of the protean Persian genius. I succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations, and, as will presently be set forth, found myself ere long in a world whereof I had never dreamed, and wherein my spirit was subjected to such alternations of admiration, disgust, and wonder, as I had never before in my life experienced.

All this, however, did not come to me at once, and would not, perhaps, have come at all but for a fortunate misfortune which entirely altered all my plans, and prolonged the period of my stay at Kirmán from the fortnight or three weeks which I had originally intended to a couple of months. For just as I was about to depart thence (having, indeed, actually engaged a muleteer for the journey to Shíráz by way of Sirján, Khír, and Niríz), I fell a victim to a sharp attack of ophthalmia, which for some weeks compelled me to abandon all idea of resuming my travels. And this ophthalmia, from which I suffered no little pain, had another result tending to throw me more than would otherwise have been the case into the society of dervishes, dreamers, and mystics. Judge me not harshly, O thou who hast never known sickness—ay, and for a while partial blindness—in a strange land, if in my pain and my wakefulness I at length yielded to the voice of the tempter, and fled for refuge to that most potent, most sovereign, most seductive, and most enthralling of masters, opium. Unwisely I may have acted in this matter, though not, as I feel, altogether culpably; yet to this unwisdom I owe an experience which I would not willingly have forfeited, though I am thankful enough that the chain of my servitude was snapped ere the last flicker of resolution and strenuousness finally expired in the Nirvana of the opium-smoker. I often wonder if any of those who have returned to tell the tale in the outer world have wandered farther than myself into the flowery labyrinths of the poppy-land, for of him who enters its fairy realms too true, as a rule, is the Persian opium-smoker’s epigram—

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“Hagrat-i-afzhān-i-md bar maraql-rd rewdšt,
Likh chu ‘dīl shtal, khud maraṣ-l-bād-wšt.”

“Sir Opium of ours for every ill is a remedy swift and sure,
But he, if you bear for a while his yoke, is an ill which knows no cure.”

Although it was some while after my arrival in Kirmán that I became numbered amongst the intimates of the aforesaid Sir Opium, he lost no time in introducing himself to my notice in the person of one of his faithful votaries, Mírzá Ḥuseyn-Kúli of Bam (a pleasant, gentle, dreamy soul, of that type which most readily succumbs to the charm of the poppy), who came to visit me in Ná’íb Ḥasan’s company on the very day of my entry into the garden. Soon after this, too, I came into daily relations with another bondsman of the all-potent drug; one ‘Abdu’l Ḥuseyn, whom Hájí Šafar, in accordance with the agreement made between himself and myself at Yezd, had hired to look after my horse. He was far advanced on the downward path, and often, when sent to buy bread or other provisions in the shops hard by the city-gate, would he remain away for hours at a time, and return at last without having accomplished his commission, and unable to give any account of how the time had passed. This used to cause me some annoyance till such time as I too fell under the spell of the poppy-wizard, when I ceased to care any longer (because the opium-smoker cares not greatly for food, or indeed for aught else in the material world save his elixir); nay, I even found a certain tranquil satisfaction in his vagaries. But I must leave for a while these delicious reminiscences and return to the comparatively uneventful fortnight with which my residence at Kirmán began. Of this I shall perhaps succeed in giving the truest picture by following in the main the daily entries which I made in my diary.

On the day of my instalment in the garden (Wednesday, 5th June, 25th Ramazán) I received several visitors besides the opium-smoker of Bam. Chief amongst these was a certain notable Sheykhu of Kum, whose doubtful orthodoxy had made
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it expedient for him to leave the sacred precincts of his native town for happy, heedless Kirman. Here he had succeeded in gaining the confidence and esteem of Prince Nasiru'd-Dawla, the Governor, in whose society most of his time was passed, either in consultation on affairs of state, or in games of chance, for which he cared the less because he was almost invariably the loser. He was a burly, genial, kind-hearted gentleman, with but little of the odour of sanctity so much sought after in his native town, and a fund of wit and information. I afterwards saw much of him, and learned that he was an Ezeli Babi, so far as he was anything at all (for by many he was accounted a free-thinker, "id-madhab"); but in this first interview he gave no further indication of his proclivities than to enquire whether I had not a copy of Manakji's New History of the Babi Theophany. With him came two brothers, merchants of Yazd, whom I will call Akh Muhsin and Akh Muhammad Sadik. Of the former, who was an orthodox Shiite, I saw but little subsequently; but with the younger brother, a man of singular probity and most amiable disposition, I became rather intimate, and from him I met with a disinterested kindness which I shall not omit to record in its proper place. He too was a Babi, but a follower of Beha, not of Ezeli; as also was a third brother, who, being but a lad of fifteen or sixteen, was suddenly so overcome by a desire to behold the face of Beha that he ran away from Kirman with only five tondins in his pocket, with the sole purpose of making his way to Acre, on the Syrian coast, in which project, thanks to the help of kindly Zoroastrians at Bandar-i-Abbas, and the Babis of Bombay and Beyrut, he was successful. I subsequently made the acquaintance of another lad whose imagination was so stirred by this exploit that he was determined to imitate it at the first opportunity, though whether or no his plan was realised I cannot say.

Thursday, 6th June, 26th Ramazan.—Soon after I was up I received a visit from Nabi Hasan (who, indeed, lost no time in establishing himself in the position of my guide, philosopher, and friend, and who seldom allowed a day to pass without giving me the pleasure of his society for a good many hours, including at least one meal). With him came Rustam, the young Zoroastrian of whom I have already spoken, who, on this occasion, outstayed the Nahi. This Rustam was a well-mannered and intelligent lad, whose only fault was an unduly deferential manner, which at times I found rather irksome. He asked me many questions about my country and about America ("Yangi-dunya," "the New World"), in which, like several other Persians whom I met, he appeared to take an extraordinary interest; for what reason I know not, since he had not the excuse of supposing, like some Muhammadians, that thence, by some underground channel, Antichrist (Dajdji) shall reach the well in Isfahan from which, at the end of time, he is to appear.

In the afternoon I went into the town, accompanied by Hajji Safar and Mirza Yusuf, notwithstanding a message which I received from the Sadir of Sistak informing me of his intention of paying me a visit. We passed the walls, not by the adjacent Darvazeh-i-Nasiriyya, but by another gate called Darvazeh-i-Masjid ("the Mosque Gate"), lying more to the west, from which a busy thoroughfare (thronged, especially on "Friday eve," with hosts of beggars) leads directly to the bazaars, and paid a visit to my Zoroastrian friends in the caravansaray of Ganj 'Ali Khan (where, for the most part, their offices are situated) and to the post-office. In the bazaars I met a quaint-looking old Hindoo, who persisted in addressing me in his own uncouth Hindi, which he seemed to consider that I as an Englishman was bound to understand. We returned about sunset by the way we had come, and met crowds of people, who had been to pay their respects to a deceased saint interred in a mausoleum just outside the Mosque Gate, re-entering the city.

On reaching the garden I found another visitor awaiting me—an inquisitive, meddlesome, self-conceited scion of some once
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influential but now decayed family, who, in place of the abundant wealth which he had formerly possessed, subsisted on a pension of 150 tâmidân allowed him by the Prince-Governor in consideration of his former greatness. For this person, whose name was Hâji Muhammad Khân, I conceived a very particular aversion. He manifested a great curiosity as to my rank, my income, and the object of my journey, and presently assured me that he detected in me a remarkable likeness to the Prince of Wales, with whom, he declared, he had struck up an acquaintance one evening at the Crystal Palace. "Don't attempt to deceive me," he added, with many sly nods and winks: "I understand how one of noble birth may for a time be under a cloud, and may find it expedient to travel in disguise and to forgo that state and circumstance to which he is justly entitled. I am in somewhat the same position myself, but I am not going to continue thus for long. I have had a hint from the Aminâl's-Sultân, and am wanted at Ţeherân. There are those who would like to prevent my reaching the capital," he continued mysteriously, "but never fear, I will outwit them. When you leave Kirmân for Shiráz, I leave it in your company, and with me you shall visit Shahr-i-Bâbak and many other interesting places on our way thither." Nâ'îb Hasan fooled him to the top of his bent, unfolding vast and shadowy pictures of my power and affluence, and declaring that I had unlimited credit with the Zoroastrian merchants of Kirmân; which falsehoods Hâji Muḥâmmad Khân (whom copious libations of beer were rendering every moment more credulous and more mysterious) greedily imbibed. When he had gone I remonstrated vigorously with the Nâ'îb for his mendacity. "I suppose it is no use for me to remind you that it is wicked to tell lies," I remarked, "but at least you must see how silly and how futile it is to make assertions whereof the falsity cannot remain hidden for more than a few days, and which are likely to land me in difficulties." But the Nâ'îb only shook his head and laughed, as though to say that lying was in itself an artistic

and pleasurable exercise of the imagination, in which, when there was no reason to the contrary, he might fairly allow himself to indulge. So, finding remonstrance vain, I presently retired to rest in some disgust.

Friday, 7th June, 27th Ramazân.—In the morning I was visited by an old Zoroastrian woman, who was anxious to learn whether I had heard in Ţeherân any talk of Aʃṭâţân ("Plato") having turned Musâlmân. It took me some little while to discover that the said Aʃṭâţân was not the Greek philosopher but a young Zoroastrian in whom she was interested, though why a follower of "the good Mazdayasian religion" should take to himself a name like this baffles my comprehension. In the afternoon I was invaded by visitors. First of all came a Belûch chief named Aţâl Khân, a picturesque old man with long black hair, a sagged moustache, very thin on the upper lip and very long at the ends, and a singularly gorgeous coat. He was accompanied by two lean and hungry-looking retainers, all skin and sword-blade; but though he talked much I had some difficulty in understanding him at times, since he spoke Persian after the corrupt and vicious fashion prevalent in India. He enquired much of England and the English, whom he evidently regarded with mingled respect and dislike. "Kalâr-i-Nâşîrî is my city," he replied, in answer to a question which I put to him; "three months' journey from here, or two months if your horse be sound, swift, and strong. Khân Khudâdâd Khân is the Amir, if he be not dead, as I have heard men say lately." He further informed me that his language was not Belûchi but Brâûlî, which is spoken in a great part of Belûchistân.

The next visitors to arrive were the postmaster, Aţâ Muhammâd Şâdík (the young Yezdí merchant of whom I have already spoken), and the eldest son of the Prince-Telegraphist. The last upbraided me for taking up my abode in the garden instead of in the new telegraph-office, which his father had placed at my disposal; but his recriminations were cut short by the arrival of
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a Tabrízí merchant, two Zoroastrians, an Ezeli Bábí (whom I will call Mullá Yúsuf, to distinguish him from my Tabrízí satellite Mírzá Yúsuf), who appeared on this occasion as a zealous Musulmán, and undertook to convince me on some future occasion of the superiority of Islám to Christianity; and a middle-aged man of very subdued demeanour (how deceptive may appearances be!), dressed in a long jubbe, fez, and small white turban, after the manner of Asiatic Turks, to whom, under the pseudonym of Shaykh Ibráhím of Sultan-ábd, I shall have frequent occasion to refer in this and the succeeding chapter. These, in turn, were followed by four more Zoroastrians, including Gushtásp, Feridún, and Rustam, who outstayed the other visitors, and did not depart till they had pledged me in wine after the rite of the Magians, after which I had supper with Náilib Ḥasan, and sat talking with him till nearly midnight.

Saturday, 8th June, 28th Ramadán.—In the morning I visited one of the shawl-manufactories of Kirmán in company with Rustam, Náilib Ḥasan, and Mírzá Yúsuf of Tabríz. Our way lay through the street leading to the Theatre Gate, which, by reason of the Saturday market (Bágh-e Shāhá), was thronged with people. The shawl-manufactory consisted of one large vaulted room containing eleven looms, two or three of which were standing idle. At each loom sat three workers, one skilled workman in the middle, and on either side of him a shiqjard or apprentice, whom he was expected to instruct and supervise. There were in all twenty-five apprentices, ranging in years from children of six and seven to men of mature age. Their wages, as I learned, begin at ten tumán (about £3) a year, and increase gradually to twenty-four or twenty-five tumán (about £7. 10s.) In summer they work from sunrise to sunset, and in winter they continue their work by candle-light till three hours after sunset. They have a half-holiday on Friday (from mid-day onwards), thirteen days' holiday at the Nawwár, and one or two days more on the great annual festivals, while for food they get nothing as

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a rule but dry bread. Poor little Kirmání! They must toil thus, deprived of good air and sunlight, and debarred from the recreations and amusements which should brighten their childhood, that some grandee may bedeck himself with those sumptuous shawls, which, beautiful as they are, will evermore seem to me to be dyed with the blood of the innocents! The shawls manufactured are of very different qualities. The finest, of three or three and a half ells in length, require twelve or fifteen months for their completion, and are sold at forty or fifty tumán apiece; others, destined for the Constantinople market, and of much coarser texture, can be finished in a month or six weeks, and are sold for ten or fifteen kyūns. Of late, however, the shawl trade had been on the decline; and the proprietor of this establishment told me that he was thinking of closing his workshops for a year, and making a pilgrimage to Kerbela, hoping, I suppose, to win by this act of piety the Divine favour, which he would have better merited by some attempt to ameliorate the condition of the poor little drudges who toiled at his looms.

I next visited the one fire-temple which suffices for the spiritual needs of the Kirmán Zoroastrians, and was there received by the courteous and intelligent old Dastúr and my friend Feridún. I could not see the sacred fire, because the mohad whose business it was to tend it had locked it up and taken the key away with him. In general appearance this fire-temple resembled those which I had seen at Yazd. I enquired as to the manuscripts of the sacred books preserved in the temple, and was shown two: a copy of the Avesta of 210 leaves, transcribed in the year A.H. 1086 (A.D. 1675–6), and completed on the “day of Abán, in the month of Bahman, in the year 1044 of Yezygírd,” by the hand of Dastúr Marzábán, the son of Dastúr Bahram, the son of Marzábán, the son of Feridún; and a copy of the Yashts, completed by the hand of Dastúr Islândiyâr, the son of Dastúr Nûshîrvân, the son of Dastúr Islândiyâr, the son of Dastúr Ardashîr, the son of Dastúr Adhar of Sîstân, on the “day of Bahman, in the month
of Isfandarmad, in the year 1108 of Yeşidigird, corresponding to A.H. 1226 (A.D. 1811). I found that the Dastur was much interested in the occult science of geomancy ('ilm-i-ramal), which, he informed me, required the assiduous study of a lifetime ere one could hope to attain proficiency. He was also very full of a rare old book called the Jāmāsdp-nāma, of which he said only one copy, stolen by a Musulmān named Ḥuseyn from the house of a Zoroastrian in Yeşid, existed in Kirmān, though he had information of another copy in the library of the Mosque at Mashhad. This book he described as containing a continuous series of prophecies, amongst which was included the announcement of the return of Šah Bahrām, the Zoroastrian Messiah, to re-establish “the Good Religion.” This Šah Bahrām, to whose expected advent I have already alluded at p. 432 supra, is believed to be a descendant of Ḥurmuẓ the son of Yeşidigird (the last Sasanian king), who fled from before the Arab invaders, with Peshūtan and other fire-priests, to China; whence he will return to Fārs by way of India in the fullness of time. Amongst the signs heralding his coming will be a great famine, and the destruction of the city of Shushar.

In the evening I went for a ride outside the city with Feridun, Rustam, and the son of the postmaster. We first visited a neighbouring garden to see the working of one of the dilābās generally employed in Kirmān for raising water to the surface. The dilābā consisted of two large wooden wheels; one set horizontally and the other vertically in the jaws of the well, cobbled together. A blindfolded cow harnessed to a shaft inserted in the axle of the former communicated a rotatory motion to the latter, over which a belt of rope passed downwards into the well, to a depth of about five ells. To this rope earthenware pitchers were attached, and each pitcher as it came uppermost on the belt emptied its contents into a channel communicating with a small reservoir. The whole arrangement was primitive, picturesque, and inefficient.

From the dilābā we proceeded to the “old town” (shahr-i-kañd), situated on the craggy heights lying (if I remember rightly) to the west of the present city, and said to date from the time of Ardashir-i-Bābakān, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty. There are a number of ruined buildings on these heights, including one known as the Kadam-gāh, where vows and offerings are made by the Kirmānis. From this place we proceeded to another valley, closed to the south by beetling cliffs studded with cavernous openings which are said to extend far into the rock. High up on the left of this valley is a little building known as Daryā-Kuľ Beg, whither, leaving our horses below, we ascended, and there sat for a while drinking wine by the light of the setting sun. My companions informed me that formerly the mouth of the valley below had been closed by a band or dyke, and all the upper part of it converted into a gigantic lake whereon boat races, watched by the king and his court from the spot where we sat, took place on certain festival occasions.

As we rode homewards in the gathering twilight the postmaster’s son craved a boon of me, which I think worth mentioning as illustrative of that strange yearning after martyrdom which is not uncommon amongst the Bábís. Bringing his horse alongside of mine at a moment when the two Zoroastrians were engaged in private conversation, he thus addressed me:—“Say, you intend, as you have told me, to visit Acre. If this great happiness be allotted to you, and if you look upon the Blessed Beauty (Jawāl-i-Mubārak, i.e. Behá’u’l-láh), do not forget me, nor the request which I now prefer: Say, if opportunity be granted you, ‘There is such an one in Kirmān, so-and-so by name, whose chief desire is that his name may be mentioned once in the Holy Presence, that he may once (if it be not too much to ask) be honoured by an Epistle, and that he may then quaff the draught of martyrdom in the way of the Beloved.’”

Sunday, 5th June, 29th Ramażān.—To-day I received a demonstration in geomancy (‘ilm-i-ramal) from a young Zoroastrian,
Bahram-i-Bihruz, whom I met in Mullâ Gushtasp’s room in the caravansaray of Ganj-‘Ali Khân. The information about myself with which his science supplied him was almost entirely incorrect, and was in substance as follows:—“A month ago you received bad news, and suffered much through some absent person. Fifteen days ago some physical injury befell you. By the next post you will receive good news. In another month you will receive very good news. You are at present in good health, but your caloric is in excess and the bilious humour predominates. Your appetite is bad, and you should take some laxative medicine.” This is a fair specimen of the kind of answer which he who consults the rammâdî (geomancer) is likely to get; but it is fair to say that Bahram laid claim to no great proficiency in the science. However, he promised to introduce me to a Musulmân who was reputed an adept in the occult sciences, including the taskhîr-i-jinn, or command of familiar spirits, and this promise, as will presently be set forth, he faithfully kept.

While Bahram was busy with his geomancy, a dervish boy, who afterwards proved to be a Babi, entered the room where we were sitting (as the dervish is free to enter any assembly and to go wherever it seemeth good to him), and presented me with a white flower. I gave him a kusdân, whereupon, at the suggestion of one of those present, he sung a ghâzal, or ode, in a very sweet voice, with a good deal of taste and feeling.

Later on in the day I visited Mirzâ Rahim Khan, the Farrâdsb-bâbsh, and Sheykhh Ibrâhim of Sulân-âbâd, whom I have already had occasion to mention. The latter, as I discovered, had, after the manner of kalândars of his type, taken up his abode in the house of the former, till such time as he should be tired of his host, or his host of him. Thence I went to the house of the Sheykhh of Kum, where I met two young artillery officers, brothers, one of whom subsequently proved to be an Ezelfi Babi. I was more than ever impressed with the Sheykhh’s genial, kindly manner, and wide knowledge. I enquired of him particularly as to the most authentic and esteemed collections of Shi‘ite traditions, and he mentioned two, the Mi‘râj-i-Qâsîdat (“Ascent of Happiness”), and a very large and detailed work in fifteen or sixteen volumes, by Jâmâ’î-Din Hasan ibn Yûsuf ibn ‘Ali of Hilla entitled ‘Allâmâ (“the Great Doctor”), called Bihârîl-Amâr (“Oceans of Light”). We then talked for a while about metaphysics, and he expressed astonishment at the lack of interest in the subject generally prevalent in Europe; after which we passed by a natural transition to the doctrines of the Sheykhs and Babîs, about which he gave me not a little information. It had been decided that I should visit the Prince-Governor in company with the Sheyk, but the visit was postponed, as the Prince sent word that he was indisposed, and wished to sleep.

In the evening I received another visit from the garrulous Haji Muhammad Khan, who seemed to me rather less disagreeable than on the occasion of his first call. After his departure a temporary excitement was caused by the discovery of a theft which had been committed in the garden. A Shirazi muleteer, who intended shortly to return home by way of Sirjan and Niriz, had greatly importuned me to hire his mules for the journey, and this I had very foolishly half consented to do. These mules were accordingly tied up in the garden near my horse, and it was their coverings which, as the muleteer excitedly informed us, had been removed by the thief. The curious thing was that my horse’s coverings, which were of considerably more value, had not been touched, and I am inclined to believe that the muleteer himself was the thief. He caused me trouble enough afterwards; for when, owing to the ophthalmia with which I was attacked, I was obliged to rescind the bargain, he lodged a complaint against the poor gardener, whom he charged with the theft. A farasb was sent by the vazir to arrest him, whereupon the said gardener and his wife, accompanied by the myrmidon of the law, came before me wringing their hands, uttering loud lamentations, and beseeching me to intercede in their favour. So,
though my eyes ached most painfully, I was obliged to write a long letter to the vezir in Persian, declaring the gardener to be, to the best of my belief, an honest and worthy fellow, and requesting, as a personal favour, that he might be subjected to no further annoyance. I furthermore took the precaution of promising a present of money to the farrāb when he returned with the gardener, in case the latter had suffered no ill-treatment; and, thanks to these measures, I succeeded in delivering him from the trouble in which the malice of the muleteer threatened to involve him; but the effect of the exertion of my eyes in writing the letter was to cause a recrudescence of the inflammation, which had previously been on the decline. So the muleteer had his revenge, which, I suppose, was what he desired and intended.

*Monday, 10th June, 30th Kamāzīa.*—In the morning I visited several persons in the town, including two of my Zoroastrian friends, Shahriyar and Bahman. The shop of the former was crowded with soldiers just home from Jāsk and Bandar-i-'Abbās, so that conversation was impossible, and I left almost immediately. Bahman, on the other hand, had only one visitor, an old seyyid named Akā Seyyid Ḥuseyn of Jandaḵ, of whom I afterwards saw a good deal—in fact rather more than I wished. He conversed with me in a very affable manner, chiefly, of course, on religious topics, and, amongst other things, narrated to me the following curious legend about Christ:

“Once upon a time,” said the Seyyid, “the Lord Jesus (upon whom be peace) entered into a certain city. Now, the king of that city had forbidden any one of his subjects, on pain of death, to shelter Him or supply Him with food; nevertheless, seeing a young man of very sorrowful countenance, He craved his hospitality, which was at once accorded. After the Lord Jesus had supped and rested, He enquired of His host wherefore he was so sorrowful, and eventually ascertained that he had fallen in love with the king’s daughter. Then said the Lord Jesus, ‘Be of good cheer, thou shalt win her. Go to the king’s palace tomorrow, and demand her in marriage, and your proposal will not be rejected.’ So the young man, marvelling the while at his own audacity, repaired on the morrow to the palace, and demanded to see the king, into whose presence he was presently ushered. On hearing his proposal the king said, ‘My daughter shall be yours if you can give her a suitable dowry.’ So the young man returned sadly to his home (for he knew that such a dowry was far beyond his means) and told the Lord Jesus what had passed. Then said the Lord Jesus, ‘If you will go to such-and-such a spot and search there you will find all that you need.’ He did so, and found much gold and silver, and many precious stones of great worth—diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, and the like, beyond all that even the daughter of a king could expect or desire. So the king bestowed on him his daughter’s hand. But after a time the Lord Jesus bade him leave all this and follow Him, and he, knowing now that the Great Treasure, compared to which all that he had given as the princess’s dowry was as mere worthless dross, was with Christ alone, abandoned all for his Master’s sake. And indeed, as this legend shows, amongst all the prophets there was none who taught the ‘Path’ (Fārākat) like the Lord Jesus, and this remains amongst you Christians in some measure even now, though the ‘Law’ (Shari’at) which he brought has little by little disappeared before Islām, so that no vestige of it is left.”

In the evening I received a visit from some of the leading members of the Hindoo community, thirteen or fourteen in number, who begged me to let them know if, at any time, they could be of service to me in any way. “We owe you this,” said they, “for it is through the protection of your government that we are able to live and carry on our business here in safety and security.” Later in the evening I partook of supper with several of the Zoroastrians at the ādāb of the elder Gushṭāsp.

*Tuesday, 11th June, 1st Shawwal.*—In the morning I had a visit
from Rustam, the young Zoroastrian. He told me, amongst other things, of the persecutions to which his co-religionists were occasionally exposed. "Formerly," said he, "it would often happen that they carried off one of our boys or girls, and strove to compel them by threats and torments to become Musulmans. Thus on one occasion they seized upon a Zoroastrian boy twelve years of age, carried him to the public bath, and forced him to utter the Muhammadan profession of faith, and to submit to the operation of circumcision. On another occasion they abducted two Zoroastrian girls, aged fifteen and twenty respectively, and, by every means in their power, strove to compel them to embrace the religion of Islam. One of them held out against their importunities for a long while, until at last they turned her out almost naked into the snow, and she was ultimately compelled to submit."

In the afternoon I again went into the town to pay some visits. I entered it by the Derwaz-e-Gabr, to the east of the Derwaz-e-Nafiriyeh, and visited an old mosque situated near to that gate. This mosque had, as I was informed, been willfully destroyed by a former governor of the city, but it still showed traces of its ancient splendour. After visiting the Hinduos and some of my Zoroastrian friends, I proceeded to the house of the Sheikh of Kum, with whom, as it had been arranged, I was to pay my respects to the Prince-Governor. After drinking tea we accordingly repaired to the Bagh-e-Nafiriyeh, which is situated near to the gate of the same name. On the arrival of Prince Nasiru'd-Dawla we were conducted to an upper chamber, where he received me in the kindliest and most friendly manner. He talked to me chiefly about the condition of Beluchistan (which, as well as Kirmán, was under his government), and declared that a very notable improvement had taken place during the last few years. I then presented my letter of recommendation from Prince 'Imádu'd-Dawla of Yezd, and took occasion to mention the forlorn condition of Mirzá Yusuf of Tabriz, and his hope that the shadow of the Royal Protection might not be withheld from him, and that he might aspire to be numbered amongst the Prince's servants.

In the evening I was again entertained at supper by one of my Zoroastrian friends named Shahriyar. All the other guests were of "the good religion" save myself, Ná'ib Hasan (who still continued to accompany me everywhere, and to consider himself as invited to every feast whereunto I was bidden), and a singer named Faraju'llah, who had been summoned for our entertainment.

**Wednesday, 12th June, 2nd Shawwal.**—Towards evening I was visited by the Belúch chief, Afžal Khán, and his son; Seyyid Huseyn of Jandaḵ; the Sheikh of Kum, and his friend the young Bábí gunner; and Mulá Yusuf the Ezeli. Between the last and Seyyid Huseyn a violent dispute arose touching the merits and demerits of the first three caliphs (so called), 'Omar, Abú Bekr, and 'Othmán, whereby the other visitors were so wearied that they shortly departed, and finally the Seyyid was left in undisputed possession of the field, which he did not abandon till he had prayed the prayers of sundown (magribi) and nightfall (asba), and explained to me at length the significance of their various component parts, adding that if I would remain in Kirmán for one month he would put me in possession of all the essentials of Islam. Ná'ib Hasan and Feridún had supper with me in the ebr-gash, or summer-house, on the roof of which I sat late with the latter, and finally fell asleep, with the song of a nightingale, sweet-voiced as Isrá'íl, ringing in my ears.

**Thursday, 13th June, 3rd Shawwal.**—In the morning, while walking in the bazaars, I met Afžal Khán, the Belúch, with his ragged and hungry-looking retainers. He invited me to return with him to his lodging, situated near the Derwaz-i-Rig-dádd, and I, having nothing else to do, and not wishing to offend him, accepted his invitation. On our arrival there he insisted,
notwithstanding my earnest protests, on sending out for sherbets and sweetmeats wherewith to do me honour, and he put me to further shame by continued apologies for the unfurnished condition of his abode and the humble character of his entertainment, repeating again and again that he was "only a poor Belúch." Presently he got on the subject of his wrongs. The English Government, so he declared, had taken into their service one of his relatives, who had forthwith made use of his new privileges to dispossess him of all his property, and, generally speaking, to make his life a burden to him. He had therefore come to Kirmán to seek employment from Prince Násiru'd-Dawla. "If he will not help me," concluded Afzal Khán, "I intend to go to Mashhad and seek assistance from the English officials residing there; and if they will do nothing for me, I will place my services at the disposal of the Russians." Shortly afterwards I rose to go, alleging, when Afzal Khán pressed me to stay, that I had letters to write. "What letters?" he enquired suspiciously. "Oh," I answered carelessly, "letters of all sorts, to Ýezd, to Shiráz, and" (this, though true, was not said altogether without mischievous intent) "to Mashhad." Then Afzal Khán, as I had anticipated, became very perturbed, and anxiously inquired what acquaintances I had at Mashhad, evidently supposing that I intended to inform the English representatives there of his intentions, so that they might intercept him in case he should attempt to reach Russian territory. But, indeed, the poor fellow's services, on which he evidently set a high value, were not likely to be accounted as of much value by anyone else—Persian, English, or Russian.

In the afternoon I visited Mullá Yúsuf the Ezêfî, who, though he talked about nothing else than religion, confined himself, much to my disappointment, to the Muhammadan dispensation. He admitted my contention that by many paths men may attain to a knowledge of God, and that salvation was not for the votaries of one religion only, but maintained that, though all roads led to the same goal, some were safe, short, and sure, and others circuitous and perilous, "wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to seek the shortest and safest way, whereby we may most speedily, and with least danger, attain the desired haven." We had a good deal of discussion, too, about the code of laws established by Muhammad, some of which (as, for example, the punishment of theft by amputation of the hand) I condemned as barbarous and irrational. To this he replied by arguing that the lex talionis was intended merely to fix the extreme limit of punishment which could be inflicted on an offender, and that forgiveness was as highly extolled by the Muhammadan as by the Christian religion. This discussion lasted so long that on reaching the gate on my homeward way I found it shut, and was obliged to creep through a hole in the city wall known to the cunning Ná'íb Hasan.

Friday, 14th June, 4th Shawwal.—This afternoon Mullá Yúsuf the Ezêfî and one of his friends came to visit me and continue the discussion of yesterday. They talked much about Reason, and the Universal Intelligence, which, according to the words "Àwâln mā khalâkon lâhînî'l-'Akî," was the first Creation or Emanation of God, and which, at diverse times and in diverse manners, has spoken to mankind through the mouth of the prophets. Reason, said they, is of four kinds: 'àkî bi'l-kiyâla ("Potential Reason," such as exists in an untaught child); 'àkî bi'l-šî'î ("Actual" or "Effective Reason," such as belongs to those of cultivated intelligence); 'àkî bi'l-mallâka ("Habitual Reason," such as the angels enjoy); and 'àkî-i-nus'tâkî ("All-sufficing Reason"). This last is identical with the "First Intelligence" (àkî-i-awwal), or "Universal Reason" (àkî-i-kûl), which inspires the prophets, and, indeed, becomes incarnate in them, so that by it they have knowledge of all things—that is, of their essences, not of the technical terms which in the eyes of men constitute an integral part of science. Whosoever is endowed with this "All-sufficing Reason," and claims to be a prophet, must be accepted as such; but unless he chooses to
advance this claim, men are not obliged to accord him this rank. Next in rank to the prophet (nabi) is the saint (vâli), whose essential characteristic is a love for God which makes him ready to lay down his life willingly and joyfully for His sake. The love of the vâli is such that by it he often becomes insensible to pain. Thus it is related of ‘Ali b. Abi Ṭâlib, the first Imam, that he was once wounded in the foot by an arrow. Attempts made to extract it only resulted in detaching the shaft from the barb, which remained in the wound, and caused so much pain that it seemed impossible for ‘Ali to endure any further operation. Then said one of his sons, “Wait till the time for prayer comes round, for when my father is engaged in prayer he becomes unconscious of all earthly things, being wholly absorbed in communion with God, and you can then extract the arrow-head without his so much as feeling it.” And this they did with complete success.

Mullâ Yûsuf told me another anecdote about ‘Ali, which, though it is well-known to students of Arabic history, will bear repetition. He had overthrown an infidel foe, and, kneeling on his prostrate body, was about to dispatch him with his sword, when the fallen unbeliever spat in his face. Thereupon ‘Ali at once relinquished his hold on his adversary, rose to his feet, and sheathed his sword. On being asked the reason of this, he replied, “When he spat in my face I was filled with anger against him, and I feared that, should I kill him, personal indignation would partially actuate me; wherfore I let him go, since I would not kill him otherwise than from a sincere and unmixed desire to serve God.”

At this point our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Mirzâ Yûsuf of Tabrîz accompanied by one of the Prince’s servants, who in turn were followed by Ferîdûn and Nâ‘îb Hasan. The two last and Mirzâ Yûsuf remained to drink wine after the others had gone; and Mirzâ Yûsuf, who was in a boastful humour, began to say, “If you wish to know anything about

the Bábís, I am the man to tell you, for I knew all their chief men at Yezd, and, indeed, professed myself a convert to their doctrines so as to gain their confidence. They gave me some of their books to read, including one wherein the reader was addressed in such words as ‘O child of Earth, ‘O child of my handmaid,’ and the like.” And in fact Mirzâ Yûsuf had succeeded in finding out a good deal about the Bábís, though his information was in some matters erroneous. He declared, for instance, that Qurratu’l-‘Ayn was put to death by being cast from the summit of the Citadel (Arg) at Tabrîz, but that the first time she was launched into the air she was so buoyed up by her clothes that she escaped all hurt. My last visitor was Seyyid Hasan of Jandâ, whose arrival caused the other guests to conceal the wine, and, at the earliest possible opportunity, to depart. He was in a captious frame of mind, finding fault with the newspaper Akhtâr (of which the Sheykh of Kum had sent me a recent issue) for talking about the Zillu’s Sultan’s “resignation” (istîf‘â), instead of calling it, in plain Persian, his dismissal (uzâf), and taking exception to sundry idioms and expressions in a letter from the Prince-Governor of Yezd, which, at his request, I allowed him to read.

Saturday, 15th June, 5th Shawwâl.—To-day, while I was sitting in the shop of a merchant of my acquaintance, Hâji Abdûllâh of Shirzâ, Bahrâm-i-Bihruz hurried up to inform me that his friend the magician, Hâji Mirzâ Muhsin, the controller of spirits and genies, was at that moment in his shop, and that if I would come thither he would present me to him. I wished to go at


2 Mirzâ Yûsuf had evidently mixed together a real fact—the Báb’s martyrdom in the square of the citadel at Tabrîz—and a story referring to the miraculous escape of a woman cast from its summit, which story has been already referred to at p. 64, supra.
once, but Háji 'Abdu'lláh and Ná'ím Hasan strove to detain me, and while we were engaged in discussion the magician passed by the shop in person. Háji 'Abdu'lláh invited him to enter, which he at first declined to do, and made as though he would pass on; but suddenly changing his mind he turned back, entered the shop, and seated himself amongst us.

"This Sáhib," said Ná'ím Hasan, as soon as the customary greetings had been interchanged, "has heard of your skill in the occult sciences, and desires to witness a specimen of the powers with which you are credited."

"What would it profit him?" replied the magician; and then, turning to me, "Is your motive in desiring to witness an exhibition of my powers a mere idle curiosity? Or is it that you seek to understand the science by means of which I can produce effects beyond the power or comprehension of your learned men?"

"Sir," I answered, "my object in making this request is, in the first instance, to obtain ocular evidence of the existence of powers generally denied by our men of learning, but which I, in the absence of any sufficient evidence, presume neither to deny nor to affirm. If, having given me such evidence of their existence as I desire, you will further condescend to acquaint me with some of the principles of your science, I need not say that my gratitude will be increased. But even to be convinced that such powers exist would be a great gain."

"You have spoken well," said the magician with approval, "and I am willing to prove to you the reality of that science concerning which you doubt. But first of all let me tell you that all that I can accomplish I do by virtue of powers centred in myself, not, as men affirm, by the instrumentalities of the jinn, which, indeed, are mere creatures of the imagination, and have no real existence. Has any one of you a comb?"

Háji 'Abdu'lláh at once produced a comb from the recesses of his pocket, and handed it to Háji Muḥsin, who threw it on the ground at a distance of about three feet from him to the left. Then he again turned to me, and said—

"Are your men of learning acquainted with any force inherent in the human body whereby motion may be communicated, without touch, to a distant object?"

"No," I replied, "apart from the power of attraction latent in amber, the magnet, and some other substances, we know of no such force; certainly not in the human body."

"Very well," said he, "then if I can make this comb come to me from the spot where it lies, you will have to admit that I possess a power whereby your learned men do not even know the existence. That the distance is in this case small, and the object light and easily movable, is nothing, and does not in the least degree weaken the force of the proof. I could equally transport you from the garden where you live to any place which I chose. Now look."

Then he moistened the tip of his finger with his tongue, leaned over to the left, and touched the comb once, after which he resumed his former position, beckoned to the comb with the fingers of his left hand, and called "Bi-yá, bi-yá" ("Come! come!"). Thereat, to my surprise, the comb spun rapidly round once or twice, and then began to advance towards him in little leaps, he continuing the while to beckon it onwards with the fingers of his left hand, which he did not otherwise move. So far one might have supposed that when he touched the comb with his moistened finger-tip he had attached to it a fine hair or strand of silk, by which, while appearing but to beckon with his fingers, he dexterously managed to draw the comb towards him. But now, as the comb approached within eighteen inches or so of his body, he extended his left hand beyond it, continuing to call and beckon as before; so that for the remainder of its course it was receding from the hand, always with the same jerky, spasmodic motion.

Háji Muḥsin now returned the comb to its owner, and
requested me for the loan of my watch. I handed to him the
clumsy, china-backed watch which I had bought at Teheran to
replace the one which I had lost between Erzeroum and Tabriz,
and he did with it as he had done with the comb, save that,
when he began to call and beckon to it, it made one rapid
gyrations and a short leap towards him, and then stopped. He
picked it up, looked closely at it, and returned it to me, saying,
"There is something amiss with this watch of yours; it seems to
me that it is stolen property."

"Well," I replied rather tartly, "I did not steal it at any rate;
I bought it in Teheran for three riyals to replace my own watch,
which I lost in Turkey. How it came into the hands of him from
whom I bought it I cannot, of course, say."

After this the magician became very friendly with me, pro-
mising to visit me in my lodging and show me feats far more
marvellous than what I had just witnessed. "You shall select
any object you choose," said he, "and bury it wherever you
please in your garden, so that none but yourself shall know
where it is hidden. I will then come and pronounce certain
incantations over a brass cup, which will then lead me
direct to the place where the object is buried." Hearing that
I was to visit the vazir of Kirmân, he insisted on accompa-
nying me.

The vazir was a courteous old man of very kindly countenance
and gentle manners, and I stayed conversing with him for more
than half an hour. A number of persons were present, including
the kalimâr, or mayor, whose servant had that morning received
a severe application of the bastinado for having struck the khat-
ghâdâr, or chief man, of a village to which he had been sent to
collect taxes or rents. Hajj Mîrzâ Muhsin, who lacked nothing
so little as assurance, gave the vazir a sort of lecture on me (as
though I were a curious specimen), which he concluded, some-
what to my consternation, by declaring that he intended to
accompany me back to my own country, and to enlighten the
ignorance of its learned men as to the occult sciences, of which
he was a master.

On leaving the vazir's presence, I accompanied the magician
to his lodging, and was introduced to his brother, a fine-looking
man of middle age, dressed after the fashion of the Baghdañis
in jubbâ, fez, and white turban, who spoke both Arabic and
Ottoman Turkish with fluency. There were also present a
number of children, belonging, as I gathered, to Hajj Mîrzâ
Muhsin, who was still mourning a domestic tragedy which had
recently led to the death of his eldest son, a lad of sixteen.
"Ah, you should have seen him," he said, "such a handsome
boy, and so quick and clever. None of my other children can
compare with him." He did not acquaint me with the details
of his son's untimely death, which, according to Nâ'îb Hasan,
were as follows:—One of Mîrzâ Muhsin's servants, or disciples,
had a very beautiful wife, with whom his son fell madly in
love. Mîrzâ Muhsin, on being informed by the boy of his
passion, promised to induce the girl's husband to free her by
divorce. In this he succeeded, but, instead of bestowing her
hand on his son, he married her himself. The lad remonstrated
vehemently with his father, who only replied, "It was for my
sake, not yours, that her former husband divorced her." There-
upon the boy, in an access of passionate disappointment, shot
himself through the head two stages out from Kirmân, whither
they were then journeying from Sirjân.

Sunday, 16th June, 6th Shawwal.—To-day I was invited to take
my mid-day meal (nabîr) with the postmaster. On my way
thither I encountered, near the Derwâz-e-Masjid, one of my Zoro-
astrian friends, Key-Khosraw, who informed me with some
excitement that two "Firangi" had just arrived in Kirmân.
"Come and talk to them," he added, "for they are now in the
street a little farther on." I accordingly followed him, though
with no great alacrity, for I enjoyed the feeling of being the only
European in Kirmân, and had no wish to spoil the unmixedly
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Persian character of my environment by forming an acquaintance
with two promiscuous Europeans, who might very likely, I
thought, be mere adventurers, and whose presence I was in-
clined to resent. We soon found one of the newcomers, a little
grey-bearded Frenchman, who was very reticent as to his object
in visiting Kirman, and told me no more than that his com-
panion (also French) spoke English much better than himself
(which I could readily believe, for his pronunciation was vile,
and his vocabulary most meagre), and that they had come from
Turkistan (Bukhara and Samarqand) by way of Mashhad, and
thence through the deserts, by way of Tus and Tabas, to Kirman.
He then went on to enquire with some eagerness whether there
were in the town any cafes or wine-shops (wine-shops in Kir-
man!), and seemed much disappointed when he heard that there
were not. I soon left him, and proceeded to the postmaster's
house.

There I found one Mitrá Muhammad Khán, of the Sháh
Nímatulláhi order of dervishes; Sheykh Ibráhími of Sultán-ábád;
and another, a parcer of peas (nokbád-bíríc) by profession,
whom, as I shall have to say a good deal about him before I
bid farewell to Kirman, and as I do not wish to mention his real
name, I will call Ustá Akbar. Till lunch-time we sat in the
takhal-khání ("idler's room" or drawing-room), smoking kelyáns
and conversing on general topics, including, of course, religion.
The postmaster told me that he had a book wherein the truth of
each dispensation, down to the present one (or Bábí "Mani-
ifestation"), was proved by that which preceded it; and this book
he promised to lend me so soon as it was returned to him by a
Zoroastrian in whose hands it then was. I asked him about the
signs which should herald the "Manifestation" of the "End of
Time," and he said that amongst them were the following:—
That men should ride on iron horses; that they should talk with
one another from great distances; that they should talk on their
fingers; and that men should wear women's clothes and women
men's; "of which signs," he added, "you will observe that the
first clearly indicates the railroad, the second the telephone, and
the third the telegraph; so that nothing is wanting to apprise
men of the advent of the Most Great Theophany." I enquired
of him, as I had previously enquired of the Sheykh of Kúm, as
to the best and most authentic collections of Shiíte traditions,
and he mentioned with especial commendation the Ušíl-i-Kafi,
the Rawza-i-Kafi, and the Man bi-yawzír of Faqíh.

After lunch most of the guests indulged in a nap, but the
parcer of peas came and talked to me for a while in a very wild
strain, with which I subsequently became only too familiar. "If
you would see Adam," he said, "I am Adam; if Noah, I am
Noah; if Abraham, I am Abraham; if Moses, I am Moses; if
Christ, lo, I am Christ." "Why do you not say at once 'I am
God'?" I retorted. "Yes," he replied, "there is naught but He,"
I tried to ascertain his views as to the future of the human soul,
but could extract from him no very satisfactory answer. "As
one candle is lit from another," he said, "so is life kindled from
life. If the second candle should say, 'I am the first candle,' it
speaks truly, for, in essence, it is indeed that first candle which
has thrust forth its head from another garment."

Presently we were interrupted by the arrival of visitors, the
officious and meddlesome Haji Muhammad Khán, and the Mullá-
báshí. As soon as the customary forms of politeness had been
gone through, the latter turned to me, saying—
"Sahib, what is all this that we hear about you and Haji
Mitrá Muhsin the magician? Is it true?"

"If you would kindly tell me what you have heard," I replied,
"I should be better able to answer your question."

"Well," he answered, "Haji Mitrá Muhsín is telling every-
one that you, being skilled in the Magic of the West, had chal-
enged him to a contest; that you gave what proofs you could
of your power, and he of his; but that he wrought marvels
beyond your power, and, amongst other things, wrote a few lines
on a piece of paper, burned it before your eyes, and then drew it out from your pocket. That thereupon you had said that if he could summon the spirit of your father and cause it to converse with you in the French language, you would embrace the religion of Islam; and that he had done what you demanded. Is this true? and are you really going to become a Musulmān?"

"Really," I replied, "I am not; and, were I disposed to do so, Ḥājī Muḥsin (whom, after what you have told me, I must regard as a liar of quite exceptional attainments) is not exactly the sort of person who would effect my conversion. As for his story, every word of it is false; all that actually happened was this" (here I described our meeting in Ḥājī Shīrāzī's shop). "Furthermore, my father, by the grace of God, is alive and in good health; neither do I see why, in any case, he should address me in French, since my language and his is English."

On returning to the garden I found Afzal Khān the Belūkh and his retainers, Mullā Gushṭāb, and Akā Seyyid Ḥuseyn of Ḥanḍā, awaiting my arrival. The first, somewhat overpowered by the Seyyid's theology, probably, left very soon; but the Seyyid, as usual, stayed a long while and talked a great deal. He first of all produced a small treatise on physiognomy ("ilm-i-kināfā), of which he declared himself to be the author, and proceeded to apply the principles therein laid down to me. "You have a long arm and long fingers," said he, "which shows that you are determined to wield authority and to exercise supremacy over your fellows, also that you take care that whatever work you do shall be sound and thorough." He next produced a collection of aphorisms which he had written out for me, of which the only one I remember is, "Eat the bread of no man, and withhold thine own bread from none." He then dictated to me four questions connected with religion, which he wished me to copy out on four separate pieces of paper, and send to the Prince-Governor, with a letter requesting him to submit them to four learned theologians (whom he named), and to require them to give an immediate answer, without consulting together or taking time to reflect. "You will see," the Seyyid remarked, with an anticipatory chuckle, "that they will all give different answers, and all wrong, so that the Prince will recognise the inadequacy of their learning." I only remember one of these questions, which ran as follows: "Which of the four gospels now in the hands of the Christians is the invil mentioned in the Korān?"

While we were engaged in this conversation, the proprietor of the garden, Mīrzā Jawād, son of Akā Seyyid Raḥīm, the late vazīr of Kirmān, was announced. He was a portly, pleasant-looking man of about forty-five or fifty, and was accompanied by his son, a very beautiful boy of unusually fair complexion, with dark-blue eyes, and long eyebrows and eyelashes, rendered even more conspicuous than they would naturally have been by a liberal application of surma (antimony). The Seyyid, however, did not allow their presence long to interrupt the unceasing stream of his eloquence, and began to catechise me about the gospels, asserting that the very fact of there being four proved that they were spurious, and that the true gospel had disappeared from the earth. He then enquired whether wine was lawful according to our law. I replied that it was, inasmuch as we knew that Christ Himself tasted wine on several occasions. "I take refuge with God!" cried the Seyyid; "it is a calumny: this alone is sufficient to prove that your gospels are spurious, for none of the prophets have ever drunk wine."

"Well," I said, "I do not quite see your object in trying to disprove the genuineness of our gospels. I imagine that you wish to convince me of the truth of Islam, but please to remember that if you could succeed in convincing me that the gospels now in our hands are forgeries, you having no other and genuine gospel to put in their place, you would be no nearer converting me to Islam, but rather farther from it than at present. You would either make me disbelieve in revealed religion altogether, or you would drive me back on the Pentateuch and make me
people of Kirmán are the greatest gossips and scandal-mongers under the sun; and the people of Kirmán will say that you go there to see Panba, who is the most beautiful woman in the city.”

“What nonsense!” I exclaimed, “why, I never even heard of Panba till this moment, and when I go to see Mirzá — I am naturally not introduced to his wives.”

“Never you mind that,” said he; “take my advice and keep away from his house. You can’t be too careful here. You don’t know what the Kirmánis are like. It was a most fortunate thing that Mirzá Jawid found me here when he came to see you.”

“It was very nice for him,” I replied, “no doubt. But why so specially fortunate?”

“Because,” answered he, “seeing that I am your friend and associate, and hearing our improving conversation, he will think the better of you, and will be the slower to credit any slanders against you which he may hear.”

“I am not aware,” said I, “that I have given any occasion for slander.”

“Perhaps you do not know what people say about your servant Hájí Sáfar’s sigba?” returned he.

“What do you mean?” I demanded sharply; “I was not aware that he had a sigba.”

The Seyyid laughed—a little, unpleasant, incredulous laugh. “Really?” said he; “that is very curious. I should have supposed that he would have consulted you first. Anyhow, there is no doubt about the matter, for I drew up the contract myself. And men say that the sigba, though taken in his name, was really intended for you.”

Here I must explain what a sigba is. A Shi’ite may, according to his law, contract a temporary marriage with a woman of his

1 For fuller details see Quéré’s Droit Musulman (Paris, 1871), vol. 1, pp. 689–695, from which admirable compendium of Shi’ite law I have drawn several of the particulars given in the text.