The books in question were two in number: one was a manuscript copy of the Ijtima ("Assurance"). which my companion declared to be an incontrovertible proof of the new faith, and by far the most important work to prepare me for a full comprehension of the Bábí doctrines; the other was a small tract, written, as I afterwards learned, by 'Abbás Efendí (the son of Behá'u'lláh, who is the present chief of the Bábís and resides at Acre in Syria) at the request of 'Ali Shevket Páshá in explanation of the tradition "I was a Hidden Treasure, and I desired to be known; therefore I created creation that I might be known"; which tradition, stated to have been revealed to David, constitutes one of the corner-stones of Sufi mysticism.

The purchase of these books was soon effected, for I was prepared to give a much higher price than was actually demanded. Specimens of calligraphy were next produced, some of which were the work of one of Behá's sons, others of the renowned Mushtín-Kalám, who was one of the Bábís exiled to Cyprus in A.D. 1868 by the Turkish Government, and who was, as I 1

1 He died since these words were written, on 16th May 1892, and was succeeded by one of his sons entitled Gímín-i-A'zam ("The Most Mighty Branch"). See Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1892, pp. 766-10.

2 I cannot here repeat all that I have written elsewhere on the history, especially the later history, of the Bábís. Those who desire full information on the subject I must refer to my papers in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (July and October 1891; April, July, and October 1892), and to my translations of the Traveller's Narrative (Cambridge, 1891), and the New History (Cambridge, 1893). For the benefit of the general reader, I give the following brief epitome, which will suffice to render intelligible what is said in this book about the sect. The Báb, before his death (9th July 1850), had nominated as his successor a youth nineteen years of age named Mirzâ Huseyn 'Ali, entitled Behá'u'lláh ("The Splendour of God"), who was about thirteen years senior to him, as the Head of the Bábí Church. In 1852, in consequence of the violent persecution of the Bábís which followed the attempt on the Sháh's life, the headquarters of the sect were transferred to Baghdád. There the Bábí chiefs remained till 1862 or 1863, when, at the request of the Persian Government, they were transferred by the

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gathered, related in some way to my friend the dâllíd. Mushtín-Kalám's skill in calligraphy is a matter of notoriety amongst the Bábís, and his writing is, indeed, very beautiful. Especially curious were some of his productions, in which the writing was so arranged as to take the form of a bird (Khušt-i-marqâb). The dâllíd informed me that these would be eagerly sought after by Persians of all classes, were it not that they all bore, as the signature of the penman, the following verse:

"Dar dîyâr-i-khušt tabâh-i-dâlîh-kallâm,
Bâbî-i-dâlîh-i-Behá, Mushtín-Kalâm."

"In the domain of writing a king of note,
The servant of Báb-i-Behá, Mushtín-Kalâm."

As it was, the sale of these works of art was limited entirely to the Bábí community.

When the inspection of these treasures was completed, I asked the dâllíd whether he knew where the two Seyyids who suffered martyrdom for the Bábí faith about the year 1879 were buried.

"Yes," he replied, "I know the spot well, and will take you there if you wish it; but surely, Sâhib, you who are so eager to obtain our books, who desire to visit the graves of our martyrs, Turkish authorities to Constantinople (where they remained four months), and thence to Adrianople. While they were at Adrianople, Behá'u'lláh announced himself to be "Him whom God shall manifest," that Great Deliverer and Fulfiller of the New Dispensation, whose advent the Báb had announced. Most of the Bábís admitted his claim, and became Behá's; some few adhered to Shâh-i-Ezâl, who vigorously contested it, and were henceforth known as Ezâlis. Disputes and quarrels ensued, and finally, in the summer of 1866, the rivals were separated by the Turkish Government. Shâh-i-Ezâl, with his followers, a few of Behá'u'lláh's followers, including Mushtín-Kalám, was sent to Famagusta, in Cyprus, where he still (1891) resides, being now a pensioner of the English Government. Behá'u'lláh, with his family, a number of his followers, and six or seven of the followers of Shâh-i-Ezâl, was sent to Acre, on the Syrian coast. This is still the headquarters of the Bábís (who constitute the vast majority of Bábís at the present day), but Behá'u'lláh himself, as stated in a previous note, died on 16th May 1862. After the occupation of Cyprus by the English, the surviving exiles there interned were given permission to depart if they so pleased. Of this permission Mushtín-Kalám availed himself. He left Cyprus in September 1866 for Acre where I met him in April 1890."
must be prompted by some motive beyond mere curiosity. You have been to Acre, you have been honoured by beholding the Blessed Countenance, you are yourself a Bábí. Say, is it not so? There is no need to conceal anything from me."

"My friend," I answered, "I am neither a Bábí, nor have I been to Acre; yet I confess that I am actuated by something more than mere curiosity. I cannot but feel that a religion which has produced examples of such heroic courage and fortitude as yours, merits a careful examination, since that must needs contain noble thoughts which can prompt to noble deeds. In visiting the graves of your martyrs I would fain pay a tribute of respect to those who gave up wealth, ease, and consideration, nay, even life itself, for the faith which they held dearer than all else."

At this point our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of the other dálíh with a collection of pictures, articles of brass-work, and other curiosities, from which I proceeded to make a selection. It was proposed by myself, and readily agreed to by the dálíh, that there should be no bargaining: they would state the price which they had actually paid for each of the articles in question, and I, if it appeared to me reasonable, would give it, together with a small percentage for their profit. In consequence of this, the transaction was one of the shortest and pleasantest I had ever effected in the East, where bartering and haggling about prices is usually inevitable; and, so far as I could judge, I obtained the full value of my money.

Just as they were leaving, the Bábí found an opportunity of whispering in my ear, "Do not forget next Saturday. I will make arrangements for someone to meet you at a given spot in the town; if I cannot find anyone else, I will come myself. Whoever your conductor may be, you will recognize him by a sign, and will follow him: he will bring you safely to my house, and there you will meet our chief. I will see you again before then, and inform you of the spot determined on. May God be your keeper!"

Saturday came at last, and at an early hour my friend the dálíh appeared. After a brief consultation we agreed on one of the principal caravansarays in the city as the best rendezvous. I was to be in waiting there shortly after mid-day, and either my friend or his associate would come to meet me.

At the appointed time I was in readiness at the spot designated, and I had not waited long before the elder dálíh appeared, caught my attention, signed to me to follow him, and plunged once more into a labyrinth of the bazaars. Once assured that I was following him, he hardly looked back, till, after half an hour’s rapid walking, we reached the house of the Bábí, who welcomed me at the door, led me into the sitting-room, and, in the intervals of preparing tea for me and the distinguished guest he was still expecting, pointed out to me a number of his treasures. These included a photograph of the above-mentioned Mushkin-Kalan and his two sons, and another photograph of the graves of the "Martyrs of Isfahan," which he assured me had been taken by a European resident who was greatly attached to the murdered men.

After a short while there came a knock at the outer door; my host hastened out and immediately returned, ushering in the Bábí missionary, to whom he presented me. He was a grave, earnest-looking man of about forty-five years of age, as I should guess; and as he sat opposite to me sipping his tea, I had plenty of time to observe his countenance attentively, and to note the combination of decision, energy, and thoughtfulness which it expressed. His manners were pleasing, and his speech, when he spoke, persuasive. Altogether he was a man whom one would not readily forget, even after a single interview, and on whose memory one dwells with pleasure.

The elder dálíh, who had absented himself for a short time, soon returned, and with him another Bábí, a tile-maker by trade. The presence of the former put some restraint on the conversation, so that I was unable to ask many questions. I learned, however,
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that he whom I now beheld was one of the chief missionaries of the new faith, for which he had suffered stripes, imprisonment, and exile more than once. I begged him to tell me what it was that had made him ready to suffer these things so readily. "You must go to Acre," he replied, "to understand that."

"Have you been to Acre?" I said, "and if so, what did you see there?"

"I have been there often," he answered, "and what I saw was a man perfect in humanity."

More than this he would not say. "You are leaving Išfahán, as I understand, in a few days," he remarked, "and opportunity is lacking to explain to you what you desire to know. I will, however, write to the 'Friends' at Shíráz, and Abádá also if you wish, requesting them to expect your arrival, and to afford you all facilities for discussing these matters. Should you intend to visit other towns at a subsequent date, they will furnish you with all necessary recommendations and instructions. The 'Friends' are everywhere, and though hitherto you have sought for them without success, and only at last chanced on them by what would seem a mere accident, now that you have the clue you will meet them wherever you go. Write down these two names (here he gave me the names and addresses of two of his co-religionists at Abádá and Shíráz respectively), and when you arrive enquire for them. Before your arrival they will be duly informed of your coming, and of your reason for desiring to converse with them. Now farewell, and may God direct you unto the truth."

"Ará," said the dāllid, "the Šáhib desires to visit the graves of the 'King of Martyrs,' and the 'Beloved of Martyrs,' and I have promised to take him there. Will you not also accompany us, that we may beguile the way with profitable conversation?"

"It is well that he should visit these graves," answered the other, "and we thank him for the good-will towards us which his desire to do so implies. Nevertheless, I will not come, for

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I am perhaps too well known of men, and it is not wise to incur needless risk. Farewell!"

Soon after the departure of the chief, I also, finding it later than I had supposed, rose to go. The tile-maker volunteered to guide me back to the caravansaray. There was but little opportunity for conversation on the way thither, nor would it have been safe to talk of those matters which occupied our minds in the open street. "You see, Šáhib," whispered my companion, "what our condition is. We are like hunted animals or beasts of prey, which men slay without compunction; and this because we have believed in God and His Manifestation."

On arriving at the caravansaray whence I had started, I bade farewell to my guide, and betook myself to the office of Messrs Ziegler's agents to conclude the arrangements for my journey to Shíráz. A muleteer was found, a native of the village of Khuraskán, called 'Abdu'-r-Rahím, who agreed to furnish me with three animals at the rate of three támáns (rather less than ½ r) a head, to convey me to Shíráz in fourteen marches, and to halt for one day at any place on the road which I might choose. Half the money was at once paid down, and, the bargain being satisfactorily concluded, I walked home to Julfá with Messrs Ziegler's agent, who had kindly assisted me in making these arrangements.

Next day, early in the afternoon, my friend the dāllid came to conduct me to the tombs of the martyrs. After a walk of more than an hour in a blazing sun, we arrived at the vast cemetery called Takht-i-Fúlát ("the Throne of Steel"). Threading our way through the wilderness of tombstones, my companion presently espied, and summoned to us, a poor grave-digger, also belonging to the persecuted sect, who accompanied us to a spot marked by two small mounds of stones and pebbles. Here we halted, and the dāllid, turning to me, said, "These are the graves of the martyrs. No stone marks the spot, because the Musulmáns destroyed those which we placed here, and, indeed, it is
perhaps as well that they have almost forgotten the resting-places of those they slew, lest, in their fanaticism, they should yet further desecrate them. And now we will sit down for a while in this place, and I will tell you how the death of these men was brought about. But first it is well that our friend should read the prayer appointed for the visitation of this holy spot."

The other thereupon produced a little book from under his cloak, and proceeded to read a prayer, partly in Arabic, partly in Persian. When this was concluded, we seated ourselves by the graves, and the dalal commenced his narrative.

"This," said he, pointing to the mound nearest to us, "is the tomb of Haji Mirza Hasan, whom we call Sultana Shoobadd, 'the King of Martyrs,' and that yonder is the resting-place of his elder brother, Haji Mirza Huseyn, called Mahbub Shoobadd, 'the Beloved of Martyrs.' They were Seyyids by birth, and merchants by profession; yet neither their descent from the Prophet, nor their rare integrity in business transactions and liberality to the poor, which were universally acknowledged, served to protect them from the wicked schemes of their enemies. Amongst their debtors was a certain Sheyk Bâkir, a mulâ of this city, who owed them a sum of about ten thousand taminas (13000). Now Sheyk Bâkir knew that they were of the number of the 'Friends,' and he thought that he might make use of this knowledge to compass their death, and so escape the payment of the debt. So he went to the Imam-Jum'a of Isfahan, who was the chief of the clergy, and said to him, 'These men are Bábís, and as such they are, according to the law of Islam, worthy of death, since they do not believe that Muhammad, the Apostle of God, is the last of the Prophets, but hold that Mirzá 'Ali Muhammad of Shiráz received a new revelation whereby the Qurán is abrogated. To my knowledge, also, they are very wealthy, and if they be slain for their apostasy from Islam, their wealth will be ours.' The Imam-Jum'a was easily persuaded to become a party to this design, and these two wicked men accordingly went to the

Zillu's-Sultán, the Prince-Governor, and laid the matter before him. He was by no means averse to a scheme which seemed fraught with profit to himself, but nevertheless hesitated to decree the death of those whose descent from the Prophet, apart from their blameless lives, appeared to entitle them to respect and consideration. At length he answered thus: 'I cannot myself command their execution, since they have committed no crime against the state. If, however, you, in the name of the sacred law of Islam, condemn them to death, I shall, of course, not interfere with the execution of the sentence.'

"Sheyk Bâkir and the Imam-Jum'a therefore withdrew, and summoned seventeen other mulâs; and these, after a brief deliberation, unanimously signed the death-warrant of the two Seyyids, who were forthwith arrested and cast into prison. When this transpired there was great consternation and distress amongst all classes, including the European residents, to whom the uprightness and virtue of the doomed men were well known. Application for the remission of the sentence was made by telegraph to Teherán, and the request was supported by one of the European Ambassadors resident there. The Shah consented to grant a reprieve, and telegraphed to the Zillu's-Sultán to that effect, but too late to stop the execution of the sentence. The two Seyyids, having refused to purchase life by apostasy, had their throats cut; cords were then attached to their feet, and their bodies were dragged through the streets and bazaars to the gate

1 The account actually given me by the dalal on this occasion begins here. What precedes was told me subsequently at Shiráz by another of the Bábí missionaries, who added other particulars, amongst which was a statement, which one cannot but hope may be untrue, that the telegram containing the reprieve actually reached the Zillu's-Sultán before the execution had taken place; that he divined its contents, laid it aside unopened till news reached him that the Seyyids had been put to death, and then sent an answer to Teherán expressing regret that the sentence had been carried out before the remand came. I have thought it better to put the whole story in outline in the mouth of the dalal, reserving a few incidents which I subsequently learned for narration in their proper place.
of the city, where they were cast under an old mud wall, which was then overthrown upon them.

“When it was night an old servant of the martyred men, who had marked the spot where their bodies were cast, came thither, and extricated them from the débris of the ruined wall, the fall of which had scarcely injured them. He tenderly washed away the blood and dust which covered them with water from the Záyanda-Rúd, and then bore them to the cemetery, where he buried them in two freshly-made graves.

“In the morning the soldiers and servants of the Prince discovered the removal of the bodies. Suspicion fell on the faithful old servant, but he refused to reveal anything under the cross-examination to which he was subjected, so that eventually they were compelled to let him go, and the bodies of the martyrs were left in peace. But we cannot mark the spot where they are buried with a stone, for when one was put up, the Musulmáns, whose malignity towards us is unbounded, and who know very well that we pay visits to these graves in secret, overthrew it. Our friend here” (pointing to his companion) “was brought to believe by means of these martyrs. Was it not so?”

“Yes,” answered the other, “some time after their death I saw in a dream vast crowds of people visiting a certain spot in the cemetery. I asked in my dream, ‘Whose are these graves?’ An answer came, ‘Those of the ‘King of Martyrs’ and the ‘Beloved of Martyrs.’” Then I believed in that faith for which they had witnessed with their blood, seeing that it was accepted of God; and since then I visit them continually, and strive to keep them neat and orderly, and preserve the spot from oblivion by renewing the border of bricks and the heap of stones which is all that marks it.”

“He is a good man,” rejoined the daláil, “and formerly those of the ‘Friends’ who came to visit the graves used to rest for a while in the little house which he has near here, and partake of tea and kalyáns. The Musulmáns, however, found this out, made a raid on his house, abused and threatened him, and, before they departed, destroyed his tea-things and pipes. He is very poor,” he added in a whisper, “give him a krán for his trouble; it is an action which has merit.”

I accordingly gave a small present to our guide, who departed with expressions of gratitude. After sitting a little while longer we too rose to go, and, taking a last look at the graves, from each of which I carried away a small stone as a memento, we once more turned our faces towards the city. On our way towards the gate of the cemetery we again passed the poor grave-digger with his little boy, and he again greeted me with expressions of thankfulness and good wishes for my journey.

I was much touched by the kindliness of these poor people, and communicated something of my thoughts to my companion.

“Yes,” he answered, “we are much nearer to you in sympathy than the Muhammadans. To them you are unclean and accursed: if they associate with you it is only by overcoming their religious prejudices. But we are taught to regard all good men as clean and pure, whatever their religion. With you Christians especially we have sympathy. Has it not struck you how similar were the life and death of our Founder (whom, indeed, we believe to have been Christ Himself returned to earth) to those of the Founder of your faith? Both were wise, even in their childhood, beyond the comprehension of those around them; both were pure and blameless in their lives; and both at last were done to death by a fanatical priesthood and a government alarmed at the love and devotion which they inspired in their disciples. But besides this the ordinances enjoined upon us are in many respects like those which you follow. We are recommended to take to our-

1 The Bábís for the most part, unlike the Muhammadans, believe that Christ was actually crucified by the Jews, and not, as the latter assert, taken up into heaven miraculously, while another, resembling Him in appearance, was crucified in His stead. But few of the Muhammadans are conversant with the Gospels, while the reverse holds good of the Bábís, many of whom take pleasure in reading the accounts of the life and death of Jesus Christ.
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selves only one wife, to treat our families with tenderness and
gentleness, and, while paying the utmost attention to personal
cleanliness, to disregard the ceremonial of purification and the
minute details concerning legal impurity, of which the Musul-
māns make so much. Further, we believe that women ought
to be allowed to mix more freely with men, and should not be
compelled to wear the veil. At present, fear of the Muḥam-
dadans compels us to act as they do in these matters, and the
same consideration affects many other ordinances which are not
obligatory on us when their observance would involve danger.
Thus our fast is not in Ramazān, but during the nineteen days
preceding the Nawrūz (‘New Year’s Day’); we are now in this
period, but I am not observing the fast, because to do so would
expose me to danger, and we are forbidden to incur needless
risk. Our salutation, too, is different from that of the Muḥam-
dadans; when we meet, we greet one another with the words
‘Allāhu ʿabdu’ (‘God is most bright’). Of course we only use this
form of greeting when none but ‘Friends’ are present.”

“Can you recognise one another in any special way?” I
asked.

“I think we can do so by the light of affection,” answered
my companion, “and in support of this I will tell you a curious
thing which I myself observed. My little boy, who is not ten
years old, greeted Mirzā Ḥasan ʿAli, whom you met in my house
yesterday, with the words ‘Allāhu ʿabdu’ the very first time he
saw him, while I have never known him use this form of saluta-
tion to a Muhammadan.”

“Your doctrines and practices,” I observed, “certainly seem
to me very much better than those of the Musulmāns, so far as
I have understood them at present.”

“Their doctrines,” he rejoined, “are as untenable as their
actions are corrupt. They have lost the very spirit of religion,

1 I.e., the old Persian New Year’s Day, which falls about 21st March, at the
vernal equinox.

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while degrading symbols into superstitions. See, for example,
what they say concerning the signs of the Imām Mahdi’s coming.
They expect Antichrist to come riding on an ass, the distance
between the ears of which shall be a mile, while at each stride
it shall advance a parasang. They further assert that each of
the hairs on its body shall emit the sweetest melodies, which
will charm all who allow themselves to listen into following
Antichrist. Some of the muḥaddis believe that this ass, the exis-
tence of which it is impossible to credit, if one reflects for a
moment on the absurdity of the characteristics attributed to it,
is concealed in Yangi-dunyā (the New World, i.e. America), which
they say is ‘opposite’ to Iṣfahān, and that in the fullness of time
it will appear out of a well in this neighbourhood. The absence
of these impossible and imaginary signs was the excuse whereby
they justified their disbelief in His Highness the Point (i.e. the
Bāb), and refused to see in him the Promised Deliverer whom
they professed to be expecting. But we, who understand all
these signs in a metaphorical sense, see very well that they have
been already fulfilled. For what is Antichrist but a type of those
who oppose the truth and slay the holy ones of God? What is
the ass of Antichrist, striding across the earth, and seducing
all those who will give ear to the sweet strains proceeding from it,
but these same foolish muḥaddis who support the temporal powers
in attempting to crush the Truth, and please the natural in-
clinations and lusts of men by their false teachings. ‘The
possessions of the infidel are lawful unto you,’ they proclaim.
How easy a doctrine to receive, and how profitable! This is but
one instance of these ‘sweet strains’ to which all whose eyes are
not opened to the Truth of God, and whose hearts are not filled
by the Voice of His Spirit, lend their ears so readily. In a similar
manner do we understand all the symbols which they have
degraded into actual external objects. Thus the Bridge of Sīrāt,
over which all must pass to enter Paradise, which is ‘finer than
a hair and sharper than a sword,’ what is it but faith in the
Manifestation of God, which is so difficult to the hard of heart, the worldly, and the proud?"

Conversing thus, we arrived at the side of the river, just where it is spanned by the bridge called Pul-i-Khâjû, a much finer structure than even the bridge of thirty-three arches which I had admired so much on my entry into Julfâ. My companion suggested that we should sit here awhile on the lower terrace (for the bridge is built on two levels) and smoke a kafigân, and to this I readily consented.

After admiring the massive piers and solid masonry of the bridge, and the wide sweep here made by the Zâyanda-Rûd, we resumed our way along the southern bank in the direction of Julfâ. On our way we visited the deserted palace called Haft-dasht ("Seven Hands"). Here was visible the same neglected splendour and ruined magnificence which was discernible elsewhere. One building, the Namak-dân ("Salt-cellar"), had just been pulled down by one of the ministers of the Zillu's-Sultân to afford material for a house which he was building for himself. Another, called A'iné-khâné ("the Chamber of Mirrors"), was nearly stripped of the ornaments which gave it its name, the remainder being for the most part broken and cracked. Everywhere it was the same—crumbling walls, heaps of rubbish, and marred works of art, still beautiful in spite of injuries, due as much to wanton mischief as to mere neglect. Would that some portion of that money which is spent in building new palaces in the capital, and constructing mîhmân-khânâs neither beautiful nor pleasant, were devoted to the preservation of the glorious relics of a past age! That, however, is as a rule the last thing an Oriental monarch cares about. To construct edifices which may perpetuate his own name is of far more importance in his eyes than to protect from injury those built by his predecessors, which, indeed, he is perhaps not sorry to see crumbling away like the dynasties which reared them. And so it goes on—king succeeding king, dynasty overthrowing dynasty, ruin added to ruin; and through
CHAPTER IX
FROM IŠFAHĀN TO SHĪRĀZ

"Wa jaldī s-yulūli 'unī 't-falāli, ka'a-maahād Zabūrnu, tujīdīn muhīnā-bā akhīdānu-bā. Fa-wakṣāthīn aś'-alī-bā: fa-kefīyī til-īlā-nū Ģumnu khawwālīsā, mā yabhītan kaldīn-bā?"

“And the torrents have laid bare its traces, as though
Twere a book of which a pen renews the characters.
And I stood questioning them: but how can we question
Dumb rocks, whose speech is not clear?”—(Mu'allakāt of Lehīd.)

“Shīrāz, a dhī-Ruknī, ma an dhī-l-khūb-nasīm;
'Ayb-ash ma-kum, kā khalī-r-ruknī-bāfi kishwār-ašī.”

“Shīrāz, and the stream of Ruknībād, and that fragrant breeze—
Disparate it not, for it is the beauty-spot of the seven regions!”

(Hafiz.)

“Cloon mi-qaarī bi-khūb-i-Shīrāz
Gū man bi-fulān qamān azrr-ashī.”

“When thou passest by the earth of Shīrāz
Say I am a captive in such-and-such a land!”

Once again the vicissitudes and charms of the road are
before me, but in this case a new and potent factor, hitherto
absent, comes in to counteract the regret which one must always
feel in quitting a place where one has been kindly received and
hospitally entertained, and where one has made friends, most
of whom one will in all probability never meet again. This
potent incentive to delay my departure no longer is the thought
that when I quit Išfahān, less than a week will see me in the
classical province of Fārs, less than a fortnight will bring me
to the glories of Persepolis, and that after that two short days
will unfold before my longing eyes the shrines and gardens of

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“the pure earth of Shīrāz,” which has been throughout the goal
of my pilgrimage.

Of course the first day’s march was no exception to the
general rule I have already laid down. I was aroused before
8 a.m., and informed that the muleteers were ready to start,
and desired to do so at once, as they proposed to “break a
stage,” as the expression goes—that is, to push on a distance of
eight or nine parasangs to Mayār, the second halting-place out
of Išfahān to the south. I accordingly dressed hurriedly, and
finished packing, full of anxiety to secure so desirable a con-
sumption as the shortening of the less interesting part of the
journey by a whole day. When I descended, I found that the
muleteers had gone off again to fetch the inevitable sacking and
ropes which are always wanted, and apparently always forgotten.
I was compelled, therefore, to abandon all hopes of getting
further than Marg, some three parasangs distant from Julfā,
and to resign myself to an idle morning. It was not till after
lunch that all was ready for the start, and, bidding farewell to
my kind host, Dr Hoernle, I mounted the sorry steed assigned

to me, and, with my mind filled with delightful anticipations,
turned my face in the direction of Shīrāz. Karapit, the head
servant of the Mission, accompanied me on my way as far as
the “Farewell Fountain” (rendered conspicuous by the solitary
tree which stands beside it), and even for some distance beyond
it, till the post-house of Marg appeared in the distance. Then
he turned back, wishing us a good journey; and a monotonous
ride of an hour or so brought us to our halting-place (which
the muleteers, for some reason, had changed from Marg to a
village somewhat farther on, called Kal'ā-i-Shūr) while it was
still early in the afternoon. We put up at a dilapidated caravan-
saray, where nothing occurred to vary the monotony, except the
arrival, some time after sunset, of a party of Jewish minstrels
and dancing-boys, who were, like ourselves, bound for Shīrāz.

Next day we left the plain, and entered the rugged defile
known as the Urchini Pass, the somewhat monotonous grandeur of which was enlivened by numbers of pilgrims bound for Kerbelâ, by way of Iṣfahân and Kirmânsâh, whom Hájî Šâfar did not fail to greet with a salutation of "Ziyâratât orary!" ("May your pilgrimage be accepted!"). Here I may remark that the greetings used on the road differ from those employed elsewhere, and each one has its appropriate answer. The commonest of them are, "Furzát bâshâd!" ("May it be an opportunity!"); to which the answer is, "Khâdû bî-shûmd furzat dibâd!" ("May God give you opportunity!"); and "Qâhûr bâshâd!" ("May it be luck!"); the reply to which is, "Oghâr-i-shûmd bi-khûrû bâd!" ("May your luck be good!").

It was not yet 3 p.m. when we reached Mayâr, and halted at an old caravansaray, the construction of which was, as usual, attributed to Shâh ʿAbbâs. There was nothing to do but to while away the time as well as might be by lounging about, looking at the few travellers who had taken up their quarters at this disconsolate spot, and superintending the culinary operations of Hájî Šâfar.

The next day's march was almost precisely similar to that of the previous day—a gray, stony, glaring plain (thickly covered with camel-thorn and swarming with lizards), on either side of which were bare black hills of rugged outline. Soon after 2 p.m. we came in sight of the blue dome of an Imâmzâdi, situated in the precincts of the considerable town of Kumishah. As it was a Thursday (Shab-i-Jum'a, Friday Eve), which is the great day for performing minor pilgrimages and visiting the graves of deceased friends, we met streams of the inhabitants coming forth from the town bent on such pious errands. Taking them all round, I think they were the most ill-favoured, dour-looking people I ever saw in Persia. Generally, however forbidding the appearance of the men may be (of the women one cannot judge, since they keep their faces veiled), the children at least are pretty and attractive. But in all these files of people whom we met I hardly saw a single face which was otherwise than sour and forbidding.

Before 3 p.m. I reached the telegraph station, and was welcomed by Mr Gifford, the resident telegraphist, and his wife. The son of the Governor of Kumishah, Mirzâ Aká by name, was there, and later he was joined by his father, Mirzâ Mahdî Khan, who had come to try and extract some information about the political outlook in Iṣfahân. It appeared that an unfortunate man from Izidkhwâst had arrived in Kumishah on that or the preceding day, bringing the news of the Żillu's-Sultân's dismissal. This news was naturally very unwelcome to the Governor—so unwelcome that he not only declined to believe it, but ordered the man who brought it to be bastinadoed. Although this had the effect of checking further speculation and gossip, the Governor was unable to overcome a certain feeling of uneasiness as to his future tenure of office, and hence these visits to the telegraph-office.

Next morning the muleteer came to see me early, and offered to push on to Amin-ābâd that day and to Shulgistân in Pârs on the morrow. I found, however, that this procedure would involve passing some distance to the east of the curious village of Izidkhwâst or Yezdikhwâst, which I was anxious to see. I therefore decided to go no farther than Maḵšûd Beg, and as this was only four parasangs distant, I gladly accepted the invitation of my kind host to stay to lunch and start after mid-day. The march was absolutely without interest, and the village of Maḵšûd Beg, where we arrived about 4.30 p.m., was a most desolate-looking spot. Here we found the Jewish minstrels who had overtaken us at Marg entertaining the muleteers and villagers with a concert in the caravansaray. The music appeared to me very pleasing. This, and the exhilarating thought that on the morrow I should bid farewell to Irâk, and enter the classical province of Pârs, the cradle of Persian greatness, enabled me to bear with equanimity the dullness of the dilapidated caravansaray. I was
further regaled with a dissertation by Hājī Šafar on the virtues of the wood-louse. This animal, he informed me, only appears for a short period before the Nawrūz. At that great festival people take it in their hands along with gold coins, “for luck.” It bears different names in the north and south: in Ṭehrān it is called khur-i-khādžī (“Earth-ass”), while in Širāz it enjoys the more pretentious title of khurāk-i-khulda’ī (“Divine little donkey”).

On the following morning (10th March) we got off about 7.45 a.m. The scenery was similar to that of the preceding two days—a stony valley, bounded by parallel chains of hills. As we advanced, the hills to the east became lower and lower, finally being reduced to broken fin-like ridges, situated one behind another, while beyond these, bordering the western edge of the plain, high snow mountains began to come into view, which the muleteer informed me belonged to the province of Luristān. About 11.15 a.m. we halted for lunch at Amin-ābdād, the last village in ʿIrāq. From this point we could clearly see before us a small conical hill, beyond which lay the hamlet of Yezdikhwāst, which I was so anxious to see. I had read many accounts of this natural fastness, perched on a precipitous rock, and accordingly, as we drew near the conical hill (which is called Teli-pīlāw, I suppose from its resemblance in shape to the pile of rice which constitutes this dish), I strained my eyes eagerly to catch a glimpse of its eyry-like abodes.

My first impressions were a mixture of disappointment and surprise. On passing the hill I could plainly discern the green dome of a little Imāmzādē surrounded by a straggling cemetery: beyond this, apparently on the same level, and situated on the flat plain which we were traversing, appeared the village of Yezdikhwāst. Where was its boasted inaccessibility, and the sheer precipices which, as all travellers asserted, rendered it one of the most marvellous natural fastnesses to be found in the world? No amount of exaggeration, I thought, could account for such a description of the place I saw before me, which ap-

parently did not enjoy even the most trifling elevation above the surrounding plain. While I was reflecting thus, and wondering if the muleteers had, for some object of their own, deceived me, we passed through the cemetery, and all at once came upon one of the most remarkable sights I ever saw.

Right across our path lay a mighty chasm, looking like the dry bed of some giant river of the past. In the middle of this stood what I can only describe as a long narrow island, with precipitous sides, the summit of which was crowned with tier upon tier of gray, flat-roofed dwellings, which even hung over the edge of the cliff, supported by beams and rafters. These, projecting outwards in all directions, gave to the place the appearance of some strange collection of birds’ nests rather than of human habitations. At the upper (i.e. the western) end this island was almost joined to the northern edge of the chasm, the comparatively shallow depression which separated them being spanned by a drawbridge, by raising which all access to the town can be cut off. At all other points a sheer precipice, increasing in height towards the east, protects it from all possibility of invasion.

At Yezdikhwāst the road to Širāz bifurcates. What is called the sar-bārād, or summer road, bears to the south-west into the mountains; while the garmistr, or winter road, crosses the chasm or valley below Yezdikhwāst, and trends towards the south-east. As it was still early in the year, and the snow was not yet gone from the uplands traversed by the former, we had determined on following the latter, which course had this additional advantage, that it would lead us past Persepolis.

The inhabitants of Yezdikhwāst do not apparently care to have strangers dwelling in their cliff-girt abode; at any rate, the caravansaray and post-house are both situated at the bottom of the chasm, across the little river (ʿĀb-i-Marvān) which flows through it, and to the south-east of the crag on which the village stands. On coming in sight of the brink of the chasm we therefore
made a detour to the right (west) which brought us to the point where the drawbridge is placed, whence a path leads down the side of the gully to the caravansaray, where we arrived in about a quarter of an hour. It is a very fine edifice, built, as an inscription over the gateway testifies, by "the most potent king and most generous prince, the diffuser of the faith of the pure Imāms...the dog of the threshold of 'Alī the son of Abū-Ṭalib,...'Abbās the Ṣafavī, may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule!" The inscription is very beautifully executed, but unfortunately it has been greatly injured, many of the tiles having been removed, and others broken. I asked the villagers why they did not take better care of a building of which they ought to feel proud. They replied that it was not their fault: thirteen or fourteen years ago a "Firangi" came by, and, wishing to possess some of the tiles, offered one of the men at the post-house two or three tīmanī if he would remove some of them. The temptation was too strong for the latter, and accordingly he went the same night with a hammer and chisel to carry out the traveller's wishes. Of course he broke at least as many tiles as he removed, and a noble monument of the past was irreparably injured to gratify a traveller's passing whim.

I was anxious to see the interior of the village, and accordingly asked some of the inhabitants who came to stare at me whether they could take me over it. They readily agreed to do so, and after tea I sallied forth with my guides, crossed the fields, already green with sprouting wheat, and, skirting the southern face of this natural citadel, reached the drawbridge at the western end. Passing over this, we entered a dark passage, which, with occasional outlets into comparatively open spaces, traverses, or rather tunnels through, the whole village from west to east. This is the only street, for the rock is narrow, though long, and there is not room in most places for more than two houses side by side. My guides informed me that their town, of which they seemed proud in no small degree, was very old—300 years older than Isfahān—and, in proof of their assertion, they pointed to a stone in the gateway on which they said I should find the date. As a matter of fact, the only date I could see was (A.H.) 1218 (about A.D. 1803), but there appeared to be other more or less obliterated characters which the gloom pervading even the entrance of this dim passage would not suffer me to decipher.

As we advanced, the street, at first open above, became entirely covered over by houses, and the darkness was such that we could not see a yard ahead, and were only saved from continual collisions with other passengers by the cries of "Yd Allāb" uttered by my companions to give warning of our approach.

The houses are for the most part three or four stories high, and are entered by stairs communicating directly with the street. On the outer side they are furnished with platforms or balconies, one above the other, which overhang the cliff in a most perilous manner. On to some of these my guides took me that I might admire the view, but my enjoyment of this was somewhat marred by the sense of insecurity with which the very frail appearance of the platforms inspired me. "I should have thought," said I to my guides, "that these platforms would have been very dangerous to your children, for I observe that they are provided with no rail to prevent anyone from falling over."

"They are dangerous," was the quite unconcerned reply; "hardly a year passes without two or three falling over and being killed."

"I wonder the houses themselves don't fall," I remarked after a brief interval, during which the palpable weakness of the flimsy structure had become more than ever manifest to me. "They do," replied the unmoved villagers; "look there." I turned my eyes in the direction indicated, and saw a dismal wreck hanging over the edge of the cliff. Feeling my curiosity quite satisfied, I suggested that we should continue our tour of inspection, whereupon they took me into one of the houses, which appeared
to be the chief shop of the place, and set before me an array of nuts and fruits, a few of which I felt compelled to eat as a matter of courtesy, while the villagers watched me with grave and polite attention.

We next visited the mosque, which seemed ancient, though I could find no date graven on its walls—not the usual summary of Shi‘ite faith: “There is no God but God: Muhammad is the Apostle of God: ‘Ali is the Friend of God.” Though more solid in structure than the other buildings, it is very simply adorned, for it contains nothing but a minbar, or pulpit, looking more like a step-ladder than anything else. This, and the arch of the mihrab by which it stood, were the sole features whereby one could divine that the place was not intended for a barn or a granary.

On leaving the mosque we visited the one other shop which this primitive place contains, where I was politely compelled to accept of a quantity of that gruesome sweetmeat known as shakkar-panir (“sugar-cheese”). Then we quitted the village by the same way whereby we had entered it (for indeed there is no other), and returned to the caravansary. Though I retired to bed early, I lay awake for some time watching the lights which twinkled from the airy dwellings of Yezdikhwast and gave to the shadowy outline of the great rock somewhat the appearance of a gigantic vessel lying at anchor in a river.

Next day we ascended the southern side of the gully by a road running eastwards, until we again reached the summit of the plateau. Here I halted for a few moments to gaze once more on the picturesque scene, and then we struck off towards the south, still bearing somewhat to the east. On the road we met many peasants and some few travellers; they nearly all carried arms, and were as a rule darker in complexion and fiercer in aspect than the inhabitants of Irak. About 2.30 p.m. we arrived at Shulghistan, a small picturesque village, rendered conspicuous by a green-domed Imamzâdeh, close to which is situated the dilapidated caravansary. Since the latter appeared incapable of furnishing comfortable quarters, we betook ourselves to the châlpâr-khané (post-house) opposite, where I was provided with a very comfortable room. The postmaster (nâshir-châlpår) was extremely courteous and attentive, and sat conversing with me for some time. From him I learned that the news of the Żillu’s-Sultân’s fall, and the consequent dismissal of all his deputy-governors, had created great excitement throughout Fârs, and especially at Shiraz, where the Şahb-Dîvân, in whom the administration of the province had hitherto been virtually vested, was greatly disliked. His dismissal was the signal for universal rejoicing, and it was said that Rizâ Khân, the chief of one of the Arab tribes settled in the neighbourhood of Shiraz, was encamped near the Tomb of Cyrus at Murghâb, waiting for the arrival of the ex-governor, against whom he was breathing threats of vengeance. The postmaster thought, however, that the tidings of the advance of the new governor, Prince Ihtishâmu’d-Dawla, who had already reached, or nearly reached, Isfahân, would prevent him from proceeding to extremities.

Later on another man came in, whose one sole topic of conversation was dervishes, for whom he professed the most unbounded regard. His enthusiasm had apparently been aroused by the recent visit of some celebrated saint from Kirmân. I ventured to ask him if there were any Bábís in Shulghistan, at the very idea of which he expressed the utmost horror, adding with pride, “We would at once slay anyone whom we suspected of belonging to that sect, for here, thank God, we are all followers of Murtażâ ‘Alî.”

His attitude towards the Bábís did not encourage me to make further enquiries in this direction, and I therefore allowed him to ramble on about his dervishes, Imâms, and miracles. He informed me, amongst numerous other stories of equal probability, that there was a mountain two parasangs to the east of Yezdikhwast called Shâh Kanûb. There, he said, the two sons of
"Ha'zrat-i-'Abbás" took refuge in bygone days from the "army of the infidels." The mountain opened to receive them, and they passed within it; the infidels followed after them, but no sooner had they entered than the rocks closed up behind them, and shut them in.

"That was very wonderful," I said, "but tell me what became of them, for I should have thought that it would have been better if the mountain had closed before the 'army of the infidels' could follow the two saints. As it was, it seems to me that they were all shut up together."

"Yes," replied the narrator, "but, you see, the infidels were all turned into stone at once. You might see them still if you knew the way which leads to that wondrous cavern—men, horses, camels, camel-drivers, children at their lessons, still holding in their hands the books they were reading—all turned to stone! It is a wonderful thing!"

"So I should think," I answered, wondering inwardly whether armies of infidels usually carried a host of school-children about with them when they went in pursuit of fugitive saints; "but you haven't told me what happened to the Imámís who were so miraculously preserved. Did they make their escape after this signal mark of Divine Displeasure had been accomplished?"

"No, they did not," rejoined my informant; "they dwell there still, and by their holy influence many wonderful miracles are wrought, some of which I will tell you. There is a shrine with two minarets on the mountain, and these minarets every year recede farther and farther apart, a fact well known to all in this neighbourhood. Furthermore, whoever goes there, and prays, and then fixes his thoughts on anything which he desires to possess—gold, silver, or precious stones—can take it from the rock to his heart's content."

"And pray," I asked, "can one find one's way to this marvellous mountain?"

"No, you cannot," retorted the other; "I could take you there if I chose, but I will not do so. — Şāhib, who was formerly telegrâfchi at Abâdé, offered me money if I would show him the way, but I refused, for it is not lawful to reveal to unbelievers these holy spots."

"That is a pity," I said; "and I venture to suggest that you act unwisely in thus hindering them from witnessing miracles whereby they might perhaps be brought to embrace Islâm. It is precisely for unbelievers that miracles are intended."

"Well," replied my informant, "there is perhaps reason in what you say. But it is not necessary to go there to witness proofs of the power possessed by the blessed Imámís. Of this we had a signal proof during last Muḥarram. A píqân (ibex or mountain-goat) came at that time to the Imámzâdeh across the road, and took up its abode there for six months. Finally it died, and is buried under a tree in the courtyard. We had no doubt but that it was sent thither by the command of the blessed Imám to strengthen the faith of all of us who witnessed it."

Altogether, I spent a very amusing evening with my talkative friend, who, delighted to find an appreciative listener, remained while I ate my supper, and did not finally leave till it was time to retire for the night.

Next day was bright and windy. The scenery through which we passed was of the usual type—a stony plain full of camel-thorn (now putting forth beautiful crimson blossoms from its apparently sapless branches) between parallel ranges of barren hills. The ground swarmed with lizards of two distinct types, the ordinary brown lizard and the Burz-majji. This latter is an animal which, as I subsequently learned, sometimes attains a length of three or four feet, but the length of most of those which I saw did not exceed as many inches. They have big clumsy heads furnished with spines, and long tails constricted at the point where they join the body, which they have a habit of jerking up into an erect position. They are very nimble in their movements, and when frightened dart away like a dusky shadow.
for a few feet, and again come to a standstill. Ḥājī Ṣafar began to tell me a long rambling story about the creation of the Baz-
majī, whereby he sought to account for its harmlessness. He
related this story in the dreamy, visionary manner which occa-
sionally came over him, and in the soft lisping accents of the
South. I was not paying much attention to his narrative, the
upshot of which appeared to be that the animals after their
creation all came into the presence of their Creator and sought
permission to be allowed to injure man, their master and tyrant,
at some appointed time. All received this permission, except
the Baz-majī, which came late, and so was forced to be content
with a harmlessness far removed from its malicious desires.

My attention revived, however, when he began to talk about
Shirāz. "In eleven days more, Ṣāḥib, you will see Shirāz: perhaps
in ten, if you do not stop at Takhti-i-Jamshid (Persepolis). You
will then enter it on the Nawrūz; all the people—men, women,
and children—will be out in the gardens and fields; many of
them in the Tang-i-Allāh-Akbar, through which you will catch
your first glimpse of the city. All will be dressed in new clothes,
as smart as they can make themselves, enjoying the beautiful
green fields, singing, smoking kalādūn, and drinking tea. There
is no other city like Shirāz: all about it the earth is green with
grass; even the roofs of the bazaars are covered with herbage.
It is the Green City of Solomon (shabr-i-sabz-i-Sulaymān). And
the people are so quick and clever and generous. Not like those
miserable, miserly Isfahānis, nor yet like those stupid, thick-
headed Khurāsānis. Have I ever told you the verses made by
the Isfahāni, the Shirāzi, and the Khurāsāni, Ṣāḥib?"

"No," I answered; "I should like to hear them very much."
"Once upon a time," he resumed, "an Isfahāni, a Shirāzi, and
Khurāsāni were travelling together. Now, one night they
succeeded in getting a dish of pilāw, and the Isfahāni, being a
witty fellow, as well as stingy (like all his rascally countrymen),
suggested that no one should be allowed to have a share of the

pilāw unless he could make a verse about his native country.
To this they agreed, and the Isfahāni began—

'Az Ṣafahān meyve-i-hafz-rang mi-yād birān.'
('From Isfahān fruits of seven colours come forth.')

The Shirāzī, without a moment's hesitation—for all Shirāzīs have
a natural gift for versifying—went on—

'Ab-i-Rukanbād-i-ma az sang mi-yād birān.'
('Our stream of Rukanbād comes forth from the rock.')

It was now the Khurāsānī's turn, but he, poor fellow, being
very stupid and slow, after the manner of his countrymen, could
not think of a rhyme for a long time, and was in great fear that
he would lose his pilāw after all, when suddenly an inspiration
came to him, and he concluded the stanza thus:—

'Az Khurāsān miyāl-i-ma aldang mi-yād birān.'
('Out of Khurāsān come forth blackguards like me.')

Aldang, you know, is the Khurāsānī word for a lāfā, a rough, or
street vagabond."

About 2 p.m. we arrived at the little town of Ābādē, another
stronghold of the Bábīs. It will be remembered that the Bábī
missionary at Isfahān, on bidding me farewell, had promised to
write to one of his co-religionists here, as well as at Shirāz, to be
on the look-out for me. I therefore hoped that I might have an
opportunity of holding further conversation with the members
of the proscribed sect, but in this hope I was disappointed, for
the shortness of my stay in the town, and the hospitality of
Sergeant Glover of the telegraph station, did not give me leisure
to seek out the person indicated to me. I was very favourably
impressed with Ābādē in every way, and the approach to it,
through lanes surrounded by orchards and gardens, the trees of
which were already bursting into blossom and filling the air
with their fragrance, was very beautiful.

At the telegraph station I was cordially received by Sergeant
Glover and his eldest son, a bright, clever boy of about fifteen,
who had an excellent knowledge of Persian. I was most hospitably entertained, and after dinner we sat up late discussing Persian folk-lore, concerning which my host was a perfect mine of information. He told me of a place called the Pari-bol, or fairy hole, near Soh; of marvellous wells and caves in the mountains; and of a hill where an old fire-worshipper was said to have taken refuge from his persecutors, who marked the spot with a pile of stones, meaning to return next day and renew their search. During the night, however, by the Divine Power, the whole hill was covered with similar heaps of stones, which utterly baffled the search of the persecutors. These heaps are said still to be visible.

Next day a short march of about three hours brought us to the post-house of Surmê. On arriving there, I was surprised to see a European traveller standing at the door, who greeted me in English. He proved to be one of the telegraph staff at Shíráz travelling up to Isfahán and Téherán, and kindly offered me a share of the bāla-khānd (upper-room), which was the only respectable apartment in the post-house. Even that was horribly cold and draughty, for a violent wind was still blowing. Notwithstanding this, we spent a very pleasant evening together, and, by combining our resources, managed to produce a very respectable supper.

Next day, after a leisurely breakfast, we parted on our respective roads. The wind had dropped, the sky was cloudless, and the sun very powerful. We could see the road stretching away straight before us for three parasangs or so, when it took a sudden turn to the left round an angle of the mountains. As we advanced—very slowly, owing to the sorry condition of our beasts—the plain gradually narrowed, and became broken by great crests of rock rising abruptly out of the ground. The mountains on the right (west) grew gradually higher and higher, and their summits were now crowned with snow. On reaching the angle of the road above-mentioned we halted by some rocks for lunch. The spot was not devoid of beauty, which was enhanced by the numerous pink and crimson blossoms of the camel-thorn (shōh-pāzand), which grew in profusion round about.

On leaving this place we began to ascend, and continued to do so till, about 4 p.m., we reached the disconsolate stone caravansaray of Khán-i-Khurreh, which stands quite alone and apart from other habitations. It was crowded with people of all sorts: Bakhtiýāris, and other tribesmen on their migrations towards their summer quarters; people who had come out from Shíráz and elsewhere to meet the new Governor and do him honour; and a certain small contingent of ordinary travellers. I might have had some difficulty in obtaining quarters if my acquaintance of the previous day had not informed me that there was a special room in the caravansaray, set apart for members of the telegraph staff, which I might have by applying to the caravansaray-keeper for the key. I did so, and thus obtained a warm, snug room, where I might otherwise have been compelled to put up with the most miserable quarters. Though the caravansaray was in the most ruined and filthy condition, the ground being strewn with dead camels and horses in various stages of decay, the scene was not lacking in interest owing to the strange costumes and stranger appearance of the tribesmen. The women do not cover their faces, and many of them are endowed with a certain wild beauty.

After tea I had a visit from the postmaster (nā‘ib-chel-pād), who came to consult me about some disorder of the chest from which he was suffering. He soon, however, forgot the object which had brought him, and wandered off into a variety of topics, which he illustrated with a surprising number of quotations from the poets; and it was only when he rose to depart that he again recurred to his ailments. His dreamy abstracted manner had already led me to suspect that he was a votary of opium and other narcotics, and in reply to a question to this effect he answered that he did occasionally indulge in a pipe of tiryāk when depressed in spirits.
“Perhaps you take hashish now and then for a change?” I asked.

“Well,” he replied, “I don’t deny that I do now and then.”

“Oh course you smoke the kalīn too?”

“Yes,” he said, “what else is there to do in this desolate spot where there is no society except these tribesmen?”

“Well,” I said, “I wish very much that I could do anything for you, but the state of the case is this: the essential principle of treating diseases is to remove their cause, and unless this can be done it is very little use to give medicines. Now, smoking kalīn in excess disorders the chest, and I understand that you do smoke them very often. Whether the opium and hashish which you also take are answerable for the evil in any degree I can’t say, but at any rate it is scarcely likely that they do you any good. Just now you quoted this couplet from Hāfīz—

‘Dīhbīn-i- Sale-khurēdā eht kūhā yēft ba pīr,
K’ry mūr-i- chashm-i-man, bi-juc e khtāt na-d-ravī!”

‘How well said the aged farmer to his son,
“O Light of my eyes, thou shalt not reap save that which thou hast sown!”’

Now people who ‘sow’ kalīn (opium) and hashish necessarily ‘reap’ bad chests; and I am afraid that, unless you can manage to give them up, or at any rate confine your indulgence in them to moderate limits, your chest will not get any better. Do you think you can do this?”

“You are right,” he replied (convinced, I feel sure, more by the quotation from Hāfīz than by anything else), “and I will try to follow your advice.” So saying, he departed and left me alone.

Next day we started early, as the muleteers were anxious to “break” a stage—that is, to go three stages in two days; so that our halting-place for the night was not to be Dīhbīd, where there is a telegraph station, but Khān-i-Kīrgān, situated some two hours’ march beyond it. Our road continued to ascend almost till we reached Dīhbīd, and once or twice we enjoyed a fine view to the east across the Plain of Abarkūh to the great range of

mountains beyond which lies the city of Yezd. We were joined for some distance by a dark, stalwart man, who turned out to be a kāsid (courier) carrying letters from Abādān to Bābānān. He was conversationally inclined, and told me tales of encounters with wolves and other wild animals which abound in these mountains, but the dialect which he spoke was difficult to comprehend, and prevented me from profiting by his anecdotes as fully as I might otherwise have done. Suddenly we came to a road crossing ours at right angles, and thereupon our companion took a long draught from our water-bottle, and, without a word of farewell, disappeared in a valley leading down into the Plain of Abarkūh.

After his departure Hājī Šafār entertained me with a long disquisition on kāsidā and their marvellous powers of endurance. He assured me that one had walked from Teherān to Shirāz in five days, while another had gone from Bushire to Shirāz in two days. He added that the latter had come near forfeiting his life for his prowess, because Prince Ferhād Mīrzā, then Governor of Pārs, hearing of his exploit, had said, “Such a man had best be put to death forthwith, for one who can go on foot from here to Bushire in two days might commit murder or highway robbery, and be in another province before his crime was even discovered.” I am faint to believe that this was only a grim jest on the part of Ferhād Mīrzā; at any rate the sentence, as I was informed, was not carried out.

The wind, which had been gradually increasing in strength since the morning, began now to cause us much annoyance, and indeed Dīhbīd, as I subsequently learnt by experience, is one of the windiest places in Persia. Hājī Šafār, however, declared that in this respect it was far behind Dāmghān, on the Meshhad road. “This is but a place which the wind visits at times,” he remarked, “but it lives there: its abode is in a well, and anyone can arouse it at any time by throwing dirt or stones into the well, when it rushes out in anger.”
Our road was redeemed from dreariness by the variety of beautiful flowers with which the advancing spring had bedecked the upland meadows. I noticed particularly the wild hyacinth (sunbul-i-bigahdán), and the sight of its long narrow dark green leaves enabled me better to understand the appositeness of the comparison between it and the “tresses of the beloved” so often made by the Persian poets.

It was nearly 1.30 p.m. when we reached Dihbíd, a small village consisting of about fifteen or twenty cabins, a very dilapidated caravansary, a post-house, and the telegraph-office. To the latter I at once made my way, and was welcomed very cordially by Mr and Mrs Blake. They expressed great regret on learning that I could not stop with them for the night, and repeatedly pressed me to do so with a hospitality so evidently genuine that I would gladly have altered my plans and relinquished the idea of “breaking a stage” had that been possible; but the muleteer had gone on with the baggage, and I was therefore compelled to adhere to my original intention, contenting myself with a halt of three or four hours for rest and refreshment.

It was beginning to grow dusk when I again set out, and the gathering shades of evening warned me that I must bestir myself, especially as the muleteer was no longer with us to direct our course. Mr Blake kindly volunteered to ride some distance with me to put me in the right way, and this offer I was glad to accept. Crossing the little river just beyond the village we saw a flight of about a dozen storks, and farther on four gazelles. Half a mile or more to the west of the road stood an old withered tree close to a ruined caravansary, and this spot, as Mr Blake informed me, was reputed to be haunted by a “white lady,” but with the details of this superstition he was unable to acquaint me.

When we had ridden a farsakb, my host bade me farewell and turned back, whereupon we quickened our pace so as to make the best use of what daylight still remained. Long before we reached our halting-place, however, it was quite dark, and we were left to pick our dubious way by the light of the stars and a crescent moon; so that it was more by good luck than good management (for the road had here dwindled to the merest track) that we were finally apprised by the barking of dogs of the proximity of human habitations. In five minutes more we crossed a bridge and found ourselves at the solitary caravansatay of Kháñ-i-Kirgán.

As it was quite dark, and I was, moreover, very cold and tired, I had no opportunity of making any observations on the nature of the place or its inhabitants that night, but on the following morning I discovered that here also were domiciled multitudes of tribesmen on their way to their summer quarters. On the road, which wound through beautiful grassy valleys bedecked with sweet spring flowers, we met many more, all bound for the highland pastures which we were leaving behind us, and a pretty sight it was to see them pass; stalwart, hardy-looking men, with dark, weather-beaten faces; lithe, graceful boys clothed in skins; and tall, active women with resolute faces, not devoid of a comeliness which no veil concealed. They were accompanied by droves of donkeys bearing their effects, and flocks of sheep and goats, which paused here and there to nibble the fresh grass.

Early in the afternoon we descended into the valley of Murgáb, and, passing the hamlet of that name (a well-built and thriving-looking village, pleasantly situated by a beautiful clear streamlet) halted at Dih-i-Naw, some three miles farther on. The feeling of regret at not having sought for a lodging at the former, which the first sight of the somewhat squalid appearance of the latter caused me, was at once removed when I learned that the group of ancient ruins generally identified with the site of the city of Pasargadae on European maps, and known to the Persians as Takht-i-Suleyman (“the Throne of Solomon”) and Masjíd-i-
FROM IŞFAHAN TO SHİRĀZ

Mddar-i-Suleymān ("the Mosque of the Mother of Solomon"), was situated within a few minutes' walk of the village. As it was not much past four o'clock in the afternoon, I determined at once to visit them, and thus to obtain a general idea of their appearance and arrangement, reserving a closer inspection of them for the morning. They have been so often and so well described that I shall confine myself to a brief account of their more salient features.

Leaving Dīh-i-Naw on the south, or Shīrāz, side, the first object of interest reached is the Takht-i-Suleymān. This, consisting of a large platform faced with masonry, projects from the face of a hill situated a little to the left (east) of the high road, not five minutes' walk from the village. Its frontage must be about 150 feet, and here the conscientious thoroughness and solidity of the masonry is most easily appreciated. I noticed the holes for the iron clamps (which have themselves been removed) noticed by Sir R. Ker Porter, and also the peculiar marks on most of the stones which he, if I remember rightly, was inclined to regard as characters of some ancient language. The villager who accompanied me declared that they were marks placed by each mason on the stone at which he had worked, in order that the amount of his work and the wages due to him might be proved; and I have no doubt that such is their nature. At any rate, they in no wise resemble the characters of any known alphabet.

From the platform of the Takht-i-Suleymān the whole plain of Pasargadā is clearly visible. The Shīrāz road takes a bold sweep towards the west ere it quits the plain and enters the grand defile through which flows the river Pulvār, and all the ruins except the Tomb of Cyrus (or Masjid-i-Mddar-i-Suleymān, as the Persians call it) are situated within a short distance of it and of one another, on the left hand of the southward-bound traveller. The Tomb of Cyrus lies about half a mile beyond them, on the opposite side of the road; it is encircled by a little village, and is regarded by the Persians as a place of considerable sanctity.

The first building to which I came on descending from the Takht-i-Suleymān is that called by Ker Porter Aṭasb-khānī ("the Fire-Temple"). My guide, however, gave it the name of Zindān-khānī ("the Prison-house"). It is situated close to the road, which it faces, and is very solid and massive in structure, but bears no inscriptions or carvings. The western end of the building only is standing; it is about thirty feet high, and contains sixteen courses of stones, and a window, below which is a buttress.

The next object which presents itself is a solitary square pillar of white stone in twelve courses, bearing a cuneiform inscription of four lines, of which the second is separated from the third, and the third from the fourth, by a blank space. I could not learn that it had any popular name.

A short distance beyond this lies the main group of ruins, called Nakkārā-khānī-i-Suleymān ("the Music-hall of Solomon"). Amongst these the most conspicuous object is a very tall slender column about sixty feet high, white in colour, and circular in shape, composed of four stones placed one on the other, the length of each one diminishing from below upwards. This column is quite plain, and bears no inscription. There are two or three other pillar-like structures, which appear to have formed the corners of the ruined edifice. At the back of each I noticed the hollowing-out of the stone noticed by Ker Porter. One of them bears on its north face a cuneiform inscription similar to that already noticed on the first column, but containing four or five different characters. On the western side of this group of ruins (i.e. on the side facing the road) are the remains of two doorways, each about five feet in width. The stones forming the sides of these are blackish in colour and susceptible of a high degree of polish. They are broken off within two feet of the ground, and on their inner surfaces are carved two pairs of feet, both turned towards the entrance. Of these, the outer pair are human feet, the inner pair feet like those of a bird; both are beautifully executed. A fragment of a similar doorway also
exists on the south side, and this is adorned with two pairs of human feet. A little beyond this is a portion of wall standing, some of the stones of which bear marks similar to those observable on the Takht-i-Suleymán.

A little distance to the east of this group of ruins, i.e. farther from the road, stands a solitary column, on the west side of which is carved in bas-relief the beautiful winged figure described and depicted by Ker Porter and others. I was still absorbed in delighted contemplation of this, when my guide, impatient at the long delay, called attention to the approach of evening, and urged me to return, declaring that it was unsafe to be out in the plain after dusk, and reminding me that I could complete my examination of the ruins next day. With regret I acceded to his request, and reluctantly retraced my steps. On the way back my companion talked freely of the state of the country and the dismissal of the old Šāhīb-Dīvān from the government of Fārs, at which he expressed unbounded delight. I asked if the Šāhīb-Dīvān had been a cruel governor that he had so aroused the hatred of the people. To this question my guide replied in the negative, alleging his incapacity and lack of integrity as the reason why he was so much disliked. “He has made everything dear,” he concluded, “and we enjoy no sort of protection from the raptures of the wandering tribes, who carry off our cattle and flocks without the least fear of reprisals. Rizā Khán, his old enemy, is now encamped between Seydūn and Sīvand with all his tribe, and has sworn to slay him if he can waylay him on his journey north; in which attempt I, for my part, wish him all success. He has already begun stripping and plundering all the followers and retainers of the ex-governor on whom he can lay his hands, including forty of Zeynu'l-ʿAbidin’s men who were sent out to catch him or drive him away, and who came back to Shīrāz crestfallen and discomfited, with nothing but their shirts. As for the new governor, the Iltisḥāmu’d-Dawla, if he is like his father, Prince Fathād Mīrāz, he will keep things in better

order. Indeed, already the marauders have desisted from their raids, and our flocks and cattle are once more safe.” So my companion ran on; and I was surprised to see that his fear was not so much that the new governor might be too harsh, as that he might not govern the province with a sufficiently firm hand.

Next day on quitting Dih-i-Naw I again visited the ruins above described, and, after reluctantly tearing myself away from them, proceeded to explore the Tomb of Cyrus. This, as I have already mentioned, is called by the Persians “the Mosque of the Mother of Solomon,” and is regarded as a holy place, so that I had some fear lest they should prevent me from entering it. This fear fortunately proved to be groundless; indeed, one of the inhabitants of the adjacent village volunteered to accompany me as a guide, though such assistance was quite unnecessary.

The Tomb of Cyrus, being built of white stone, forms a most conspicuous landmark in the plain of Pasargāde. It consists of a rectangular roofed chamber of extraordinary solidity, situated on a square platform approached on all sides by steep and lofty steps, up which one must climb, rather than walk, to reach the low entrance. The building bears no inscriptions in cuneiform or Pahlavī characters, but numerous Musulmān visitors have engraved their names on its walls and steps. I had hitherto imagined that the passion for leaving such memorials of one’s visit was peculiar to the West, and reached its highest development with the English and Americans; but not only the ruins of Pasargāde and Persepolis, but every post-house and caravansaray in Persia, bear witness to the fact that this habit is hardly less rife amongst the Persians. De Sacy was, I think, the first to direct attention to these interesting relics of former travellers. In the presence of the ancient cuneiform characters, which carry us back to the time of the Achaemenian kings, one is tempted to overlook them, though not a few of them date back to the earlier Muhammadan period. The longest of these inscriptions is situated on the wall to the right of one entering the mausoleum. This wall
is adorned with a rude mihrab (probably made by those who first conceived the idea of sanctifying the burial-place of the ancient fire-worshipping monarch by connecting it with the name of Solomon), on the lower portion of which is cut the word Allāb. This is surrounded by a long rectangular border raised into a subsidiary rectangle on the upper side to embrace the mihrab, the whole length of which is occupied by a much-worn Arabic inscription, only legible in parts, beginning: "In the Name of God the Merciful, the Clement. Verily we have opened unto thee a per- spicious victory...." At the left-hand lower corner of this border, close to the ground, is a Neo-Persian inscription in Arabic characters of an archaic type. Across the end of the chamber opposite to the door was hung a string, on which were suspended ribbons, pieces of cloth, beads, pipe-bowls, and other votive offerings brought by pious visitors to the shrine; and in the corner lay a copy of the Qur'an.

Leaving the mausoleum, I turned to descend, examining the steps and the inscriptions cut on them on my way. Some of the stones bore mason's marks similar to those referred to in speaking of the Takh-i-Suleyman. Besides these there were a great many Neo-Persian inscriptions, mostly undated, or of comparatively recent date, some almost illegible, others as clear as though cut yesterday.

Around the base of the steps is a small burial-ground strewn with fragments of other buildings which have perished. At its entrance are two long stones, propped one against the other in the shape of an inverted V, which form a sort of gate to the enclosure. Each of these is engraved on its inner surface with a line of Arabic in a fine bold character. The space left between the two stones is very narrow, and their surfaces are worn as smooth as glass by the passage of generations of pilgrims and visitors. These stones are supposed to be endowed with healing virtues, and my guide informed me that anyone bitten by a mad dog can be cured by crawling through the narrow interstice which separates them. To the faith of the people in this theory, if not to its truth, the high degree of polish on the inner surfaces of the stones in question bore witness.

Turning at length with much reluctance from this interesting spot, I again mounted and rode forward, and, in a few minutes, quitted the plain and entered the splendid rocky defile through which the river Pulvar flows down towards Shiraz. This defile, with occasional widenings into fertile grassy valleys, continues to within two stages of Shiraz. There, a little beyond the post-house of Pāzī, its rocky walls fall sharply away to the east and west as it enters the great plain of Marv-Dasht. At that point its width is three or four miles; in the rocks to the right are the tombs called by the Persians Naksh-i-Rustam; on the left, opposite to these, are the sculptures of Naksh-i-Rahab, the ruins of Iṣṭahhr, and just round the angle formed by the Kūh-i-Raḥmat ("Mountain of Mercy") the stupendous remains of Persepolis, of which I shall shortly have to speak.

This defile of the Pulvar offers some of the finest and most picturesque views in Persia: the rugged cliffs which hem it in on either side; the rushing river meandering through fertile meadows under the willows which fringe its banks; the fragrant shrubs and delicate flowers which, at this season, perfume the air and delight the eye; the gaily-plumed hoopoes—the birds of Solomon—which dart through the clear sunny air; but most of all, perhaps, the memories of the glorious Past which every footstep awakens, all combined to render this one of the most delightful parts of my journey.

Soon after turning into the defile we ascended the rocks to the right for some distance, and entered the Sang-bur ("Rock-cutting"), a passage two or three hundred yards in length, just wide enough to admit a man and horse, hewn out of the mountain side. While marvelling at this enduring triumph of the engineering skill of ancient Persia, a vision arose in my mind's eye of gorgeously apparrièred horsemen spurring in hot haste with
messages to or from the “Great King” through the Rockcutting. I pictured to myself the white temples and lofty halls of Pasargad-e first bursting on their sight, and sighed inwardly as I thought of that departed splendour, and of the fickleness of fortune, which has taken away the very tomb of Cyrus from him to bestow it upon Solomon.

Soon after leaving the Sang-bar I was startled—almost frightened—by the sudden apparition of four or five armed men, who sprang out from behind a rock and barred my progress. The reports which I had heard of the disturbed state of Šâr, the turbulence of its inhabitants, and the deeds of Rizâ Khán flashed through my mind; and I was in full expectation of a summons to surrender my money or my life, when I was reassured by a humble request on the part of the spokesman of the party that I would be kind enough to “remember the poor infânkhâbî” who watched over the safety of the roads. I was so relieved that I readily gave him what he desired; and it was not till I had passed on, and these guardians of the peace had once more hidden themselves in their ambush, that I was struck by the ludicrous nature of the proceeding. Imagine policemen or sentinels in England hiding behind rocks and leaping out on the passing traveller to ask him for a “present” in recognition of their vigilance!

About mid-day I halted in a pleasant meadow by the river for lunch. The infinitely-varied shades of green and red exhibited by the willows, just bursting into foliage, the emerald hue of the grass, and the pleasant murmur of the rushing river flowing past me, rendered the spot charming beyond all description. Hâji Šafar, whose spirits appeared to rise higher and higher as he drew nearer to Šîrâz (for, whatever he may say, in his heart of hearts every Šîrâzi thinks his own native city incomparable and peerless), was in high good humour—a fact which always disclosed itself by his giving me a better meal than usual—and on this occasion he went so far as to kindle a fire and make some tea, which he brought me triumphantly when I had finished eating.

Reluctant quitting this delightful spot, we again continued on our way through scenery as varied as it was grand, and presently passed through one of the wide cliff-girt valleys into which the Pûlûr defile here and there expands. Here the rich pastures were dotted with groups of black tents belonging to the wandering tribes (hîyêf) moving northward into the mountains, while their flocks of sheep and goats, tended by dark-eyed graceful shepherd boys, moved hither and thither over the plain. Leaving this happy valley we entered another defile, which brought us, a little before 6 p.m., to the village of Šîvand, in which is situated the last telegraph station before Šîrâz. Here I was received with the utmost kindness by Mr and Mrs Whittingham, whose little boy had ridden out to meet me some while before, for I was expected earlier.

Next morning I did not start till about ten o’clock, being unwilling to leave the hospitable roof of my kind entertainers. The post-road to Šîrâz continues on the left bank of the river, but as I wished to visit the inscriptions on the rocks above Hâji-ábâd, which lies on the opposite side, we forded the stream, and followed the western bend of the valley, thus shortening our day’s march by nearly a parasang. Soon after mid-day the village of Hâji-ábâd came in sight, and, as I was uncertain as to the exact position of the inscriptions, I began carefully to scrutinise the rocky cliffs to the right, in the hopes of discerning some trace of them. Presently I detected a small squarish hole hewn in the face of the rocks some distance up the side of one of the mountains (which at this point receded considerably from the road), and at once proceeded to scramble up to it. As usual, the clearness of the atmosphere led me to underrate the distance, and it was only after a long and hot climb that I finally reached the spot, where, to my disappointment, no inscription was visible—nothing but the shallow excavation, which in the distance
looked like the mouth of a tunnel. For what purpose and by whom it was made I do not know, but I saw several similar excavations in the neighbourhood. Disappointed in my search, I again descended to the foot of the mountains, and continued my way along their base, eagerly scanning the rugged cliffs above me. I was much afraid that after all I might fail in discovering the object of my search, so numerous were the clefts, valleys, and ravines by which the mountains were indented and intersected at this point. Presently, however, I came to the opening of a wider valley, running straight up into the hills, where it divided into two small glens, which ascended to the right and left, to lose themselves in the mountain above. In the mouth of this valley were pitched two or three tents, near which a tribesman was watching his grazing flock. Accosting him, I enquired whether he knew where the writing on the rocks was to be found.

"Do you mean the writing or the sculptures?" he demanded.

"The writing," I answered; "I know that the sculptures are lower down the valley."

"And what do you want with the writing?" asked the shepherd, suspiciously. "Can you read it?"

"No," I replied, "unfortunately I cannot; nevertheless I have heard that there are writings from the ancient time somewhere in these rocks, and I am desirous of seeing them."

"You can read them, I know very well," said he, "and you hope to find treasures there; many Firangis come here seeking for treasures. However, if you must know, they are up there," and he pointed up the valley. I wished to ask him in which bifurcation of the valley they were, but he had returned to his sheep, evidently disinclined to give me any further information.

There was nothing for it but to explore both of the gullies in question, and I began with the one to the right. It led me up into the heart of the mountain, and, after scrambling up amongst huge rugged boulders, I finally found myself at the mouth of a most gloomy-looking cavern, which appeared to run straight into the hillside. From the rocks above and around the water dripped with a sullen plash; a few bones scattered on the ground irresistibly suggested the thought that I was in close proximity to the lair of some wild beast, and caused me instinctively to feel in my pocket for my revolver; while the silence and loneliness of the spot, whence I could not even see the road, being hemmed in on all sides by beetling rocks, made me in no wise sorry to retrace my steps as soon as I was well assured that the object of my search was not to be found here.

I now proceeded to explore the other ravine, which, if less gloomy, was hardly less imposing than that which I had just quitted. As I ascended, its sides grew steeper and steeper, until, approaching one another more and more closely, they terminated in sheer precipices. At this point several huge boulders lay at their feet, seeming to bar all further progress, and I was beginning to doubt the advisability of trying to proceed farther, when, raising my eyes to the rocks on the right, I espied, some distance up, a long depression, looking dark in the sunshine, on the wall of which I thought I could discern a prepared tablet of cruciform shape. Hastily ascending to this, I perceived with joy that my conjecture was right. On the rock forming the back of this hollow was a prepared surface, shaped roughly like a cross with very thick limbs, along the transverse length of which were four tablets hewn in the mountain face. Of these tablets the two situated to the left were bare, having apparently never received the inscriptions for which they were destined; but each of the other two bore an inscription of some length in Pahlavi characters. The inscriptions in question have been fully treated of by Haug in his admirable *Essay on the Pahlavi Language*, and it is therefore unnecessary for me to say more of them in this place than that one of them is in Sásánian, and the other in Chaldeo-Pahlavi; that both belong to the reign of Sháapur I,
the son of Ardashir Babakán, the founder of the dynasty; and that consequently they date from the third century of the Christian era.

Having satisfied my curiosity, I returned to Hajji Safar, who was awaiting me with the horses in the road, and we proceeded in a straight line towards the village of Zangavar (situated on the same side of the river as Hajji-Abad, nearer the end of the valley), where I proposed to halt for the following day, as it forms the best starting-point for visiting Persepolis and the rock-sepulchres of Naḵš-i-Rustam. Our progress was, however, soon checked by innumerable streams and ditches, and we were compelled to return to the road skirting the base of the mountains on the western side of the valley. Annoying as this delay at first appeared, it was in truth a most fortunate occurrence, for, while looking about for signs of a path which would lead us more directly to our goal, I suddenly caught sight of a large cruciform excavation on the face of the rock, which I at once recognised, from the descriptions I had read and the sketches I had seen, as one of the tombs of Naḵš-i-Rustam, on which I had thus unexpectedly chanced. Hajji Safar seemed scarcely so well pleased as I was, for he well knew that this discovery would involve a further delay, and, as the day had now turned cold and windy, he would doubtless have reached the halting-place as soon as possible. Since an hour or two of daylight still remained, however, it was obviously out of the question to waste it; and as I knew that the morrow would be all too short fully to explore the wonders of Persepolis, I was anxious to get a clear impression of the monuments which so thickly beset this angle of the valley.

Accordingly I spent about an hour in examining and taking notes of these—a delightful hour, which passed only too quickly. The monuments in question are well-known to all travellers and antiquarians, and have been fully described in many books, so I shall content myself with merely enumerating them.

They are as follows:—

(i) Four rock-sepulchres dating from Achaemenian times. Externally, these present the appearance of crosses cut in the rock, with limbs equal in length and about half as wide as they are long. The aperture affording access to the inner gallery (which corresponds to the horizontal limbs of the cross in length, height, and position) is near the centre. Of the interior I shall have to speak shortly. Two pillars carved out of the rock stand on either side of this aperture, which is forty or fifty feet above the ground. The upper limb of the cross is adorned with sculptured symbols, amongst which a fire-altar surmounted by a crescent moon, a priest engaged in devotional exercises, and, over all, the winged figure gilt with the symbol of infinity, which forms so constant a feature in the Achaemenian tombs, are most conspicuous.

(ii) Six tablets bearing inscriptions and bas-reliefs of Sassanian workmanship. Close to the first of these (proceeding from the north southwards) is a modern Persian inscription, bearing the date A.H. 1127 (A.D. 1715), which is already almost as much defaced as the Sassanian inscriptions by the side of which it stands, and far more so than the exquisite cuneiform of the Achaemenians. Of the six Sassanian tablets, most of which are commemorative of victories over the Romans, and one or two of which bear long Pahlavi inscriptions, the first is adjacent to the Neo-Persian inscription noticed above, and stands about half-way between the first and second rock-tombs, but close to the

1 This is not the only place where the kings of modern Persia have adopted this time-honoured means of perpetuating their fame. A similar tablet, bearing a bas-relief of the king on horseback spearing a lion, as well as a Neo-Persian inscription (also barely legible), may be seen in the rocks to the north of what is generally regarded as the site of Rey, near Teheran. I believe that it was cut by order of Fath-Ali Shah. Another and a much better tablet, containing, besides a Persian inscription, bas-relief portraits of Nasir-ud-Din Shah (by whose command it was cut) surrounded by his ministers, forms a conspicuous object on the rocks above the admirably-constructed new road leading through Mazendaran from the capital to Amul, about two stages south of the latter town. This will be further noticed in its proper place.
ground; the second is placed under the second rock-tomb; the third between the second and third rock-tombs; the fourth under the fourth rock-tomb; and the fifth and sixth, one above the other, just before the angle formed by the falling away of the cliffs to the west where the valley enters the plain of Marv-Dasht.

(iii) Opposite the last rock-tomb, on the other side of the road (which runs close to the face of the cliff), is a square building of very solid construction, bearing some resemblance to the Tomb of Cyrus. This can be entered by climbing without much difficulty. It is called by the villagers Ka‘ba-i-Zardusht (“the Caaba of Zoroaster”).

(iv) On a summit of the rocks which form the angle of the valley is a cylindrical pillar about five feet high, sunk in a socket cut to receive it. This is called Dasta-i-Piré-Zan (“the Old Woman’s Pestle”).

(v) Beyond the angle formed by the junction of the Pulvar valley with the Marv-Dasht, and consequently concealed from the sight of one standing in the former, are two altars, each about four and a half feet high, hewn out of the solid rock. These are well described and figured by Ker Porter.

The above list comprises all the remains included by the Persians under the name “Naksh-i-Rustam,” and, with the exception of a brief description of the interior of one of the rock-tombs which I shall shortly attempt, I shall say no more about them, since they have been exhaustively described by many writers far more competent in this matter than myself.

While engaged in examining the Naksh-i-Rustam, we were joined by a villager who had been collecting a plant called kanger in the mountains. Some of this he gave to Hajjé Safar, who cooked it for my supper. It is by no means unsavoury, and resembles celery more than anything else I can think of. This villager proved to be a native of Zangavar, the village whither we were bound; and on learning that I proposed to spend the morrow there, so as to explore the antiquities in the neighbour-

hood, he offered to obtain the help of one or two other men who, by means of a rope, would haul me up to the platform of the rock-tombs, so as to enable me to examine its interior.

As the gathering dusk warned me that I must postpone further explorations till the morrow, I regretfully turned my back on the Naksh-i-Rustam, and, after a ride of fifteen or twenty minutes, reached the large straggling village of Zangavar. Here I was informed that the Kedkhudé (chief man of the village), apprised by the muleteer of my arrival, had assigned quarters to me in the takéyé consecrated to the Muharram passion-plays. Proceeding thither, I found a clean and comfortable room set apart for me, in which I had hardly installed myself when the Kedkhudé in person, accompanied by one or two friends, came to pay his respects. He was a nice old man, very courteous and kindly in his manners, and we had a long conversation, of which the antiquities in the neighbourhood formed the principal topic. He told me that a little while ago two Frenchmen (working for M. Dieulafoy) had been engaged for some time in making plans and taking photographs of Persepolis and the Naksh-i-Rustam, in front of which they had erected a sort of scaffold (manjanik) the better to reach its upper part. They had lodged in this village; but, the Kedkhudé complained, had been very unsociable and reticent, refusing to allow the people to watch their work or see their photographs and sketches.

This subject exhausted, the Kedkhudé began to question me concerning our religion, and to ask me whether I had heard of the European doctor who had recently embraced the Muhajmadan faith at Shiráz. I answered that I had read about his conversion in a Persian newspaper which I had seen at Isfahán, and that I was very desirous of conversing with him, so that I might learn the reasons which had led him to abandon his own creed in favour of Islám.

“Perhaps you, too,” said the Kedkhudé, “will, by the grace of God, be brought to believe in the religion of our Prophet. You
have come to see our country from afar; do not, like the majority of the Firangis, occupy yourself with nothing but dumb stones, vessels of brass, tile, and fabrics; contemplate the world of ideas rather than the world of form, and seek for Truth rather than for curiosities. Why should you not even pay a visit to the most holy tombs of our Imams at Kerbelá and Nejef? There you might see the miracles whereby they prove to all that they still live and rule."

"Gladly would I do as you advise," I replied, "and I trust that I am not so bigoted as to refuse fairly to consider whatever proofs can be adduced in favour of your religion. Unfortunately, however, your countrymen and co-religionists, so far from offering any facilities to 'unbelievers' for witnessing the miracles whereby, as you say, the Imams continue to manifest their power and presence to the world, would drive me from their shrines like a dog if I attempted to approach them, even as they did at the shrine of Sháh 'Abdu'l-'Azím. Surely they act most unwisely in this matter; for if, as you say, miracles are there wrought, they must be intended not so much for those who believe as for those who doubt, and who might be convinced thereby."

"You are perhaps right," said the Keshkháli, after a moment's reflection, "yet still I would urge you to make the attempt, even if you must disguise yourself as a Persian to do so. It would be a pity that you should come here at so much trouble and expense, and should take back nothing with you but a collection of those curiosities and antiquities with which your people seem for the most part to be so strangely infatuated." So saying, the Keshkháli took his departure and left me to myself.

Although I was up in good time next day, all eagerness to make the best use of an opportunity which I should in all probability never again enjoy, I was delayed in starting for some time by a crowd of people who, hearing that I possessed some medical knowledge, desired to consult me about their various disorders; and it was not till nine o'clock that I finally left the village, accompanied by the villager whom I had met on the previous day, two younger men provided with ropes, and a little boy who enlivened the way with his childish prattle. Arrived opposite the Naḵš-i-Rustam, my guides advanced to the second rock-tomb, which is somewhat nearer the ground than the others, and more readily accessible. One of them climbed up the rocks with marvellous agility to the narrow platform which crosses the entrance. He then let down the rope, by the aid of which the others followed him. The rope was again lowered, I bound it firmly round my waist, and, not without sundry bumps and abrasions, was hauled up to where they stood.

Entering the tomb by the low doorway opening on to this ledge or platform, I found myself in a long gallery corresponding to the transverse limb of the cross carved on the face of the rock. This gallery was twenty-seven paces in length from end to end, three paces in width, and perhaps twenty feet in height. On the side opposite to the entrance, four rectangular recesses are hewn out of the rock, the width of each being about four and a half paces. The floors of these are not level with the ground, but raised some three feet above it. Out of each of these floors are hewn three parallel tombs or sarcophagi, their greatest length being parallel to the gallery, and consequently transverse to the recess in which they lie. These sarcophagi were, of course, empty (except for some débris of stones and rubbish), and their coverings had been destroyed or removed.

On completing my examination of the tomb and descending to the ground, I found a small knot of people collected. These asked me whether I could read the inscriptions, and would hardly believe my assertion that I was unable to do so, asking me if I were not a "mulla." Indeed, one or two appeared to imagine that they were written in my own language, or in one of the languages of Firangistán.

We now struck across the valley towards Persepolis—"Takht-Jamshíd" ("the Throne of Jamshíd"), as it is called by the