imâmzadâ, of which the blue dome is the most conspicuous feature of Miyânê. Here, as it was Thursday evening (shâb-i-
"immâ', the eve of Friday), many people were assembled to witness a ta'ziya, or representation of the sufferings of the Imâms Hasan and Huseyn. In the enclosure surrounding the building was seated a half-naked man, who held in his hand a scourge armed with iron thongs, wherewith he occasionally struck himself on the shoulders and back. All those who entered this enclosure, from which we were excluded, kissed the chains which hung in festoons across the gate.

On returning to our quarters we found a man who had brought his horse to consult us about its eye, which had received a slight injury. After advising him as to its treatment, we entered into conversation with him. He warned us that in spite of the apparent cleanliness of our lodging, he knew for certain that there were bugs in it; but on questioning him further, it appeared that his only reason for saying so was that he had seen one three years ago. Nevertheless, he advised us to take two precautions, which he assured us would protect us from injury: firstly, to keep a candle burning all night; secondly, to take a small quantity of the spirit called ‘arâk just before going to bed. We neglected the first of these measures, but not the second; and whether owing to this, or to the absence of the malar, we slept untroubled by the noxious insects which have given to Miyânê so evil a reputation.

Our road next day led us towards the imposing-looking mass of the Kaflân-Kûh. A tortuous path brought us to the summit of the pass, whence we again descended to the river, which we crossed by a fine bridge. On the other side of this bridge we were met by a man who besought us to help him in recovering his horse from the soldiers at an adjacent guard-house, who had, as he alleged, forcibly and wrongfully taken it from him. We accordingly went with him to the guard-house, and endeavoured to ascertain the truth of the matter, and, if possible, effect a
satisfactory settlement. In answer to our enquiries, the soldiers informed us that they had reason to suspect that the horse had been stolen, as it was too valuable an animal to be the lawful property of the man in whose possession they had found it. They added that if he desired to recover it, he must go to Miyáne and obtain a paper from some respectable citizen to certify that the horse really belonged to him, when it would be restored to him. With this explanation and promise we were compelled to be satisfied, and proceeded on our way till we reached another pass. On crossing this, we entered on an immense flat table-land, the surface of which was thrown into conical mounds resembling gigantic ant-hills, and thinly covered with mountain plants, which perfumed the air with their fragrance. The ground was riddled with the holes of what appeared to be a kind of jerboa. These little animals were very fearless, and allowed us to approach quite close to them before they retreated into their burrows.

About 4 p.m. we reached the compact and almost treeless village of Sarcham, where we halted for the night. Just before reaching it we came up with one of those “caravans of the dead,” so graphically described by Vâmbéry. The coffins (which differ in some degree from those used in Europe, the upper end being flat instead of convex, and furnished with two short handles, like a wheelbarrow) were sewn up in sacks, to which was affixed a paper label bearing the name of the deceased. Each animal in this dismal caravan was laded with two or three coffins, on the top of which was mounted, in some cases, a man or woman, related probably to one of the deceased, whose bodies were on their way to their last resting-place in the sacred precincts of Čum.

We had no difficulty in getting lodgings at Sarcham, for the place contains an extraordinary number of caravansarays, considering its small size, and the inhabitants vied with each other in offering hospitality.

Next day (Saturday, 12th November) we started early, being given to understand that a long stage lay before us. All day we followed the course of the river, which is a tributary of the Kızıl Uzan, though here it seems to be known by the name of the Zanján-áb. Dense fogs obscured the sun in the earlier part of the day, but these rolled away as the heat increased, leaving a cloudless sky. The air was perfumed with the scent of the plant which we had observed on the preceding day. On our march we passed three immense caravans, consisting respectively of 102, 72, and 39 camels, bearing merchandise to Tabrīz. There is to my mind an indescribable dignity about the camel, who seems to eye one scornfully with half-turned head as he passes majestically on his way; and the sight of a string of these animals was one of which I never grew weary. On the road we saw a serpent, as well as numbers of lizards, and a small tortoise, which our muleteers called sparshd, a word which I have never heard elsewhere, and which seems to be purely local.

About 5 p.m. we reached the village of Nilkh-beg, where we halted. It is a squalid-looking place, devoid of trees, and only remarkable for a very fine old caravansaray of the Šafaví period, which bears an inscription over the gateway to the effect that it was repaired by order of Shâh Šâli, who alighted here on his return from the successful siege of the fortress of Erivan. While copying this inscription, we were surprised and pleased to perceive the approach of Mr Whipple, the American missionary, who was posting from Tabrīz to Hamadán to visit his fellow-workers there.

Our next stage brought us to the considerable town of Zanján, so celebrated for its obstinate defence by the Bábís against the royal troops in the year 1850. It lies in a plain surrounded by hills, and is situated near, but not on, the river called Zanján-áb, which is at this point surrounded by gardens. The town has never recovered from the effects of the siege, for, besides the injury which it sustained from the cannonade to which it was exposed for several months, a considerable portion was burnt
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by the besieged on one occasion, when they were hard pressed by the enemy, to create a diversion. We entered the town by the western gate, passing on our left an extensive cemetery, of which two blue-domed imamzads constitute the most conspicuous feature.

We alighted at a caravansaray near the bazaar, which we visited shortly after our arrival. It is not very extensive, being limited to one long street running east and west more than half through the town (which is much longer in this direction than from north to south). The great drawback to Zanján is the enormous number of beggars who throng its streets and importune the traveller for alms with cries of “Allah nejat versin! Allah nejat versin!” (“May God give you salvation!”). In this respect it is unrivalled, so far as I have seen, by any town in Persia, with the exception of Kirmán; and even there, though the poverty of the mendicant classes is probably greater, their importunity is far less.

In the evening we received a visit from a very rascally-looking Teherání with a frightful squint, who enquired if we had any ‘arąk, and, on learning that we had, requested permission to introduce some companions of his who were waiting outside. These presently appeared, and, having done full justice to the ‘arąk, which they finished off, suggested that we might perhaps like to hear a song. Without waiting for an answer, one of them broke forth into the most discordant strains, shouting the end of each verse which struck him as peculiarly touching into the ear of the man who sat next him, who received it with a drunken simper and a languid “Bali” (“Yes”), as though it had been a question addressed to him. When this entertainment had come to an end, the eyes of our visitors fell on my pocket-flask, which they began to admire, saying, “This bottle is very good, and admirably adapted for the pocket... but we have already given enough trouble.” As I affected not to understand the purport of their remarks, they presently departed, to our great satisfaction.

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From the difficulty which the squint-eyed man seemed to experience in getting his feet into his shoes, I fancied that our ‘arąk was not the first which he had tasted that night.

We remained at Zanján during the next day, for I was anxious to examine the town and its walls, with a view to obtaining a clearer idea of the history of the siege, and the causes which had enabled the Bábí insurgents to keep the royal troops at bay so long. Sir Henry Bethune, quoted by Watson in his History of Persia under the Kádhí Dynasty, says that in his opinion the place ought to have been subdued by a regular army in a few days, and, so far as I can judge, it possesses no natural advantages as a stronghold. It is true that it is surrounded by a wall (now destroyed in some places), but though this averages twenty or twenty-five feet in height, it is built of no stronger material than unbaked clay. The desperate resistance offered by the Bábís must therefore be attributed less to the strength of the position which they occupied than to the extraordinary valour with which they defended themselves. Even the women took part in the defence, and I subsequently heard it stated on good authority that, like the Càrrhagíran women of old, they cut off their long hair and bound it round the crazy guns to afford them the necessary support. The fiercest fighting was on the north and north-west sides of the town, by the cemetery and Tabrız gate. Unfortunately there was no one from whom I could obtain detailed information about the siege. This I regretted the more because I was convinced that, could I have found them, there must have been many persons resident in Zanján who had witnessed it, or even taken part in it. I had, however, at that time no clue to guide me to those who would probably have preserved the most circumstantial details about it, viz. the Bábís. There was therefore nothing to induce me to prolong my stay, and accordingly, after one day’s halt, we left Zanján on 11th November for Sultáníyyé.

The road from Zanján to Sultáníyyé runs through a perfectly flat stony plain bounded by low hills to the north and the south,
and is devoid of interest. Nearly three hours before reaching the latter place we could plainly see the great green dome of the mosque for which it is so celebrated. From a distance this appeared to form part of a mass of buildings, which, on nearer approach, proved to be a large palace constructed in the modern style, and situated some way to the north-west of the mosque.

We paid a visit to the mosque immediately on our arrival, and were shown over it by an old Seyyid who spoke Persian. It is built in the shape of an octagon, and is surrounded by the large green dome which forms so conspicuous a feature of the landscape. From one side of the octagon (that farthest from the road) is thrown out a rectangular annexe containing the mihrâb. The main entrance is on the east side. The interior of the building is lined with most exquisite tile-work, and beautiful inscriptions in Arabic. In some places, these tiles have been destroyed or removed, an older, deeper layer of still finer pattern is visible. As the mosque is no longer used, the European traveller meets with none of the difficulties which usually form an insuperable obstacle to visiting similar buildings in Persia. The village of Sultânîyyé must formerly have been a flourishing place, but it now consists of only a few hovels, which form a sad contrast to the ancient splendour of the mosque.

As to the date when the mosque was built, our guide was unable to inform us, but he said that it had been repaired and beautified by Shâh Khudâ-bandé, concerning whom he repeated some lines of doggerel, which we had already heard from the muleteer, and which run as follows:

"Ey Shâh Khudâ-bandé,  
Zulm konandé,  
Iki fa’âk, bir kandé!"

"O Shâh Khudâ-bandé, practiser of tyranny, two fowls to one village!"

The last line of this is Turkish: what event it alludes to, or what its real purport is, I was unable to ascertain. Our guide informed us that some time ago a European engineer had spent a week at this place, making elaborate plans and drawings of the mosque. Having completed our inspection, we offered a small sum of money to the old Seyyid who had accompanied us; but he bade us give whatever we wished to his son, a little boy, who had also followed us. I accordingly gave him two frâns, which appeared to me a sufficient recompense for the amount of trouble we had given, but the Seyyid seemed to be of a different opinion, remarking that it was "a very trivial sum for people of distinction." I asked him what reason he had for supposing that we were "people of distinction," to which he only replied that we were "mukhtâr"—free to do as we pleased.

Besides the mosque and the palace, there are several little imâmzâdân at Sultânîyyé, and I was anxious to remain another day to examine these. Farach, however, appeared to divine my intention and took pains to frustrate it, for he avoided me all the evening, instead of coming in after supper, as he usually did, to discuss the events of the day, and sent off all the baggage early in the morning, so that we had no course open to us but to proceed. After another uneventful stage, we reached our next halting-place of Khurram-déré—a pretty village situated on a river, surrounded by poplars and willows—about 4.30 p.m. Here, as usual, we were very hospitably received by the villagers, two of whom came out some distance to meet us and conduct us to their house, where we were lodged in a very good upper room, thickly carpeted, and furnished with eight large windows provided with shutters.

Next day we started early, the muleteers pretending that they would try to reach Kazvin that evening, which, as I believe, they had from the first no intention of doing. Our road ran towards the north-east in the direction of a low range of hills. On reaching the highest point of the ridge we could see before us the mighty range of the Elburz mountains, which separates Persian 'Irâk from the humid, richly-wooded provinces bordering on the Caspian Sea. Between us and these mountains lay a wide, flat,
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stony plain, in which the position of Kazvin was clearly indicated by the thin pall of blue smoke which hung over it. Towards this plain our road now began to descend, and in a few minutes we arrived at the village of Kirishkin, where the muleteers announced their intention of halting for the night—a decision from which it was impossible to move them, and to which I was in great measure reconciled by the kindly welcome given to us by the inhabitants. Here, indeed, a marked change was observable in the people, who appeared much brighter, more intelligent, and more amiable than the natives of Adharbāyjān. The latter, with their scowling faces and furtive gray eyes, are not popular amongst the Persians, whose opinion about the inhabitants of their metropolis, Tabrīz, is expressed in the following rhyme:

"Zi Tabrīz bi-jāz bīd nā-bīst:
Hamān bistar kī Tabrīz nā-bīst."

"From a Tabrīz thou wilt see naught but rascality:
Even this is best, that thou shouldst not see a Tabrīz."

The change in the appearance of the people is accompanied by a change in language, for this was the first place we came to at which the Persian tongue appeared to preponderate over the Turkish.

At this village we obtained the most sumptuous quarters in a large room, twenty-five feet long by fifteen wide, thickly spread with carpets. A few works of Persian poetry, placed in niches in the wall, showed that our entertainers united a taste for literature with a love of comfort. In the course of the evening we received a visit from our host and his sons. One of the latter—the one to whom the books chiefly belonged—was a bright intelligent youth who discussed the merits of various Persian and Turkish poets with great zest. I was much amused at one remark which he made. Speaking of the recently-concluded ta'ziyas (dramatic representations of various moving episodes in the lives of the Prophet and his successors), and especially of the scene wherein the "Firangī ambassador" at the court of Damascus, moved by the misfortunes and patience of the captive believers, embraces Islām, and is put to death by the cruel tyrant Yeẓīd, he said, "How I wish you had come here a little earlier, for then we could have borrowed your hats and clothes for the Firangīs, and indeed you might have even taught us some words of your language to put in the mouths of the actors who personated them. As it was, not knowing anything of the tongue of the Firangīs, we had to make the actors who represented them talk Turkish, which seemed to us the nearest approach possible to Firangī speech."

Next day we reached Kazvin after a short stage, during which we descended into the plain of which I have already spoken. Here we intended to halt for a day to see the town, which is of considerable size and contains many fine buildings. Amongst these is a miḥmān-khān, or guest-house, which is one of a series constructed between Enzeli and Ţeherān, and thence as far south as Kum. At this, however, we did not put up, as I was anxious to cling for a few days longer to the more Oriental abodes to which I had become not only accustomed, but attached, and which I foresaw would have to be abandoned on reaching Ţeherān in favour of more civilised modes of existence. Unfortunately, our muleteers, either through indifference or ignorance, took us to a very poor caravansary, far inferior in comfort to the quarters which we had enjoyed since leaving Zanjān, where we had suffered in a similar way. Indeed it is usually the case that the traveller (unless provided with introductions) fares less well in the towns than in the villages.

We spent most of the following day in wandering through the bazaars and examining the appearance of the town and its inhabitants. The bazaars were much like those which we had already seen at Khūy, Tabrīz, and Zanjān; but as regards the people, the advantage was decidedly in favour of the Kazvinīs, who are more pleasing in countenance, more gentle in manners, and rather darker in complexion than the Adharbāyjānīs. Persian
is spoken by them universally, but almost all understand Turkish as well.

The road from Resht to Țeherán, which is the route usually taken by those entering Persia from Europe, passes through Kazvín. This road we now joined, and by it we proceeded to the capital, accomplishing the journey thither in three days. As it is probably the best known and the least interesting of all the roads in Persia, I will not describe it in detail, and will only notice certain points which appear worthy of mention.

First of all the mihmand-khānās, or guest-houses, of which I have already spoken, merit a few words. They were built, I believe, by order of Náṣiru’d-Dín Sháh on his return from his first visit to Europe. They are intended to afford the traveller by the ordinary route to the capital greater comfort and better accommodation than are obtainable in caravansarays, and to fulfil in some degree the functions of a hotel. I cannot say that I was at all favourably impressed by these institutions, at the first of which, called Kishlākh, we arrived on the evening of the day of our departure from Kazvín (20th November). It is true that they are well built, and stand in gardens pleasantly surrounded by trees; that the rooms are furnished with European beds, chairs, and tables; and that cooked food can be obtained from the attendants. But these advantages are, to my mind, far more than counterbalanced by the exorbitance of the charges and the insolence of the servants, which contrasted painfully with the ready hospitality, genial courtesy, and slight demands of the villagers in whose humble but cleanly homes we hitherto generally found a resting-place at the end of our day’s journey.

The mihmand-khānā, in short, has all the worst defects of a European hotel without its luxury. Let me briefly describe our experiences at one—that of Kishlākh—as a specimen which will serve for all. On our first arrival we are discourteously told that there is no room. Remonstrances and requests are alike useless, so we prepare to move on and try to find a village where we can

halt for the night, which is now rapidly advancing. We have hardly started, after a considerable delay to allow of the baggage-animals coming up, when a man runs after us and informs us that there is room. No explanation or apology is offered for the previous statement, but, as no other habitation is in sight, we decide to turn back. On dismounting, we are conducted to a room littered up, rather than furnished, with several beds, a number of cane-bottomed chairs, and a table or two. The windows are furnished with tawdry curtains; the walls are bedecked with tinselled mirrors and gaudy pictures; while on the washing-stand a single ragged tooth-brush is ostentatiously displayed by the side of a clothes-brush, which would seem to be intended to serve as a hair-brush as well.

While contemplating this chaos of luxury, and meditating somewhat sadly on the unhappy effect produced in Eastern lands by the adoption of Western customs, I became aware of a stir outside, and, rushing out, was just in time to see the İmām-Jumu’a, or chief ecclesiastic, of Tabríz drive up in a carriage followed by a number of attendants in other vehicles. By the side of the road lay the bleeding carcase of a sheep, whose throat had just been cut to honour to the approaching dignitary. This not very graceful custom is common in Persia, and Mr Abbott, the British Consul at Tabríz, informed me that he had great difficulty in preventing its performance whenever he returned to Persia after an absence in Europe.

Before we retired for the night—not on the unattractive-looking beds, but, as usual, on our Wolseley valises—we received another proof of the advance of European ideas in the neighbourhood of the capital in the form of a bill (a thing which we had not seen since we left Erzeroum), in which two kranus were charged for "service," which charge the bearer of the document was careful to inform us was not intended to prevent us from bestowing on him a further gratuity. The total amount of the bill was eight kranus—not much, indeed, but about double
the sum which we had usually expended for a night’s lodging hitherto—and we were requested to settle it the same evening—a request which showed that a becoming suspicion of one’s fellow-creatures was amongst the European “improvements” introduced by the mibmān-khānāts.

The muleteers, who had been compelled to pay an exorbitant price for food for their animals, were not less disgusted than ourselves, and declared that they would henceforth avoid mibmān-khānāts entirely. Next day, accordingly, passing two of these, we made a long stage, and halted about nightfall at a walled village called Ǧal‘a-i-Imām-Jum’a, where we were assured by Farach that we should find “everything that our hearts desired.” Unless he fancied that our hearts would desire nothing but melon-peel, which was scattered freely about the floor of the little cell where we took up our quarters, Farach’s promise must have been dictated less by a strict regard for truth than by a fear of being compelled by us to halt at a mibmān-khānāt. However, we eventually succeeded in obtaining some bread from a kindly Persian who had become cognisant of our need, and with this, and the last remains of the preserved meats bought at Trebizond, we managed to appease our hunger, consoling ourselves with the thought that this would be our last night in the wilderness for the present, and that on the morrow we should be amongst the fleshpots of Ǧeberān.

Next morning we were astir early, for the excitement of being so near the Persian capital made sloth impossible. Yet to me at least this excitement was not free from a certain tinge of sorrow at the thought that I must soon bid farewell to the faithful Farach, whom, notwithstanding his occasional obstinacy and intractability, I had learned to like. Moreover, difficult as may be the transition from European to Asiatic life, the return is scarcely easier. I sighed inwardly at the thought of exchanging the free, unconstrained, open-air existence of the caravan for the restraints of society and the trammels of town life; and it was only when I reflected on the old friends I should see again, and the new friends I hoped to make, that I felt quite reconciled to the change before me.

This day’s march was the most interesting since leaving Kazvīn. To the north, on our left hand, towered the long range of the Elburz mountains, much loftier and bolder in outline here than at their western extremity; nor had we proceeded far when there burst suddenly on our view the majestic snow-capped cone of Mount Demivend, where, as ancient legend runs, the tyrant-parricide, Zabāhk, lies bound in chains. At the base of this giant wall are gentler slopes, covered with villages which serve as a summer retreat to the more opulent when the heat of the capital has become intolerable. Near the road for some distance runs the river Karach, bright and rippling; while, to the south of this, numerous little villages set with poplars diversify the monotony of the gray stony plain. Once or twice we passed bands of soldiers returning from their military service to their homes in Ądharbāyān, and then a mighty caravan of 311 camels wending its slow course westwards. Then, all at once, our eyes were dazzled by flashes of light reflected from an object far away towards the south, which shone like gold in the sun. This I at first imagined must be the situation of the capital, but I was mistaken; it was the dome of the holy shrine of Shāh ʿAbdu’ll-ʿĀzīm, situated five or six miles south of Ǧeberān, which, lying as it does somewhat in a hollow, is not clearly seen until it is almost reached. At length, however, at a little roadside tea-house, where we halted for refreshment, we came in sight of it.

Many such tea-houses formerly existed in the capital, but most of them were closed some time ago by order of the Shāh. The reason commonly alleged for this proceeding is that they were supposed to encourage extravagance and idleness, or, as I have also heard said, evils of a more serious kind. Outside the town, however, some of them are still permitted to continue their trade and provide the “bona fide traveller” with refresh-
ment, which, needless to say, does not include wine or spirits.

At length, about sunset, we entered the city by the Derwazé-i-
Naw (New Gate), and here we were accosted by one Yúsuf ‘All,
who, though he wore the Persian dress, was, as he proudly
informed us, a British subject of Indian nationality. We asked
him what accommodation was to be found in Țeherán. He
replied that there were two hotels, one kept by a family called
Prevost, of French or Swiss extraction, the other by a man called
Alberr, and advised us to go to the latter, because it was cheaper.
As, however, we purposed making a sojourn of some length in
the capital, and the comfort of our abode was therefore a matter
of more importance than when we were halting only for a night
or two, we determined to inspect both places on the following
day, and in the meantime, as it was now late, to take up tem-
porary quarters at a caravansaray situated not far from the gate
whereby we had entered.
thus generally conversant with the life of the capital, H——, who had no special interest in the language, literature, or science of the Persians, and whose time was, moreover, limited, desired to continue his journey to the Persian Gulf; while I, finding at Teherán facilities for the prosecution of my studies which I was unwilling to let slip, wished to remain there. So, finding our objects incompatible, we were compelled to separate. He left Teherán for the south on 29th December, taking with him our Turkish servant 'Ali, who was unwilling to remain in Persia longer than he could help, since he found the people and the climate equally ungenial. These, then, journeyed gradually southwards, halting for a while at the chief towns through which they passed, until about the beginning of April they reached Bushire, and thence took ship homewards.

Soon after their departure, about the beginning of the new year (1888), I was invited by my friend the Nawwáb Mirzá Hasan 'Ali Khan, a Persian nobleman whose acquaintance I had made in London, to take up my abode with him in a house which he had rented near the English Embassy. Of this kind offer I very gratefully availed myself, and continued for the remainder of my stay in Teherán (i.e. till 7th February 1888) an inmate of his house, to my great pleasure and advantage. For my whole desire was, as my host well knew, to obtain as full an insight as possible into Persian life; and though he was thoroughly conversant with the English language, yet, out of regard for me, he rarely talked with me save in Persian, except that in the evening he would sometimes ask me to read with him a chapter of Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, which work, by reason of the favourable opinion of the Prophet Muhammad entertained by the author, is very highly esteemed by Muhammadans acquainted with English. Moreover most of my host's visitors and all his servants were Persian, and spoke, for the most part, only Persian (though his younger brother, an officer in the Persian army, and two of his nephews, whom I had known in London, had been

educated partly in England and spoke English extremely well), so that I was not only able but forced to make much progress in speaking and understanding. And during all this time I was able to benefit by the teaching of a very able scholar, Mirzá Asadulláh of Sabzawâr, a pupil of the late Hâjí Mullá Hâdî of Sabzawâr, the greatest philosopher whom Persia has produced during the nineteenth century. Thus was I enabled to obtain some insight into the philosophical doctrines current in Persia, of which I shall say something in the next chapter.

The European colony in Teherán is considerable, and the society which it affords equally remarkable for distinction and hospitality. It comprises the *corps diplomatique* attached to the different embassies (and almost every European nation of note is represented, as well as the United States of America); the staff of the Indo-European Telegraph; the American missionaries; several merchants and men of business; and a few Europeans employed in the Persian service. From many of these I received much hospitality and kindness, which I shall not soon forget, and on which I would gladly dwell did I feel justified in so doing. But my business at present is not to attempt an inadequate discharge of personal obligations (a discharge, moreover, which would probably be unacceptable to those to whom I am so indebted), but to depict with such fidelity as I may the life, character, and customs of the Persians. Of the European colony, then, I will say no more than this, that it is associated in my mind with every feeling of gratitude and every pleasant remembrance which kindness and hospitality received in a strange land can evoke in the heart or impress on the mind of the recipient.

Teherán, as everyone knows, was not always the capital of Persia. In the most ancient days the province of Fârs, or Persia proper, and at a later time Isfâhán, generally enjoyed this dignity. At other times, when, on the decay of some great dynasty, the empire was split up into numerous fragments, princes of different dynasties often reigned over one or two provinces, fixing the
seat of government at the most important town in their dominions. Under the Şafavi kings, when the ancient greatness of Persia enjoyed a temporary revival, it was Isfahán which was graced by their splendid court. About a century ago, when the great struggle between the Zend dynasty and the family of the Kájars was in progress, the former, represented by the noble and generous Karín Khán, had its capital at Shíráz, while the latter, personified by that atrocious and bloodthirsty tyrant Ağá Muhammad Khán, fixed their headquarters at ְֶהרַון. On the final victory of the latter, the northern city, situated as it is near the lands from which sprung the originally Turkish tribe of the Kájars, was definitely raised to the rank of capital, and has enjoyed this dignity ever since, while each of the three kings who succeeded the founder of the dynasty further exerted himself to enlarge and beautify the city.

Teherán, as it is at present, is a large town lying in a slight hollow, just sufficient to prevent its being seen from any distance on the plain; roughly speaking circular in shape; and entirely surrounded by walls of unbaked clay, and for the most part by a ditch as well. Access is given to the interior by twelve gates, which are as follows:

Between the north and the east—
1. The Derdžé-i-Behjátábd.
2. The Derdžé-i-Dawlat,
3. The Derdžé-i-Shírání,

Between the east and south—
4. The Derdžé-i-Dawshán-tepé, leading to the Sháh's hunting-
   palace of Dawshán-tepé (“Hare-hill”).
5. The Derdžé-i-Dádáb (“the Mill Gate”).
6. The Derdžé-i-Mashhad (“the Mashhad Gate”).

Between the south and west—
7. The Derdžé-i-Sháh-‘Abdél-Azíz (through which passes the
   great caravan road to the south).
8. The Derdžé-i-Ghín (“the Cave Gate”).
9. The Derdžé-i-Naw (“the New Gate”).

Between the west and north—
10. The Derdžé-i-Gamruk (“the Custom-house Gate”).
11. The Derdžé-i-Kázvé (“the Kazvín Gate”).
12. The Derdžé-i-‘Aṣr-dádání (“the Race-course Gate”).

To the north of the city are numerous gardens; some, like Behjátábd and Yúsufábád, situated within a short walk of the walls; some in the villages of Shírání, like Kálahak and Tajtrísh, which serve as summer retreats to the Europeans and rich Persians, distant five or six miles from the town; and others yet more distant, on the slopes of Elburz. Some of the gardens belonging to the royal family are very beautifully laid out, as, for example, the garden called Kámráníyád, which is the property of the Sháh’s third son, the Ná‘íbu’s-Saltána. The Persians take the greatest delight in their gardens, and show more pride in exhibiting them to the stranger than in pointing out to him their finest buildings. Yet to one accustomed to the gardens of the West they appear, as a rule, nothing very wonderful. They generally consist of a square enclosure surrounded by a mud wall, planted with rows of poplar trees in long straight avenues, and intersected with little streams of water. The total absence of grass seems their greatest defect in the eyes of a European, but apart from this they do not, as a rule, contain a great variety of flowers, and, except in the spring, present a very bare appearance. But in the eyes of the Persian, accustomed to the naked stony plains which constitute so large a portion of his country, they appear as veritable gardens of Eden, and he will never be happier than when seated under the shade of a poplar by the side of the stream, sipping his tea and smoking his kályád. What I have said applies to the great majority of gardens in Persia, but not to all; for some of those in Shíráz are very beautiful, and, except for the lack of the well-trimmed lawns which we regard as so indispensable to the perfect beauty of a garden, might well defy all competition.

Many of the gardens near Teherán are cultivated by “Guebres,”
the remnant of the ancient faith of Zoroaster. The headquarters of Zoroastrianism in Persia are at Yazd and Kirmán, in and about which cities there may be in all some 7000 or 8000 adherents of the old creed. In other towns they are met with but sparingly, and are not distinguished by the dull yellow dress and loosely-wound yellow turban which they are compelled to wear in the two cities above-mentioned. As I shall speak of this interesting people at some length when I come to describe my stay amongst them in the only two places in Persia where they still exist in any numbers, I will not at present dwell on their characteristics further than to allude briefly to their dakhmeh, or “tower of silence,” situated two or three miles south of Teherán, on one of the rocky spurs of the jagged mountain called Kūh-i-Bībī Shahr-bānu.

Bībī Shahr-bānu was the daughter of the unfortunate Yezdīgird III, whose sad fate it was to see the mighty empire of the Sassanians and the ancient religion of Zoroaster fall in one common ruin before the savage onslaught of the hitherto despised Arabs, ere he himself, a hunted fugitive, perished by the hand of a treacherous miller in whose house he had taken refuge. The daughter subsequently married Ḩusayn, the son of ‘Alī, thus uniting the royal blood of the house of Sāsān with the holy race of the Imāms and the kindred of the Arabian prophet. To this union is perhaps to be attributed in some degree the enthusiasm with which the Persians, bereft of their old religion, espoused the cause of ‘Alī and his successors (or in other words the Shi’ite faction of the Muḥammadans) against the usurpations of those whom the Sunnis dignify with the title of Khalifa, or vicegerent of the Prophet. After the calamities suffered by the family of ‘Alī at the hands of their ruthless foes, Bībī Shahr-bānu is said to have fled to Persia, and to have found a refuge from her oppressors in the mountain just to the south of Teherán which still bears her name. It is said that the place where she hid is still marked by a shrine which has the miraculous property of being in-

accessible to men, though women may visit it unimpeded. Where this shrine is I do not know, neither did I make any attempt to test the truth of the legend.

The Guebres’ dakhmeh is situated midway up a sharp ridge which descends from the summit of this mountain on the northern side, and is a conspicuous object from a distance. It consists of a circular tower of clay or unbaked brick, of the grayish colour common to all buildings in Persia. The wall, which is provided with no door or gate, is about forty-five feet high on the outside; inside (as we could see by ascending the spur on which it stands to a point which overlooks it) its height, owing to the raised floor, is probably not more than ten feet. The floor of the tower consists of a level surface broken at regular intervals by rectangular pits. Whenever a Zoroastrian dies, his body is conveyed hither, and deposited by two of his co-religionists (set apart for this duty) inside the dakhmeh and over one of these pits. The carrion birds which hover round this dreary spot soon swoop down, tear it in pieces, and devour its flesh, till nothing is left but the disarticulated bones, which fall into the pit below. Little, therefore, remains to tell of those who have been laid in this charnel-house; and from the ridge above, where I could see almost the whole of the interior, I counted not more than two skulls and a few long bones. Of course the total number of Zoroastrians in Teherán is very small, and the deaths do not probably exceed two or three a year, which may to some extent explain the paucity of remains in the dakhmeh. Yazd and Kirmán have each two dakhmehs, similarly constructed, and situated in like manner on the spurs of mountains at a distance of several miles from the city. These five dakhmehs constitute, so far as I know, the total number now in use in Persia. This method of disposing of the dead often strikes Europeans as very disgusting, and, indeed, it would clearly be inapplicable to a thickly-populated, flat country with a humid atmosphere. In Persia, however, where the air is so clear, the sun so strong,
the population so sparse, and mountains so numerous, I can well imagine that no inconvenience was caused by its adoption, even in the days when the whole population was Zoroastrian.

Near the mouth of the valley which lies to the north of the Kāh-i-Bībī Shahr-bānū, and on the opposite side to the daḵhmeh, is a tablet cut in the rock (in rough imitation of the ancient monuments about Persepolis), bearing the figure of a king, and an inscription in modern Persian. Though of such recent date, it possesses none of the clearness still discernible in its Sāsānian prototypes, and the writing on it is already almost illegible.

Below this, at the end of the valley, are to be seen the remains of gigantic mud walls, which are said to have formed a portion of the ancient city of Rey (Rhages), though by some this is supposed to have lain farther from Teherān towards the east, near the present village of Varāmnī. Rather nearer to the Shāh ʿAbduʾl-ʿAzīm road (which crosses the mouth of the valley at right angles) are two high brick towers, one of which is called the Tower of Ṭoḡhrul.

Of the little town of Shāh ʿAbduʾl-ʿAzīm itself, which is chiefly notable for its very fine mosque and its very detestable population (the place being what is called "bast," that is, a sanctuary or city of refuge, where all criminals are safe from pursuit), I shall have something to say in another chapter. It was to this place that the railway of which such great things were expected, and which it was hoped might be extended farther south—perhaps even to the Persian Gulf—was laid from Teherān. When I returned there in the autumn of 1888 on my way home, this railway was open, and was running some eight or ten trains a day each way. Its prosperity, alas! was short-lived: before the end of the year it was torn up and completely wrecked by a mob, exasperated at the accidental death of a man who had tried to leap from the train while it was in motion.

That the friends of this man, whose death was brought about solely by his own folly and rashness, acted unreasonably in

revenging themselves on the railway I do not for a moment wish to deny. That the deep-seated prejudice against this and other European innovations which found its manifestation in this act is equally unreasonable, I am not, however, disposed to admit. I think that the jealousy with which the Persian people are prone to regard these railways, tramways, monopolies, concessions, and companies, of which so much has been heard lately, is both natural and reasonable. These things, so far as they are sources of wealth at all, are so, not to the Persian people, but to the Shāh and his ministers on the one hand, and to the European promoters of the schemes on the other. People who reason about them in Europe too often suppose that the interests of the Shāh and of his subjects are identical, when they are in fact generally diametrically opposed; and that the Shāh is an enlightened monarch, eager for the welfare and progress of a stubborn and refractory people who delight in thwarting his benevolent schemes, when in reality he is a selfish despot, devoid of public spirit, careful only of his own personal comfort and advantage, and most averse to the introduction of liberal ideas amongst a people whose natural quickness, intelligence, and aptitude to learn cause him nothing but anxiety. He does everything in his power to prevent the diffusion of those ideas which conduce to true progress, and his supposed admiration for civilisation amounts to little more than the languid amusement which he derives from the contemplation and possession of mechanical playthings and ingenious toys.

I can only pause to notice one other object of interest outside the city walls, to wit, the pleasantly-situated palace of Dawshān-tepē (which means in Turkish "Hare-hill"), where the Shāh often goes to pursue the chase, to which he is passionately devoted. This palace, of dazzling whiteness, stands on an eminence to the north-east of the town, and forms a very conspicuous feature in the landscape. Besides the palace on the hill, there is another in a garden on its southern side, attached to
which is a small menagerie belonging to the Sháh. This collection of animals is not very extensive, but includes fine specimens of the Persian lion (shír)\(^1\), whose most famous haunt is in the forests of Dasht-i-Arjín, between Shiráz and Bushire, as well as a few tigers (babr), leopards (palang), and baboons (jänggal).

Having spoken of what is without the city, I must now say something about the chief monuments contained within its walls. These are very few, and, for the most part, of little interest. Téherán is an essentially modern town, and as such lacks the charm which invests Isfahán, Shiráz, Yezd, and other Persian cities of more respectable antiquity. In the eyes of its own inhabitants, however, it appears the \textit{plus ultra} of splendour. It has two European hotels; it is intersected, especially in the northern quarter, by several wide, straight thoroughfares, some of which are even lit by gas, and one of which certain Europeans and their Persian imitators are pleased to designate the "Boulevard des Ambassadeurs." There are also several large squares, some of which are embellished with tanks and fountains worthy of a sincere admiration. In addition to all this the bazaars (situated in the southern quarter) are extensive and flourishing; the situation of the town, in full view of the snow-capped mountains of Elburz, is unquestionably fine; and the air is clear and exhilarating. In a word, it is a pleasant place to stay in, rather than an interesting place to see. Nevertheless, some of my readers may desire to obtain a clearer notion of what is, after all, the present capital of Persia. Let us ask them, then, to accompany me in imagination for a stroll through the northern quarter of the city, in which are situated most of the parks, palaces, and public buildings, all the embassies except the Russian, and the residences of almost all the Europeans and many of the more opulent and influential Persians.

\(^1\) I mention this chiefly because this word, mispronounced shír (like English "shār"), is applied in India to the tiger, which animal is properly termed babr in Persian, as stated in the text.

We will begin our walk at the northern end of the \textit{Khiyddán-i-‘Alá’u’d-Dawlá} ("Boulevard des Ambassadeurs"), a fine broad, straight avenue, running almost due north and south. Entering this from the north through the waste land which intervenes (or did intervene in 1887) between it and the Bejjetábád and Dawlat Gates, we first pass, on the right-hand side, the fine garden and buildings of the English Embassy. Lower down on the same side are the German and American Legations. Near the latter, a street running westwards leads to the church, schools, and residences of the American missionaries. On the left (east) side of the avenue the finest building is the Turkish Embassy, remarkable for a magnificent gate adorned with an inscription in letters of gold. On the same side are the French and Italian Legations, and a little lower down the office of the Indo-European Telegraph. Beyond this are a few European shops, as well as the two hotels already mentioned; opposite these are several more shops, one of which belongs to a photographer—a Russian, I believe—who sells excellent photographs at the very cheap price of four \textit{támíns} (about twenty-four shillings) a hundred. Below this point, as well as in some places above it, the sides of the avenue are formed by colonnades of brick, within which are situated a few small Persian shops, dealing chiefly in groceries. Passing under an archway guarded by sentries, we enter the north-west corner of the \textit{Meydán-i-Tálkíhání}, or Artillery Square. This is of great size, and is surrounded by barracks, the white walls of which are profusely decorated with rude representations of the national symbol, the lion and the sun.

From this square emerge five great streets or avenues; one, sometimes called the "Rue de Gaz," on the east side; two on the south; and two (one of which we have already traversed) on the north. Leaving the three which belong to the eastern portion of the square for future consideration, we continue in a direct southward line across the western end, and enter another avenue, which leads us past some of the Persian Government
Offices (the road opposite to which is, during a considerable part of the day, blocked by carriages and horses) into a very pretty square, well paved and girt with trees, called the Meydān-i-Arg ("Ciradé Square"). The central portion of this is occupied by a large basin of water of octagonal shape, surrounded by gas lamps. At its southern end is a raised stone platform, on which stands a large gun mounted on wheels. This gun is remarkable, in common with Sháh ‘Abdu’l-‘Azízm, the royal stables, and sundry other places, as affording sanctuary to those who are pursued by the law. It has, indeed, the disadvantage of being a very small "city of refuge," and one which would not long be tenable; nevertheless, for the time being, the fugitive is safe in its shadow.

Quitting the Meydān-i-Arg, and traversing a short bazaar containing a few small shops, we come out into another broad street, which at this point runs at right angles to our path, but which, if we turned to the left and followed its course eastwards, would be found to bend gradually into a northerly direction, and would conduct us back to the Meydān-i-Topkhané. By this road we propose to return; but before doing so, let us take a glance at the intricate mazes of the bazaar. To do this, we cross the road and enter a square known as the Sabzé-Meydān, or "Herb Market." In its centre is the usual tank of water, and it is surrounded by the shops of watchmakers, tobacconists, and other tradesmen, mostly of Armenian nationality. We cross towards its southern side, and enter the hatmakers' bazaar (Küebé-i-kuláb-dázin), where any variety of Persian head-dress may be purchased, from the light cloth hat affected by the Armenians and Europeanised (firmáni mu‘dib) Persians, costing only three or four kránis (about two shillings), to the genuine lambskin kuláb, costing thirty, forty, or even fifty kránis.

Having passed the hatmakers, we come to the shoemakers, and, if we continue our way perseveringly towards the south, we shall eventually arrive at the gate of Sháh ‘Abdu’l-‘Azízm, unless, as may easily happen, we lose our bearings hopelessly in the labyrinthine mazes which we must traverse, distracted either by a string of majestic camels, past which we contrive to edge ourselves, or by a glittering array of antique gems, seals, and turbquoises, exposed in a case at our very elbow.

As, however, we have already visited the dákhné in the Mountain of Báb Shahr-bánú and the ruins of Rey, and as we shall pass through Sháh ‘Abdu’l-‘Azízm on our journey southwards, it is unnecessary to explore the bazaar any farther at present. Bazaars, after all, are much alike, not only in Persia, but throughout the Muḥammadan world; there are the same more or less tortuous vaulted colonnades, thronged with horses, camels, and men; the same cool recesses, in which are successively exhibited every kind of merchandise; the same subdued murmur and aroma of spices, which form a tout ensemble so irresistibly attractive, so continually fresh, yet so absolutely similar, whether seen in Constantinople or Kirmán, Šehrán or Tabriz.

Instead of pursuing our way farther, therefore, we strike to the left from the shoemakers' bazaar, and, without even pausing to examine the array of saddles, bridles, whips, saddle-bags, leather water-bags, and other travellers' requisites exhibited to our gaze, make for the Bázúr-i-dundáli-khandák ("Market behind the moat"), and, following this for a while, soon emerge once more into the broad open street which we crossed at a point farther west to reach the Sabzé-Meydān. At the point where we have now entered it, it has already begun to assume a northerly direction to reach the Meydān-i-Topkhané, towards which we again bend our steps. On our left we pass the very modern-looking palace called Shamsu’l-Imára ("the Sun of Architecture"), with its lofty tower, and come to the Dárál-Funun, or university. Here English, French, Russian, Medicine (both ancient and modern), Mathematics, and other useful accomplishments are taught on European methods. The students vary in age from mere boys to youths of eighteen or nineteen, and are distinguished
by a military-looking uniform. They not only receive their education free, but are allowed one meal a day and two suits of clothes a year at the public expense, besides being rewarded, in case of satisfactory progress and good conduct, by a very liberal distribution of prizes at the end of the session. Arabic, Theology, and Metaphysics do not enter into the curriculum, but are relegated to the ancient madrasas attached to some of the mosques and endowed by pious bequests. The best madrasas, however, must be sought for, not in Teheran, but in Isfahan, the former capital.

Just above the Dārūl-Funūn is another fine building, intended, I believe, to serve as a Central Telegraph Office which shall combine the hitherto separated European and Persian branches. Not far above this we re-enter the Meydān-i-Takhtān, this time at the south-east corner. To our right the "Rue de Gaz" emerges from the square, and runs eastwards. In it dwells a Turkish hairdresser of well-deserved fame, but beyond this it possesses few features of interest, and we may therefore pass it by, and cross to the north-east corner of the square, whence we enter another avenue similar to and parallel with the Khwājah-i-ʿAlāʾ-ud-Dawla in which we commenced our walk. This avenue is bounded on the right by a fine garden, the Bāgh-i-Lâl-e-zâdār ("Garden of the Tulip-bed"), which belonged, I believe, to the talented Riza-Kuli Khān, generally known as the Lâl-e-kāshī, or chief tutor of the Shāh, whose numerous works, varied in matter but uniform in merit, are alone sufficient to prove that Persian literary ability has not, as some would pretend, ceased to exist. Little else besides this claims our attention here, and if we pursue our way up this avenue we shall finally reach a point where it is crossed by another broad road running at right angles to it. This latter, if we follow it to the left, will bring us out where we started from, in front of the English Embassy.

Although the walk just described has led us through most of the principal streets and squares, and past a number of the chief buildings and palaces, a few objects of interest which lie apart from the route traversed deserve a brief notice.

First amongst these I will mention—because it can be disposed of in a very few words—another large square, called Meydān-i-Mashhik ("Drill Square"), which lies to the north-west of the Meydān-i-Takhtān. Though somewhat smaller than the latter, it is very spacious, and serves admirably the purpose to which, as its name implies, it is appropriated—that of a place d’armes, or exercising-ground for the troops.

Next to this, the palace called Nīqūristān ("Picture Gallery"), which was the favourite residence of the second king of the Kājār dynasty, Fath-ʿAli Shāh, deserves mention. It is situated at no great distance from the English Embassy, and derives its name from the numerous highly-finished paintings with which the walls of some of its chambers are decorated. In the largest room I counted no less than 118 full-length portraits, which included not only Fath-ʿAli Shāh and his numerous sons and ministers, but also the staffs of the French and English Embassies (headed respectively by General Gardanne and Sir John Malcolm) then resident at the Persian Court, the names of all these being indicated in Persian characters. The portraits, which seem to have been carefully and accurately executed, were completed in the year A.H. 1228 (A.D. 1812–13) by one ʿAbdu’llāh, as is witnessed by an inscription placed under them. The only other noticeable feature of the Nīqūristān is a beautiful marble bath, furnished with a long smooth glissière, called by the Persians sursurāk ("the slide"), which descends from above to the very edge of the bath. Down this slope the numerous ladies of Fath-ʿAli Shāh’s harem used to slide into the arms of their lord, who was waiting below to receive them.

It remains to say a few words about the mosques, which are of less interest than those of almost any other Muhammadan city of equal size. One of the finest is quite recent, and was, indeed, still in process of construction when I visited it. It was
commenced by the late Shâh Shâhâr, whose career is generally reported to have been brought to an abrupt close by a cup of "Kâjâr coffee," while he was in retirement and disgrace at Mashhad. The construction of the mosque, rudely interrupted by this sad event, was subsequently resumed by his brother, the Māshhur-i-Dawla, whom I had the honour of visiting. He received me with the easy courtesy characteristic of the Persian nobleman; questioned me as to my studies, the books I had read, and the towns I proposed to visit on leaving Teherân; and, after allowing me to inspect the various rooms (some furnished in Persian and others in European style) in his large and beautiful house, kindly sent a servant with me to show me the mosque, which I might otherwise have had difficulty in seeing. The fine large court of the mosque, in the centre of which is a tank of water, is surrounded by lofty buildings, devoted partly to educational, partly to religious purposes. On the walls of these is inscribed on tiles the wakf-nâmê, or detail of the endowment, in which is set forth the number of professors and students of theology and the kindred sciences who are to be maintained within the walls of the college. Of the former there were to be four, and of the latter, I think, 150.

It is generally very difficult to visit the interior of mosques in Persia; for in this respect the Shi‘ite Muhammadans are much more strict than the Sunnis, and a non-Muslim can, as a rule, only enter them in disguise. I once resorted to this expedient to obtain a glimpse of another mosque in Teherân, the Māshjīd-i-Shâhâr, which I visited with two of my Persian friends. Although we only remained in it for a very short time, we did not wholly escape the critical gaze of sundry mulús who kept hovering round us, and I was not sorry to emerge once more into the bazaar; for the consequences of discovery would have been, to say the least of it, disagreeable. From the little I have seen of the interiors of Persian mosques, I should say that they were decidedly less beautiful than those of Constantinople or Cairo.

I have already had occasion to speak of the Dorut-i-Fi‘nân, or university, and I mentioned the fact that it included a school of medicine. Through the kindness of Dr Tholozan, the Shâh's physician, I was enabled to be present at one of the meetings of the Majlis-i-Sîyâh ("Congress of Health," or Medical Council), held once a week within its walls. The assembly was presided over by the learned Mukhbir-i-Dawla, the Minister of Education, and there were present at it sixteen of the chief physicians of the capital, including the professors of medicine (both the followers of Galen and Avicenna, and those of the modern school). The discussion was conducted for the most part in Persian, Dr Tholozan and myself being the only Europeans present; but occasionally a few remarks were made in French, with which several of those present were conversant. After a little desultory conversation, a great deal of excellent tea, flavoured with orange-juice, and the inevitable kalyôn, or water-pipe, the proceedings commenced with a report on the death-rate of Teherân, and the chief causes of mortality. This was followed by a clear and scientific account of a case of acute ophthalmia successfully treated by inoculation, the merits of which plan of treatment were then compared with the results obtained by the use of jequirity, called in Persian chashm-i-khurâs, and in Arabic 'ayn-i-dák, both of which terms signify "cock's eye." Reports were then read on the death-rates and causes of mortality at some of the chief provincial towns. According to these, Kirmânsghâr suffered chiefly fromague, dysentery, and small-pox, while in Isfahân, Kirmân, and Shâh-rud, typhus, or typhoid, joined its ravages to those of the above-mentioned diseases. My faith in these reports was, however, somewhat shaken when I subsequently learned that they were in great measure derived from information supplied by those whose business it is to wash the corpses of the dead. Some account was next given of a fatal hemorrhagic disease which had lately decimated the Yomut Turkmâns. As these wild nomads appeared to entertain an unconquerable aversion to medical men, no
scientific investigation of this outbreak had been possible. Finally, a large stone, extracted by lithotomy, was exhibited by a Persian surgeon; and after a little general conversation the meeting finally broke up about 5 p.m. I was very favourably impressed with the proceedings, which were, from first to last, characterised by order, courtesy, and scientific method; and from the enlightened efforts of this centre of medical knowledge I confidently anticipate considerable sanitary and hygienic reforms in Persia. Already in the capital these efforts have produced a marked effect, and there, as well as to a lesser extent in the provinces, the old Galenic system has begun to give place to the modern theory and practice of medicine.

Having now spoken of the topography, buildings, and institutions of the capital, it behoves me to say something about its social aspects. I begin naturally with the royal family.

Of Nāširu’d-Dīn Shāh, the reigning king, I have already said something. His appearance has been rendered so familiar in Europe by his three visits to the West, that of it I need hardly speak. He has had a long reign, if not a very glorious one, for he was crowned at Téhéran on 20th October 1848, and there seems every likelihood that he will live to celebrate his jubilee. He came to the throne very young, being not much more than seventeen or eighteen years of age. Before that time he had resided at Tabríz as governor of the province of Azharbáyjáñ, an office always conferred by Kájárs sovereigns on the Crown Prince. The Kájárs, as I have already said, are of Turkish origin, and the language of Azharbáyjáñ is also a dialect of Turkish; whence it came about that Nāširu’d-Dīn Shāh, on his accession, could scarcely express himself at all in Persian—a fact to which Dr Polak, about that time his court physician, bears testimony. Even now, though he habitually speaks and writes Persian, and has even composed and published some poems in that language, he prefers, I believe, to make use of Turkish in conversation with such of his intimates as understand it.

I wish to insist on the fact that the reigning dynasty of the Kájárs are essentially of Turkish race, because it is often overlooked, and because it is of some political importance. When the Sháh was in England, for instance, certain journals were pleased to speak of him as a “descendant of Cyrus,” which is about as reasonable as if one should describe our own Prince of Wales as a descendant of King Arthur. The whole history of Persia, from the legendary wars between the Kiyáníans kings and Afrásiyáb down to the present day, is the story of a struggle between the Turkish races whose primitive home is in the region east of the Caspian Sea and north of Khuríšán on the one hand, and the southern Persians, of almost pure Aryan race, on the other. The distinction is well marked even now, and the old antipathy still exists, finding expression in verses such as those quoted above at p. 84, and in anecdotes illustrative of Turkish stupidity and dulness of wit, of which I shall have occasion to give one in a subsequent chapter. Ethnologically, therefore, there is a marked distinction between the people of the north and the people of the south—a distinction which may be most readily apprehended by comparing the sullen, moody, dull-witted, fanatical, violent inhabitants of Azharbáyján with the bright, versatile, clever, sceptical, rather timid townsfolk of Kirmán. In Fars, also, good types of the Aryan Persian are met with, but there is a large admixture of Turkish tribesmen, like the Káshká’ís, who have migrated and settled there. Indeed this intermixture has now extended very far, but in general the terms “northern” and “southern” may, with reservation, be taken as representing a real and significant difference of type in the inhabitants of Persia. Since the downfall of the Caliphate and the lapse of the Arabian supremacy, the Turkish has generally been the dominant race; for in the physical world it is commonly physical force which wins the day, and dull, dogged courage bears down versatile and subtle wit. Thus it happens that to-day the Kájárs rule over the kinsmen of Cyrus and Shápúr, as ruled in earlier days the
Ghaznavids and the Seljûks. But there is no love lost between
the two races, as anyone will admit who has taken the trouble
to find out what the southern peasant thinks of the northern
court, or how the Kâjârs regard the cradle of Persia’s ancient
greatness.

Of the Shâh’s character I do not propose to add much to what
I have said already, for, in the first place, I am conscious of
a prejudice against him in my mind arising from the ineffaceable
remembrance of his horrid cruelties towards the Bábís; and, in
the second place, I enjoyed no unusual facilities for forming a
weighty judgment. I have heard him described by a high English
official, who had good opportunities of arriving at a just opinion,
as a liberal-minded and enlightened monarch, full of manliness,
energy, and sound sense, who, in a most difficult situation, had
displayed much tact and wisdom. It must also be admitted that,
apart from the severities practised against the Bábís (which, with
alternate remissions and exacerbations, have continued from the
beginning of his reign down to the present time), his rule has
been, on the whole, mild, and comparatively free from the
cruelties which mar nearly every page of Persian history. During
the latter part of his reign, especially, executions and cruel
punishments, formerly of almost daily occurrence, have become
very rare; but this is partly to be attributed to the fear of European
public opinion, and desire to be thought well of at Western
courts and in Western lands, which exercise so strong an
influence over his mind.

For most of the more recent Bábí persecutions the Shâh was
not directly responsible. It was his eldest son, the Zíllu’l-Sultán,
who put to death the two “Martyrs of Ispâhân” in 1879, and
Mirzâ Ashraf of Abâd in 1888; and it was in his jurisdiction
(though during his absence) that the persecutions of Siyâh and
Najaf-âbâd occurred in the summer of 1889; while the cruel

1 A translation of this is given in my Traveller’s Narrative, vol. ii, pp. 108–131, and 390–400.
2 See p. 68 supra.
3 See Polak’s Persien, vol. i, p. 333.
nigh a score of wounds, in each of which was inserted a lighted candle, went to the place of execution singing with exultation:

"Yah dast jâm-i-bâddi, va yah dast zulf-i-yar—
Râkût ebnûn moûdûn-i-meydânûn ûrûtû!"

"In one hand the wine-cup, in the other the tresses of the Friend—
Such a dance do I desire in the midst of the market-place!"

The impression produced by such exhibitions of courage and endurance was profound and lasting; nay, the faith which inspired the martyrs was often contagious, as the following incident shows. A certain Yezdi rough, noted for his wild and disorderly life, went to see the execution of some Bábís, perhaps to scoff at them. But when he saw with what calmness and steadfastness they met torture and death, his feelings underwent so great a revulsion that he rushed forward crying, "Kill me too! I also am a Bábí!" And thus he continued to cry till he too was made a partaker in the doom he had come out only to gaze upon.

During my stay in Téherán I saw the Sháh several times, but only once sufficiently near to see his features clearly. This was on the occasion of his visiting the new telegraph-office on his way to the University, where he was to preside over the distribution of prizes. Through the kindness of Major Wells, then superintendent of the Indo-European Telegraph in Persia, and myself were enabled to stand in the porch of the building while the Sháh entered, surrounded by his ministers. We afterwards followed him to the University and witnessed the distribution of prizes, which was on the most liberal scale, most of the students, so far as I could see, receiving either medals, or sums of money averaging three or four tímâns (about £1). The Sháh sat in a room opening out into the quadrangle, where the secretaries of state (mustawfîs), professors, and students were ranged in order. Around him stood the princes of the royal family, including his third son, the Na'dîbu's-Sâlîhana, and the ministers of state. The only person allowed to sit beside him was his little favourite, "Manjîk," who accompanied him on his last journey to Europe.

The Sháh's extraordinary fondness for this child (for he did not, at the time I saw him, appear to be more than eleven or twelve years old) was as annoying to the Persian aristocracy as it was astonishing to the people of Europe. It galled the spirit of the proud nobles of Persia to watch the daily-increasing influence of this little wizened, sallow-faced Kurdish lad, who was neither nobly born, nor of comely countenance, nor of pleasant manners and amiable disposition; to see honours lavished upon him and his ignoble kinsmen; to be compelled to do him reverence and bespeak his good offices. All this now is a thing of the past. Within the last year or so Ghulâm 'Ali Khán, the Kurd, better known as "Manjîk," (which, in the Kurdish tongue, signifies a sparrow), and somewhat dignified by the title of 'Azeîhu'Sâlîhana ("the Darling of the King"), fell from favour, and was hurled from the pinnacle of power down to his original obscurity. The cause of his fall was, I believe, that one day, while he was playing with a pistol, the weapon exploded and narrowly missed the Sháh. This was too much, and "Manjîk" and his favoured kinsmen were shorn of their titles and honours, and packed off to their humble home in Kurdistan. Perhaps it was, after all, as well for them; for "the Darling of the King" was far from being the "Darling of the Court." Sooner or later his fall was bound to come, and had it been later it might have been yet more grievous.

The Sháh has five sons. Two of these, the Sâlîrâl'Mulk and the Râkîn'l-Mulk, were, at the time of which I write, mere children. They were described as beautiful and attractive boys, but neglected by their father in favour of Manjîk. The third son is entitled Na'dîbu'Sâlîhana. He resided in Téherán, and to him was entrusted the government of the city and the supreme military command.
The two elder sons were born of different mothers, and as the mother of the Vâli‘-âbîd was a princess, he, and not his elder brother, was chosen as the successor to the throne. That the Zîllâ‘-sâlîn inwards chafed at being thus deprived of his birthright is hardly to be doubted, though he was in the meanwhile compensated for this in some measure by being made governor of the greater part of Southern Persia, including the three important cities of Shiráz, Yezd, and Isfahân, at the last of which he resided in almost regal state. Here he collected together a considerable body of well-drilled troops, who were said to be more efficient and soldierly than any of the regiments in Teherân. Besides these he had acquired a number of guns, and his magazines were well provided with arms and ammunition. In view of these preparations, and the energy and decision of character discernible in this prince, it was thought possible that, in the event of his father’s death, he might dispute the crown with his younger and gentler brother, the Vâli‘-âbîd, in which case it appeared not improbable that he might prove victorious, or at least succeed in maintaining his supremacy over Southern Persia.

All such speculations, however, were cast to the winds by an utterly unforeseen event which occurred towards the end of February 1888, while I was at Isfahân. In the beginning of that month both the Zîllâ‘-sâlîn and the Vâli‘-âbîd had come to Teherân, the former from Isfahân, the latter from Tabrîz, to pay a visit to their father. A decoration was to be presented to the former by the English Government for the protection and favour which he had extended to English trade and enterprise, towards which he had ever himself well disposed. Suddenly, without any warning, came the news that he had been deprived of all his governments, with the exception of the city of Isfahân; that he and some of his ministers who had accompanied him to the capital were kept to all intents and purposes prisoners within its walls; that his deputy-governors at Yezd, Shiráz, and other towns were recalled; and that his army was disbanded, his artillery removed to Teherân, and his power effectually shattered. On first hearing from the Shâh that of all the fair regions over which he had held sway, Isfahân only was left to him, he is reported to have said in the bitterness of his heart, “You had better take that from me too”; to which the Shâh replied, “I will do so, and will give it to your son” (Prince Jalâl‘-ud-Dawla, then governor for his father at Shiráz). This threat was, however, not carried out, and the Zîllâ‘-sâlîn was left in possession of the former capital as a remnant of his once wide dominions.

Passing from the Shâh and his sons, we must now turn our attention to one or two other members of the royal family. Foremost amongst these is (or rather was, for he died in 1888, while I was still in Persia) the Shâh’s aged uncle, Ferhâd Mirzâ, Mu‘ta-\,mâd‘-d-Dawla, with whom, through the kindness of Dr Torrence of the American Missionary Establishment, and by means of his interest with Prince Iltishâmû‘-d-Dawla (the son of Ferhâd Mirzâ, and, since the downfall of the Zîllâ‘-sâlîn, governor of Shiráz and the province of Fars), I obtained the honour of an interview. We found him seated, amidst a pile of cushions, in his andarîn, or inner apartments, surrounded by well-stocked shelves of books. He received us with that inimitable courtesy whereby Persians of the highest rank know so well how to set the visitor completely at his ease, and at the same time to impress him with the deepest respect for their nobility. I was greatly struck by his venerable appearance and dignified mien, as well as by the indomitable energy and keen intelligence expressed by the flashing eye and mobile features, which neither old age nor bodily infirmity was able to rob of their animation. He talked much of a book called Nîshâb, written by himself to facilitate the acquisition of the English language (with which he had some acquaintance) by his countrymen. Of this work he subsequently presented me with a copy, which I value highly as a souvenir of its illustrious author. It is arranged on the same plan as the
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Arabic Nisibä is so popular in Persia—that is to say, it consists of a sort of rhymed vocabulary, in which the English words (represented in the text in Persian characters, and repeated in English characters at the head of the page) are explained successively by the corresponding Persian word. The following lines, taken from the commencement of the work, and here represented in English characters, will serve as a specimen of the whole:

"Dar mah-i-Dey jâm-i-nay dib, ey nigâr-i-melâbâh,
Kaz 'zânâmî-i-dû dimâqh-i-'akf gardad mushāb."  
"Hidden sar-ast, dî 'nûzâ bîhî, 'lip' lab-ast, dî 'ây' ehn chastâm;
'Tâhî' dinâdân, 'fûl' jâdî, dî 'hand' dast, dî 'feysî' rû;  
Golb â gardan 'rî' â 'nik', 'chik' zhirâb', 'tang' dimud zahân;
Nâf 'nîl' dal, dî 'tehâd-rud 'buzam', khowân 'hil'âzâr mâ;"

"In the month of Dey give the cup of wine, O moon-faced beauty,
So that by its fragrance the palate of the intellect may become perfumed as with musk.
Head is sar, and nose bîhî, lip is lab, and eye like chastâm;
Tooth dinâdân, foot jâdî, and hand dast, and face rû;
Golbân and gardan ear and neck; cheek zhirâb, tongue becomes zahân;
Recognise naf as navel, and pêshân as bosom; call haiz mâ."

I doubt greatly whether such a method of learning a language would commend itself to a European student, but with the Persians, endowed as they are with a great facility for learning by heart, it is a very favourite one.

Prince Ferhâd Mîrzâ professed a great kindliness for the English nation as well as for their language; nor, if the following narrative be true, is this to be wondered at, since his life was once saved by Sir Taylor Thomson when endangered by the anger of his nephew, the Shâh. Fleeing from the messengers of the king's wrath, he took refuge in the English Embassy, and threw himself on the protection of his friend the Ambassador, who promised to give him shelter so long as it should be necessary. Soon the

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1 The best known of these is the Nisibâ'-Shîyân of Abû Našr Farâhî, who flourished in the beginning of the seventh century of the lâhûr (thirteenth of our era).

2 The tenth month of the old Persian solar year, corresponding to December—January.
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As these are seen in a more truly national form in the provinces, where chairs, tables, knives, and forks have not yet obtruded themselves to such an extent as in the semi-Europeanised capital, I shall leave much that I have to say on this subject for subsequent pages. Most of the Persians with whom I was intimate at Teheran had adopted European habits to a considerable extent; and during my residence there I was only on two occasions present at a really national entertainment.

The order of procedure is always much the same. The guests arrive about sundown, and are ushered into what corresponds to the drawing-room, where they are received by their host and his male relations (for women are, of course, excluded). Kalyans (water-pipes) and wine, or undiluted spirits (the latter being preferred), are offered them, and they continue to smoke and drink intermittently during the whole of the evening. Dishes of "ajf" (pistachio nuts and the like) are handed round or placed near the guests; and from time to time a spit of kubis (pieces of broiled meat) enveloped in a folded sheet of the flat bread called "nain-i-sangak", is brought in. These things bring out the flavour of the wine, and serve to stimulate, and at the same time appease, the appetite of the guests, for the actual supper is not served till the time for breaking up the assembly has almost arrived, which is rarely much before midnight.

As a rule, music is provided for the entertainment of the guests. The musicians are usually three in number: one plays a stringed instrument (the sihur); one a drum (dambak), consisting of an earthenware framework, shaped something like a huge egg-cup, and covered with parchment at one end only; the third sings to the accompaniment of his fellow-performers. Sometimes

1 Sangak ("pebble") is the diminutive of sang ("a stone"). This bread is called "pebble-bread" because the bottom of the oven in which it is baked is formed by a sloping bank of pebbles, on which the flat cakes of dough are thrown. It is very pleasant to the taste, and the only objection to it is that sometimes a stray pebble gets incorporated in its substance, to the manifest peril of the teeth of the consumer.
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Dancing-boys are also present, who excite the admiration and applause of the spectators by their elaborate posturing, which is usually more remarkable for acrobatic skill than for grace, at any rate according to our ideas. These, however, are more often seen in Shiráz than at Téherán. Occasionally the singer is a boy; and, if his voice be sweet and his appearance comely, he will be greeted with rapturous applause. At one entertainment to which I had been invited, the guests were so moved by the performance of the boy-singer that they all joined hands and danced round him in a circle, chanting in a kind of monotonous chorus, “Báráka’lláh, Kichbulá! Báráka’lláh, Kichbulá!” (“God bless thee, little one! God bless thee, little one!”), till sheer exhaustion compelled them to stop.

When the host thinks that the entertainment has lasted long enough, he gives the signal for supper, which is served either in the same or in another room. A cloth is laid on the floor, round which are arranged the long flat cakes of “pebble-bread” which do double duty as food and plates. The meats, consisting for the most part of piláw and chiláw of different sorts, are placed in the centre, together with bowls of sherbet, each of which is supplied with a delicately-carved wooden spoon, with deep boat-shaped bowl, whereof the sides slope down to form a sort of keel at the bottom. The guests squat down on their knees and heels round the cloth, the host placing him whom he desires most to honour on his right side, at the upper end of the room (i.e. opposite the door). At the lower end the musicians and minstrels take their places, and all, without further delay, commence an attack on the viands. The consumption of food progresses rapidly, with but little conversation, for it is not usual

in Persia to linger over meals, or to prolong them by talk, which is better conducted while the mouth is not otherwise employed. If the host wishes to pay special honour to a guest, he picks out and places in his mouth some particularly delicate morsel. In about a quarter of an hour from the commencement of the banquet most of the guests have finished and washed their hands by pouring water over them from a metal ewer into a plate of the same material, brought round by the servants for that purpose. They then rinse out their mouths, roll down their sleeves again, partake of a final pipe, and, unless they mean to stay for the night, depart homewards, either on foot or on horseback, preceded by a servant bearing a lantern.

Such is the usual course of a Persian dinner-party; and the mid-day meal (nabír), to which guests are sometimes invited, differs from it only in this, that it is shorter and less boisterous. Although I have described the general features of such an entertainment in some detail, I fear that I have failed to convey any idea of the charm which it really possesses. This charm results partly from the lack of constraint and the freedom of the guests; partly from the cordial welcome which a Persian host so well knows how to give; partly from the exhilarating influence of the wine and music (which, though so different from that to which we are accustomed, produces, in such as are susceptible to its influence, an indescribable sense of subdued ecstasy); but more than all from the vigour, variety, and brilliancy of the conversation. There is no doubt that satiety produces somnolence and apathy, as is so often seen at English dinner-parties. Hence the Persians wisely defer the meal till the very end of the evening, when sleep is to be sought. During the earlier stages of the entertainment their minds are stimulated by wine, music, and mirth, without being dulled by the heaviness resulting from repletion. This, no doubt, is one reason why the conversation is, as a rule, so brilliant; but beyond this the quick, versatile, subtle mind of the Persian, stored, as it usually is, with anecdotes,
historical, literary, and incidental, and freed for the time being from the restraint which custom ordinarily imposes on it, flashes forth on these occasions in coruscations of wit and humour, interspersed with pungent criticisms and philosophical reflections which display a wonderful insight. Hence it is that one rarely fails to enjoy thoroughly an evening spent at a Persian banquet, and that the five or six hours during which it lasts hardly ever hang heavily on one's hands.

The Persians have only two full meals in the day—nabūr, which one may call indifferently either breakfast or lunch, since on the one hand it is the first meal of the day, and on the other it is not taken till a little before noon; and shām, or supper, which, as I have already stated, is eaten the last thing before retiring for the night. Besides these two meals, tea is taken on rising in the morning, and again in the afternoon.

The usual way in which a Persian of the upper classes spends his day is, then, somewhat as follows: He rises early, often before sunrise (which, indeed, he must do, if devotionally inclined, for the morning prayer), and, after drinking a glass or two of tea (without milk, of course) and smoking a kalyán, sets about the business of the day, whatever it may be. About noon, or a little earlier, he has his breakfast (nabūr), which differs little from supper as regards its material. After this, especially if the season be summer, he usually lies down and sleeps till about 3 p.m. From this time till sunset is the period for paying calls, so he either goes out to visit a friend, or else stays at home to receive visitors. In either case, tea and kalyāns constitute a prominent feature in the afternoon’s employment. Casual visitors do not, as a rule, remain long after sunset, and on their departure, unless an invitation to supper has been given or received, the evening is quietly passed at home till the time for supper and bed arrives. In the case of government employees, as well as shopkeepers, tradesmen, and others, whose hours of work are longer, a considerable portion of the afternoon may have to be spent in business, but in any case this rarely lasts after 4 or 5 p.m. Calls may also be paid in the early morning, before the day’s work commences. The true Persian life is, however, as I have before remarked, much better seen in the provinces than in the capital, where European influences have already wrought a great change in national customs. Further remarks on it will therefore find a fitter place in a subsequent chapter.

I must now return to my life in the Nawwāb’s house, and the society which I there met. Amongst the visitors were a certain number of Afghans who had formed the suite of Āyyūb Khán before his attempted escape, and who were now to be transferred to Rāwal Pindī in India, by way of Baghdbād. The arrangements for their journey were entrusted mainly to my host, and, for a time, few days passed without his receiving visits from some of them. On these occasions I used often to remain in the room during the conversation, half of which, although it was conducted in Persian, was nearly unintelligible to me; for the Afghans speak a manner and with an accent quite peculiar to themselves. These Afghans, who wore coloured turbans wound round a conical cap, after the Indian fashion, were troublesome and cantankerous fellows, seeming never to be satisfied, and always wanting something more—a larger allowance of money, more horses, or more sumptuous litters for the journey. As a rule, too, their expressions betokened cruelty and deceit, though some of them were fine-looking men, especially an old mulhā called Kāži ‘Abdu’s-Salām, who had held an important position under the late Amir, Shīr ‘Ali.

For the most part, however, the visitors were Persians, and of these a large proportion were natives of Shīrāz, to whose eulogies of their beloved city (for all Shīrāzis are intensely patriotic) I used to listen with unwearying delight. They would praise the beautiful gardens, the fat-famed stream of Rūknābād, the soft, sweet speech of the south, and the joyousness of the people; but when I exclaimed that Shīrāz must be a very paradise,
they would shake their heads sadly and say, "the place, indeed, has no fault—vall ṣahibī na-dābad—but it has no master," thinking, perhaps, of the happy time when the virtuous and noble Karīm Khān the Zend held his court there, and rejoiced in his palace, when he heard the sounds of merriment from the town, that his people should be free from care and sadness.

One constant visitor was the Nawwāb's brother-in-law, Akā Muhammad Ḥasan Khān of the Kāshkā'ī tribe which dwells in the neighbourhood of Shīrāz. When he had ceased for a while the disquisitions on philosophy which were his favourite theme, and had temporarily exhausted the praises of "the Master," as he called his teacher in the science, Mīrzā Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Jīlī, he, too, used to revert to the inexhaustible subject of the beauties of his native land. "You must on no account postpone your visit to Shīrāz later than the Nawwāb" (the Persian New Year's Day, which corresponds with the vernal equinox), he would say, "for then, indeed, there is no place on the face of the earth so beautiful. You know what the Sheykh (i.e. Sa'dī) says—"

"Khārist tafarvār-i Nawwāb, khāṣṭā dar Shīrāz, 
Ei bar hamad dīl-i-mard-i-musufr az wujūnā sabār."

"Pleasant is the New Year's outing, especially in Shīrāz, Which turns aside the heart of the traveller from his native land."

In the evening, when I was alone with the Nawwāb, or his brother 'Īsā Khān, a colonel in the Persian army, or my old friend, his nephews, the talk would turn on religion, philosophy, or literature. Sometimes they would entertain me with anecdotes of celebrated men and accounts of curious superstitions and customs; sometimes the Nawwāb would play on the sičār, on which he was a proficient; while sometimes they would explain to me the intricacies of the Muḥammadan prayers and ablutions, and the points wherein the Shi'ites differ from the Sunnis, both in practice and belief. They did not fail on these occasions to point out the meaning which underlies many of the ordinances of Islām. "The fast of Ramāzān," they said, "appears to you a most grievous burden for a prophet and legislator to lay upon his followers, but in truth this is its very value, for, as it is enjoined on all alike, the rich are made to realise what hunger and thirst, which they would otherwise never experience, really are. Thus they are enabled to understand the condition of those who are always exposed to these trials, and brought to sympathise with them and to strive to ameliorate their lot more than they would otherwise do. So, too, with our prayers, and the ablutions by which they must be preceded. It is true that there is no special virtue in praying and washing oneself five times a day; but it is evident that one who is enjoined to remember his Creator thus often, and to keep his body pure and clean, will always have these objects in view, and will never through negligence fall into forgetfulness of God and disregard of personal cleanliness. Moreover, we are forbidden to pray in any place which has been forcibly taken from its owner, or in which he does not give us permission to perform our devotions. This continually serves to remind us to be just and courteous in all our dealings, that our prayers may be acceptable to God."

Sometimes the conversation was of a lighter character, and turned on the sayings of witty and learned men, their ready replies, and pungent sarcasms. Of these anecdotes I will give a few specimens.

Sheykh Sa'dī was unrivalled in ready wit and quickness of repartee, yet even he once met with his match. It happened in this wise. The young prince of Shīrāz, who was memorable for his beauty, went one day, accompanied by his retinue, to visit a mosque which was being built by his orders, and which is still standing. As he passed by a workman who was digging, a piece of mud flew up from the spade and touched his cheek. Sa'dī, who was walking near him, saw this, and immediately exclaimed, making use of a quotation from the Kur'ān, "Yā layṭam kuntu turdbīl!" ("O would that I were earth!"). The prince, hearing

1 Kur'ān, ch. lxxviii, v. 41.