehpeech” or “snake” seldom is, save when quite new.

The portion between the pipe-head and the water-holder is as a rule always the same: a wooden tube some fourteen inches or more long, with numerous indentations, turned in a lathe, and coming to a point, so that any pipe-head will fit it; from the end of this an inner tube goes to within an inch of the bottom of the water. Sometimes this tube is made of ebony, at other times covered with silver, and rarely with gold. In its side at the bottom is the hole for the snake-like tube, or the stick.

The water-reservoir is usually of glass, either plain crystal, or cut Bohemian; the shape of these glasses is that of a wide-mouthed, long-necked decanter, and the neck serves as the

place by which the whole contrivance is held. In summer a porous clay bottle is generally used as cooler by all classes, rich or poor.

Another kind of reservoir called a narghil (narghil, a cocoa-nut) is made, having its shape like a cocoa-nut, with a spike or small knob at the sharp end; this rests on the ground, and is meant for travelling. It is made of brass, silver, or gold, and often in the two latter cases enamelled; the “meāna,” or middle tube, to this kind of pipe is often two and a half feet long, and the stem two.

Yet another form of kalian exists for travelling, and that is a copy of the glass reservoir, of a rather squat shape, in buffalo or rhinoceros hide; this is often, indeed usually, covered with enamelled plates of gold and silver, often encrusted with gems, and is only in use among the very rich.

As the great personages of Persia are constantly travelling, these more elaborate forms of pipe are frequent; and, as a man’s pipe often gives an idea of his social position, money is very freely lavished on them. The mouth-piece is simply either wooden, or else the end is shod with silver. The head consists of, among the poor, a clay reservoir for the tobacco. These cost a farthing. But most Persians, though only of the lower middle class, manage to have a silver pipe-head; this consists of three pieces, the handle or chōb (wood), a carved and turned piece of wood pierced with a conical hole which fits the meāna (or stem)—this may be represented by the lower two-thirds of an old-fashioned wine-glass, with a small foot; the fire-holder, which is of gold, silver, or stone, is fitted to this, and represents the upper third of the wine-glass; and on this all the ingenuity of the Persians is

lavished in the matter of ornament. From its under edge hang four or six little silver or gold chains four inches long, terminated by flattened balls.

Lastly, the wind-guard, which prevents the fire from falling or being blown up into an excessive state of incandescence, is usually made of silver, and is an inverted cone of the same size as the fire-holder, fitted to it with accuracy, and provided with two holes to give the requisite amount of draught; at the side two pairs of chains depend from the upper edge of this, and are made to reach as far as do the lower set.

The fire-holder is lined with a mixture of clay and plaster of Paris, on which is placed the tobacco, freshly moistened and rubbed into coarse fragments (though connoisseurs prefer a more elaborate preparation)—about three-quarters of an ounce is required; it is flattened and smoothed, the surplus water being squeezed away. Upon it are placed morsels of live charcoal, which are blown into a fierce flame, and the excess of water in the reservoir or bottle being driven out by blowing from the bottle, which is always nearly filled. A few draws are taken by the pipe-boy to see that all goes well, and to get rid of the taste of fresh charcoal, and get the tobacco well alight, and it is then handed to the smoker as under weigh.

On the fire-holder, however—perhaps because it is opposite the eye and so most conspicuous—are seen the highest efforts of Persian art. It is, whenever it can be afforded, of purest gold, though often thin; some rare exceptions are unornamented; more ordinarily it is chased or covered with high *repoussé* work, or elaborately engraved. Or it may be so

encrusted with turquoises till little, if any, of the original metal shows; or it may be ornamented with elaborate enamels of birds and flowers, or of fruit; and a favourite pattern is vine-leaves of transparent enamel let into the deeply-cut metal, and the bunches of grapes of varied colours.

More often three or four ovals, some two inches long, are filled by portraits of a girl or boy—of course fancy ones—and the spaces between them filled with flowers and birds. These enamels are very beautiful, very costly, and very brittle; ten pounds being a common price paid to an enameller to decorate a gold head, while as much as one hundred tomans, or forty pounds, are given by great and rich amateurs.

Of the kalians, the heads and reservoirs of which are thickly encrusted with gems, I do not speak at present; I had few opportunities at that time of seeing such, and, as a rule, they are only possessed by the Shah, his sons and uncles. I trust the reader will bear with this long but needful detail as to pipes.

[4] As a rule, in Persia every one is up *by six* A.M.

[5] Those who feel curious on the subject of modern Persian medicine, I must refer to my article on the subject in the *British Medical Journal*.

[6] The English Legation or Embassy is always called “The Mission” in Persia, by the members of it, and the English in the country.

[7] Futteh-Ali Shah had *over seventy sons and daughters*, and a prince’s *son* in Persia is a *prince*.

[8] As some confusion may be experienced

in the matter of money terms, I may append the following table of coins:—

						s.	*d.*
(Copper)	2	pūls	= 1	shahi (or shaie)	or English	0	0½
”	10	shahis	= 1	banabat or half-keran (silver)	”	0	5
	20	shahis	= 1	keran (silver)	”	0	10
	10	kerans	= 1	toman (tomaun), gold	”	7	6

Were the keran really tenpence, of course the tomaun would be 8*s.* 4*d.*, but its value is really only ninepence at present exchange (1883). Of these coins the pūls and shahis are copper, the kerans and half-kerans or banabats silver, and the tomauns gold; though for the past fifteen years, until just recently, the tomauns (in gold) had nearly disappeared, and were merely nominal, or old coins hoarded for the sake of the purity of their gold. Prices are given indiscriminately in tomauns or kerans; the price in kerans as five hundred kerans being mostly spoken of and always *written as kerans* and not fifty tomauns. Till lately the tomaun has been *only a name*. The merchant-class, too, use the dinar, an imaginary coin (not now minted at least), as a convenient fraction for calculation.

I *on arrival* took my servants' accounts in tomauns and kerans, *afterwards* in kerans and shaies, *and at last in* kerans and pūls; while an English merchant friend actually wrote his house accounts in dinars, and said it *awed* his

servants! one thousand dinars make a keran, so one dinar is the 1/1000 of 9*d.*

There are no bank-notes: and in *The Times* telegraphic news, under the head of Persia, Friday, February 24th, 1883, is a summary of a truly Persian edict. By it the Shah informs his subjects that, "they are foolish to take *dirty pieces of paper* for gold and silver, and that in future all *Russian Rouble notes will be confiscated*!" Then follows a really useful prohibition forbidding aniline dyes, and ordering such, when imported and discovered, to be destroyed; *these dyes*, which are not fast, have been lately much used by ignorant carpet-weavers in Persia.

[9] Hakim, a doctor or physician.

[10] This system accounts partly for the apparently very low wages paid to the Persian servant, which are (I give those paid latterly—1881—by myself; in the case of head-servants it is sometimes, but very seldom, more, as the pay is of course nothing to the modakel):—

	A month.	£	*s.*	*d.*
A nazir or steward	50 kerans, or	2	0	0
A good cook	50 "	2	0	0
A good peishkhidmut (personal servant, waits at table, and valets one, and is expected to dress well)	40 to 50 kerans, or	2	0	0 to 30s. to
A farrash, i. e. sweeper or message runner	25 kerans, or	1	0	0
A sherbet-dar, plate-cleaner, maker of coffee, ices, etc.	25 "	1	0	0
A second farrash	20 "	0	16	0
A third farrash	15 "	0	12	0

A cook's disciple, or scullery man	10 ”	0	7	6
A washerman, or woman who can wash and iron thoroughly	35 ”	1	6	0
A woman-servant or nurse	25 ”	1	0	0
A head-groom	30 ”	1	5	0
An under-groom	20 ”	0	16	0

[11]? Mustela Sarmatica.

[12] More correctly munshi.

[13] Or nummud.

[14] Here are four tombs, cut in the face of the solid rock, those of Darius, Xerxes I., Artaxerxes I., and Darius II. A detailed description is to be found in Usher's book. (See illustration.)

[15] Russian subjects are well protected in Persia, and no injury or insult to them is allowed to pass by their embassy.

[16] The present comparative dearness of provisions, such as bread, milk, eggs, etc., is compensated for by a corresponding cheapness in the price of sugar, candles, etc., which formerly were more expensive. I append a list of prices in Ispahan in 1882:—

	Kerans.	*s.*	*d.*
Rice (per maund, 14 lbs.)	2	1	6
Mutton ” ”	2	1	6
Beef ” ”	1½	1	1½
Fowls (each)	¾ to 1	7*d.*, 18*d.* and	0 9
Small chickens (each)	⅓	0	3

Pigeons ”		0	2
Partridges ”	½	0	4½
Eggs (40 to 60)	1	0	9
Butter (14 lbs.)	5	3	9
Clarified butter or ghee for cooking (14 lbs.)	5 to 7	4*s.* to 5	0
Coffee, Mocha (per lb.)	1	9*d.* to 0	10
Tobacco (14 lbs.)	4 to 12	3*s.* to 10	0
Potatoes ”	½ to 2	4½*d.* to 1	6
Wood for firing (280 lbs.)	2½	1	9
” broken, in small quantities (280 lbs.)	5	3	9
Loaf-sugar, English (per lb.)	¾ to 1	6*d.* to 0	9
Charcoal, sifted (14 lbs.)	½ to 1	4½*d.* to 0	9
” unsifted ”	¼ to ½	2*d.* to 0	4½
Grapes ”	7/20 to 15/20	3*d.* to 0	7
Dip candles ”	4	3	0
Commonest oil for servants (14 lbs.)	1½	1	1½
Bread (14 lbs.)	1 to 1½	9*d.* to 1	1

The cost of horse-keep, *including* grooms' wages, shoeing, etc., is from 9*d.* to 1*s.* a day; this is supposing several are kept.

[17] I use this word for want of a better.

[18] On March 30th I left Erzeroum at nine A.M., reached Hassan Kaleh, twenty-four miles, at three P.M.; started again at four P.M. (*all snow*), reached Balakoohi, where a storm compelled us to halt at seven P.M. Slept there.

March 31st.—Started at five A.M. for Kharassan, twenty-five miles; arrived at half-past nine; made a detour of ten miles on account of water. Started at half-past eleven on *same horses*; stopped at a village twenty-four miles off, name unknown; horses dead beat; road—*water, mud, and thawing snow*—twenty-four miles.

April 1st.—Started at five A.M.; arrived at Moollah Suleiman, eighteen miles (same sort of road), at ten A.M.; left at half-past eleven for Kadikeesa, twenty miles; arrived at five P.M.; went on through snow till nine P.M. to a village, twelve miles only; halted. Slept in a sheep-shed *full of tics*.

April 2nd.—Started at six A.M.; arrived at three P.M. at Desardūn, thirty-six miles. Here I saw Mount Ararat. Road very bad, from melting snow. Arrived at Kizzil Deeza, twenty-four miles (a wretched hole), at eight P.M.

April 3rd.—Five A.M. Road pretty fair over a long snow-pass, twenty miles to Abajik, in PERSIA. Arrived at ten A.M. Quite a pleasure to get among the Persians again, and to be able to make myself understood. Then an easy twenty miles to Keranee—half-past four P.M. Started at once; reached Zarabad, twenty-two miles over a good road with capital horses, at half-past eight P.M.

April 4th.—Left at half-past six A.M. for Khoi, a long twenty-four miles; got in at eleven A.M. Khoi is a very large place, apparently prosperous. Good dinner of bazaar kabobs. Arrived at Turseh, twenty-four miles, ten P.M.; road good, but shocking horses, down a tremendous pass, then along the shores of Lake Ooroomeyeh—a kind of Dead Sea—it is very salt. Many bituminous fires lighted it up at night, huge sheets of flame suddenly

appearing.

April 5th.— Half-past two A.M., left Turseh for a place the name of which has escaped me, arriving at half-past ten A.M. Arrived at Sufian at half-past twelve noon. Left at once, reaching Tabriz, twenty-four miles off, in four hours. Erzeroum to Tabriz, six days and seven hours, three hundred and thirty-five miles.

I stopped with Colonel J——, V.C., our Consul-General, April 6th, 7th, and 8th. At three P.M. of April 9th I started for Teheran.

STAGES BETWEEN TABRIZ AND TEHERAN.

		Miles.
	Saoudabad	20
	Hadji Aga	20
	Darathiar	16
		56
	Slept.	
April 10th.—	Turcomanchai	24
	Meana	16
	Jemalabad	12
	Tercham	16
	Aga Mezar	12
	Nikibeg	20
		100
	Slept four hours.	
April 11th.—	Zinjan (met one of our staff; breakfasted, and lost three hours)	26
	Sultaneah	24
	Khya	30
		80
	Slept four hours.	

April 12th.—Khirve		18
	Zeedaen	24
	Kasvin	16
	Abdulabad	18
		76
	Slept four hours.	
April 13th.—Sufferkhoja		24
	Shunkerabad	22
	Meanjūb	20
	Teheran	20
		86

[19] This is the one standard weight of Persia, the other being the miscal or sixth part of our ounce. This, for convenience, is supposed to consist of twenty nokods—the nokod being a grain similar to our pea in appearance. The nokod is subdivided into three gundums or grains (of wheat); these again into four kērāts (or carats)—these latter, however, are only used in weighing gems. The Tabriz maund (or batman) and the miscal and its subdivisions are in use throughout Persia in mercantile affairs.

Further north than Ispahan the sere and the gerewankeh—the latter about a pound, and borrowed from the Russians—are in use. Other local weights exist, only known in special places. As a rule, each village has its special weight (literally stone, “sang”), and their maunds get lighter and lighter as one gets away from the large cities.

[20] The cost had been—

	Kerans.
Thirty jars, at five kerans	150
Twenty loads of grapes	750

Carriage of same	60
Cost of labour, etc.	100
	1060

Per contra.

	Kerans.
Paid to me by Jews for refuse, for arrack-making	50
Resale of jars	140
	190

Total cost, 870 kerans, or about 5½d. per bottle.

[21] *Must* is a Persian word signifying "drunk;" it also means the state of excitement of male camels at certain times.

[22] Strangled, after he had refused a cup of poisoned coffee, in 1882, by order of the Zil-es-Sultan, while an honoured guest in his (the Zil-es-Sultan's) house.

[23] Topi, a sun-helmet.

[24] The full title is Kawam-ul-Molk.

[25] The full title is Muschir-ul-Molk.

[26] Would it have been necessary to have *explained* to Bishop Bonner the use of the thumbscrews *after* his cruelty to the Reformers?

[27] Aug. 2nd, 1887. Dr. Odling writes me that this well is 849 feet deep. I fancy that there is some error in this, as I put down the six hundred yards. Possibly there may be a second shaft.

[28] The murdered sons of Ali, considered by the Persians, and all Shiah Mahommedans, as the rightful successors of the prophet, consequently sainted martyrs.

[29] Bhang, an intoxicating drug used by dervishes.

[30] Azraël, the angel of death.

[31] Not of coral, as in the Levant.

[32] Origin of our word “hummums.”

[33] Now Sir Oliver St. John.

[34] See Ussher’s ‘London to Persepolis,’ p. 564.

[35] Muleteer.

[36] See Appendix D, page 417.

[37] Shah Abbas the Great built caravanserais of great size and solidity all over Persia, hence a good and large caravanserai, even though not built by him, is called a “Shah Abbas caravanserai.”

[38] Mushir al Mulk, counsellor of the province.

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