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AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY OF
PERSIAN LITERATURE

BY

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THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE object of this book is to give, from the literary point of view and from direct reading of the literature itself, as brief a store-house of information as is essential for an intelligent appreciation of the Persian Literature. It purports to be only an introduction to a very great subject, and is chiefly designed for the undergraduates of the Indian Universities where Persian is mostly studied. My aim throughout has been to present the subject in a concise form, so that it may be neither too elaborate for College use, nor too elementary for the scholar. In a work of this nature, a greater minuteness in detail and citations in support of the opinions advanced are both unnecessary and impossible. Hence, many an eminent writer has received scanty treatment, and many well-known names have been entirely passed over. Some will, no doubt, wish to supplement the book with detailed explanation of many points; on the other hand some may prefer to trace only, from period to period and from age to age, the growth and development of the wonderful literature of Persia. It is hoped this work will be useful to both these classes, serving as a basis for study, and stimulating further investigation and more critical and thorough reading of the books themselves. And especially in the absence of any one

book dealing with the whole subject from the earliest times down to the nineteenth century, this work will, I believe, supply a long-existing need of the Indian Colleges.

It would be presumptuous on my part to claim that this work is absolutely free from blunders and errors of judgment. But the indulgent reader will overlook all such imperfections of the book and the shortcomings of the author when he considers the complexity of the subject and the difficulties of independent enquiry.

Finally, I ought to make a full acknowledgment here of my indebtedness to the learned Orientalists whose works I have frequently and profitably studied. But there is one author who must be mentioned separately—I mean Professor E. G. Browne, the great Cambridge Orientalist of world-wide reputation. His 'Literary History of Persia' was of immense help to me in my research work, and made me constantly go back to the native sources of information. And if in some instances I have differed from him in my estimate of different authors it is solely because my own private reading and independent enquiry have led me to conclusions other than his.

*Baptist Mission,
Delhi*

JOEL WAIZ LAL.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In bringing out this second and Revised Edition of this well-known book the main object underlying the original has been carefully preserved, only an attempt has been made to increase its usefulness by making it up-to-date. For this purpose, the subject matter has been carefully revised and, besides some additions and alterations suggested by recent authoritative researches, supplemented by the addition of several useful and interesting foot-notes. Suitable sub-headings have been assigned to each paragraphe. Chapters XIII and XIV (dealing with the Qachar Period and the post-Revolution Persian Literature) have been practically rewritten. The following are entirely new features:—

1. An Appendix giving some useful information about the ancient Persian inscriptions.
2. A map of the country showing the situation of all the important inscriptions as also of the important towns and provinces connected in one way or the other, with the literary history of the land.
3. An Index giving the names of the authors and their works noticed in the book.

In its present form, it is hoped, the book will be found still more useful than its predecessor.

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AN INTRODUCTORY HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY

The Philological Division of Languages. The Persian language belongs to the Aryan branch of the Indo-European family of tongues. A family of languages means a large group exhibiting an unmistakable likeness in words, grammatical forms, and general structure of sentences. In a like manner, a branch indicates a smaller group in which we find, besides the main characteristics of the larger group, a certain similarity in words and forms peculiar to that one group, and not found in other members of the family. This similarity furnishes an indubitable proof of the original union of all members of the family who, at some remote age, had a common ancestry, a common home, and a common language. In course of time when the members of the family who lived together multiplied and grew in numbers, separation from one another and migration to other parts of the surrounding regions became not only necessary but inevitable. This separation naturally tended to divergences of language emphasised by the climatic and physical conditions of the new homes. Thus began that differentiating

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process which finally resulted in different dialects. A casual observer, perhaps, will not note anything in common between them. But a philologist, who studies them closely and critically, will recognise in them a body of cognate words and certain forms of inflection which he is able to trace to a common source.

The Four Most Important Families.—There are, in all, about one hundred families of languages known to the philologist. Of these the Hamitic, the Semitic, the Ural-Altaic, and the Indo-European families are the most important. They have been carefully and systematically studied by Western scholars whose indefatigable labours have led to the growth and development of a science of languages known as Philology. It is to their researches that we are indebted for the light thrown on the history of our ancestors in the distant past. Much is still buried in obscurity ; but the facts discovered are sufficient to establish the ethnic and linguistic relationship of nations included in the Indo-European family. The testimony of language is irrefragable on this point.

The Indo-European Family and its Branches. Eight branches are comprised in the Indo-European family, viz., the Aryan, the Armenian, the Hellenic, the Lithuanian or the Lettic, the Slavic, the Teutonic, and the Celtic. Each of these has several

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sub-divisions. In order to prove the original unity of the languages enumerated above, it would suffice to take only a few sets of every-day words, and show their resemblance to one another in spelling, and their identity in meaning. But even more convincing than this is a study of the changes undergone from age to age, and the roots and suffixes common to them all. It is, in fact, the constancy of the formal and phonetic changes, brought about by the law of dialectal alteration, which puts the question of the original unity of these languages beyond all reasonable doubt. So, then, the very divergences of the dialects, spoken by the various tribes of the Indo-European family, give us the surest proof of their genealogical affinity. Hence, if the Indo-European family of languages has existed to this day with its roots, terminations, declensions, and conjugations that are so strikingly similar, it must have taken rise in a region where the ancestors of the Hindus, the Persians, the Greeks, the Italians, the Armenians, the Slavonians, the Germans, and the Celts, could live together, and speak the same language. The terms for God, for house, for father, mother, son, and daughter, for dog and cow, for axe and tree are almost identical in all the Indo-European languages. Besides these, they have hundreds of other words which have, practically, the same spelling and meaning.

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The tables of words, given at the end of this chapter, will enable the reader to judge of the truth of this statement.

The Primeval Seat of Civilization.—The original home of our ancestors seems to have been in the table-lands of Central Asia, though some philologists have placed it in regions about the Black Sea in southern Russia. Probably, the country about the Caspian Sea, towards the south-western slopes, formed in the primitive times, the chief stage on which the drama of history was exhibited. Sacred writings, ancient traditions, and proofs and indications derived from the study of Ethnology and Philology, all agree in pointing to these regions as the primeval seat of civilization, where kindred feelings and community of interest facilitated the cultivation of arts and commerce. A rich soil, irrigated by numerous streams, and valuable natural products, rendered them best fitted for the encouragement and promotion of civilization.

The Ancestors of the Indo-European Peoples.—The ancestors of the Indo-European peoples were, in part, shepherds, and, in part, tillers of the soil. They were, in the main, monogamous, and worshipped the heavenly bodies. The pressure of the Mongols, consisting of hordes of nomadic tribes, drove them from their original home. Complete separation from one

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another, and their migration to distant lands, caused such divergences in their expressions and idioms as to make their dialects unintelligible to one another. We may divide the whole family into two branches— the northern, and the southern. The northern branch pursued a north-westerly direction, and gave birth to the leading nations of Europe and North-western Asia. They appear in history as the principal actors in the great drama of human life. Their splendid literatures, their wonderful organizations, their political achievements, their marvellous progress in Art, Science, and Philosophy, are facts attested alike by their languages as well as by history.

The southern branch migrated towards Persia and India. With regard to the past of the Hindus and Persians, we have the testimony of the Vedas, of the national epics, and of the Zend-Avesta. Their primitive country which they call Aryavarta is the same as the Arya-Vœdja of the Iranians. The Hindu Aryans crossed the Hindu-Kush, and descended into the Panjab. Thence they slowly advanced to Bengal and the Deccan, conquered the great peninsula, and subdued the aboriginal races of the land. The Persian Aryans proceeded to Bactriana whence they were driven by the Turanians, their legendary and historic enemies. Some of these Persian Aryans poured into

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Media and Armenia. The others massed themselves by degrees in Persia proper, where they ultimately succeeded in wresting the empire from the Medes and the Babylonians.

The Achievements of the Indo-Europeans.—In conclusion, it only remains to be said, that for the last two or three thousand years, the direction of the world has fallen to the nations belonging to the Indo-European family. Wherever they have gone, they have established monarchies and empires, and founded institutions and great seats of culture and civilization. And, above all, they have given us religions and philosophies which, in range, depth, variety, and power, are still unsurpassed. They have achieved whatever unaided human reason and imagination could achieve. In their attempt to solve the great problems of human life, and its ultimate destiny, they were irresistibly led on to speculate and meditate on things unseen and eternal. Instinct, impulse, curiosity, religious fervour, all these factors combined to produce schools of thought and systems of philosophy. The very exigencies of their case compelled them to develop all the resources of their language, and make it capable of expressing various shades of meaning, and different phases of thought. This, in reality, constitutes the great charm and fascination of Greek, and Sanskrit, and Zoroastrian literatures.

Three sets of words of the Indo-European Languages identical
in sound and meaning.

TABLE I.

English equivalents.	Sans- krit.	Lithua- nian.	Zend.	Greek (Doric).	Old Slav.	Latin.	Gothic.	Arme- nian.	Modern Persian.
I am	Asmi	Esmi	Ahmi	Emmi	Vesme	Sum	In	Em	Suffixes. Am
Thou art	Asi	Essi	Ahi	Essi	Vesi	Es	Is	Es	I
He is	Asti	Esti	Asti	Esti	Vesto	Est	Ist	E	Ad.
We are	'Smas	Esmi	Hmahi	Esmes	Vesmo	Sumus	Sijum	Emq	Em.
You are	Stha	Este	Sta	Este	Veste	Estis	Sijuth	Eq	Ed.
They are	Santi	(Esti)	Henti	Enti	Somte	Sunt	Sind	End	And.

TABLE II.

Meaning in English	Sanskrit.	Zend.	Greek.	Latin.	Gothic.	Slavonic.	Celtic.
Father	Pitar	Patar	Pater	Pater	Fadar		Athair
Mother	Matar	Matar	Meter	Mater		Mati	Mathair
Brother	Bhratar	Bratar	Phrater	Frater	Brothar	Brat	Brathair
Sister	Svasar	Qanhar		Soror	Svistar	Sestra	Siur
Daughter	Duhitar	Dughdar	Thugater		Dauhter		Dear
Cattle	Pashu	Pasu	Pou	Pecu	Fibu		
Ox & cow	Gaus	Gao	Bous	Bos	Chuo	Govjado	Bo
Steer	Sthura	Staora	Tauros	Taurus	Stiur	Tour	Tor
Horse	Asva	Apa	Hippos	Equus			
(Hound)							
Dog	Svan	Spa	Kuon	Canis		Sobaka	
Sheep	Avi		Ois	Ovis	Avistr	Ovjza	
Mouse	Mush	Mush	Mus	Mus	Mus	Mysz	
Fly	Makshika	Makshi	Muia	Musca		Mucha	
Ox	Ukshan	Ukshan		Vacca	Auhsan		Ych
Bear	Riksha		Arktos	Ursus		Lokys	Art
Wolf	Vrika		Lukos	(v) irpus		Wilkas	
Serpent	Sarpa	Sarp	Herpeton	Serpens			Sarff

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TABLE III.

Meaning in English	Sanskrit	Greek	Latin	Lithuanian	Gothic	Modern Persian
One	Ekas	Eis (Oine)	Unus	Wienas	Ains	Yak
Two	Dvan	Duo	Luo	Du	Tvai	Do
Three	Trayas	Treis	Tres	Trys	Threis	Sih
Four	Chatvaras	Tettares	Quatuor	Kettri	Fidvor	Chahar
Five	Pancha	Pente	Quinque	Penki	Finif	Panj
Six	Shash	Hex	Sex	Szeszi	Saihs	Shash
Seven	Sapta	Hepta	Septem	Septyni	Sibun	Haft
Eight	Ashtau	Okto	Octo	Asztuni	Ahtan	Hasht
Nine	Nava	Hennea	Novem	Dewyni	Niu-n	Nuh
Ten	Dasa	Deka	Decem	Deszimt	Taihun	Dih
Hundred	Satam	Hekaton	Centum	Szintas	Taihun tai hund.	Sad

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Four Important Conclusions.—A careful examination of the fore-going sets of words will show their identity in sound and meaning. Moreover, they will enable us to draw the following conclusions :—

First, that all of them are but various forms of one common type.

Secondly, that none of them can be considered as the original from which the others have been borrowed.

Thirdly, that Modern Persian is a lineal offspring of the language spoken by Persian Aryans of antiquity.

Fourthly, that Persian is related to the Aryan Branch of the Indo-European family.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY HISTORY OF PERSIA

In order to show the different periods of Persian literature in its early stage, it is necessary to give a short account of the early history of the land. In this chapter we shall endeavour to sketch briefly the most important historical events up to the time of the Moslem invasion of Persia. The reader will understand that the aim of the writer is to present only a general outline of the subject. Therefore any thing like a lengthy discussion of facts or events will be rigidly excluded as not falling within the scope of the present chapter.

How Iran came to be called Persia.—Persia, or rather the Greek form Persis, was originally the name of a small province, Pars, near the Persian Gulf. It was bounded on the north by Media and Parthia, and on the north-west by Susiana. Later on, the name 'Persia' was extended to the whole of the Iranian upland. 'Iran,' the native name of the country, is used much in the same sense now by the present inhabitants.

The Persians.—The Persians appear to have formed part of a great Aryan migration which began

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at a very remote time. Their fore-fathers are said to have inhabited the regions about the Caspian Sea. The line of migration seems to have been first eastward into Bactriana. Here they came into conflict with the Turanians, who were of the Mongolian race. The incessant wars in which they were involved caused them to migrate once more. This time they proceeded westward along the Elburz range into Armenia and Atropatene (Azerbaijan); then south along the Zagros into Media; and finally south-east into Parthia and Persia proper. The tribes that settled there belonged to the Aryan stock.

The Assyrian Influence over the Ancient Iranian peoples.—The earlier portions of the Zend-Avesta indicate the existence of powerful Aryan states in the great plateau of Iran, and in the low districts of the Caspian Sea at a very remote period. Bactriana seems to have been the seat of Aryan power in these primitive times. In course of time, when these Aryan tribes migrated westward, and settled down in Parthia, Media, and Persia proper, they became tributary to the Assyrian kings of Nineveh. Ecbatana or Hamadan, the capital of the Medes, is mentioned in an inscription of TIGLATH PILESER (about B. C. 1160), king of Assyria, as a subject territory. SALMANESAR II, (B.C. 858-823) another

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king of Assyria, contended with the Medes and the Persians, and subdued them. After the fall of Samaria, (B.C. 720) the Israelites were transported to Assyria, and placed according to Noldeke, "in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gözan, and in the cities of the Medes." Most of the Israelite captives carried their sacred books with them into the distant province of Media. The influence which they must have exercised over the Medians on account of their superior culture and religion has very seldom received adequate attention. If the critics are right in saying that ZOROASTER was a Median, then it is not unlikely that he borrowed part of his monotheistic doctrines from the scripture of the Hebrew exiles. There is a Jewish tradition that he was a disciple of the prophet NAHUM.

The Medians.—The series of the great Iranian monarchies begins for us with the Median empire. The Medes were the first of the subject peoples who freed themselves from the Assyrian yoke (B.C. 700) after five centuries of submission. For a time they lived without a master till DEIOCES obtained the kingly power. His successor PHRAORTES (Fravartish of the inscriptions, B.C. 647-625) extended his sway beyond the limits of Media, and subjugated the Persians. We learn from DARIUS'S great inscription

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that during this time Persia had kings of its own. They seem to have been vassals of the Median emperor. CYAXERE; (HUVAKHSHATARA, B.C. 625-585) the successor of PHRAORTE;, brought the empire to the highest pitch of power. It was he who destroyed Nineveh in B.C. 607, in conjunction with NEBUCHAD-NEZZAR, king of Babylon. In the reign of ASTYAGES (B.C. 585-539) the sceptre passed from the Medes to the Persians. The Median empire was not destroyed; it was only transformed. Another race of the Iranian people and another dynasty stood at the head of the empire. Nor was there any change of language or writing. Both the Medes and the Persians had the same language and the same script, and professed the Zoroastrian faith. Under the Persian rule the Magi, who were a Median tribe, were in full possession of the priesthood in the empire.

Persia under Cyrus, the Great.—According to Persian inscriptions CYRUS (B.C. 559-529) was descended from ACHÆMENES who ascended the throne of Persia about a century before him. Relations of a feudal character bound Persia to Media in the age preceding CYRUS. After his accession to the throne, he overthrew the Medians and pushed Persia into the imperial position. Babylonia and other neighbouring states were soon added to his dominions. Soon after

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that, he carried the Persian arms to the furthest limits of Asia Minor. He professed a purer form of Zoroastrianism than the Medes, and made it the State religion. According to HERODOTUS the Persians were a monotheistic people, and their abhorrence of idols was pushed almost to fanaticism. In sacred history, CYRUS is known as the liberator of the Jewish exiles whom NEBUCHADNEZZAR had transported to Babylon. May it not be that he and his countrymen were influenced by the pure and lofty teachings of the Hebrew prophets? Be this as it may, it cannot be denied that the reign of CYRUS ushered in a new and momentous era. The fate of Western Asia had been, so far, in the hands of the Semitic nations. They had been virtually the makers of history. But now the ascendancy of the Persians meant the ascendancy of the Aryan or Indo-European races who were, henceforth, to sway the destiny of mankind.

Persia under Darius I.—Under DARIUS I Persian dominion reached from the Indian Desert to the borders of Thessaly, and from the Caucasus to Ethiopia. It was he who set up the great rock inscription at Behistun (Bagistana), the most valuable of all the Persian monumental remains. The period of Persian domination is very important. The language of CYRUS

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and DARIUS was the language of the Avesta, and as such it was the mother of the Persian spoken to-day. The cuneiform inscriptions on rocks and buildings are in this language. They are found at BEHISTUN, PERSEPOLIS, HAMADAN, and VAN, and cover the period from CYRUS, B. C. 550, to ARTAXERXES OCHUS, B. C. 350.

Alexander's Invasion of Persia and its effects.

With the advent of ALEXANDER, the current of history changes once more. The Persian rule represented the domination of the East. In B. C. 331, when ALEXANDER, shattered the Persian power at the decisive battle of ARBELA, the palm of political leadership passed on to the West. The Macedonian invasion touched only the surface of Persian life, and did not produce any lasting effect upon the people. But it destroyed, at least for a time, the prestige and power of Zoroastrianism. Literature, too, suffered an irreparable loss at the hands of the conqueror. ALEXANDER, in a drunken fit, ordered that the palace and royal archives at Persepolis (Istakhr) should be burned, and his order was only too faithfully executed. In a few hours, all that the ACHÆMENIANS had so zealously collected in their library, was committed to the flames. This vandalism swept away all the learning and culture of the ancient Persians, and reduced the greater part of their sacred books to ashes.

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Persia under the Parthian Rule.—After the death of ALEXANDER, the country remained in the hands of his successors for about two centuries. In B. C. 140 ARSACES VI, King of Parthia, who is more commonly known as MITHRIDATES I, entirely expelled them, and became master of Persia. The Parthians belonged to the same stock as the Persians. In the main, they affected Persian customs, and spoke the same language. The court migrated at different seasons of the year to Ctesiphon, Ecbatana, and Hyrcania. The same dignity and state were maintained by the Parthian kings as by the kings of the ACHÆMENIAN line. After conquering Persia proper, MITHRIDATES added Bactria, Media, Susiana, and Babylonia to his empire. The Parthians were pious, and conscientiously observed all the precepts of Zoroastrianism. But the Magians were not so powerful under the Parthian kings as under the Sassanians later on. However, the restoration of the Magian priesthood brought about the resuscitation of the court-language of the Achæmenians, with a thin veneer of Hellenic culture and a mixture of Semitic words and idioms.

The Sassanians.—After five centuries of subjection, the Persians rose to power again under ARTAXERXES (ARDASHIR), son of BABAK, son of SASSAN. They defeated the Parthians in three great battles,

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and secured their independence. The Parthian empire thus suddenly came to an end in A. D. 226. The Sassanian rule marks the second great period of Persian literature which is of considerable bulk. The language in which it is written is known as HUZVARIŠH or, better still, PARIKAWI.

Persia under Ardashir.—ARTAXERXES (ARDASHIR) collected and published all the writings of Zoroaster on which he could lay hands. He placed symbols of fire-worship on his coins, and became a most zealous patron and defender of the Zoroastrian faith. On his inscriptions he styles himself a 'Mazdayasn' or orthodox Zoroastrian. From his days onwards, the priests of the Zoroastrian religion enjoyed great power in the land. ARDASHIR won a great empire and so consolidated it that it held together for nearly four centuries. His successors counted themselves strong enough to enter into a contest with ROME for political supremacy. It was he who collected and re-arranged the scattered fragments of the Zoroastrian scriptures. This noble work of reconstructing the Avesta was first undertaken in the reign of the Parthian King, VOLOGESES I, A. D. 51-78. Ardashir carried it on with vigour, and met with singular success.

The Muslim Invasion of Persia and its effects.

The Moslem invasion of Persia, however, changed the

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entire course of history. In A. D. 637, the Arabs shattered the Persian empire in the ever-memorable engagement of QADISIYA, and planted their own religion there which has endured, through all shocks and changes, to the present day. This sudden and complete conquest of Persia by the Moslems once more swept away all the sacred writings of the Zoroastrians, and scattered them to the winds. The old religion feebly lingered on in the fragment of the Sassanian empire, which lasted for over a century in Tabaristan; but its death-knell was sounded, and it never revived again in the land of its birth. Almost the whole of the population of Persia was, within a century, converted to the faith of the conquerors.

The Spread of Islam in Persia.—The rapid spread of Islam in Persia has been sometimes accounted for by the supposition that the Zoroastrians had to embrace the religion of MAHOMED at the point of the sword. This, however, is only partially true. The conversion of the Persians was, on the whole, voluntary and spontaneous, though it was not altogether peaceful. As time went on, Mahomedanism struck deeper and deeper root, and Persia was penetrated to the core by the new religion. The separate national existence of Persia ceased for a while. Politically, it was merged in that great empire which stretched from

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Gibraltar to the Great Wall of China. Intellectually, it did not lose, but gain. For the unrivalled literature of the Arabs gave dignity and compactness to the Persian language, and made it the *lingua franca* of central and southern Asia.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD LANGUAGES OF PERSIA

Ancient dialects of Persia.—In the preceding chapters I have shown the relation of the Iranian people to the Indo-European family of races, and touched on those facts of their early history which have a direct bearing upon our subject. In the present chapter we shall speak of their most important ancient languages. We know that these new settlers spoke several dialects that were, more or less, allied to one another. SYED HUSAIN SHAH HAQIQAT, a native grammarian, says that seven dialects were spoken in Persia in the early times, *viz.*, Sughdi Zabuli, Sakzi, Hiriwi, Parsi, Dari, and Pahlawi. Of these the first four are said to have become obsolete before the Moslem invasion of Persia. It would be futile to enter into a discussion of this statement. The languages that have come down to us, or rather the dialects whose specimens have been preserved to this day, are of more vital interest, therefore we shall confine ourselves strictly to their account.

The East Iranian and the West Iranian dialects.
Many Western scholars including the late Mr. E. G.

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BROWNE, and Professor REUBEN LEVY of the Oxford University, do not approve of it. But still for the sake of simplicity and convenience, it is well to class the old Iranian language, which has come down to us, under two heads,—(a) the East Iranian or Bactrian dialect, and (b) the West Iranian dialect which was the spoken and written language of Media and Persia proper. It is this second dialect which is, in reality, the mother of Persian spoken to-day.

Three Periods of the History of Persian Language.—In the palmy days of Persia the West Iranian was the literary language of the empire. It is known to us during the periods of antiquity, middle ages, and modern times. So, rightly speaking, the history of the Persian language naturally falls into the following well-defined periods :

- I. The Achæmenian period from B. C. 550–330.
The language of this period is called Old Persian.
- II. The Sassanian period from A. D. 226–651.
The language of this period is called Middle Persian.
- III. The Mahomedan period from about A. D. 960 down to the present time.
It is the period of Modern Persian.

The East Iranian or Bactrian Dialect.—The

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fragments of the Parsi scriptures that are still extant are written in the East Iranian or Bactrian dialect. It is the sacred language of the Zoroastrians, and stands to Old Persian of the Achæmenian period in the relation of sister. In the Parsi scriptures there are two forms of this dialect. The more ancient of them is called the "Gatha dialect;" while the other is called the "classical Avesta language." The Gathas, which represent the teachings and utterances of Zoroaster himself, show unmistakable traces of a higher antiquity. The language in which they are written is the same as that of the Avesta, with this difference that the "Gatha dialect" shows more primitive forms than the other. There are slight changes and variations in the Avesta language which point to the fact that, even as early as the sixth century before Christ, there was a tendency towards simplicity in speech. *So, the two are not really different dialects : but are one and the same language representing two different periods and stages of development.* The "Gatha dialect" is therefore, one or two centuries older than the "classical Avesta language."

Zoroaster.—Perhaps, it will not be out of place here to say a few words about ZOROASTER, the founder of the Parsi religion. There is no doubt that he was a thoroughly historical personage, and lived at a very

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early time. Some of the ancient writers make him a contemporary of Moses : others assign him a still older date. But according to the foremost Western scholars of modern times especially Professor A. V. WILLIAMS JACKSON of Columbia University, New York, he flourished about the seventh century before CHRIST. He was a Median by birth, and belonged to the tribe of the Magi. He seems to have gained his first notable success in Bactria whence his religion spread rapidly throughout all the Iranian provinces. In many respects there is a close similarity between his teachings and those of the Brahmans. But his characteristic doctrine of Ahuramazd, as the creator of the universe and the source of light and life, imparts to his religion a sublime spirituality. The charge of dualism, which is sometimes brought against the religion of ZOROASTER, is indignantly repudiated by the Modern Parsis.

The Avesta.—This holy book was originally 'written with gold ink on prepared ox-hides and stored up in Stakhar-Papkan which was totally destroyed by 'the accursed ALEXANDER the Roman,' in 331 B. C. Then ensued a long period of Persia's subjugation extending over five and a half centuries during which not a single sign of national spirit and religious enthusiasm is traceable. It is only from A. D. 224 when the Sassanian dynasty was founded that a revival of literary

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production took place, and the scattered fragments of original Avesta were again brought into book-form. This Avesta of the Sassanian times, however, in its turn was destroyed by the Arabs in A. D. 651 and out of 21 books which it contained there are only one whole book and several incomplete fragments which have come down to modern days. These fragments of the Sassanian Avesta are divided into two parts, the Avesta proper and the Khuda Avesta, *i.e.*, little Avesta which consists of a number of short prayers. The Avesta proper is again divided into three main divisions : (1) the Vendidad—the only complete book containing religious laws, mythical tales, and ‘Gathas’; (2) the Visperad which comprises a number of sacrificial litanies; and (3) the Yasna which also is a liturgical work. It will not be considered as out of place if it is further added that the Pahlawi commentary on the Avesta is known as Zend and the re-explanation of the Pahlawi commentary is called the Pazend.

The General Character of the Avestic Language and its close resemblance with the Old Sanskrit.—

We shall now consider the general character of the language found in the Gathas and the Avesta. These scanty remains of the original Zoroastrian scriptures give us a complete insight into its structure and peculiarities. Not only among Iranian dialects, but

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among all the languages of the Indo-European family, the language of the Gathas and the Avesta takes a very high place in importance. *It is most remarkably rich in inflections, and almost completely agrees with the language of the oldest Vedic hymns.* In style and expression it is extremely rough and clumsy, and contrasts unfavourably with the elegance and symmetry of Vedic Sanskrit. On the other hand, it can show forms which are unquestionably more primitive than those found in the Vedas. The resemblance between the Gatha language and the language of the Vedas is so close that they seem hardly more than two dialects of one tongue. *Whole sentences and strophes of the Gathas can be turned into good old Sanskrit by only changing a few letters according to the laws of phonetic variation.* The Homeric Greek and the oldest specimens of Latin and Gothic exhibit the same striking similarity to the language of the Avesta, chiefly in the conjugation of moods and tenses. *This close affinity furnishes the strongest proof of their original identity.*

The cuneiform inscriptions of the Achæmenian Period.—We have said before that Modern Persian is the lineal offspring of Old Persian, and that by old Persian we are to understand the language of the Achæmenian period. Unfortunately, its only specimen

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that has come down to us is represented by the edicts and proclamations of the Achæmenian kings. But we can well believe that it must have had a pretty extensive literature in the times of its royal patrons. If ALEXANDER had not burnt the citadel, palace, and the royal archives at Persepolis, the Parsis to-day would have had all their sacred books in their possession, and the world, in general, would have inherited the learning and wisdom of the ancient Persians. Happily, there is something still existing which the mad rage of ALEXANDER and the ravages of Time could not efface or destroy. The indefatigable labours and researches of European scholars have brought the dead to life, to bear witness to the might and glory of the successors of CYRUS. Their edicts and proclamations have been rescued, to some extent at least, from total oblivion. These are contained in the cuneiform inscriptions engraved on the rocks of BEHISTUN and NAQSH-I-RUSTAM, and on the walls and massive columns of PERSEPOLIS. Some of these inscriptions are found in the ruins of HAMADAN and VAN also. They were engraved by the command of the Achæmenian kings, and cover a period of 220 years, *i.e.*, from CYRUS (B. C. 550) to ARTAXERXES OCHUS (B. C. 330). They have been recently deciphered, translated, and explained.

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The Language of the Inscriptions.—The language of these inscriptions is very closely allied to that of the Avesta. It is highly inflectional, and possesses most of the grammatical peculiarities of the Avesta, Sanskrit, and other ancient languages of the Indo-European family. The *style and vocabulary of these inscriptions sufficiently prove that Old Persian was a rich, highly-developed, and expressive language. It has given birth to Modern Persian which, besides retaining all the characteristics of its mother, has so gained in charm and power and flexibility that it is justly considered one of the sweetest and most expressive languages of the world.

Pahlawi: the simplified form of the Avestic Language.—Modern Persian, like Modern English, has lost nearly all the inflections and makes no distinction in gender. The process of simplification must have been exceedingly slow and gradual. We cannot, by any means, specify the time when it began to lose its inflectional terminations. Later inscriptions do indeed show some irregularity and

*Levy in his 'Persian Literature' however describes the style of these inscriptions especially of the Behistun in the following terms: "it is rough and abrupt, repetitions are many, and nearly every paragraph begins with the fixed formula, 'Says DARIUS the King,' which produces the formal impression of a legal document".

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confusion in case-endings and other grammatical forms; but no positive conclusion can be based upon this phenomenon. Possibly the dissolution of heavy inflectional endings began soon after the overthrow of the Persian rule. As a matter of fact, for two centuries at least, Greek was employed as the court and literary language of Persia, and the old language of the country ceased to be written. Driven from the mansions of the great and the haunts of the learned, it had to live in the huts and cottages of the poor towns-people and the illiterate villagers. It was a period when its original purity and form could not be safeguarded, and so it fell an easy prey to the disintegrating forces which surrounded it. The Parthians, who entered upon the scene after the expulsion of the Greeks, have not left any monumental record to enable us to trace its dissolution and simplification. When we next meet it under the Sassanians it appears in the guise of a most curious mongrel dialect known as the PAHLAWI. Such, in brief, is the history of the old languages of Persia.

CHAPTER IV

PAHLAWI OR MIDDLE PERSIAN

We have seen that the Avesta language and the language of the cuneiform inscriptions of the Achæmenian period are the two ancient languages of Persia that have come down to us. We have also seen that though they exhibit a most striking similarity and stand to one another in the relation of sisters, still it is the latter which is the mother of Modern Persian, and to it, therefore, the term 'Old Persian' is applied. In the present chapter I shall endeavour to show it in its second phase, and explain some of its peculiarities.

The Pahlawi Language. It has already been remarked that after the five centuries of obscurity which enshroud the old Persian language after the downfall of the empire of CYRUS, when we next meet it, it has assumed a most curious form generally known as PAHLAWI. Its history after the Macedonian conquest and during the Parthian occupation is almost a blank page. But from the fact of its splendid revival under the Sassanians, we may reasonably infer that it never ceased to be the speech of the Persian

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people. Generally speaking, foreign conquest or invasion seldom affects, to any considerable degree, the construction and grammar of a vernacular, though it may add to its vocabulary. It may be affirmed with perfect truth that Persian fared much in the same way under the Greek rule as our own vernaculars are doing under the British rule to-day. It borrowed freely from the language of the conquerors, and thus adapted itself to the new circumstances. It should be borne in mind that *it was a period of transition*. The impetus given to the native speech by the superior excellence of Greek culture came at a most critical time. After losing the pre-eminence which it so long enjoyed under its national rulers, it was compelled to become the language of the common people. But its very obscurity ultimately proved to be its salvation. No longer able to preserve the classical purity of its form and vocabulary, it soon began to take in new words, and throw off its heavy inflectional terminations. Other changes that followed made it all the more completely a simple but expressive vehicle of communication.

How this language came to be called the Pahlawi Language.—Various interpretations have been suggested regarding its new name 'PAHLAWI.' Scholars of note derive it from Pahlaw—a corrupt

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form of Parthwa, and Parthwa in the later Sassanian inscriptions stands for Parthia. This derivation appears most probable, for the Parthians were of the same blood and kindred as the Persians, and must have used the Persian language during their rule which lasted for four centuries. I have said in the second chapter that the Parthians were followers of Zoroaster just as the Persians were, and affected, in the main, Persian customs. Is it possible that in the days of their power and glory they did not use Persian as their court-language and national tongue? Happily there are coins still existing which belong indisputably to the Parthian period, and bear Pahlawi inscriptions. This fact conclusively proves that PAHLAWI was the court-language of the Parthians.

Bilingualism a characteristic feature of Pahlawi.

The present usage of the name 'PAHLAWI' is solely restricted to the written language of the Sassanian dynasty, and to the ancient translations of the Zoroastrian scriptures and some other writings still extant. The language of these books is of such a peculiar character that at one time it was supposed to be a dialect of the Chaldaic branch. There were some philologists who even went so far as to include it in the Scythian group. The large admixture of Semitic words found in PAHLAWI evidently presented a most

difficult problem to the philologist. Strange to say that the oldest inscriptions of the Sassanian period show the largest admixture. Purely Semitic words—nouns, verbs, numerals, demonstrative and even personal pronouns, are found side by side with Persian vocables. Sometimes Semitic words are compounded with Persian words or have Persian terminations. All this is sure to present a most curious spectacle of mixture of speech. *But when the language is analysed into its component parts, it is found to be essentially Persian in roots, grammar, and construction.* It should be remarked here that the Persian language was undergoing a tremendous change at this period, and language in its transitional stage invariably shows a strange mixture of speech. This is why bilingualism is a characteristic feature of PAHLAWI or MIDDLE PERSIAN.

The Semitic element in Pahlawi.—It is not difficult to account for the Semitic element which is so predominant in PAHLAWI. We know to what extent Persia has fallen to the Semitic influence from time to time—first Assyrian, then Aramaic, and lastly Arabian. We are told that the Assyrian influence is clearly traceable in the sculptures and inscriptions of PERSEPOLIS and BEHISTUN. Under the Achæmenian kings Aramaic writing and speech

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were frequently employed in official documents and coins. This is not at all surprising when we remember that the Persian king was heir, in far more than mere style and name, to the great king of Babylon. The arrow-headed writing of the inscriptions silently points to Babylon and Assyria as its native country. Besides this, there were the captive Jews scattered all over Media, Babylonia, and Persia proper. Their language and expressions were constantly to be heard, not only in the fields and shops and market-places, but in the council-chamber and palace of the king. Considering all this, is it strange that the Semitic influence should have been so pronounced on the Persian language, especially in its second phase ?

The Earliest Traces of Pahlawi.—The earliest traces of PAHLAWI are found on the coins struck at the end of the fourth century before CHRIST. PAHLAWI legends are borne by the later Parthian and all the Sassanian coins. Even early Mahomedan coins down to A. D. 695 have PAHLAWI legends on them. Inscriptions in PAHLAWI date from the establishment of the Sassanian rule, and extend down to the beginning of the eleventh century of our era.

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Pahlawi is fundamentally Semitic in writing but essentially Persian in speech.—This extraordinary language was never spoken in Persia or anywhere else in the form in which it appears in the literature of the period. *It was only a way of writing in which Persian words are partly represented to the eye, and not to the ear, by their Semitic equivalents.* Ibn-i-Muqaffa, a celebrated Mahomedan writer of the eighth century, states that the Persians had about one thousand words which they wrote otherwise than they were pronounced. For *bread* they wrote the Semitic word *lahm*, but they pronounced it *nan*. Similarly *bisra*, the Aramaic word for *flesh*, was pronounced *gosht*, and so on. This shows that the Semitic words were mere ideograms, and were read with the sound of the corresponding Persian words. In order to understand thoroughly this strange system of writing, we have to take as examples a few Latin abbreviations. We write the Latin '*viz.*' but read its English equivalent '*namely*'; we write '*e.g.*' and pronounce it '*for example.*' Similarly, '*i.e.*' is pronounced '*that is,*' and £ is read '*pound.*' In these instances, the Latin abbreviations serve only as ideograms. They represent the Latin expressions to the eye, and not to the ear. When we come

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across them in writing, we do not pronounce them as they are in the original, but we pronounce their English equivalents. Now the Persians of the Sassanian period, when they read PAHLAWI books, did precisely the same thing, but on a much larger scale. The same thing is done by the Parsis to-day who, instead of reading the Semitic expressions of which their religious books are full, pronounce their Persian equivalents. So, it may be rightly said that PAHLAWI is fundamentally Semitic in writing, but essentially Persian in speech. Consequently, after the Mahomedan conquest of Persia, the change from PAHLAWI to MODERN PERSIAN was, more or less, a change in writing, and not an alteration in speech. It is not to be concluded from this that the PAHLAWI language differed but little from the Persian of to-day. A large number of Semitic words and expressions were freely used in ordinary conversation, but they have given place to Persian or Arabic expressions now. Moreover, the grammar had become much simpler than it was in the Achæmenian period, though it was still richer, in inflectional forms and in the distinction of genders and cases, than the grammar of Modern Persian.

The Pahlawi Literature.—As remarked above, the PAHLAWI literature is represented by inscriptions

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on rocks, monuments, seals, and coins, and by the ancient translations of the Avesta and a good many other writings. Its period extends from the establishment of the Sassanian dynasty A. D. 226 to about the ninth century. Strictly speaking, it ceased to be popularly used after the downfall of the Sassanians. But it can hardly be doubted that at one time the PAHLAWI literature was very extensive. For the Sassanian ruler considered himself 'king of kings,' and his court was graced by poets, writers, and other learned men of the age. His halls and palaces rang with the songs of bards and minstrels among whom BAHLABAD, AFARIN, and KHUSRAWAN are said to have occupied the foremost place.

The fragments of the Pahlawi Literature.—

The fragments of the PAHLAWI literature that have survived the Moslem invasion are divided into 3 classes.

(1) *Translations of the Avesta numbering about 27 books.*

(2) *Theological and liturgical writings. These books were written by the Zoroastrians. They number about 55, and show a very rich vocabulary. Of these the most popular in Europe are the Bundahish, the Dinkart, and the Mainyo-i-Khirad.*

(3) *Secular writings. This is by far the most*

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interesting class, and is represented by 11 books. All the other books of this class are lost now. A few of the early Mahomedan writers have given the substance of some of these books in their writings. The Social Code of the Zoroastrians in Sassanian Times, the Yatkari-Zagiran (also called the Shah-nama-i-Gushtasp and Pahlawi Shahnama), the Tale of Khusraw-i-Kawatan (Nushirwan) and his Page, the Karnamak-i-Artaخشتر-i-Papkan, the Chahrang Namak, and the Farhang-i-Pahlawik are the most important books.

It is in writing only that Pahlawi seems peculiar.—Remembering the fact that the chief peculiarity of PAHLAWI lay in the writing, and not in the speech, it will not be difficult to see that if a PAHLAWI book were to be transliterated in the Arabic character, it would closely resemble Modern Persian with scores of archaic and Semitic words. Replace these words by Persian or Arabic words, and the book will be intelligible, in the main, to a good Persian scholar. As a matter of fact, the language of the Sassanian period has undergone comparatively slight changes. If, by any means, we could wake the slumbering spirits of that age, and make them talk together, a good deal of their conversation would be understood by a Persian of to-day.

Pahlawi compared with the Old Persian and the Modern Persian.—PAHLAWI, or MIDDLE PERSIAN, presents many important changes as compared with the Old Persian of the Achæmenian period. Nearly all its primitive forms are gone, and the abundant grammatical terminations, which are invariably found in the ancient language, are much reduced in number. Instead of a highly inflected tongue, it presents the appearance of a simple dialect. The case-endings are almost completely lost; the dual is dropped, and the noun has only two inflections, the singular and the plural. The cases are expressed by prepositions. Even distinctive forms for gender are entirely abandoned, *e.g.*, the pronoun 'o' or 'u' signifies 'he,' 'she,' or 'it.' In the verb especially compound forms predominate. In this last respect, Middle Persian is exactly similar to Modern Persian.

No definite opinion can be formed about the Pahlawi Literature.—It is much to be regretted that, with the exception of a few books of a distinctively secular character, the rest of the extant PAHLAWI literature is entirely religious or exegetical. Hence it is difficult to judge rightly of the range, quality, and literary merit of the writings of this period. In a certain sense, the Moslem invasion completely overwhelmed the land, and swept away the national

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literature. In the utter confusion consequent upon the downfall of the once-powerful Persian empire, there was a gradual extinction of a literature that was penetrated through and through with the spirit of the Zoroastrian religion. The conquest of Persia by the Arabs introduced an age of unprecedented change and revolution. Opinion and belief, theory and practice, fashion and custom, knowledge and learning, all passed through a series of the most momentous transformations, which had no parallel in the previous history and experience of the nation. The years immediately following the Moslem conquest saw the last sovereign of the Sassanian line a wanderer upon the face of the earth, and the political independence of the Persians absolutely destroyed.

The extirpation of the national faith followed close upon the heels of the Arab invasion, and Persia found itself in the grip of the dwellers of the Arabian desert. The new rule heralded a new age, and brought a new religion and a new language in its train. The new religion soon cast its spell over the people of the land, and attracted them into its fold. The uncompromising spirit of Islam filled the Persian converts with an irrepressible zeal for propagating the new faith, and stamping out the old. The

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national literature was naturally considered to be the stronghold of a religion that had to be erased from the popular mind, and so it fell under the ban of the new followers of Islam. Their attitude towards the religion of their fathers became one of hatred and aversion, and they set about the task of destruction with deadly determination and passionate energy.

Arabs destroyed the magnificent Pahlawi Literature produced under the Sassanians.—The Sassanians were not only the defenders of the Zoroastrian faith ; they were munificent patrons of culture. Historical documents, contemporary notices of Persia in the European writings, philological indications, and national traditions, all of them point to the conclusion that Persia under the Sassanians had attained a very high degree of civilization, and the court of the Chosroes was a brilliant centre of learning. Some of them had expended vast sums of money on rare and ancient writings ; others had liberally rewarded the eminent authors of the day. In this way, there sprang into existence a literature which embraced various branches of knowledge, and proceeded in its evolution through successive phases, and advanced from stage to stage. From the accounts preserved in the writings of the early Maho-

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medan historians, it appears that the PAHLAWI literature was in the full swing of its career at the time of the Moslem invasion. But what was so assiduously collected and built up through centuries was indiscriminately and ruthlessly destroyed in a few years. The part which has perished, beyond all hope of recovery, was enormously greater than the surviving remnants, not only in bulk, but in range and variety. If we had all the old writings, collected by the Sassanians, and the books composed in their reign, in our possession to-day, they would have furnished much valuable and definite information regarding the character and quality of the literature of the period.

The absence of Poetry in the Sassanian Period.—Unfortunately, our estimate of the literature of the Sassanian age will be entirely based on the scanty remains described above. No specimen of Sassanian poetry has come down to us. Other ancient literatures have their epics. Old and Middle Persian have none. It may be inferred from this that in the pre-Mahomedan period when Zoroastrianism was dominant, poetry was never cultivated as an art. The bards and minstrels did something in this direction ; but this noble vocation never received an adequate attention or encouragement from the royal

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patrons of learning. The poets of other nations have sung of the prowess and martial deeds of their heroes in stirring lines and glowing strains. The colour and fire of their language, the graceful harmony of their style, the pellucid melody of their verses, and the persuasive tone of their moral teaching, still delight the imagination, and fascinate the mind. Their subtle power and their irresistible beauty thrill the heart with a sort of passionate joy. Once read, they are never completely forgotten ; for their magic haunts the memory, and fills the soul with a deep yearning after something higher, nobler, and greater. It is strange that Persia has nothing of the kind to show or boast of in the pre-Mahomedan times. On the other hand, it is sadly deficient in early poetic feeling and gifts.

Serious drawbacks of the Pahlawi Literature.—

Another characteristic worth noting here is the complete absence of polish and rhythm. The vocabulary of the PAHLAWI literature is remarkably rich, but it has serious drawbacks. It lacks brilliance, depth, stateliness, and lyric power. In style it is simple, direct, and vigorous, and its general character is altogether that of an uncouth, ungainly, and crabbed language. Those who look in it for ease, facility, and elegance are bitterly disappointed.

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PAHLAWI books, when read aloud, set on edge the teeth of those who are accustomed to the exquisite cadence and perfect symmetry of Modern Persian. Notwithstanding these drawbacks and limitations, PAHLAWI was, for centuries, the written and spoken language of Persia, and held this position till the time of Hajjaj *b.* Yusuf A. D. 700.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW AGE

The New Age and the changes it brought.—The old age ended with the downfall of the Sassanians, and the new began when the Arabs made themselves masters of Persia. Times had suddenly and completely changed. The new conditions—political, social, moral, and religious, created a most critical situation in the affairs of the Persians, and demanded very earnest and serious consideration. So far, they had been moving continuously on other lines, and to other objects. Now they found themselves face to face with problems that touched them very closely, and were to affect them most profoundly in the future.

The Influence of the Quran on the Persian People.—It was impossible to bridge over the gulf which separated the old from the new, and circumstances compelled Persia to start upon an entirely new course. The moral and religious problems were solved, to a very great extent, by the acceptance of Islam. Though the Arabs were not disposed to accord to the Persian converts social equal-

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ity with themselves, yet they could not abhor or treat them as infidels. With the change of creed, there now began to tell upon them the irresistible influence of the *Quran*. Its precepts entered into their individual and corporate life from every side. All orders and classes were touched by it; all minds of whatever type were affected deeply; everything had to be considered in the light of its teaching. Its nervous, brilliant, and sonorous style—gracefully and easily modulated; its clear, sharp, and incisive sentences—subtly and skilfully woven together; its stately periods, its magnificent symphonies, its rhythmical flow, its chiselled phrasing, its solemn dignity, its emphatic declarations, its glowing passion, its tremendous energy, its dazzling profusion of metaphors, its exquisite polish of workmanship, all these worked like magic upon the Persian mind.

Quran : the veritable miracle of art.—This veritable miracle of art completely dazed, fascinated, and overmastered the new converts. Their unstinted admiration for it and for the pure, flexible, and vigorous language it represented resulted in something like contempt for their native Persian. In the reaction that followed, the study of the *Quran* and the Arabic language became not only a widely extended pursuit but a fashion. There were glorious times to live in.

With the Arab conquest there came to the Persian people a sudden widening of the boundaries of human knowledge, and a bright and splendid vision of hitherto unknown possibilities. And this revelation actually meant new life and the inspiration of fresh endeavour to the quick and vivid intellect of Persia, and it set itself deliberately to explore and possess the new domain.

Why the Arabic Language attracted so much the Persian Intellect.—The susceptibilities of the new age craved a language in which all the different phases of thought and emotion, and the multitudinous shades of meaning could be fully and affectively expressed, and Arabic had these and other qualities of a high order in an extraordinary degree. Its incomparable richness, its infinite capacity, its wonderful organic compactness, and its marvellous elasticity, more than entitled it to hold a most prominent position. It attracted, dominated, and swayed all the promising and highly-gifted intellects of Persia. Men who had no classical models of their own to follow bowed to the dignity and grace of the new standard of culture. There was an intellectual influence outside them which was too powerful to be resisted. For the next two or three centuries, this influence absorbed their whole mental energy, and demanded

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exclusive attention to itself. Patiently and laboriously they studied the Arabic language, and acquired the most consummate mastery over all its subtleties. *And before a century was over, their preparation for taking the lead in the domain of the intellect was complete and astonishing.*

Persian scholars equal the Arab scholars.—The very circumstances in which they found themselves placed, changed and complex as they were, forced them to the utmost possible development of their intellectual resources. Their subtle and receptive, elastic and penetrative minds gathered up and absorbed in themselves all the forces and influences of the new culture. Then began that most brilliant succession of literary productions which took the world by storm, and gave the authors an indefeasible right to be honourably received into the Temple of Fame. This new intellectual aristocracy was distinguished for its versatility of acquirements, profound learning, and accurate scholarship. The writings of these critical and cultured Persian scholars show a very high standard of excellence. They were supreme masters of a style which in grace and precision, splendour of colour and finish of workmanship is still unsurpassed. All that came from their pen bore the stamp of originality and authority, and

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commanded universal admiration and assent. Even as grammarians they were not a whit behind the very greatest of Arabian writers.

The Arab Domination of Persia produced eminent writers of many-sided and perfect scholarship. This age has a character of its own, at once brilliant, diverse, and complex. It produced a type of men very rarely found in the history of nations. The two or three centuries immediately following the Moslem conquest of Persia marked a period of immense and unique interest. It drove the best spirits of Persia back upon their own resources, and made them self-conscious, self-determined, and self-reliant. These select men, mentally mature and intellectually supreme, were needed for the diffusion of Arabic learning and culture in Persia. The outburst of literary activity which is the glory of this period was, both directly and indirectly, the result of their many-sided and perfect scholarship. They not only contributed to Arabic literature that which is best and noblest in it, but became, pre-eminently, apostles of culture to their own countrymen. But for the labours of these men of comprehensive attainments, the Persian language would have been a poor, contemptible jargon to-day. We shall do well to bear all this in mind, for it is only too easy for us to

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underrate the achievements of this period.

The happy blending of the Pahlawi and the Arabic Languages.—The rich, elegant, splendid literature of the Arabs was indispensable to the Persians. Their own tongue was devoid of all high qualities. It was neither chaste nor scholarly; nor could it show a style at once elaborate and nervous, rich and flexible. Its loose, uncertain grammar, and its stiff and cumbrous style, made it unfit for literary purposes. Besides all this, there was no conventional type, no recognized model or standard. Hence it was impossible to produce in it any work of real and lasting merit. The nation had first to assimilate the new culture and thoroughly imbibe its spirit; it had to be steeped through and through in the new learning, before it could turn its attention to the cultivation and embellishment of its vernacular. There was to be not only a complete fusion between the old and the new, a happy blending of the Semitic and the Aryan; but *a thorough transformation*. This was done slowly, gradually, imperceptibly, and took centuries for its accomplishment.

The Modern Persian owes all its admirable qualities to the influence of the Arabic Literature. The Arabic literature infused vitality, energy, and force into the Persian language, and transmitted to its

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uncouth, nerveless structure, its own melodious sweetness and virile strength. It found it in a mean and obscure condition, and made it a mighty instrument of expression and a thing of rare beauty. It generously put within its reach its vast, inexhaustible treasures, and gave it free access to its classical models and masterpieces. From it proceeded that irresistible impulse which galvanised the Persian language, and eventually made it one of the noblest vehicles of thought. The ornate splendour, the stately rhythm, the exuberance of metaphors, and the luxuriance of expressions, the intense passion, and the tremendous energy, these and a hundred other qualities which we admire so much in Modern Persian are, directly or indirectly, traceable to the influence of the Arabic literature. The reading of Persian authors which at once awakens so keen and intoxicating a delight in the melody and beauty of language is the result, not of reckless imitation, but of a slow and vital assimilation. Judged from this literary point of view, the Moslem invasion has proved to be, in the case of Persia, the greatest blessing in disguise.

CHAPTER VI

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The Battle of Zab a turning-point in the lives of the Persians.—As has been already shown, the Persians made a critical study of the Arabic language and literature, and thoroughly mastered them. During the rule of the Abbasids, they rose to great power, for it was their swords which won the sovereignty of the eastern empire of Islam for the house of Abbas. From A. D. 749, the revolution which put the Abbasids on the throne entirely changed the social status of the Persians. So far they had been in the position of an oppressed and despised subject race, and had no hand in the machinery of government. But the battle of the Zab, in which they, by their gallantry and valour, shattered the power of the Umaiyyads, brought them to the fore, and once more changed the current of their history. Their ascendancy over the Arabs was complete now. Henceforth we find them in the very front rank, not only as poets and writers, but as statesmen, politicians, and soldiers.

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Causes of the downfall of the Abbasid Caliphate.

One of the results of the battle of the Zab was that the military prestige of the Arabs was destroyed, and the Persians became aware of the strength they possessed. So long as the Abbasid rulers had a strong control over the affairs of the state, they were able to keep the eastern provinces of Persia in their hands. But, as fate would have it, the Caliphs, in an evil hour, surrounded themselves with Turkish guards. These bloodthirsty mercenaries soon found out their power and importance, and most unscrupulously availed themselves of the advantage so providentially put within their reach. In course of time the servant became the master, and the political domination of the Arabs suffered a total eclipse.

The ever-increasing strength of the Turkish soldiery weakened the hands of the Caliphs, and led to the formation of principalities and small kingdoms in the distant provinces of the empire. Over the eastern part of Persia, the control of the Caliphs was exceedingly feeble. The Persians saw their opportunity, and eagerly leaped forward to seize it and make themselves masters of the situation. Province after province rebelled and assumed independence, or only nominally acknowledged the suzerainty of the house of Abbas.

The Nationalist Movement among the Persians.

This turbulent period also gave rise to a new movement among the Persians. Their national consciousness was stirred up to its very depths, and their thoughts naturally and spontaneously went back to the past glories of their forefathers. The atmosphere was charged with new ideas of nationalism which broke through all restraints, and ultimately resulted in the revival of the old language. Smitten with something like compunction for their indifference to their national literature, they now attempted to resuscitate the past, and blend it with the new culture.

The slow and silent preparation that had been going on for years unsuspected and unperceived at last gathered sufficient energy to burst forth in all its resistless vehemence and overwhelming force. And as is universally the case, this new movement brought with it new eyes, new powers of comprehension and appropriation, and new objects of delight. The imagination of the people, held in check so long, asserted itself freely and shot out to the romance and mystery of untried and unrealised possibilities. There are few things in History that can serve as a parallel to the stirring and exaltation of the mind which filled and completely subdued the men of this

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period, and gave an altogether new birth to thought and art.

Beginning of the Persian Renaissance.—The development of the vernacular required the energetic and sympathetic co-operation of the whole Persian people and they proved equal to the occasion. The time was come when they could unite themselves with the past, and remodel and suit it to the requirements of the present. The national life, smothered and stifled for more than two centuries, sprang into activity, *and the Renaissance began*. The growing decay of the power and influence of the Caliphs, which began soon after the death of the immediate successors of HARUN-RASHID in the ninth century, marks the commencement of this new era in Persian history. It is, in fact, the starting-point of the movement for national independence, and of the revival of national literature.

The formation of Persian Nationality and Literature.—In this age when the national life was simply brimming over with an intense and overflowing vitality, and the spirit of bold enquiry and adventure was goading them on, enthusiasm burned fierce and clear in the heart of the people, and displayed itself in all forms of physical and mental activity. On the mental or rather on the intellectual

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side, it wrought a complete revolution in language and style, and occupied itself with literary experiments and achievements. At first, it expressed itself in a sort of wild licence and extravagance, but was ultimately controlled and brought within proper bounds by the dictates of its own higher instincts and interests. The spirit of the age prevailed and formed the Persian nationality and literature.

The Origin of the Persian National Poetry.—No definite date can be given at which Modern Persian literature may be said to have begun, for we do not meet with any actual composition, poetry or prose, before the end of the ninth century. But this much is certain that in Modern Persian, as in Arabic, it was verse which attracted attention first and led to future developments. Persian historians differ in their accounts of the origin of their national poetry. Most of them go back to the Sassanian times, and make *BAHRAMGÖR (A. D. 420-439) and his mistress DILARAM the joint-inventors of metre and rhyme ; other mention ABU HAFS, a physician of Soghd, near Samarkand, as the author of the first Persian poem from which they quote a line. According to one

*Bahram caught a living tiger by the ears and exultingly remarked 'Manam' an 'p'il-i-daman-o-manam au shir-i-yalah' and his mistress uttered by way of admiration : 'Nam Bahram tura-o-pidrat bu-Jailah.'

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writer, there was a Persian couplet engraved on the walls of the palace of SHIRIN, the beloved of KHUSRAW PARWEZ (A. D. 590 –628) whose romantic love-affair is the theme of many later poets. Another writer tells us that there existed in the beginning of the ninth century an old book, called the *Romance of Wamiq and 'Azra* which was composed in the reign of NAUSHERWAN the JUST (A. D. 531-579). This book is said to have been destroyed by the order of 'ABDULLA b. TAHIR in about A. D. 835. These stories, coupled with the fact that there were bards and minstrels in the court of the Sassanian kings, lead us to the conclusion that *Persian poetry existed in a crude form at least, in the pre-Mahomedan times.*

*There is yet another story which ascribes the first metrical line to the gleeful utterance of the little son of Y'ACUB b. LAIS the founder of the Saffarid dynasty.

Khurasan the cradle of Modern Persian Literature : Abbas of Merv. --However this may be, it is certain that the province of Khurasan, in the north-east

*The child was amusing himself by trying to throw walnuts into a small pit which was at a distance. For some time not a single walnut could be thrown into the pit. But at last one nut slowly and steadily rolled upto the edge of the pit whereupon the young prince gleefully uttered "Ghalatan ghalatan hamirawad tu lab-i-gu."

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of Persia, was the cradle of Modern Persian literature. According to MUHAMMAD AWFĪ, the oldest biographical writer of Persia, the first poem in Modern Persian was composed in A. D. 809 by 'ABBAS of Merv. It was an encomium written in honour of the Caliph AL MAMUN on the occasion of his entry into Merv. MAMUN'S mother was a Persian lady; so he was able to speak both Persian and Arabic. He appreciated the poem very highly, and rewarded the writer with an annual grant of one thousand gold-pieces. 'ABBAS died in A. D. 822. AWFĪ has cited four couplets of this poem in his book. Later on, when TAHIR succeeded in making Khurasan a semi-independent native state, it became the centre of literary activity. The language spoken here and in the surrounding regions was Pahlawi which had, by this time, shaken off nearly all its remaining inflections. This simplified native tongue was noted for its purity, vigour, and literary capacity. It had suffered less from admixture because, being remote from the capital of the Caliphs, it was less exposed to foreign influences. So the enthusiasm for national literature as well as political independence was first generated in Khurasan, and spread in course of time over the rest of the country.

The Tahirids and the Saffarids.—The semi-

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independent dynasty of the TAHIRIDS lasted only from A. D. 820-872. Its establishment marks the period when Persian poetry began to flourish; for the earliest poets whose verses have been preserved to this day appear to have received considerable encouragement from it. But it suddenly came to an end in A. D. 872 when Y'AGUB b. LAIS overthrew the last ruler of this line. This remarkable man was the founder of the SAFFARID dynasty which ruled in Iraq, Faris, Khurasan, Sistan, and Tabaristan from A. D. 868—903. It is to the rulers of this house that Persia owes, in a very large measure, the revival of her national life.

The Samanids.—But the glory of having supplied real motive force to the Persian Renaissance was reserved for the princes of the house of SAMAN. They were descended from the old royal line of Persia, and took the keenest interest in national affairs. They were brave, generous, and pious sovereigns, and to the utmost of their power fostered the literary spirit of their nation. From their times onwards Persian began to be employed as a court language, though Arabic still remained the language of diplomacy and culture. Their powerful court was thronged by the wittiest and most highly-gifted intellects of the age. Under the SAMANID rulers (A. D. 874-1000) Persian

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poetry and to some extent prose also flourished in full vigour. Their court at Bukhara was the focus of splendour round which circled all the most brilliant literary stars of the age. They patronised the celebrated poet RODAKI, who holds the same position in Persian poetry as Chaucer holds in English. All the oldest prose works of this period that have come down to us were written by their proteges.

The Ziyarids and the Buwaihids.—Alongside of the SAMANIDS, mention must be made of the ZIYARIDS of Tabaristan (A. D. 865-1028) and the BUWAIHID princes who exercised, at this period, sovereign power over the whole of southern Persia and in Baghdad itself. The BUWAIHIDS were formidable rivals of the SAMANID princes whose authority extended over northern Persia, Transoxiana, and the cities of Bukhara and Samargand. The generous and princely encouragement, given by the ZIYARIDS and the BUWAIHIDS to poets and writers, contributed largely to the development of the national literature, and the cultivation of science and philosophy. They played a most honourable part in the promotion of learning and the protection and patronage of men of letters for more than a hundred years, when they were outrivalled by the GHAZNAVIDS who extinguished the ZIYARIDS, and curtailed the power of the BUWAIHIDS, in the

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beginning of the eleventh century. Some of these rulers were not only patrons of learning and culture and founders of schools and colleges, but they were poets as well. Their excellent verses in Persian and Arabic testify to their gift and the wide range of their intellectual attainments. From the timely help and liberal encouragement of these noble houses proceeded the impulse and the energy which made the Persian language, within a century, the rival of Arabic in force, purity, ease, and strength.

The Modern Persian Literature.—Modern Persian literature covers a period of nearly eleven hundred years. During this time the changes in the language have been but slight and inappreciable. With the exception of archaisms and the fairly large admixture of words and expressions and technical phraseology borrowed from Arabic, it is substantially the same as it was in the ninth century. In grammatical forms, it is much poorer than Middle Persian, and has few inflections.

The Verse-forms.—As regards verse-forms, it is certain that the quatrain (Persian *do-bayti* and Arabic *ruba'i*) was the most ancient form. Next to it comes the doublet (*masnawi*) in which the rhyme changes in each couplet. This form of verse was eminently suited for purposes of narration, and was first popula-

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risied by DAQIQI. Later on, we find the poets turning their attention to monorhymes, and cultivating those forms which are known as *qasida* (eulogy or encomium), *gazal* (ode), and *qit'a* (fragment). They expended their mental energy on these forms, and made them as polished and perfect as possible.

What favoured and facilitated the Revival of Persian Language and Literature—That these writers were able to accomplish so much in a comparatively short time is a proof of their extraordinary powers, keen literary acumen, and fine taste. Of course, it is to be remembered that these intellectual artists had to work on very poor and raw material. But they were immensely helped by the native rulers and princes whose generous support enabled them to devote themselves, heart and soul, to the enrichment and purification of their national tongue, and the development of its resources. Their courts attracted all promising intellects, and offered them splendid opportunities for the display of their talents. Thus political conditions, no less than local circumstances and patriotic feelings, favoured and facilitated the revival of the Persian language and literature.

CHAPTER VII

PERSIAN LITERATURE UP TO THE GHAZNAVID DYNASTY

A. D. 820—998

How Persian became a literary language.—We have made it perfectly clear in the fifth chapter that soon after the Moslem conquest of Persia, Arabic became the literary medium of the land. A host of Persian authors appeared, chiefly in the ninth and tenth centuries, who produced their works in the language of their rulers. It would have been preposterous on their part, if they had chosen to employ their vernacular as a literary medium at a time when Arabic was the language of the Islamic world. It is plain, therefore, that the absence of Persian verse, in the centuries immediately following the Moslem conquest, did not rise from a lack of talent or literary ability, but simply from the fact that there was no demand for it. But as soon as the Persians began to show a revived and keen interest in their native language and literature, poets and authors sprang up in every direction, and began to use their vernacular for literary purposes.

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In the present chapter we shall attempt to give a short account of what these men actually did.

It was the Arabic Literature that created a literay taste among the Persians.—It is important to remember in this connection that the Arab conquest, mighty and far-reaching as were its effects, was no political cataclysm which swept away the old Persia, and replaced it with something absolutely foreign. On the other hand it left the old, in a great measure where it was, and grafted on to it a purer and loftier and a nobler form of culture, which struck deep root in the character and national life of the people, and became their most precious and abiding heritage. The splendid literature which the Arab conquerors brought with them created a *literary taste* among the Persians, and stimulated them to polish their own native speech according to classical types and models. In other words, it supplied the key which unlocked the inestimable treasure hidden in the despised vernacular.

The Age of Romance.—Before passing on to our main subject, it is better to get a general idea of the leading characteristic of this period. But it must be confessed at the outset that the “Zeit-Geist”—the spirit of the age—is always an immaterial, impalpable reality and eludes analysis. However, it makes itself visible in certain outstanding qualities which give a

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shape and colouring to the whole period, and thus renders itself liable to be expressed in words. So far as we are able to judge, this age presents to us all the tendencies, impulses and elements of ROMANCE. It puts before us the passions and emotions of the human heart, the glories of the historic past, and the immensity and loveliness of nature in all its mysterious beauty and strength. Nothing is too big, too wild, too sentimental for it. Comedy and tragedy, life and death, joy and sorrow, light and darkness, sunshine and gloom—all find a sweet, simple, and pathetic expression.

Persian Poets of the Tahirid Period.—As has been already explained, the first attempt to compose verses in Persian was made under the 'TAHIRIDS. Of the many poets who flourished then, only three are mentioned in the old histories of this period. Among these HANZALA of Badgis (died in A. D. 841) is first both in merit and in point of time. According to native accounts he was the author of a number of lyrical pieces and quatrains. Unfortunately all his verses are lost, and we possess only two couplets of his which are cited by AWFI. He is the immediate successor of 'ABBAS OF MERV who composed the first Persian poem and died in A. D. 822. MAHMUD WARRAQ is another poet who flourished

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under the TAHIRIDS. The author of *Majma'-ul-Fusaha* cites two of his couplets. WARRAQ died in A. D. 844. FIROZ MASHRIQI is the last poet of this period. He lived partly under the TAHIRIDS, and partly under the SAFFARIDS. He was a popular versifier, and composed many short pieces. He died in A. D. 903. Of the other SAFFARID poets we know almost next to nothing. One name—that of ABU SALIK GURGANI—is mentioned by MANUCHAHRI. Of his verses likewise only two couplets have been handed down. It is most curious that in the age of the TAHIRIDS and the SAFFARIDS, we do not find a single poet of commanding influence.

The Samanids as Patrons of Learning.—It has already been observed in the preceding chapter that the Persian literature, in its early stage, owes more to the princes of the house of SAMAN (A. D. 874-1000) than to any other national dynasty. They were most liberal patrons of learning, and promoted the cause of the national literature to the utmost of their power. The age of the SAMANIDS is characterised by the large number of Persian poets and writers who have left their indelible mark upon the literature of the country. Historians mention the names of a multitude of poets who shed lustre upon

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the court of the SAMANIDS. The most accomplished minstrels of this period were ABU 'ABDULLA FARALAWI, SHAHID BALKHI, MURADI, ABU SHAKUR BALKHI, ABU'L 'ABBAS BUKHARI, ABU'L MUZAFFAR NAISHAPURI, ABU 'ABDULLAH JUNAIDI, M'ANAWI, KHABBAZI NAISHAPURI, ABU SHU'AIB S'ALIB, RODAKI, DAQIQI, ABU'l FATH BUSTI 'UMARAH MARWAZI, and ABU'l Hasan KISAI. Our knowledge of most of these poets is exceedingly imperfect. They lived on the unbounded generosity of the SAMANID princes, and spent their time in poetical composition.

Poets of the Samanid Period.—FARALAWI, MURADI, and ABU SHAKUR BALKHI were the immediate precursors of RODAKI. Of FARALAWI's verses, only two are cited by AWFI. MURADI was renowned for his witty epigrams and love-ditties. ABU SHAKUR BALKHI is the oldest literary representative of this period. He invented the famous verse-form known as *masnawi* or double-rhymed poem, and was also the first poet who composed in the Rubai, or quatrain form which in the later centuries became the most popular vehicle of mystical thought. He may fairly be considered as the fore-runner of DAQIQI in *masnawi*. From the few specimens of ABU SHAKUR's *masnawi*, it appears

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that he was a perfect master of this form of verse. In elegance, polish, and felicity of expression, they are hardly inferior to the verses of DAQIQI.

SHAHID BALKHI was a popular lyric poet. He was the first to make an alphabetical collection of his epigrams and odes. ABU'L 'ABBAS BUKHARI was a writer of very graceful and tender verses. ABU'L MUZAFFAR NAISHAPURI and JUNAIDI were noted for their Arabic and Persian poetry of great merit. M'ANAWI is full of subtle and original thoughts.

Rodaki: The first Great Persian Poet.—

RODAKI, whose real name was Abu 'Abdullah J'afar, was born about the year 880 A. D. in a small village near Samarqand called Rod, and was blind from his birth. He had an extraordinary memory, and knew the Qur'an by heart when he was only eight years old. He was deeply versed in the learning of the age, and began to compose poems in his childhood. Apart from being a poet, he was a sweet singer also, and generally amused himself and others by singing his extemporaneous productions. He was skilful in the use of the harp and lute, and often played on them before his patron. He died in A. D. 941.

RODAKI is the first great Persian poet, who enjoyed a very high reputation in his life-time. In the

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estimation of some of his contemporaries, he was the greatest living poet of the Islamic world. He was, undoubtedly, one of the most brilliant men of letters of his time, and had the admirable gift of improvisation. It appears from all accounts that he possessed great powers of versification, and a simple, vigorous style. According to RASHIDI SAMARQANDI, his verses amounted to thirteen hundred thousand. At the request of his patron NASR b. AHMAD (A. D. 913—942), he made a metrical version of *Kalila and Dimna* for which he received an immense sum. Unfortunately, this work and the greater part of his verses are lost. He lived almost like a prince in the SAMANID court, and had two hundred personal attendants.

Rodaki the Chaucer of the Persian Literature.—In making an estimate of RODAKI'S powers and of his great influence on Persian writers, one is tempted to set aside his imperfections and speak only of his achievements. That he was a genius of a very high order cannot be disputed. *He did for Persian literature what Chaucer did for English.* He lived at a time when there were exceedingly few verse-forms and types in the vernacular, and the language spoken by the people was only a provincial dialect. He was the first classic genius who showed

its intrinsic merits and raised it to the dignity and position of a literary language.

Rodaki as a poet : Greater than even the Great Firdausi.—Rodaki did not take up the profession of a vernacular poet as a connoisseur. It was, in truth, his deliberate choice, his life-long vocation. Among the great and illustrious men to whom Persia owes the revival of her national language and literature he deserves the foremost place; and his devoted attachment to this noble cause constitutes his greatest title to the gratitude of posterity. Of the few who were his superiors in genius, none—not even the great FIRDAUSI himself, has exercised a more extensive or a more permanent influence on the national habits of thought and expression. He was possessed with the spirit of the new movement: he was the votary of the Renaissance.

Rodaki a patriotic genius.—He threw himself into the very heart of the great national revolution, and effected a complete change in the public taste, and imprinted a new character on the age. His ardent, tender, and magnificent turns of thought, his fertile imagination, his brilliant fancy, his command of language at once elegant, forcible, and varied, eminently fitted him to be the central figure of this period.

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Rodaki made Persian a truly sweet, vigorous and powerful language.—He owes little to his predecessors ; his successors owe much to him. He refined the language. He polished the style. He laid open the rich treasures of thought and diction which were latent in the native ore. In his hands, the despised vernacular becomes a supple tool, quite fit for every purpose, and for the highest use. His is therefore the glory of having created a sweet, vigorous, and powerful language, distinguished alike for its copious vocabulary and unrivalled melody, and eminently capable of expressing all shades of thought in a rhythmical, concise, and delicate way. Herein lies his claim to immortality.

Rodaki the first Persian poet who appropriated or adopted the Arabic Verse-forms.—In judging of the merits of RODAKI as a poet, it should be borne in mind that, with the exception of the quatrain, he had no other distinctively national type or model before him. Consequently, in a few instances at least, he had to create new verse-forms which he successfully did. But, as a general rule, he appropriated or adapted Arabic forms according to his requirements. The immense range of his poetical powers, as seen in his verses, is most remarkable. There is hardly any subject, and scarcely any

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metre, which he has not handled. Elegy, encomium, satire, ode, narrative and didactic poems, all these fall within his province, and in all of them his soft touch bears witness to his masterly skill and excellent practice.

Rodaki's poems thoroughly Persian.—In the short pieces and lyrical poems of RODAKI there is an extraordinary tenderness and personal passion pervading a lovely symbolism.

*He describes natural scenery at first hand, and is altogether free from conventional phrasing. His verses are thoroughly Persian in subject, feeling, and manners. He loved the mountains, the streams, the soft grassy places, and the woodlands ringing with the notes of the nightingale. His elegies, especially those on his two gifted contemporaries, SHAHID BALKHI and MURADI, are marked by intense feeling and a rare philosophic height of thought.

Rodaki's style and diction. The style of Rodaki is always chaste and graceful, though his diction is sometimes obscure and wearisome. His unpardonable

*Rodaki's famous poem beginning :

‘Buyi-ju-yi-Muliyān ayad hami’

is a fine descriptive poem which induced his patron Nasr bin Ahmad at once to jump on to the horse back and to take the road to Bukhara, his capital, from which he had long been absent, without even waiting to put on his boots.

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weakness is his constant repetition. His long pieces lack proportion, condensation, and humour. Notwithstanding these minor defects he was, in a very true sense, the Morning Star of the Persian Renaissance.

Daqiqi.—The second great poet of this period is DAQIQI of Tus, a countryman of FIRDAUSI. His real name is Abu Mansur Muhammad. The date of his birth is rather uncertain. He was probably born soon after the death of RODAKI. Of his early life we know absolutely nothing. Originally, he was a protege of the CHAGHANI rulers, and acquired a wide reputation for his learning and fine poetical gifts. NUH II b. MANSUR, the powerful and magnificent SAMANID prince (A. D. 975—997) heard of the growing fame of DAQIQI, and sent him an invitation to come to his court which was at this time a brilliant centre of learning and culture. DAQIQI accepted the invitation, and transferred his literary services to NUH.

Daqiqi : the first poet who undertook the versification of Shahnama.—The SAMANID sovereign claimed descent from the old line of the Sassanian kings, and was deeply anxious that the glorious deeds of his royal ancestors should be immortalised in elegant verse. DAQIQI was at this time a bright and shining light, so the prince entrusted him with

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the versification of the Book of Persian Kings, and promised to reward him most liberally. He undertook this difficult task with some reluctance; and set about to accomplish it. He was just in the prime of his manhood when he commenced this work. Unfortunately, his glorious task was never completed. He had written only about a thousand couplets—according to some accounts twenty thousand, when his brilliant career was cut short by his assassination. FIRDAUSI has incorporated this splendid fragment in his epic with some ungenerous criticisms.

Daqiqi as a poet : his style and diction.—

DAQIQI's title to fame rests on this fragment, and numerous other odes and encomiums and short pieces. He was a poetical genius, and could produce every kind of verse with perfect ease and facility. His love-ditties, wine-songs, and quatrains exhibit his great lyric powers. He has a graphic style, and a diction which is remarkably chaste and free from vulgarity and foreign admixture. In this respect he was as careful and fastidious a purist as FIRDAUSI. He has some gorgeous descriptions of nature, and his short pieces are steeped in the colours of romantic poetry. He was an objective poet, and could vividly portray historical events.

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His verses are remarkable for their fine balance and smoothness. Had he lived longer, he would have become a rival of the great FIRDAUSI himself. He died in A. D. 977.

Rabi'a : a poetess.—A very interesting and conspicuous figure of this period is a female poet whose name was RABI'A FARHARI. She was born at Balkh towards the end of the ninth century, and was a contemporary of RODAKI. Her father was one of those Arab immigrants who settled in Persia, and finally amalgamated with the people of the land. Her dazzling beauty and her mental accomplishments soon spread her fame all round. She was passionately in love with a slave of hers whose name was Yaktash. The handsome Turkish youth returned the advances of his mistress with equal ardour, and their love became the gossip of the other servants and the talk of the neighbourhood. Finding herself opposed in her intention to marry Yaktash, her wounded heart and delicate spirit took refuge in ideal love. There in the secret shrine of her soul she idolised the object of her tenderest passion and love. The pious believers could not tolerate this double sin, so they secretly made away with this unfortunate lover. Her tragic end excited general sympathy, and invested her with a halo of romantic idealism.

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Rabi'a as a gifted poetess of Love and Mysticism.—RABI'A was a richly gifted poetess, and her exquisite verses take us to a high plane of mystic thought and absorption. She has caught up the sum of love, and uttered it with an intense feeling of suppressed emotion. We catch the note of passionate sobbings, and a deep, unutterable sorrow in her pathetic lines. At times she soars to those heights of contemplation and ecstasy where the real is lost in the ideal, and visions take the place of facts. Withal, there pervades in her poems an inextinguishable hope of everlasting union with the Spirit of Love.

Rabias Mysticism the dominant note of Persian theosophy.—This last characteristic of RABI'A's poetry is the dominant note of Persian theosophy. The eager inquisitive spirit that flamed up at the Renaissance in Persia could not exhaust itself entirely in the expansion of poetry or the creation of literary models. The wider outlook brought about by the kindling of new desires and aspirations deepened the sense of mystery, and sought an appropriate expression. The soul turned away with dissatisfaction from the seen, and yearned after the Divine. This was the dawn of mysticism in life and poetry of which we shall have an occasion to speak later on.

Some other poets of the Samanid Period.—The

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SAMANID circle of poets included divers other men of letters who were, more or less, followers of RODAKI. The sonorous and captivating style of this great master was imitated by KHABBAZI NISHAPURI who died in A. D. 964. His odes, epigrams, and wine-songs are full of delicate allusions to his munificent patron. ABU SHU'AIB S'ALIB has left a delightful little poem which was inspired by the dazzling beauty of a young Christian maiden. UMARAH was an astronomer of Merv, and died in A. D. 987. He has left some very sweet poems on wine and love. Abu'l Fath BUSTI who was born in A. D. 971 was a writer of great fame. After the downfall of the SAMANIDS he joined the GHAZNAVID circle of poets. Abu'l Hasan KISAI was born at Merv in A. D. 905. He was a man of ascetic habits, and acquired great fame as a scholar and poet. The verses which he wrote in praise of 'Ali and the Imams are still admired for their force and splendid melody.

Poets of the Buwaihid and the Ziyarid courts.—There were other distinguished and brilliant poets at this epoch who attached themselves either to the BUWAIHID princes or to the ZIYARID dynasty of TABARISTAN. Of these MANSUR MANTIQUI RAZI deserves special notice. He was one of the panegyrists of SAHIB IMA'IL, the famous minister of the

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BUWAIHID rulers. His style, though graceful and flowing, is rather artificial. It is interspersed with hyperbolical conceits and rhetorical devices. Among the ZIYARID poets, SARAKHSI and ABU'L QASIM ZIYAD GURGANI hold the first place. They sang the praises of QABUS b. WASHMGIR (A. D. 976—1012), the most eminent ZIYARID ruler.

The Three Prince poets.—QABUS was a man of great learning and accomplishments. He was a liberal patron of letters, and generously extended his protection and aid to poets and scholars. It was to him that the well-known book Marzuban-nama was dedicated by Marzuban-Rustam-i-Sharwin its author. This book was originally written in the dialect of Tabaristan and according to Ethè was first translated into ordinary Persian by Sa'd of Warawin about A. D. 1210—15. We ought to mention here that QABUS himself was a poet of no mean reputation. There were two other royal personages who aspired for distinction in versification, *viz.*, the SAMANID king MANSUR II and the CHAGHANI prince 'ABD-UL-MUZAFFAR.

Arabic in the Tenth Century.—It will be a gross historical error to suppose that the revival and encouragement of the Persian language and literature at this epoch necessarily meant the repression or

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restriction of the use of the Arabic language. Arabic, in the tenth century, was the language of diplomacy and commerce, philosophy and science, religion and culture, poetry and prose. It was universally employed by those who looked for fame and celebrity in the higher walks of literature. There is abundant evidence to prove that it was systematically studied and invariably used even by men who were the most zealous supporters of the national movement. The princes and rulers of the different Persian dynasties are remarkable for their enthusiastic and liberal patronage of Persian as well as Arabic letters. Many of the poets who flourished under them wrote verses in both the languages. Composition in Persian was, more or less, a sort of intellectual diversion to most of them. There were few writers who conceived it possible to make the native speech capable of expressing lofty and passionate thoughts. Those who did think it possible boldly made the experiment, and startled the world by the extraordinary delicacy and finish of their literary ventures.

Persian prose of the pre-Ghaznavid: period Balamis translation of Tabari.—We have scanty remains of the Persian prose literature of this period. Apparently writers and scholars never took to it seriously. They thought Persian an unsafe and

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untrustworthy makeshift. In their opinion, Arabic was *the* only secure medium for posterity. However, the SAMANID princes, who had the full development of the national literature at heart, turned their attention to the encouragement of prose works in the vernacular. MANSUR I (A. D. 961—975), the grandson of RODAKI's patron, commanded his famous minister, BALAMI to translate the universal history of TABARI from Arabic to Persian. This accomplished scholar and statesman is, in prose, the central figure of the entire SAMANID period. His translation of TABARI finished in A. D. 970 is the oldest prose work in Persian, and is of first-rate philological and literary importance. Apart from its intrinsic merits, it is a pure well of Persian undefiled, and the classic model of a simple, easy, beautiful, and straightforward style.

Balami : the father of Persian prose.—Balami little thought that this translation of his would give him a permanent place among the Immortals. *He is the father of Persian prose in the same sense as Rodaki is the father of Persian poetry.* The very limitations under which he worked contributed largely to his glorious success as a writer of the native speech. For the magnificent vocabulary of the unrivalled Arabic historian, he had to find a suitable Persian equivalent. This literary necessity compelled him to reproduce in the

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vernacular, not only the subject matter of the original, but its graceful, energetic style.

Another Translation of Tabari.—There exists another translation of TABARI which was executed in this period. This erudite scholar was not only a great historian, but also a great commentator. His exegesis on the Quran is a monument of profound learning and critical study. MANSUR I ordered the most learned scholars of his court to turn this great work into the national tongue. This admirable translation is the second oldest prose document in Modern Persian. To the same prince was dedicated the first Persian book on medicine written by a physician of Herat whose name was ABU MANSUR MUWAFFAQ. Another extant prose work of this period is a volume of an old Persian commentary on the Quran. According to NOLDEKE, BARON ROSEN and Professor BROWNE, this commentary which is full of archaisms and dialectal peculiarities was produced in the beginning of the tenth century. The language of these two books is remarkable for its simplicity and native force.

Persian of the Tenth Century compared with the Persian of To-day.—The remains in verse and prose of this period, for which posterity is mainly indebted to the fostering care of the enlightened and noble-minded SAMANIDS, sufficiently prove that while the modern

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languages of Europe were yet without their tongues, Persian could boast of a fair amount of polite literature. It possessed a rich, vigorous, and expressive vocabulary, and a style at once easy and graceful. The language of this period is almost the language of our own times. It has changed less in a thousand years than English has within the last three centuries. The lines and verses written in the tenth century are as plain and intelligible to a Persian scholar to-day as Shakespeare is to a modern Englishman. In this respect it is absolutely peerless and unique among the languages of the world.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GHAZNAVID PERIOD

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.—Sultan MAHMUD of Ghazni appears in history as a great conqueror and an eminent patron of learning. He ascended the throne in A. D. 998, and by his numerous wars and conquests succeeded in founding an empire which extended from Bukhara and Kashgar in the north to the borders of Bengal in the south. His vast kingdom included Tabaristan, Sistan, Transoxiana, Khurasan, Afghanistan, Kashmir, the Punjab, and a large part of the United Provinces. Soon after his death, which took place in A. D. 1030, this mighty empire began to fall to pieces. In A. D. 1044, his grandson MAUDUD was defeated by the Seljuqs who wrested from him all the Persian provinces. In the history of Persian literature this period embraces forty-six years, *i.e.*, from A. D. 998—1044.

Great Centres of Culture of the Pre-Ghazanavid Period.—At the time of MAHMUD'S accession to the throne, the splendid courts of the ZIYARID, BUWAHID, and SAMANID princes were the great centres of culture. Here and in a few other places, notably in Khiva and

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Naishapur, poets and writers were highly esteemed and sumptuously maintained by the rulers and princes. And it was not uncommon for men of great intellectual attainments to wander from court to court with a view to bettering their fortune.

Mahmud's Court : a resort of Learning.—Like the great QABUS b. WASHMGIR and the SAHIB ISMAIL b. ABBAD, MAHMUD too was a cultured man. He overthrew the SAMANIDS in A. D. 999, and annexed their dominions. The literary luminaries that clustered round the Samanid court in Bukhara were dispersed in different directions and attached themselves to other masters. It was at this juncture that MAHMUD began to invite the poets and leading writers of the age to his magnificent court, and promised to give them the most liberal encouragement. His fame and high promises attracted the men of letters, and Ghazni became the resort of the most brilliant scholars and *savants*.

The poets of his court.—The great literary outburst of this period was preceded by plentiful and various literature in which new forms of poetry were tried, and new veins of thought opened. RODAKI, DAQIQI, BALAMI, and a host of other writers and poets had proved to the world how rich, energetic, flexible, and expressive the native tongue was. The SAMANIDS

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had made it the language of their court, and their example was quickly followed by the other Persian rulers. But the flood-tide of the Renaissance had not yet set in : the achievements of the singers of the tenth century were yet only partial. Stronger hands and mightier intellects were required to make Persian the language of one of the richest literatures in the world, and these were found in FARRUKHI, FIRDAUSI, and other later poets. After this short introduction, we shall now pass on to the eminent circle of those renowned poets who have made the name of MAHMUD for ever famous in the literary history of Persia. Of these FIRDAUSI is by far the most brilliant, and his fame has eclipsed that of all his contemporaries. After him come 'UNSURI, FARRUKHI, ASADI, 'ASJADI, GHAZARI, MANUCHAHRI, and a number of other poets.

Firdausi: his life and his works.—FIRDAUSI, whose full name was Hasan b. Ishaq b. Sharaf, was born at Tus in KHURASAN, about A. D. 936. He was a man of private means, and had one son and one daughter. The son died when the father was sixty-five years of age : but the daughter survived him. He was already advanced in years when he went to Ghazni in A. D. 1000 with the first series of his verses on the ancient Persian kings. Here he was

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treated with great kindness and was universally considered the brightest ornament of MAHMUD'S court. At the request of the king he completed the versification of 'the Book of the Kings,' and produced his immortal *Shahnama* containing 60,000 couplets. *The king had promised to pay him one gold piece for every distich; but when the work was finished, he was given only 60,000 silver pieces. The aged poet distributed this sum amongst the attendants of the bath where he happened to be at the time when this money was brought to him, and revenged himself on the perfidious king by a satire full of the most scathing invective. After this untoward event, he had to fly from place to

*The poet Jami makes use of this incident while emphasizing 'the appreciation of worth' thus:

Khush-ast qadr shinasi ke chun Khamidah sipihr;
Siham-i-hadisa ra kard aqbat qausi.

Bi-raft shawkat-i-Mahmud-u-dar zamana na-mand;
Tuz in fasanah ki na-shinakht qadr-i-Firdausi.

†From the following verses it may well be judged how cutting to the heart this 'satire' had been to the Sultan:

Agar shah ra shah bude pidar; bi-sar bar nihada
mera taj-i-zar.

Wagar madir-i-shah banu bude; mara sim-u-zar ta
bizanu bude.

Chin audar tabarash buzurge na bud; nayarast nane-
i-buzurgan shunud

And the last verse:

Parastar-zada nayayad bakar; agarchi buwad zada-i-
shahryar.

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place in order to save himself from the vengeance of the infuriated monarch. His other long poem, *Yusuf wa Zulaikha* containing about nine thousand couplets, was composed under the protection of one of the BUWAIHID princes. It is the first great romance in verse, and served as a model to Nizami Ganjawi's romantic productions. He wrote many encomiums and odes on different occasions, and returned to his native Tus just before his death. MAHMUD repented of his meanness, and sent to him the promised amount. But the reparation was made too late. They were taking out the funeral of FIRDAUSI when the royal messengers arrived there. FIRDAUSI died in A. D. 1025.

Firdausi, the great Epic poet of Persia; his Shahnama.—FIRDAUSI'S reputation as a poet is altogether based on his *Shahnama* at which he worked for about thirty-five years. It is unquestionably one of the most glorious monuments of genius and learning, and puts the writer on a level with the very greatest poets of the world. In this immortal work Firdausi has exhausted almost all the possibilities of the native Persian speech, and has furnished to the world the greatest proof of his immeasurable superiority to his contemporaries.

Firdausi's style and diction.—His style is pure,

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polished, and perfect, and his diction is magnificent and incomparable.

Firdausi compared with Homer, Dante and Shakespeare.—In creative power, in fineness of workmanship, in intensity of passion, in intellectual force, he is quite the equal of Homer and Dante; while in conception and execution, in delineation of the softest emotions as well as the wildest passions, in dramatic touch, in splendour of colour, in range of imagination, and in delicacy of feeling, he is hardly much inferior to the great Shakespeare himself. His verses, melodious beyond all description, reveal the strength of his mental grasp and the plenitude of his descriptive powers. To paint the most different characters imaginable, in ever-changing circumstances and moods, is an overwhelming task; and to paint it in a pure and polished language and in an easy and elegant style is the highest achievement in verse. This is the secret of the irresistible fascination exercised by FIRDAUSI.

The Shahnama : a huge gallery of pictures.—It is characteristic of FIRDAUSI that he never digresses and never violates harmony of sound or sense. *His

*The late Mr. E. G. Browne holds quite the contrary views of Firdausi's *Shahnama* and points out the following as definite and positive defects : (1) its length

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book is like a huge gallery of pictures. At every turn it gives us new forms, exceedingly beautiful in themselves and true to nature. In force, elegance, purity, vividness, and grace, his language and style are on a par with the noblest models of Greek composition. The Ancients owe to him their fame, and the Moderns are indebted to him for their refinement. Right from beginning to end, right through all the ever-shifting scenes and the endless varieties of character and pictures, the poet maintains a high standard of literary excellence and dramatic presentation. There is not one false note : there is not one touch overstrained. The words and expressions in which he clothes his thoughts are always the best, the most energetic and the most natural. There is probably no other writer in the whole compass of Persian literature who is so natural and yet so concise. He shows an amazing self-control in the handling of his subject. His keen insight and penetration are nowhere more discernible than in the realm of the affections. He describes the workings of the human heart with inimitable delicacy and reserve. In his sixty thousand couplets there is not one indecent line or allusion. The *Shahnama*

is inordinate, (2) its metre is monotonous, (3) its similes are also unnecessarily monotonous, and (4) its sonorous majesty defies satisfactory translation.

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faithfully reflects not only the thoughts and passions of the ancient Persians, but the very form and pressure of the age. Firdausi once said that he brought Old Persia back to life. His book shows that it was not an empty boast. The *Shahnama* has ever since its composition been the pride of Persian people and has played an important part in the Persian national movements ancient as well as modern.

'Unsuri : the Poet-laureate of the Court of Ghazni.

'UNSURI'S full name was Abu'l Qasim Hasan b. Ahmad. He was a native of Balkh. He was in the prime of life when he was sent to Ghazni by NASR b. SABUKTAGIN, the brother of MAHMUD. From this we may conjecture that he was probably born about A. D. 970. MAHMUD entertained him sumptuously, and made him the poet-laureate of his court. He lived in a princely style, and had four hundred liveried pages to wait upon him. Biographers say that besides being an eminent poet he was a great philosopher and an erudite scholar. The four hundred poets who formed the famous "Round Table" of MAHMUD looked upon him as their literary chief. All poetical productions were recited before him ere they were presented to the king. *His extemporaneous effusions were the delight

* Once Mahmud in a state of intoxication bade Ayaz to cut his locks down by halves and the order was

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of the whole court, and his odes and panegyrics were generally admired for their exquisite polish and soft voluptuous beauty. His verses exhibit the employment of ingenious and artificial conceits used to heighten their effect. He is noted for his beautiful metaphors, and a pure, vigorous diction. Of his thirty thousand couplets only three thousand are extant now. He lived to see the downfall of the house of SABUKTAGIN, and died in A. D. 1049.

Farrukhi.—Abu'l Hasan Ali bin Qulu' or Tulugh FARRUKHI of Sistan was a celebrated poet and a skilful harper. He was originally a protege of Amir Khalaf, a descendant of the SAFFARIDS. Pecuniary difficulties led him to try his fortune in the court of Amir Abu'l Muzaffar b. Nasr, governor of Balkh. He was well received here, and wrote many panegyrics in praise of his new master. After a short time the Amir sent him to Ghazni where he at once attached himself

promptly executed. When, however, Mahmud came to his senses he very much regretted his words, and his mind was so agitated that he did not know what to do. At this juncture 'Unsuri who was sent for by the Prime Minister improvised the following quatrain which restored his master to his usual temper:

Gar aib-i-sar-i-zulf-i-but az kastan ast,
Chiza-i-bigham nishastan-o-barkhastan ast,
Ja-i-tarab-o-surur-o-mai khawastan ast,
Tei arastan-i-sary zi pirastan ast.

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to 'UNSURI, the poet-laureate. He was a keen observer of nature, and could vividly describe local scenes and martial exploits. He was a born poet, and had a fine ear for the music of verse. His poetical works display some of the best qualities of the poetry of this period. He wrote a work on Prosody which was known as *Tarjuman-ul-balagat*, but it is lost. FARRUKHI died after MAHMUD. *His threnody on the death of his royal patron is a most touching and pathetic poem.

Asadi : the Inventor of controversy-poems.—

ASADI, a native of Tus, was one of the most celebrated poets in the court of MAHMUD. His full name was Abu Nasr Ali b. Ahmad. He was a teacher and friend of FIRDAUSI, and outlived his illustrious pupil. The dates of his birth and death are unknown. MAHMUD often entreated him to undertake the versification of the "Book of Kings" but he excused himself on account of his age. Some say that he was the author of the *Gürshasp-nama* and the oldest Persian Lexicon; others maintain that these two books were written by his son. Almost all his poems are supposed to be lost. We possess only a few of them, and these are known as *Munazara* or controversy-poems. He

* This famous 'marthiya' begins with :
Shahr-i-Gahznin na haman-ast ki man didam par ;
Chi fitadast ki imsal digargun shud kar.

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invented and developed this peculiar species of poetry, and is chiefly remarkable on this account.

‘Asjadi.—Our knowledge of ‘ASJADI is exceedingly fragmentary. According to DAULAT SHAH he was a native of Herat, and received his poetical training at the feet of ‘UNSURI. His biographer cites only one quatrain of his as a specimen of his style.

Manuchahri of Damghan: an original poet.—Abu’n-Najm Ahmad MANUCHAHRI was born at Damghan towards the end of the tenth century, and was a most clever and precocious boy in his youth. He was a panegyrist of the ZIYARID prince Manuchahr, the son of the famous QABUS b. WASHMGIR. After the death of his patron (A.D. 1029) he went to Ghazni. He was the most prominent man of letters in the court of MAS‘UD b. MAHMUD. It appears from his works that he was an original poet, and popularised many verse-forms that were distinctively Arabic. His extant verses numbering about three thousand bear the stamp of a strong, versatile character. It is said that he was a pupil of ‘UNSURI in whose praise he wrote many eulogies. Of all poets of the Ghaznavid period he is most difficult to understand on account of his frequent allusions to the standard works of Arabian poets. His diction is magnificent, and his metaphors are charming and powerful. His poems on natural

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objects and scenes are full of bright flashes of genius, and give him a permanent place among the great poets of Persia. He died in A. D. 1054.

Ghazari and Abu'l Faraj Sanjari.—GHAZARI was born at Ray. It is said that he wrote a panegyric in praise of MAHMUD and was rewarded with a large sum of money. We should not omit here the name of Abu'l Faraj SANJARI, a panegyrist of Amir Abu 'Ali Samajur who died in A. D. 1002. After the defeat of his master he fell into the hands of MAHMUD who wanted to kill him, for he had written many stinging invectives against the house of SABUKTAGIN. But 'UNSURI, who was his pupil at one time interceded on his behalf and saved his life.

Pindar.—Pindar was another noted poet who was born at Ray. He was patronised by the BUWAHIDS, and died in A. D. 1010. He seems to have been an accomplished scholar; for he was able to compose poetry in Arabic, Persian, and the dialect of Dailam. He wrote many eulogies in praise of his noble and generous master, Abu Talib b. Fakhr-ud-Daulah. According to DAULAT SHAH, the well-known biographer, Zahir-ud-Din Faryabi thought very highly of PINDAR. Another poet who deserves a passing reference here is Abu'l Fakhr Mas'ud b. Sad GURGANI. He was a most enthusiastic panegyrist of the ZIYARIDS.

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Abu Sa'id b. Abi'l Khair.—We now come to a most fascinating and original poet who was destined to lay the foundations of Theosophic poetry in Persian. With the exception of RABI'Ā FARWARI, the female poet, no one had yet cultivated this kind of poetry. ABU SA'ID b. ABU'L KHAIR (A. D. 967—1049) was the first poet who devoted his most brilliant literary powers to the development of mystic poetry. He was a contemporary of AVICENNA, and made the quatrain a vehicle of theosophical ideas. His extant verses reflect all the chief characteristics of Persian mysticism. Like the famous 'UMAR KHAIIYYAM he made poetry the vehicle of philosophical thoughts and mystical utterances. He was followed by men who carried this new form of verse to the highest pitch of perfection and made mysticism an important element of Persian poetry.

Avicenna and his contemporaries.—ABU 'ALI b. SINA—the world-famous philosopher who is commonly known as AVICENNA—flourished in this period. He was born in KHURASAN in A. D. 980, and died in ISFAHAN in A. D. 1037. In the Middle Ages he was considered a great authority in Philosophy and Medicine. His book, the *Shifa*, written in Arabic, is a monument of patient research, critical study, and close observation. Unfortunately, like AL-BIRUNI and

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BADI-'UZ-ZAMAN Hamadani, his great contemporaries and countrymen, he produced almost all his works in Arabic. His Persian poems, of which only about forty verses are extant, have all perished. His *Danish-nama-i-'Alai*, written in Persian, is important as being one of the few prose books of this period. AL-BIRUNI, the celebrated 'chronologist, wrote a small book entitled *Tafhim* in Persian, but it is lost. The only other books written in Persian prose and belonging to this age are BAHRAMI'S *Khujistan-nama* and FARRUKHI'S *Tarjuman-ul-Balagat*. These were the only substantial additions made to the prose stock of this period.

Persian Literature of the Ghaznavid period: its characteristics.—The literature of this age is remarkable for its freshness, solidity and originality. The *Shahnama* of FIRDAUSI fixed the standard Persian once for all. Towards the end of the Ghaznavid period, there is clearly discernible the influence of the three great Arabian poets, MUTANABBI, BUHTARI and ABU TAMMAM. The Renaissance did a vast work for Persian literature, and prepared the language which, after a short time, supplanted Arabic and became one of the greatest literary vehicles. It gathered up all the forces of the past, and blended them most effectively with the national thought and feeling. It opened up

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to the imagination a world of great beauty and possibilities, and paved the way for the splendid, nervous, and passionate literature of the SELJUQIAN period. A multitude of new words and expressions, especially borrowed from Arabic, streamed into the language and considerably enriched the native vocabulary and speech.

CHAPTER IX

THE SELJUQIAN PERIOD

A. D. 1044—1156.

The Seljuqs. The SELJUQS rose to power almost immediately after the death of Sultan MAHMUD of Ghazni. TUGHRAL BEG, the commander of the forces of the SELJUQS, defeated MAS'UD the son of Sultan MAHMUD, in a battle fought in A. D. 1038, and assumed the title and state of a sovereign at NAISHAPUR. Six years later, he defeated MAUDUD, the son of MAS'UD, in Khurasan, and became the master of nearly the whole of Persia. The power of the SELJUQS was firmly established now. TUGHRAL BEG and his three successors, ALP ARSLAN, MALIK SHAH, and SANJAR, were liberal patrons of learning. Their sway extended from Arabia to the Oxus, and their rule proved most beneficial to the subject-nations. Under them the territories over which they ruled attained the highest prosperity. Justice was well administered from one end of the empire to the other; colleges and mosques were erected in every city; and the poor were protected from the tyranny of the rich. This

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long period, extending from A. D. 1044--1156, is most important in the history of Persian literature.

Under the Seljuqs Persian became a Universal Language.—With the SELJUQS we enter the Augustan Age of the Persian literature. The countries, subject to them, enjoyed a long period of tranquillity under their wise and strong rule. Right from the plains of Tartary to the confines of Syria the sovereigns of the Seljuq dynasty held undisputed sway. They are no less famous for their munificent patronage of letters than for their administration of justice. Both in verse and prose, the writers and poets attached to their court and to other patrons produced, in rapid succession, a splendid and plentiful literature. Philosophy, Science, History, Theology, Romance, and all the other great branches of knowledge fully engaged the master-minds of this period, and flourished with great vigour. The scholars who arose in this period held up the torch of learning for more than a century, and raised Persian to the dignity of a universal language. Their intellectual achievements are the glory of this age, and some of their works are the priceless heritage of mankind. In this book it is impossible to give an account of all of them; so we shall speak only of the most distinguished among them.

A comparison of the Ghaznavid and the Seljuqian Periods.—Here, at the outset, it appears necessary to make a passing remark. A careful student, when he passes in his reading from the age of RODAKI and FIRDAUSI to that of NASIR I-KHUSRAW and ANWARI, will at once perceive certain sharply defined differences between the temper and styles of the writers of the two periods. In essence and quality the latter is removed from, and is far in advance of, the former. One is "*Romantic*," and the other is pre-eminently "*Classic*." In the main, the differences are real and easily seen, even though the names chosen may not be the happiest that could be found to describe them. What are, then, the leading characteristics of this age? Stated broadly, we find in it the high qualities of the Renaissance blending in just and beautiful proportions with the best elements of the classical age of Arabic literature. In other words, the temper displayed in the works of the authors of this period is that of urbanity, love of good sense and moderation, deliberate art, hatred of all that is sentimental or fantastic, clear insight, and realistic touch. While in form, it is direct, polished, smooth and lucid. We shall now pass on to our main subject.

'Umar Khaiyyam : the unequalled Epigrammatist.
'UMAR KHAIYYAM, who was born at Naishapur about

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the time of the death of Sultan MAHMUD of Ghazni, is one of the most interesting and prominent figures of the Seljuqian period. He was a genius of a very high order, and composed many philosophical and mathematical books. MALIK SHAH held him in high esteem, and asked him to reform the calendar and superintend the erection of the royal observatory. He was by far the foremost astronomer of his time, and was universally respected as such. Besides his thorough acquaintance with Greek philosophy, he was deeply versed in religious knowledge. He is known to posterity chiefly through his Persian quatrains. ABU SA'ID b. ABU'L KHAIR had successfully introduced this typically Persian verse-form as a vehicle of subtle thoughts and mystic poetry. 'UMAR KHAIVYAM carried it to the highest pitch of perfection, and is unequalled to this day as an epigrammatist.

The Quatrains of 'Umar Khaiyyam.—The *Rubaiyat* of 'UMAR KHAIVYAM are full of philosophical maxims and passionate rhapsodies on wine, love, earthly joys, and sensual pleasures. A vein of melancholy pessimism runs through his five hundred quatrains and other poetical utterances. The boldness and freedom

*Umar Khaiyyam was first introduced to the West by the exquisite poem of Fitzgerald who even to this day is regarded the best translator of his *Rubaiyat*.

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with which he protests both against the bigotry of the orthodox Moslems and the wild ravings of the mystics are most remarkable.

‘Umar Khaiyyam compared to Voltaire.—At times he seems, like Voltaire, to be scoffing at religious ordinances, and making light of the very personality and existence of the Supreme Being. Most of his contemporaries held him to be either an agnostic or an atheist. The Sufis, of course, claim that he was a mystic. His fame as a writer of Persian entirely rests on the *Ruba‘iyat* or quatrains which have come down to us.

‘Umar Khaiyyam’s style.—In many respects, his style is like that of HAFIZ; but it is more concise and energetic. Their sweet pathos and unutterable sadness coupled with their animation and brilliancy make them a delightful reading. ‘UMAR KHAIIYYAM died in A. D. 1123.

‘Abdullah Ansari of Herat: his works.—The other poet of this period, who made the quatrain the vehicle of his mystical effusions, is ‘ABDULLAH ANSARI of Herat. He was born in A. D. 1006, and died in 1088. His dominant theme is the transitoriness of the world. He was a voluminous writer, and possessed a clear, straight-forward style.

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His *Munajat* is a fine specimen of stately prose. His mysticism is altogether of an inferior type, and his quatrains lack fire and polish. Among his many works *Nasihah*, *Anwar-ut-Tahqiq* *Kitab-i-Asrar*, *Tabaqat-i-Sufiya*, *Ilahi-nama*, and *Zad-ul-'Arifin*, are the most important.

Nasir Khusraw: his achievements.—Contemporary with 'UMAR KHAIVYAM but far surpassing him in reputation and influence is Abu Mu'in-ud-Din Nasir-i-KHUSRAW. He was born at Qubadiyan near Balkh in A. D. 1004. He had an insatiable appetite for reading of all kinds, and it at length concentrated itself upon Natural Science and Philosophy. Besides being well versed in Mathematics, Astronomy, Greek Philosophy, and the interpretation of the Quran, he had a comprehensive knowledge of many other religious systems and creeds of the East. In his youthful days he was much addicted to worldly pleasures, especially to excessive wine-drinking. At the age of forty-one he set out on travel, and visited most of the cities of the East. While at Cairo, he was much impressed with the good government of the Fatimid Caliphs, and was secretly converted to the Isma'eli propaganda. Henceforward he made his definite aim to introduce Isma'eli doctrines in his native land where he returned after seven years. The fierce hostility of the Sunnis compelled him to fly

and take refuge in Yumgan, in the mountains of Badakhshan. Most of his lyrical pieces were composed in his retirement. He lived to a good old age, but the date of his death is uncertain.

Nasir-i-Khusraw poet and prose-writer; his works.—

NASIR-I-KHUSRAW was a great poet and a great writer of prose. The verses he wrote in praise of *Ali* and his descendants, and his poems on moral and spiritual topics, are remarkable for their chaste expressions and majestic eloquence. Scattered through them all we find lessons of the purest morality. He glides through them with a most exquisite grace and freedom, and thunders forth his repeated and solemn warnings against the vanity of all earthly joys and splendour, the deceptive allurements of court-life, and the hypocrisy and licentiousness of the world of his day. His two *masnawi* poems, *Roshnainama* and *Sa'adat-nama*, reflect the same characteristics as his *Divan*. In them, this prince of the didactic poets seems to revel in the pure light of heavenly wisdom, and assumes the role of the seer. He was a thorough artist and could dress his teachings in the loveliest form. His *Safar-nama* or travels is one of the great prose works of the eleventh century. This book is written in the speech of the people, and gives an authentic account of the state of the Moslem world, and the condition of Persia, Arabia, Syria,

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Palestine, and Egypt in simple, energetic words.

Nizam-ul-Mulk; a great prose-writer and a patron of learning.—By far the most striking figure in the social history of this period is that of Abu 'Ali al-Hasan b. Ishaq who is generally known by his title of NIZAM-UL-MULK, (A. D. 1012—1092). The prosperity and magnificence of the reigns of ALP ARSLAN and MALIK SHAH were entirely due to the wise and salutary measures of this celebrated minister and statesman. For the last thirty years of his life (1062—1092) this remarkable man, who united in himself the highest qualities of the politician, the writer, and the philosopher, controlled and directed all the affairs of the state, and made the names of ALP ARSLAN and MALIK SHAH for ever famous in history. He founded colleges, schools, mosques, and other places of public utility, and immortalised himself by his well-known book, *Siyar ul-Muluk* or *Siyasat nama*. It is written in a simple straightforward style, and is undoubtedly one of the greatest prose-works of this period. It is a perfect store-house of information, and embodies the mature views and reflections of a great statesman who was perfectly acquainted with the intricate machinery of the greatest government of his day. In facility of narration, in lucidity of details, and in depth of observation NIZAM-UL-MULK has few equals.

Eleventh century singularly rich in prose; the Qabus Nama.—It is a most remarkable fact that almost all the great prose works of this period were written in the eleventh century. Next in importance to Nizam-ul-Mulk's *Siyasat-nama*, but equal in interest to Nasir-i-Khusraw's *Safar-nama*, is the *Qabus-nama* written by KAI-KAUS, the grandson of the famous Ziyarid prince QABUS b. WASHM GIR. The author composed this book in A. D. 1082 when he was 63 years of age. This style is perhaps the most perspicuous ever employed by any writer; simple, clear, forcible, it conveys the exact meaning intended with greater success than has been attained by NIZAM-UL-MULK and NASIR-I-KHUSRAW. The book is full of the wit, wisdom, and ripe experience of the author, and contains moral precepts and rules of conduct. It is the genuine, outspoken utterance of a man who has sounded the depths of human knowledge, and exemplifies his observations by anecdotes and illustrations. Its simple grace and unaffected elegance make it a prose classic of the Persian language.

Nuzhat-nama-i-Alai; the oldest Persian encyclopædia.—Mention must be made here of a very important prose contribution to the literature of the period. No author had attempted so far to make Persian the medium of all available knowledge. SHAHMARDAN b. ABU'L KHAIR was the first to devote his energies to the

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production of a book containing valuable information on important subjects. Towards the end of the eleventh century this versatile man wrote his *Nuzhat-nama* - 'Alai for a prince of Tabaristan. It is the oldest Persian encyclopædia, and gives the reader an insight into the learning and culture of the age.

Rashid-ud-Din Watwat; his works.—Another interesting prose work of this period is the *Hadaïq-us-Sihr* of RASHID-UD-DIN-WATWAT. This remarkable man was born at Balkh in A. D. 1085, and was the poet-laureate of Sultan ATSIZ KHWARAZMSHAH, a rival of SANJAR. That he possessed great powers as a writer and poet is beyond dispute. His *Diwan*, containing thousands of verses, is still much admired. In ready wit, splendour of style, and power of sarcasm and vituperation, he was hardly inferior to Anwari with whom he had a poetical encounter in satirical couplets. He died in A. D. 1182, aged 97 years. His prose work, *Hadaïq-us-Sihr*, is an extremely important book, and throws a flood of light on the poetical art of the Persians. Its flowing rhythm, ornate style, and well-chosen diction, give Watwat a place among the great writers of prose. Another interesting prose book written by this poet is the *Sharh-i-Kalimat-ul-Khulafa-i-Rashidin*. It contains a hundred sayings of each of the four Caliphs paraphrased and explained in Persian.

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Nizami 'Uruzi : the author of *Chahar Maqala*.—

NIZAMI 'URUZI of Samargand deserves special mention here not so much on account of his excellent verses which number about half a dozen as of the interesting biography of the poets he wrote. He was a pupil of AMIR MU'IZZU, and was born between A. D. 1080—85. This learned man was noted for his fine critical powers and brilliant style. Early in life he attached himself to the court of SANJAR who greatly respected him for his industrious habits. He travelled about a good deal, and diligently collected materials for his celebrated prose work known as *Chahar Maqala*. This book, which probably appeared in A. D. 1155, is valuable as being one of the most authoritative biographies of the Persian poets. It is astonishing how much useful and varied information the author gives us regarding the internal condition of the different Moslem kingdoms of Central and Eastern Asia. The style is facile and elegant, and the accounts given of the poets are at once compressed and full of information. NIZAMI 'URUZI occupies a front place among the writers of Persian prose. He had a wonderful command of language, and described historical facts in a most charming way. The date of his death is not known.

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Imam Ghazzali: his works.—I have already spoken of some very important prose works of this period. To these may be added the *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat* of IMAM GHAZZALI (A. D. 1059—1111) the most distinguished and learned theologian of his day. This beautiful treatise on religion is a noble defence of the principles of Islam, and is a model of cogent reasoning and lucid statement of views. Another book written by him in Persian prose is *Manahij -ul-'Ibad*. *Zakhira-i-Khwarazmshahi* is another work of this most productive age. It is an encyclopædia of medicine, and shows the extent to which medical researches were carried in the days of the author.

Maqamat-i-Hamidi and Kalila wa Dimna —Two of the most valuable contributions to the prose literature of this period are the Persian *Maqamat* or discourses of Qazi HAMID-UD-DIN Balkhi, and the elegant translation of *Kalila and' Dimna*. HAMID-UD-DIN modelled his work on the famous Arabic *Maqamat* BADI'UZ-ZAMAN Hamadani, and HARIRI. Though much inferior in merit and style to the original, it is yet a good example of the infinite resources of the Persian language. The translation of *Kalila and Dimna* executed by NASRULLAH b. HAMID is remarkable for its classical expressions, stately periods, and polished style.

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Sanai : one of the great Mystic Poets of Persia.—

Abu'l Majd Majdud SANA'I is one of the greatest theological writers of this period. He was a native of Ghazni, and flourished in the reigns of the Ghaznavid Sultans IBRAHIM (A. D. 1059—1099), his son MAS'UD (A. D. 1099—1114), and his grandson BAHRAM SHAH (A. D. 1118—1152). He was born in the second half of the eleventh century, and died between A. D. 1140 and 1150. Like his contemporaries MASU'D b. SA'D SALMAN and HASAN GHAZNAVI he was at first a court panegyrist. But an incident occurred one day which changed the entire course of his life, and made him devote his time exclusively to religious exercises, pious meditations, and the composition of Sufic poetry. His poetical works are among the most eloquent, learned, and powerful books of the age. The *Hadiqat-ul-Haqiqat*, *Tariq-i-Tahqiq*, *Kunuz-ur-Rumuz*, *Ishq-nama*, *'Aql-nama*, *Kar-nama*, and his *Diwan* consisting of about eight thousand couplets, all testify to the consummate learning and passionate fervour of SANA'I. He has a nervous, magnificent style, and some of his poems are perfect gems of great brilliancy and lustre. There are passages in his writings in which he has reached the very top-most

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height of solemn grandeur. * He is one of the three great mystic poets of Persia.

Asad Gurgani : the author of *Wis wa Ramin*.—FAKHR-UD-DIN AS'AD GURGANI is important as having been the immediate precursor of NIZAMI of Ganja in the department of romantic poetry. His *Wis wa Ramin*, based on a beautiful Pahlawi story, shows him to be a master of a style at once powerful and captivating. Love, romantic loyalty, and airy elegance find in him their best representative. Astonishing fertility of invention, analysis of character, vivid and animated painting of the incidents, and above all, a masterly delineation of the softer passions—these are the qualities which give FAKHR-UD-DIN AS'AD a high place in Persian literature.

Anwari: his life and achievements.—The most brilliant name among the poets of this period is that of 'Ali Auhad-ud-Din ANWARI of Khawaran. He was born about A. D. 1125, and received his education at Tus which was a great seat of learning in his day. From the notices given of him in different books it appears that he was a highly accomplished scholar, and was thoroughly versed in metaphysics, natural

* Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, the greatest of the mystic poets, had a very high opinion of Sanai. He writes:

Attar ruh bud, u Sanai du chashm-i-u;

Ma az pay-i-Sanai u 'Attar amadim.

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science, and logic. He was by far the greatest poet of the court of his unfortunate master, SANJAR the SELJUQID; but he was never adequately appreciated in his life-time for his wonderful powers both as a poet and as a satirist. It must be remembered that ANWARI lived at a time when the constant inroads and ravages of the barbarous Mongol tribes shook the very foundations of the empire of the SELJUQS, and made life and property utterly insecure. He had fallen upon evil days, and had often to endure persecution and eat the bread of exile. His life was a continual struggle against poverty. He probably died between A. D. 1190 and 1200.

Anwari: the poet of the learned.—ANWARI is pre-eminently the poet of the learned. His grand diction and his beautiful ornate style make him a fascinating but difficult poet. He possessed an extraordinary command over the Persian language, and used it especially in * panegyrics and satire as few writers have done before or since. With the exception of SA'DI and NIZAMI, there is hardly any other poet who has painted the sufferings and sorrows of

* (a) Anwari's best Qasida or the "swan-song" is the one which begins with:

Ay Musulmanan, fighan az jawr-i-charkhi-charbari
In this poem the poet has depicted some interesting events of his life.

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the human heart with such wonderful power and penetration. Some of his odes and panegyrics are the finest specimens of lofty, impassioned versification. His poetical appeal entitled 'The tears of Khurasan' is one of the most pathetic and thrilling things in literature. Intensity of feeling, condensed force and picturesqueness of expression,² delicate perception of beauty, and the highest finish of style are the qualities which distinguish his verses.

Mu'izzi; the poet-laureate of the Seljuq court.—

AMIR 'ALI MU'IZZI is another celebrated poet of this period. Introduced into the court of MALIK SHAH at a tender age, he soon excelled the poets who were crowded there by his sweet, fluent, and charming songs. SANJAR, the successor of MALIK SHAH, greatly honoured him and made him his poet-laureate. He occupied the same position in the court of this noble and brave king as 'UNSURI did in the court of MAHMUD. Persian biographers tell curious stories of his jealousy and greed. In their pages he appears

(b) Jami in his 'Baharastan' quotes the following verses in which the popular opinion of Persians reckons Anwari as the King of Qasida :

Dar shi'r si tan payambran-aud ;
Har chand ki'la nabiyya ba'di—
Masnawi-u-qasida u ghazal ra,
Firdausi u Anwari u Sa'di.

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as a man who could not bear a rival in the department of poetry. He had a tragic end, for he was accidentally killed by an arrow shot by SANJAR. MU'IZZI died in A. D. 1148.

Mu 'izzi as a poet ; lacks originality.—In MU'izzi the intellect and the fancy play a greater part than sentiment or passion. He has a cold, correct, artificial manner. Anything like spontaneous impulse or an irresistible outflow of feeling is sadly wanting in his verses. His poems, nice and quaint and charming though they are, are yet full of purely conventional metaphors. In this *Diwan* of 15,000 verses, there is little that is really quite fresh and original.

Mihasti a poetess.—Prominent among the men of letters of the court of SANJAR was a female poet whose name was MIHASTI. This singular woman, gay in disposition and loose in character, possessed a keen understanding and a ready tongue. We do not know the circumstances under which she was first introduced into the royal court. Daulat Shah says that she was a mistress of SANJAR. Quatrain was her favourite vehicle of expression, and she often employed it with great success. She must have been an accomplished and witty person, for her lines are full of beautiful turns of expression and unexpected analogies. She is not an important poet by any means.

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But I have ventured to mention her name in order to show that the profession of the poet was most profitable in this period, and brought great honours to the person who followed this calling. It proves further that even women were infected by the desire of acquiring fame as a poet, and freely attended the courts of kings and princes. • It is a remarkable fact that MIHASTI was not the only female poet of this period. There were others no less renowned than she; but their full account cannot be given in a book purporting to be only an introduction.

Sycophancy and Satire the outstanding characteristics of the Seljuqian Period. Panegyrical and satirical poetry rose to the highest pitch in this period. Under the SELJUQS and the princes of Khwarazm, a host of poets appeared whose main business was to compose laudatory verses in praise of their patrons, or hurl the most stinging invectives against their rivals and against one another. Sycophancy and satire are the two outstanding characteristics of most of these versifiers. Their fulsome adulation is as disgusting as their scurrilous language and coarse allusions. It is a sad fact that even great poets, like ANWARI and KHAQANI, frequently descended to personalities and satirised one another in lines of revolting indecency.

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Other celebrated poets of the Seljuqian Period.—

The other poets who gained celebrity as eulogists are 'AM'AQ of Bokhara (died in 1149) whose romantic poem *Yusuf-wa-Zulaikha* can be read in two metres; Shahab-ud-Din ADIB-I-SABIR, drowned in the Oxus about 1145 A. D. by order of ATsiz KHWARAZMSHAH; Amir QATRAN, famous for his double rhymes; JAUHARI ZARGAR; 'ABDUL WASI' JABALI; HASAN GHAZNAWI; Abubakr AZRAQI; ZAUZANI; ABU'L MAFAKHIR RAZI; SOZANI and LAMI'I, noted for their parodies and travesties; and SHATRANJI, an indecent satirist.

CHAPTER X

LITERATURE FROM THE DEATH OF SANJAR TO THE SACK OF BAGHDAD.

A. D. 1156[•]—1258.

The downfall of the Seljuqs.—Sultan SANJAR, after a long and glorious reign, experienced the most cruel reverses towards the end of his life. Not content with his vast dominions, he penetrated into the interior of Tartary and attacked GOUR KHAN the monarch of Kara Khatay; but he sustained a crushing defeat, and fled to Khurasan with a few followers, where the poet FARID-UD-DIN consoled him. The unhappy king little knew that there were greater misfortunes and worse disasters in store for him. At the end of A. D. 1153 he marched against the Turkoman tribe of GHUZ who had withheld their annual tribute of forty thousand sheep. An engagement followed in which SANJAR'S army was totally routed, and he himself was taken prisoner, and remained in captivity for two years. His favourite wife, KHATUN TURKAN, ruled over his territories during his imprisonment, and died in the beginning of A. D. 1156. After her death SANJAR escaped from his confinement

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and regained his liberty. The devastated and deplorable condition of his once flourishing kingdom filled him with melancholy, and he died the same year. The different branches of the Seljuqian dynasty now began to make wars upon one another, and kept the country in a distracted state for forty years. At last TUGHRAL III succeeded in overcoming most of his rivals. But his success was short-lived; for he himself was defeated and slain by TAKASH, king of Khwarazm in A. D. 1194. With this prince terminated the Seljuqid monarchs of Persia.

The House of Khwarazmshahs: the Mongol Invasion and the sack of Baghdad.—The dynasty of the KHWARAZM SHAHS, begun in A. D. 1077 with QUTB-UD-DIN MUHAMMAD, a favourite cupbearer of MALIK SHAH, dates its firm establishment from the secession of ARTSIZ in A. D. 1127. This crafty ruler was a most formidable rival of SANJAR. His successors completely overthrew the Seljuqian power, and founded a vast and powerful empire. But the KHWARAZM SHAHS were not destined to rule over Persia for a long time. Their fortune fell before CHANGEZ KHAN, the great destroyer of the human race, who overran their dominions in A. D. 1221 and defeated the last king of Khwarazm. Before CHANGEZ died, his empire extended from the Indus to the Black Sea,

from the Volga to the plains of China, and from the Persian Gulf to Siberia. It was his grandson HALAKU KHAN who exterminated the terrible order of the Assassins, captured Baghdad in A.D. 1258, massacred 300,000 of its inhabitants, killed MUSTA'SIM, the last Abbasid Caliph, plundered the city, and destroyed the literary and scientific monuments of the once glorious metropolis of Islam. After this brief survey of the political history of Persia in this period, we shall now pass on to its literary history.

Khaqani: his life and achievements. — Afzal-ud-Din Ibrahim b. 'Ali Shīrwānī, surnamed KHAQANI, is one of the literary luminaries of the twelfth century. He was born in A. D. 1107, and was brought up under the roof of his paternal uncle who taught him Arabic, medicine, astronomy, and metaphysics. His quick and retentive memory enabled him to finish his difficult course of reading at a comparatively early age. He was a pupil of ABU'L 'ALA GANJAWI, the poet-laureate of MANUCHHR SHIRWANSHAH, and took lessons in the art of versification

³The horrible events of the destruction of the great Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad by the huge Tartar host of the blood-thirsty Halaku Khan, have been described in one sentence by a Persian who narrowly escaped death and managed to flee from the scene of death and destruction. *viz.* 'Amdand-o-kushtand-o-bastand-o-sukhtand-o-raftand.'

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from him. The teacher perceived the rising genius of KHAQANI, and gave him his daughter in marriage. But this new relation led to serious troubles and mutual recriminations in the future. He attached himself to the court of MANUCHIHR SHIRWANSIAH who was a most liberal patron of men of letters, and kept a number of brilliant poets and writers round him. This prince had a great regard for KHAQANI. It is said that the poet once thought of going to Khurasan: but the misfortunes of SANJAR prevented him from carrying out his intentions. The splendid court of the KHWARAZMSHAHS tempted him next, and he even went so far as to write a few panegyrics in their praise, and exchange complimentary verses with WATWAT, their poet-laureate. He was a pious believer and twice went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Once he fled from Shirwan, but he was arrested and confined. When he regained his liberty after seven months, he left MANUCHIHR, and wandered about from place to place. His death took place at Tabrez in A. D. 1186.

Khaqani as a Poet and inventor of Prison poems. KHAQANI was a great poet.* His verses are, undoubtedly, far superior to those of most of his contemporaries.† His *Tuhfat-ul-'Iraqain*, a large number

*He is also the inventor of the 'Habsiya' or th

of panegyrics and a long *Diwan*, are the works which have come down to us. He had little skill in the delineation of character, as is abundantly proved from *Tuhfat-ul-'Iraqain*, a masnawi poem giving a detailed account of his second pilgrimage to Mecca. Nor had he any considerable mastery over the tender emotions. But he could write odes, love-songs, and encomiums¹ in a most superb language, and paint incidents and local circumstances in glowing and vivid colours. His metaphors are always striking, and his style, in spite of its obscurity and artificial ring, has a majesty and force which are seldom surpassed. Among FALAKI, ABU'L 'ALA GANJAWI, ZULFIQAR, SHAHFUR, and ABU SA'ID BAIZAWI, his fellow-poets in the court of MANUCHIHR SHIRWAN-SHAH, KHAQANI held the foremost place.

Nizami of Ganja: the unrivalled Master of Romantic Epopee in Persia.—Abu Muhammad

'Prison Poem,' and composed several such poems during the seven months of his incarceration in the prison.

One of Khaqani's famous poem begins:—

Subah-dam chun kullah bandad ab-i-dud-asay-a-man,
Chun shafaq dar khun nashinad chashm-i-shah-
paymay-i-man.

* The best and the most admired of Khaqani's qasidas (or encomiums) is the one beginning:—

Sarhadd-i-badiyast: rawan bash bar sar-ash;
Tiryak-i-rnh kun zi stumm-i-mu'attar-ash.

مع دم چوں کلمه بنزد آه دود آب می من
چوں شفق در خون نشیند چشم شب سپای من

NIZAMI, the greatest poet of this period, and the acknowledged and unrivalled master of the romantic epopee in Persia, was born at Ganja in A. D. 1141. *In poetical genius, inventive power, felicity of expression, and dignity of style, he towers far above all other poets, and ranks next to FIRDAUSI. He was a man of earnest piety, and kept absolutely aloof from the prevailing vices and corrupting influences of the age. Over and over again he was invited to participate in the pleasures of court-life by becoming a courtier, but he steadily and stoutly refused to give up his retirement. Alike in character as in qualifications he is one of the purest and loftiest figures. Like MILTON, "his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

Nizami's five immortal poetical works. *Makhzan-ul-Asrar*, his first poetical work which appeared in A. D. 1165-66, is of a didactic character. This was followed by *Khusrau wa Shirin* which at once secured for him the foremost place among the Persian

*Bacher the well-known European Orientalist writes that: 'Nizami's high rank as a poet alike original, fruitful, and of rare and noble genius, is admitted by all critics, Persian and non-Persian, including 'Awfi, Qazwini, Daulat-shah and Lutf 'Ali Beg Azar amongst biographers, and Sadi, Hafiz, Jami and 'Ismat amongst the poets.'

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romanticists. Later on he wrote his celebrated *Sikandar-nama*, an epic poem which is the most successful imitation of *Shahnama*. Finally he produced his other two romances, *Laila wa Majnun* and *Haft Paikar*, and achieved immortal fame.

Nizami as a poet: the style and characteristics of his poetry. It is a noteworthy fact that the pious and devout NIZAMI never chose a strictly Mahomedan legend or story for his works of fiction. He drew his inspiration from PAHLAWI legends, and poured forth, in lofty and musical eloquence, the abstractions of love and devotion. The tendencies of the human mind, and the struggles and passions of men, are depicted with the utmost tenderness and with a sure, unerring precision and penetration. In the whole range of Persian literature, only FIRDAUSI and FAKHR-UD-DIN AS'AD GURGANI can compete with him in the wonderful delineation of human affections, especially of the joys and sorrows of the heart. His style is chaste and classical, and his verses are marked for their sweet melody, brilliant polish, and soft eloquence.

Nizami's Diwan.—Besides the five poems, generally known as *Panj Ganj*, enumerated above, there was a *Diwan* of NIZAMI consisting of odes and encomiums and other poetical pieces, and containing

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about twenty thousand couplets; but it is supposed to be lost now. Only a few odes and panegyrics have come down to us, and these are not of very great literary value.

Zahir Faryabi: the notorious Satirist.—ZAHIR-UD-DIN Tahir b. Muhammad of Faryab is another poet of this period who achieved considerable reputation in his lifetime. He was born about A. D. 1155. He was a time-server and flatterer like most of the court-poets, and shamelessly demanded money in return for his praises, or held out the threat of invective if refused. His chief patron was ATA'U-G NUSRAT-UD-DIN ABUBAKR, the successor of QIZIL ARSLAN. It appears from his *Diwan* of about five thousand couplets that he was an unprincipled voluptuary; but he seems to have repented towards the end of his life. He was in the habit of addressing his poems, especially encomiums, to wealthy and influential persons with the hope of getting some reward from them. His style is polished and correct, but his verses lack fire and originality. There is nothing of that condensed vitality and irrepressible outbursts of strong feeling that characterise the poems of KHAQANI, ANWARI, and NIZAMI, his great rivals and contemporaries. He died at Tabrez in A. D. 1202, and was buried at SURKHAB near the grave of

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KHAQANI. Besides the three great poets mentioned in this paragraph, there were other men of letters who were contemporaneous with him. Among these, Mujir-ud-Din BAILAQANI, SHAHFUR, KIRMAJ ISFAHANI, and JAUHARI ZARGAR are noted for their poetical compositions. FARYABI was a most popular poet in his day and had a number of ardent admirers who preferred him to ANWARI. He is very seldom read now, partly for this reason that his poems are either full of flattery and false professions, or they are written in such a vein of exaggeration that it is hard to find anything in them that is really interesting or instructive. I need scarcely mention that FARYABI was a notorious satirist.

SA'DI: one of the greatest didactic poets of Persia and the most popular prose-writer.—Mushar-rif-ud-Din SA'DI one of the greatest didactic poets and unquestionably the most popular Persian writer, was born at Shiraz in A. D. 1184. His father was in the service of the ATABEGS of Faris, and died when SA'DI was only a boy. The fifth ruler of this dynasty, SA'D b. Zangi who ascended the throne in A. D. 1195, took the orphan under his protection, and arranged for his education. SA'DI showed a great aptitude for learning, and was at once sent to the famous Nizamiyya College of Baghdad where

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he studied for about thirty years. It was here that he fell under the influence of the celebrated mystic, Shahab-ud-Din 'Umar SAHRAWARDI, who died in A. D. 1234 and is the author of '*Awarif-ul-ma'arif*', a highly esteemed book on Sufi doctrine. The ardent, noble-minded youth received his Sufi training under the spiritual guidance of this holy man, and eagerly imbibed all that was best and purest in his teachings. After finishing his course at BAGHDAD, SA'DI spent the next thirty years of his life in visiting the great cities of Asia. He came to India also, and stayed here a considerable time. In A. D. 1256, he went back to his native city and resided there till his death which took place in A. D. 1292.

Sa'dis' odes. In the estimation of his own countrymen, SA'DI is one of the greatest poets of Persia. As a writer of odes, he certainly far surpasses his predecessors, and worthily takes his place next to HARIZ. His *Diwan* comprises all sorts of poetical compositions, and fully establishes his reputation as a star of the first magnitude.

The Gulistan and the Bostan. He combined in himself all the high and rare qualities of the writer, the orator, the mystic, and the poet. The experience of the world gained during his extensive travels, his intimate acquaintance with men of different nationalities

and types, his insight into human character, his thorough knowledge of the motives and passions which govern men's lives, together with his innate nobility of thought and pure morals, made it easy for him to produce his two master-pieces, the *Bostan* and the *Gulistan*, in A. D. 1257-58. These two works are full of the ripe wisdom of the author, and abound in sound ethical maxims. The *Gulistan* especially is a rich store of clever tales and charming anecdotes, told in a clear, forcible language, and contains lessons of practical wisdom which are capable of universal application. This remark holds good of the *Bostan* also. It is this element of catholicity that makes these two books the heritage of mankind.

Sa'di's poetry.—In his odes, panegyrics, elegies, other poetical pieces, SA'DI appears before us as a

* Here I give the first verses of three of the very best odes of Sa'di.

- (i) Ay S'arb'an, ahista rau karm-i-jānam mirawad;
Wan dil ki ba khud dashtam, ba dilsatanam
mirawad.
- (ii) Au dust hi man darane man yar ki man danam;
Shirin dahane darad, dur az lab u danddanam.
- (iii) Har kas bi-tamasha-yi raftand bi-sahara-yi
Ma ra ki tu manzuri, khatir narawad ja-yi.

† Sa'di composed a very touching Maithiya on the tragic death of the last Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustasim. It begins:—

Asman ra haq buwad gai khun bi-barad bar zamin;
Bar ziwal-i-mulk-i-mustasim Amir-ul-Muminin.

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philosopher and mystic. *His utterances are marked for their pure lofty thought, sincerity of expression, breadth of view, chaste and easy language, varied and graceful style, and, above all, their high moral tone.

Attar: his life, achievements and works.—The mystical element, dimly visible in the writings of SA'DI, is more clearly and vividly represented by the works of Muhammad FARID-UD-DIN 'ATTAR who was born at Naishapur about 1119 A. D. He followed for a long time his father's profession, and studied the mystic theosophy under Shaikh RUKN-UD-DIN. From his father Ibrahim who himself was an enthusiastic follower of a well-known mystic, QUTB-UD-DIN HAIDAR, the young 'ATTAR inherited his mystical tendencies. So thoroughly did he enter into the spirit of this religion that before long he was recognised as one of its principal exponents. The writings of the mystics, especially those of Shaikh Abu Muhammad RUZBIAAN and SANA'I, had already begun to influence national thought. 'ATTAR zealously collected all the Sufi writings and traditions, and propagated them along with his own voluminous works. He travelled to

* It is for this very reason that the following half-verse has become proverbial:—

Hama guyand u sukhun guttan-i-Sa'di digar-ast.

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distant countries, visited Mecca, Egypt, Damascus, and India, and on his return was invested with the Sufi mantle by Shaikh MAJD-UD-DIN of Baghdad. His most famous work is his *Mantiq-ut-Tair*. It is an allegorical poem, and contains a complete survey of the life and doctrine of the Sufis. In this splendid work 'Attar also gives the fullest account of the 'Stages on the Sufi Path' of which he has raised the number from three to seven. He is also the author of *Asrar-nama*, *Ilahi-nama*, *Jauhar-uz-zat*, *Haidar-nama*, *Gul-o-Hurmuz*, *Musibat-nama*, *Wasiyat-nama*, *Bulbul nama*, *Pand-nama*, *Siyah-nama*, *Mazhar-ul-'Ajaib*, and *Lisan-ul-Gaib*. Besides these and other poems, there are his long *Diwan* and an interesting prose work entitled *Tazkirat-ul-Auliya*.

'Attar as one of the greatest Mystic poets of Persia': his poetry, style and diction.—FARID-UD-DIN 'ATTAR is one of the four great mystical poets of Persia—the other three being SANA'I, AUHADI, and JALAL-UD-DIN RUMI. His verses, which are more than one hundred thousand, are remarkable for their lucidity, sweet idealism, pathos, and imaginative range. His diction is at once choice and simple,

* *Pand-nama* (A Book of Advice) is very popular both in India and Persia. Like Sa'di's *Gulistan* and *Bostan* it is also a school text for the children.

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and his metaphors and illustrations embody sound moral teaching. Like SA'DI and SANA'I, he is always sober, sane, and balanced. Even in his most ecstatic mood, he is wonderfully self-possessed in this sense that he can clearly describe his visions. It is said that he was killed in A. D. 1230 during the Mongol invasion.

Rumi: the greatest of all the Mystic poets.—By far the greatest and most uncompromising Sufi writer of all ages is JALAL-UD-DIN MUHAMMAD, commonly known as MAULANA RUM. His father Baha-ud-Din Walad was himself a great mystic and had an immense following. This provoked the jealousy of MUHAMMAD KHWARAZM SHAH who drove him out of his dominions. JALAL-UD-DIN, born in A. D. 1207, was only a boy when his father had to leave Balkh, his native city. He went with his father to Naishapur first where FARID-UD-DIN 'ATTAR is said to have blessed him, and predicted his future greatness. Thence they went to Mecca on a pilgrimage. After this, the family proceeded to Asia Minor, and finally settled down at Qonya (Iconium). JALAL-UD-DIN was taught by his father who was an accomplished scholar. After his death (A. D. 1231) he visited Aleppo and Damascus, and, on his return, perfected his studies under BURHAN-UD-DIN TIRMIZI. He was

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also influenced a good deal by SHAMS-I-TABREZ, a mystic of the extreme type, and a most aggressive and domineering character. JALAL-UD-DIN was a saintly man and acquired great reputation as a poet and mystic. He married twice and had several children. He died in 1273. •

Rumi's Masnawi; one of the greatest poems in the world.—Jalal-ud-Din's **Masnawi*, containing about twenty-seven thousand distichs, is one of the greatest poems of the world. It is divided into six books the first of which was begun in 1260. The whole poem was completed before his death, and is one of the grandest monuments of genius and human aspiration. Its deep fervent spirit, tremendous enthusiasm, matchless beauty, high moral teaching, severe dignity of style, brilliancy of colouring, and consummate melody, make it unquestionably one of the most powerful books. An intense idealism pervades the whole work and lends it an indescribable charm.

Rumi's Diwan.—His *Diwan* generally known as

*Jalal-ud-Din Rumi's 'Masnawi' also known as 'Masnawi-i-Mawlawi-i Ma'nawi, is undoubtedly one of the masterpieces of the poetic world. In Persia the true believers reckon it next only to the Quran: There is a popular saying to this effect.

Masnawi-i-Mawlawi-i-Ma'nawi;

Hast Furqan dar zuban-i-Pahlawi.

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DIWAN-I-SHAMS-I-TABREZ is not much read, though it is instinct with feeling, sentiment, and conviction, and has a solemnity and grandeur which are absolutely unique. It is only recently that Doctor Nicholson has published an authenticated edition of this book with a scholarly commentary and masterly translation in English.

Other celebrated poets of this Period.—The other celebrated poets of this period are JAMAL-UD-DIN ABD-UR-RAZZAQ and SHARAF-UD-DIN SHAFARWI, chiefly known to posterity as eulogists and satirists; KAMAL-UD-DIN ISMA'IL, the son of ABDUR-RAZZAQ, and the author of a *Diwan* remarkable for its far-fetched conceits and polished style; SHAHFUR NAISHAPURI and ZULFIQAR SHIRWANI noted for their vast learning and cutting sarcasms; ASIR-UD-DIN AKHSIKI, FALAKI, and SAIF-UD-DIN ASFARANGI, contemporaries of KHAQANI and authors of *Diwans*; and Maulana IMAMI of Herat, contemporary with SA'DI, and an excellent penegyrist.

Poetical characteristics of this century.—It should be borne in mind that this age was most fruitful in didactic and mystical poetry, and produced great masters in the department of odes and sonnets. The names of SA'DI and MAULANA RUM stand out as brilliant writers of odes which were soon to absorb

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the whole mental energy of some of the greatest Persian poets. 'UMAR KHAIIYYAM had given complete expression to philosophical doubts; but some one was wanted to put into poetical language the deepest yearnings and aspirations of the soul. The genius of HAFIZ accomplished this task.

The Defects of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries'

Prose.—The prose works of this period are important, and show considerable progress towards orderly and balanced Persian. So far, the great defect in Persian prose was its prolixity, diffuseness, disjointed construction, and oppressive repetition of words. Some writers of a cool, judicious temperament had appeared whose language was direct, restrained, and dignified; but they had failed to attract attention. Generally speaking, the prose of the tenth and eleventh centuries was either cramped and fantastic or too exuberant and overburdened with needless reiteration of words and phrases. These defects disappear, to a great extent, in the period under review in this chapter.

The Prose-productions of this Period.—Of the prose productions of this period the most important is the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* written by MINHAJ-US-SIRAJ GURGANI in A. D. 1252. This work, remarkable for the accuracy of its contents and the lucidity and elegance

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of its style, was dedicated [to King NASIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD of Delhi who reigned from A.D. 1246 to 1266. It deals with general history from early times down to the Mongol invasion. *Tarikh-i-Jahankusha* or the history of CHANGEZ KHAN is another important work which throws much light on contemporary events. The writer had an intimate connection with the successors of CHANGEZ, and durst not present a faithful picture of the deeds of the Mongol conqueror. Many of his statements, therefore, have to be received with caution. The *Lubab-ul-Albab*, the oldest biography of Persian poets, was also written in this period by MUHAMMAD AWFI. It is a valuable work, and gives very useful information about the early poets of Persia. It was about this period that QAZI ABU SA'ID 'ABDULLAH BALZAWI produced the *Nizam-ut-Towarikh*, an epitome of oriental history from Adam to the sack of Baghdad. *Mu'ajjam fi may'ar-i Ash'ar-il-'Ajam* is a small treatise on Persian prosody by SHAMS-I-QAIS. It is a most interesting production, for it contains a large number of citations from the earliest poets. ABU NASR FARABI is another notable writer who flourished about A. D. 1220. He is the author of a well-known Arabic-Persian vocabulary in rhyme with running commentary in prose. This work is still in vogue in Persia.

CHAPTER XI

THE MONGOL PERIOD

A. D. 1258 --1395

A General Survey of the History of the Ilkhans.--

After the sack of Baghdad HALAKU KHAN was desirous of returning to Tartary to take possession of the government of his native country, which was left without a ruler by the death of his brother MANGU KHAN. But the crushing defeat which his general suffered in Syria from SAIF-UD-DIN FIROZ, the Mameluke prince of Egypt, compelled him to fix his residence at Maragha, in Azarbijan. He is the first Mongol prince who can be rightly regarded as the sovereign of Persia. He and his descendants paid a nominal homage to the Khaqan (Great Khan) who ruled over China and officially recognised this dependence in their title of 'Ilkhan,' *i. e.* provincial Khan. From 1258 to 1335 A. D. the Ilkhans were not seriously challenged in their authority. After the death of HALAKU in A. D. 1265, his son ABAQA KHAN ascended the throne of Persia, and endeavoured to give order and prosperity to the distracted country by his wise and strong administration. He died in A. D. 1281, and was succeeded

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by his brother NIKODAR AHMAD. The conversion of this prince to Islam was an event of great moment both to the internal peace and to the external relations of Persia. After his murder in A. D. 1284, his son ARGHUN KHAN was put on the throne. The reign of this prince was disturbed by serious internal troubles, especially by the rebellion of BAIDU KHAN, a grandson of HALAKU. ARGHUN died in A. D. 1291, and was succeeded by his brother KAIKHATU who was taken prisoner by Baidu Khan in an engagement and killed in A. D. 1295. BAIDU's career was cut short in the same year by GHAZAN MAHMUD, the son of ARGHUN. GHAZAN is historically important as the first Mongol ruler who definitely adopted Islam, and whose example was only too eagerly followed by a large number of his subjects. He died after a short but prosperous reign in A. D. 1304, and his brother ULJAITU better known in history as MUHAMMAD KHUDABANDA succeeded him. This prince was an out and out Shiite, and struck his coins with the names of the twelve Imams on them. He died in A. D. 1316, and was succeeded by his son ABU SA'ID. This monarch was the last of the dynasty of HALAKU KHAN who enjoyed any real power. After his death in A. D. 1335 Persia was divided under five minor dynasties, (1) the Jalairids, (2) the Muzaffarids, (3) the Sarbadarids

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(4) the Bani Kart, (5) and the Chobanians, *all* of whom ultimately fell before the armies of TIMUR by A. D. 1395.

Dominance of the Critical Spirit the chief characteristic of the Persian Literature of this Period.

During the Mongol period, the Persian literature flourished with vigour. The Ilkhans patronised letters and amply rewarded the poets and writers attached to their court. Their conversion to Islam made them all the more zealous supporters of the cause of learning. But it is, per-eminently, the age of mediocrities, with just a few names of commanding influence and fame. It is to be remembered that a profound and lasting change, mainly due to the conditions of social and political life, had come over the spirit of the literature of Persia. *The dominance of the critical spirit in place of the imaginative spirit is the characteristic of the plentiful literature produced in this period.* The creative imagination concerns itself with the interpretation of human nature and moves on the plane of primal qualities. Contemporary events, passing movements, and local interests may appear in its pictures; but the main object is always the delineation and interpretation of life. The *critical spirit*, however, is analytic rather than synthetic; it brings the intellect rather than the imagination

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into the forefront. The merits of the new school are to be found in its positive expressions, lucid and direct style, concentrated intellectual force, and actuality. But it has a tendency to ignore the larger issues, and deal exclusively with superficialities.

The effects of the critical spirit on Literature.

It is obvious then that under the predominance of the new, critical school of thought, *poetry* would languish and *prose* attain importance. The critical faculty finds its freest and fullest expression in language unfettered by rhyme or meter. This is precisely the case here. The poetry of this period is interesting; but it is, in a large measure, an imitation of the great classics of former periods. Prose productions, on the other hand, reveal originality in mental grasp and critical insight. They have an austere grace and stateliness combined with effective ornamentation and logical brevity. Later on, especially towards the end of the fourteenth century, we perceive a tendency in the direction of verbosity, elaboration, and hyperbole.

A reason for the preponderance of Mystical writings in this Period.—Attention must be drawn here to the extraordinary prevalence of the teachings of Sufi saints in this period. Mysticism was already a powerful and recognised force. The writings of

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NASIR-I-KHUSRAU, SANA'I, ATTAR, SAHRWARDI, and MAULANA RUM had made the nation perfectly familiar with its principles. Its strength lay in the serious and emphatic claims it made regarding the truth of its credentials. It declared and guaranteed to its votaries the joy of heavenly visions in this life, and eternal bliss and felicity in the world to come. In the beginning of the thirteenth century when morals were loose and society corrupt to the core, it alone gave rest to the weary, and healing to the morally diseased. Then came the Mongol invasion—that political catastrophe which swept away the Caliphate, extinguished the last sparks of liberty, overwhelmed the Mahomedan world with disaster, and spread death, ruin, and desolation all round. Its suddenness and merciless fury filled the believers with consternation and dismay, and it seemed to them as if the very demons of hell had been let loose upon mankind. Finding themselves bereft of all hope in this world, they took refuge in mysticism. This is why there is so great a preponderance of mystical writings in the literary productions of this memorable period.

Direct result of the Influence of Mysticism on national life. —Another characteristic, no less important than the preceding ones, is the direct result of the influence of mysticism on national life. As years

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rolled by, the Mongol barbarians settled down in the lands they had conquered, and gradually absorbed the civilising forces working around them. Later on, their conversion to Islam brought them completely under the influence of religion, and curbed their wild passions. Thus, the terror they had inspired in the hearts of the Persians vanished away by degrees, and gave place to a sense of security. After this, mysticism *as a creed* was no longer required. Men were absorbed once more in the pursuit of worldly pleasures and forgot the terrible experiences they had gone through. And so it came about that the same highly figurative language in which the mystics had sung of the raptures of Divine love, began to be universally employed in wine-songs and love-ditties of this period. It is for this reason that the odes produced in this age are almost invariably capable of two interpretations absolutely different from one another. In short, mysticism supplied a ready-made and highly effective language for the expression of emotional thoughts and ideas.

The kinds of Literature produced in the Mongol Period.---In the light of the foregoing remarks, it will be easy to understand why this period was so productive, especially of three kinds of literature, *viz.*, (a) prose, covering almost all departments of thought

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and learning, (b) mystic poetry, (c) odes, giving expression to the deepest experiences of the soul both in its spiritual and worldly aspects. Men were stirred everywhere to express their thoughts either in prose or in poetry. A host of writers appeared who explored the different branches of knowledge, and presented the results of their researches in books that have become classics now. A full account of all these writers cannot be given here; so we shall treat of the most important names.

Prose.

Muhaqqiq-i-Tusi: the famous Philosopher and Astronomer.—Khwaja NASIR-UD-DIN of TUS, generally known as Muhaqqiq-i-Tusi, is the greatest and most renowned writer of this period. He was the foremost philosopher and astronomer of his time, and was employed by Halaku Khan, the grandson of Chaghatay, to form the Ilkhani Tables, and superintend the erection of the Royal Observatory at Maragha, where Halaku had taken up his residence after his conquests. He was the son of Imam Fakhr-ud-Din Razi, that famous doctor of the Shaf'i sect who surpassed all his contemporaries in theology, mathematics, and philosophy, and composed several works of great value. NASIR-UD-DIN was born at Tus in Khurasan in A. D. 1201, and received his education

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directly under the supervision of his father. He wrote on almost all subjects, and most of his books are standard works. He was a competent Greek scholar, and made a new translation of Euclid into Arabic, and proved many of the geometrical propositions in ways wholly different from the demonstrations of the Greek author. He also translated the well-known Arabic work *Almajisti* into Persian, and wrote a big volume of explanatory notes on it. During the Mongol invasion he wandered among the hills of Khurasan where he was captured by 'Ala-ud-Din Muhammad, one of the leaders of the Assassins and a descendant of Hasan Sabbah. 'Ala-ud-Din made him his Wazir, and forced him to stay with him. It was during his captivity that he wrote that excellent work on moral philosophy, entitled *Akhlaq-i-Nasiri*. This well-known and much admired treatise was dedicated to Nasir ud-Din 'Abd-ur-Rahim, Governor of the fortress of Dez. He was at last released in A. D. 1256 by Halaku Khan who annihilated the Assassins, and destroyed their strongholds.

Muhaqqiq-i-Tusi's works and style.—NASIR-UD-DIN TUSI was highly respected by Halaku and his successor Abaqa Khan. It is said that it was he who persuaded Halaku to march against Baghdad and

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put an end to the Caliphate. He was an accomplished Arabic scholar, and wrote several books in that language. His best known Persian works, besides the *Akhlaq-i-Nastiri*, are *Risala-i-Si Fasl*—a book on astronomy; *Zij-i-Ilkhani*—a Persian almanac; *Ausaf-ul-Ashraf*; *Bahr-ul-Ma'ani*; *Khilafat-nama-i-Ilahi*; *Maasir-ush-Shu'ara*—an important work on prosody; and *Tarjama-i-Tahrir-i-Uqlidas*—the Persian translation of Euclid. He also composed several works on philosophy and theology, and wrote several very learned dissertations on miscellaneous subjects. He had a clear, manly style, and his voluminous productions are characterised by patient study, wide learning, mature thought, accurate details, and comprehensive treatment. Most of his works are still read in Persian schools and colleges. He died in the reign of Abaqa Khan in A. D. 1274.

Rashid-ud-Din Fazl-Ullah: his life and achievements.—Amir Fazl-Ullah RASHID-UD-DIN is a dominant and conspicuous figure of this remarkable period. He was born at Hamadan in A. D. 1247, and studied medicine, mathematics, and philosophy with great diligence. It was probably from skill in medicine that he succeeded in getting a highly honourable and lucrative post under the Mongol kings of Persia. Abaqa Khan, the successor of Changez, reposed full

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confidence in him, and treated him with respect and kindness. At a subsequent period Ghazan Mahmud, who himself was an accomplished scholar and liberally supported the men of letters, appointed him to the post of prime minister in A. D. 1298 in conjunction with Sa'd-ud-Din. RASHID was maintained in his office by Muhammad Khudabanda, the brother and successor of Ghazan Mahmud, and was treated by him with great consideration and generosity. In the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id, this old minister who had many powerful enemies in the court of the new monarch was removed from his office mainly on account of their misrepresentations. He was recalled to it after a short time ; but it was not long before he again lost favour at court, and was accused of causing the death of his late royal master, He was charged with having given a purgative to Uljaitu which proved fatal. He and his son Ibrahim were condemned to death, and were publicly executed in A. D. 1318.

Rashid-ud-Din's works and their quality.—RASHID-UD-DIN's title to fame rests on the important works he composed. He wrote the *Jami-'ut-Tawarikh*, a comprehensive history compiled from different sources ; *Kitab-ut-Tauzihat*, a work of great literary and scientific value ; *Miftah-ut-Tafasir*, an excellent commentary on the Qur'an ; and the *Risalat-*

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us-Sultaniyyah most charming treatise meant for kings and princes. In the hands of NASIR-UD-DIN TUSI and RASHID-UD-DIN, we can clearly see prose growing into greater excellence and more massive strength, spreading itself over larger fields of thoughts, and taking up a greater variety of subject.. But this is not the whole account of the matter. It was altogether a new type of prose, of greater intellectual force, of more condensed vitality and harmony of thought, of clearer arrangement of subject-matter, and of more organic proportion. I need scarcely say that both the writers mentioned above display nearly all these qualities.

Husain b. Hasan-ul-Husaini.—HUSAIN b. HASAN-UL-HUSAINI is a well-known figure of this period. He was born at Ghor about the time of the sack of Baghdad, and received careful training in his early years. After finishing his course of reading he travelled extensively as a merchant, and acquired first-hand knowledge of the manners and customs of different nations. According to Firishta, he came to India also with his father Sayyid Najm-ud Din, and became the disciple of Shaikh Baha-ud-Din Zakaryah of Multan. HUSAIN was a man of a considerable culture, and possessed a keen understanding, retentive memory, ardent nature, and a large sympathetic heart.

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Husain's works and their characteristics.— He wrote *Kanz-ur-Rumuz*, *Si-nama*, *Nazhat-ul-Arwah*, *Zad-ul-Musafirin*, *Tarab-ul-Majalis*, *Ruh-ul-Arwah*, and *Sirat-ul-Mustaqim*. His *Diwan* contains verses both in Arabic and Persian. He has a clear, well-balanced, rhythmical style, and a rich vocabulary of choice words and expressions. His writings are characterised by sound judgment, reasonable moderation, and cool unimpassioned fairness. He was never led into any vagaries in his style, and seldom allowed his critical powers to be overmastered by his strong feelings and susceptibilities. He was a master of Persian prose, and achieved great reputation in his life-time as a writer. His verses, though good in their own way, lack fire, imaginative insight, and discrimination. Husain died at Herat in A. D. 1318.

Hamd-Ullah Mustaufi, the renowned historian:
his works. HAMD-ULLAH MUSTAUFİ b. Abubakr is a renowned historian of this period. He was born at Qazwin towards the end of the thirteenth century. In A. D. 1329 he wrote the celebrated *Tarikh i-Guzida* which contains the history of the four ancient Persian dynasties, viz., the Peshdadians, the Kayanians, the Ashkanians (the Achæmenians), and the Sassanians. The period covered in this book extends from B. C. 900 to A. D. 650. This work,

which ranks among the best general histories, was written in the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id, and dedicated to his minister Ghayas-ud-Din, who was the son of the unfortunate Rashid-ud-Din, prime minister and author of the *Jami'-ut-Tawarikh*. After the completion of this history, HAMD-ULLAH composed his celebrated work on geography and natural history entitled *Nuzhat-ul-Qulub*. This book, which is in high repute among Oriental scholars, makes the author the foremost scientific writer of the day. He also composed memoirs of the numerous dynasties which ruled over Persia and Tartary during the Caliphate, and a supplementary history bringing it down to A. D. 1329. It is needless to add that he was a careful writer both as regards style and subject-matter. He based his works on scientific principles, and studied his subject most critically and assiduously before committing it to writing. He has a precise and weighty style, and his name is quoted as an authority. His solid learning and many-sided attainments are reflected in his sober sentences. He died in A. D. 1349.

Fiction becomes popular in the Mongol Period.—

The excitement and sensibility that marked the latter half of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries, though amply reflected in the

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personality of NASIR-UD-DIN TUSI, finds its literary expression in the fiction that suddenly sprang into popularity. There were already many indications to show that the stir of new and distracting political events and social interests had created a deep craving in the heart of the nation for imaginative and emotional literature. 'Romantic fiction in verse was to be found in abundance. But the nation wanted something new, something more commonplace than the ideal and highly coloured pictures of ancient and mediæval life. *Kiab-i-Samak 'Aiyar*, a novel in three volumes written about A. D. 1190, partly met this want. Other attempts of a similar nature had resulted in the production of heaps of stories and tales called *Akhbar* and *Hikayat*. But they had two great defects—lack of sentiment and lack of humour. The people wanted scenes of current life and manner suffused with sentimental pathos in plain prose.

Tughrai's novels.—To Amir YAMIN-UD-DIN TUGHRAI must be accorded the honour of pioneer in this kind of fiction. This remarkable man, who flourished in the reigns of Muḥammad Khudabanda and his son Abu Sa'id, was born at Mashad after the overthrow of the Caliphate by Halaku Khan. He is the author of a number of entertaining novels, viz., *Mir'at-ul-Maftuh*, *Kanz-ul-Ma'ani*, *Majma'-i-Gharib*,

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Chashma-i-Faiz, and *Anwar-ul-Mubarak*. These works, though prolix and artificial to a degree in style, exhibit genuine observation and real emotional power. It must be said that these books show no constructive power or skilful analysis of character.

Persian novelists compared to the Western novelists.—Perhaps, this is the proper place to point out in this connection that Persian novelists, as a general rule, do not care much for analytical force and subtlety, close correspondence with the actualities of life, and an accurate delineation of motives that govern human conduct. In descriptive power, inventive faculty, and a certain kind of mawkish humour, they are hardly inferior to Western novelists. But in the portrayal of the deepest experiences of the soul—its joys and sorrows, its trials and temptations, its pains and agonies, its moral defeats and surrenders, its heroic endurances and noble sacrifices, Persian writers are sadly deficient. That is why their stories seem so extravagant, artificial, and one-sided to those who are familiar with the works of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot, and fail to serve any high moral or spiritual purpose.

Tughrai's other works.—The other works of TUGHRAI are his *Insha* in prose, and his *Kulliyat* containing a collection of didactic poems, odes,

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elegies, and short lyrical pieces which any one might have written. He died in A. D. 1324.

The lesser prose writers of this Period.—Of the lesser writers and historians of the age it is impossible to speak here. Some of them may be mentioned in the briefest terms. YAHIA b. AHMAD made his reputation by writing two 'important works on jurisprudence, viz., *Jama'-ush-Sharaya'* and *Madkhal dar Usul-i-Figh*. He died in A. D. 1280. SHAIKH 'ALLAMA HILLI, the great Shia lawyer, wrote *Khu-lasat-ul Agwal*, an authoritative biography of eminent Shias. His works on the traditions are the *Istisqa*, the *Masabih-ul-Anwar*, and the *Durar wal Marjan*. His legal works are numerous, and frequently referred to as authorities of undisputed merit. The most important of these are the *Talkhis-ul-Maram*, the *Ghayat-ul-Ahkam*, and the *Tahrir-ul-Ahkam*. His book entitled *Irshad-i-'Allama* is constantly quoted. He died in A. D. 1326. ABU SULAIMAN DAUD BANAKATI, the poet laureate of the court of Sultan Ghazan Mahmud, is the author of *Tarikh-i-Banakati*. It is chiefly an abridgment of RASHID-UD-DIN's *Jami'-ut-Tawarikh*, and was compiled by the author only seven years after the completion of that work, i.e. in A. D. 1317. ABU SULAIMAN DAUD died in A. D. 1330. Abdullah b. FAZL-ULLAH of Shiraz is the

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author of *Tarikh-Wassaf*. Properly speaking, it is a continuation of the *Tarikh-i-Jahankusha*. This valuable work covers more than a century, and relates events down to A. D. 1328. Maulana *Muin-ud-Din Juwaini* is the author of the *Nigaristan*. It is a miscellaneous work on moral subjects, and, being an imitation of the *Gulistan* of Sa'di, is written partly in prose and partly in verse. NASIR b. MUHAMMAD KIRMANI translated the *Kanz-ud-Daqa'iq*, the famous legal work by NASAFI, from Arabic into Persian. ZAHIR-UD-DIN ABD-UR-RAHMAN translated the celebrated mystical work, '*Awarif-ul-Ma'arif*', written by SAHRAWARDI, from Arabic into Persian in A. D. 1316. MUHAMMAD b. 'ALI b. SHAIKH MUHAMMAD is the author of the *Majma'-ul-Ansab*. It is an abridgment of general history from the earliest times down to the death of Sultan Abu Sa'id, A. D. 1335. *Ikhtiyarat-i-Badi'i fit-Tibabat* is an invaluable work on Materia Medica by 'ALI b. HUSAIN ANSARI. The author lived at Shiraz in the latter half of the fourteenth century A. D.

We shall take leave of the prose-writers now, and pass on to the leading poets of this period.

POETRY.

The Mystical Poetry of the Mongol Period: essentially dull and devoid of fire and passion.—It

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has been said that the Mongol invasion deepened the sense of the mystery of life, and caused men to accept for themselves the creed of the mystics. The result was that there was an abundant, or rather over-abundant, production of mystical poetry, which was in reality, only *an imitation* of SANA'I, 'ATTAR, and MAULANA RUM. The didactic poems and *masnawis* of MAGHRIBI, AUHADI, and scores of other poets link them backwards to the last age. They looked upon the evils of this world with exaggerated horror, and dwelt upon them with painful and gloomy persistence. This melancholy, unnatural and distorted view of life prevented them from seeing the best things of this world, and killed the true poetic spirit. It was Puritanism reigning supreme in life and in literature. It directed a noble search after the true aims of life; but it over-reached itself and worked more harm than good. It compelled some of the choicest spirits of the age to renounce the world with all the bright and beautiful things found therein. Khwaja Majd-ud-Din Hamkar, Khwaja Hammam Tabrezi, and 'Allama Qutb-ud-Din, all of them contemporaneous with Shaikh Sa'di, were content to throw away their talents and high gifts, and bend their necks to the yoke of mysticism. They wrote

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poetry ; but it is devoid of fire and passion, and its moralisings are dull, vapid, and uninteresting.

Amir Khusraw, an original poet.—AMIR KHUSRAW, the celebrated poet of Delhi, is one of the most prominent writers of this period, and, in many directions, an original poet. His father, Amir Mahmud Saif-ud-Din was a Turk, and came from Balkh to India, and took up his residence at Patiala where KHUSRAW was born in A. D. 1253. He was a wealthy man, and spent liberally on the education of his son. KHUSRAW was a precocious boy, and commenced literary work at a very early age. After mastering the learning of the age he left his father's house and came to Delhi to try his fortune at the court of the Mahomedan kings of this city. Here he fell under the magic influence of Nizam-ud-Din, a saintly character, and became his disciple. He died in A. D. 1325, six months after the death of his spiritual guide.

Khusraw's works.—KHUSRAW was a voluminous writer, and produced a large number of works both in prose and poetry. He wrote his famous *Khamasa* or 5 poems in reply to Nizami's *Panj Ganj*. His poems are universally admired, and there are not wanting eminent critics, both Indian and Persian, in whose judgment they rival the great poems produced

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by Persian poets. He has produced verses in almost every conceivable metre, and exhausted the possibilities of the metrical art. It may fairly be contended and easily proved that not even Persia can show a greater and more original master of verse. His most celebrated poems are *Tuhfat-us-Saghir*, *Shatt-ul-Hayat*, *Ghurrat-ul-Kamal*, *Hasht Bihisht*, *Sikandar-nama*, *'Laila-wa-Majnun*, *Shirin-wa-Khusraw*, and *Nuh Sipahr*. The *Qiran-us-Sadian* was written in praise of Sultan Kaiqobad and his father Baghra Khan. His other works are *Sifat-ul-Ashiqin*, *Maqala*, *Matla-ul-Anwar*, *Baqiya-i-Naqiya*, *Aina-i-Sikandari*, *Jawahir-ul-Bahr*, and *Khizr Khani*. He also wrote a short history entitled *Tughlaq-nama*, commemorating the reign and virtues of Ghayas-ud-Din Tughlaq, a wise and just ruler. His *Diwan* contains poems chiefly on mystical theology and Divine love. Many of them have been set to music, and are frequently chanted by the Sufis. His most important prose works are the *A'ajaz-i-Khusrawi* and the *Insha*. It is said that he was the author of altogether ninety-nine books, but it sounds rather incredible.

Khusraw as a poet.—KHUSRAW, undoubtedly, was a man of rare qualities and exceptional powers. There was no form of Persian poetry—didactic, lyric, romantic, narrative and mystical, which he left un-

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touched, and in each and all of them he attained singular success. He has not the keen characterisation of Nizami, the insight and penetration of Maulana Rumi, or the charming realism of Firdausi; but he has a lovely symbolism, magnificent diction, pure eloquence, glowing fervour, soft touch, beautiful colouring, and an amazing command of language. It is these qualities which constitute his real greatness, and secure for him an honourable niche in the Temple of Fame. It is true that he was not *supreme* in any department of poetry; but it is equally true that his music was sweet, impassioned, spontaneous, and full-throated in an age when poetry was, except in a few cases, anything but natural, dignified and instructive.

Qutb-ud-Din and his works.—‘ALLAMA QUTB-UD-DIN is the author of several works among which are *Tuhfa-i-Shahi*, *Sharh-i-Kulliyat-i-Qanun*, and *Sharh-i-Miftah-ul-‘Ulum*. He died at Tabrez in A. D. 1311.

Auhadi : a Mystic poet.—AUHADI put into verse the *Jam-i-Jam*, book full of spirituality and written in imitation of the *Hadiqa* of Sana’i. He is also the author of a *Diwan*. He was liberally supported by Arghun Khan who took a great interest in him and liked his verses. He died in A. D. 1337.

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Salman Sawaji and his works. JALAL-UD-DIN MUHAMMAD SALMAN is a celebrated poet of this period. He was born at Sawa towards the end of the thirteenth century, and achieved considerable reputation as a poet. Hasan the Elder and his son Sultan Awes, the Jalairid rulers of Baghdad, had a great liking for him, and made him their poet-laureate. He lived up to a good old age, and died in A. D. 1377. SALMAN SAWAJI marks the exhaustion of the impulse which began with the Persian poets of the early *Renaissance* period. He is the author of *Jamshed-wa-Khurshed*, *Firaq-nama*, and several other works. His *Diwan*, consisting of quatrains, panegyrics, odes and other miscellaneous pieces, is highly esteemed in Persia. Maulana NASIR-I-BUKHARI and *UBAID ZAKANI, a well-known satirist and author of *Akhlaq-ul-Ashraf*, were his contemporaries. Both of them thought very highly of the poetical powers of SALMAN, and paid literary homage to him.

— **Hafiz: the greatest lyrical poet of Persia: his life and character.**—Muhammad Shams-ud-Din HAFIZ entitled 'Lisan-ul-Ghayb is by far the most

*Ubaid of Zakan has also composed a short humorous poem in the 'mock-epic style, entitled 'Mush-u-Gurba'—The Mouse and the Cat. It has attained much popularity as a text for the children in the schools of modern Persia.

celebrated writer of lyrical poetry. The exact date of his birth is uncertain. He was probably born in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and died in A. D. 1388. He flourished under the Muzaffarid princes who were ultimately overthrown by Amir Timur. Of these Shah Shuja' and Mansur were his patrons. In his early days he devoted himself to the study of poetry and theology, and read the mystical philosophy under Mahmud 'Attar. For some time he was professor of Quranic exegesis in a College of Shiraz, and joined the order of the advanced Sufis. His loose conduct and drinking habits drew upon him the severe censures of his colleagues. In revenge he satirised them in his verses, and mercilessly lashed them for their hypocrisy and religious pretensions. He possessed extraordinary powers, and his fame as a poet soon spread all round. Wealthy and powerful men began to vie with one another in giving him honour, and issued special invitations to him to visit them. But he preferred to pass his life in quiet retirement and literary ease at Shiraz. Though he was a Shia, yet he had a strong leaning towards mysticism. He acquired notoriety by his heretical opinions, dissipated life, and the extravagant form of theosophy he professed.

Odes of Hafiz : European, American and Oriental views. - His principal work is his *Diwan* consisting of odes or sonnets called *gazel*. It was first compiled by Muhammad Gulandam some years after his death. The nature of the poems of Hafiz has been the subject of much discussion, especially in Europe and America. Some scholars interpret them literally, and read nothing but sensuality and materialism into them. Others are rather moderate and charitable in their views, and follow mainly the Orientals. The extreme position of those who maintain, in the teeth of facts furnished by his life, that these poems are allegorical and have a spiritual signification from beginning to end, is hardly sane or sound. That he was a professed Sufi cannot be denied. But this does not mean that a Sufi can take liberties with his conscience, break the fundamental rules of morality,* and openly and vehemently attack those who observe them. And HAFIZ did all this, and lived like one who had not the slightest regard for social or religious prohibitions. But it must be remembered that the mystical outpourings or poetical effusions of men like HAFIZ are not to be interpreted in the light of their lives and conduct.

* It is a fact that Hafiz was in love with a bad but beautiful woman called Shakh-i-Nabat.

The beauty of the poetry of Hafiz – The beauty* of the poetry of HAFIZ is in its naturalness and spontaneity. It is the outcome of a fervent soul and lofty genius who felt the flow of life in his veins, and found an intense delight in nature. The wonder and strangeness of the outer world, the mystery of everyday life, the magic of creation, the silence of the gleaming stars, and the unspeakable glories of light and colour moved his heart and soul, and filled his whole being with joy and ecstasy. He loved life, he loved nature, without understanding either of them. His supremely plastic imagination, keenly susceptible to all outside influences, compelled him to make mysticism his creed and spiritualise both life and nature. This is what gives warmth, tenderness, and a strange fascination to his poetry. As for the form in which HAFIZ clothed his thoughts, it has all the high qualities of consummate artistic expression.

Kamal Khujandi. Space will not allow us to notice the crowd of minor poets and versifiers who imitated HAFIZ and composed odes. With a short biographical sketch of a notable figure among them, we shall take leave of them. Shaikh KAMAL-UD-DIN KHUJANDI, a lyric poet of no mean power, was a contempo-

* Many Europeans have tried to translate Hafiz in their respective tongues, but it is in the English poetical version of Miss Gertrude Bell alone that the very spirit and the beauty of the original has most successfully been transmitted.

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rary of HAFIZ. He was a protege of the Jalairids, and wrote only *sonnets* and fragments. He died in A. D 1390, and left a *Diwan* which was much appreciated in his day.

Some of the minor poets of the Mongol Period.—

It is well to keep in mind that it was a period of great literary activity in the history of Persia. We have spoken of those writers and poets only whose works are read and studied to-day with interest and enthusiasm. But there were men in that period whose writings made them the object of praise and admiration, and swelled the bulk of Persian literature. The names of the following men of letters fill the pages of native *tazkiras* or biographies:—

Mulla Mohammad Shirin Maghribi of Tabriz one of the successful imitators of Hafiz.—Rafi-ud-Din Lubnani, Farid-i-Ahwal, Asir-ud-Din Aotani, Purbahai Jami, Auhad-ud-Din Kirmani, Abu Si'id Baizawi, Qutb-ud-Din Shirazi, Hasan Sanjari, Auhad-ud-Din of Maragha, Amir Mahmud Ibn-i-Yamin, 'Imad Faqih, Burandaq, Asmat Ullah Bukhari, Nizari, Mahmud Shabistari, 'Assar, Hakim Jalal Shirwani, Kashi Mulla, and Mahdi Khan Mirza. For full accounts of their lives and works, see *Tazki-ra-i-Diulat Shahi*, *Reyaz-ush-'shu-ara* by Dagistani, *Khazana-i-'Amirah* by Ghulam Ali Belgrami and *Majma-ul-Fusaha* by Hidayat Quli Khan.

CHAPTER XII

THE AGE OF THE TIMURIDES

A. D. 1395—1500.

A brief history of Timur and his descendants.—

We have said in the preceding chapter that by A. D. 1395 TIMUR made himself master of the whole of Persia. At the time of his death, A. D. 1405, his sway extended over Tartary, Central Asia, Upper India, Persia, Transoxiana, the greater part of European Russia, Asia Minor, and Syria. He was the undisputed sovereign of nearly half the world when he made preparations for the conquest of China, and proceeded with his great army on an expedition to subdue it. But this mighty warrior and proud victor was arrested in the career of his conquests, and breathed his last at Otrar, away from his capital and home. After some troubles which lasted for more than two years, his son SHAH RUKH ascended the throne in A. D. 1408, and ruled over his vast dominions for thirty-eight years. This magnificent prince extended the most liberal encouragement to men of science and learning, and kept a splendid court. After his death his crown descended to

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ULUGH BEG who was inhumanly put to death after a few years by his own son 'ABD-UL-LATIF. But this monster did not live long after this unnatural crime. After a short reign of six months only he was barbarously murdered by his soldiers in A. D. 1450, and was succeeded by BABAR. This prince ruled with a strong hand, and died in A. D. 1457. ABU SA'ID, a great-grandson of Timur, succeeded him, and reigned for eighteen years. He left eleven sons; but none of them merit notice except 'UMAR SHAIKH, the father of the justly celebrated BABAR who, through his great qualities, founded or rather won for himself a splendid empire in India. At the death of ABU SA'ID, Sultan HUSAIN MIRZA, a descendant of Timur, made himself master of the empire. His court boasted of many eminent men. Unfortunately he had his capital at Herat, and was therefore not able to keep all the provinces under his subjection. There were frequent disorders and troubles in his reign until the assumption of royalty in A. D. 1500 by Isma'il I of the Safawid dynasty. The Timurides, both in Persia and India, were hearty and generous supporters of the cause of learning. So the present chapter will include a brief account of Persian literature produced in India.

Amir 'Alisher Nawai: a patron of Learning and Poetry.—AMIR 'ALISHER, surnamed Nizam-ud-Din, is the most striking personality of this period. He was descended from an illustrious family, and his father was a trusted officer during the reign of Sultan Abu'l Qasim Babar, great grandson of Timur. 'ALISHER was born in A. D. 1440, and received his education in the same college with his future sovereign, Sultan Husain Mirza. He was deeply attached to his father's patron, Babar, who had a sincere liking for him and called him 'son'. After the death of this beneficent ruler, he retired to Mashhad and continued his studies with all the passionate zeal and energy of an ardent lover of learning. After a few years when disturbances broke out in Khurasan, he quitted Mashhad and proceeded to Samarqand where he applied himself most diligently to the pursuit of knowledge. When his old school-fellow HUSAIN MIRZA ascended the throne at Herat in A. D. 1468, and became uncontrolled ruler of Khurasan, he requested Ahmad Mirza, at that time ruler of the countries beyond the Oxus, to send 'ALISHER to him. 'ALISHER accepted the royal invitation, and set out for Herat. On his arrival there, he was received with great distinction and made 'Keeper of the Seal'. He was promoted afterwards to the highest post—that of the

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prime minister of the Sultan. He was no less distinguished for his great learning and high statesmanlike qualities than for his munificent patronage of letters. He founded the famous *Khilasiyya* convent at Herat as a house of retreat for literary men of merit. His palace was open to scholars of all nationalities whom he respectfully treated and sumptuously entertained. By his loyal services and wise administration he won the love and gratitude of his own royal master, and the esteem and confidence of foreign potentates. He nobly and generously supported the distinguished writers of the age who, freed from all cares and financial anxieties, produced works that have become classics now. 'ALISHER retired from public life after he had been prime minister for many years, and passed the remainder of his days in composing Turkish and Persian works.

· **Nawai's works.**—According to Sam Mirza, he was the author of no less than twenty-one books. His Turkish odes, which he wrote under the poetical name of Nawai, and his five poems in the Turkish language, written in imitation of Nizami's *Panj Ganj*, are to this day universally admired by the Turks. His couplets in Turkish amount to more than forty thousand. He composed odes in the Persian language also under the poetical name of Fani; but they do

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not possess much attraction for those who are conversant with the great masterpieces of Persia. *Majalis-un-Nafais* is his most important Persian work. In this remarkable book he lays before the reader the results of his literary researches and studies. It is written in a carefully finished and rhythmical style, and sparkles with brilliant flashes of true insight into the soul of literature. 'ALISHER died in A. D. 1501.

Mirkhond: his famous work *Rauzat-us-Safa*. - Muhammad b. Khawand Shah, generally known in Europe and America by the name of MIRKHOND, is perhaps the greatest writer of this age. He was born in A. D. 1433, and his father, who was a very pious and learned man, lived at Balkh. From his early youth he applied himself to historical studies and general literature. After the death of his father he went to Herat where he succeeded in gaining the favour of that celebrated patron of letters, Amir ALISHER, of whose fame the empire was redolent. MIRKHOND received every mark of kindness and encouragement from this distinguished personage, and began at his request his great work on universal history in A. D. 1474. His profound knowledge of history and his comprehensive studies in general best fitted him to undertake this stupendous task.

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Unfortunately, he made no attempt at a critical examination of the materials he collected for his book. The immense amount of information he has massed into his work is really astonishing, and fills the reader with admiration for his patient industry in gathering and arranging and classifying historical traditions. He wrote in a flowery and grandiloquent style, and sometimes sacrificed sense to mere form. Still, in spite of this drawback, his *Rauzat-us-Safa* is one of the most marvellous achievements in literature, and the greatest production of the age. In the opinion of competent judges, there is no Oriental work in Persian prose that has greater literary merit or more valuable information than MIRKHOND'S history. It comprises seven large volumes and a geographical appendix. The author had just completed the sixth volume when he died at Balkh after a lingering illness in A. D. 1498. So, he practically worked at the six volumes for twenty-three years in the quiet convent of Khilasiyya. The last volume was written by his grandson Khondamir of whom we shall speak in the next chapter.

Daulatshah of Samarqand: his Tazkira.—

Another well-known writer whose name is perfectly familiar to Persian scholars is DAULAT SHAH of Samarqand. He flourished in the reign of Sultan

Husain Mirza, and was generously supported by Amir 'Alisher. He composed a biography of poets which is generally called *Tazkira-i-Daulat Shahi*. This work was written in A. D. 1486, and dedicated to 'Alisher. It contains the lives or memoirs of ten Arabian and one hundred and thirty-four Persian poets with various citations from their works, and brief accounts of princes at whose courts they resided. He has also given biographical sketches of six poets contemporaneous with him, two of whom were ministers of the Sultan, viz. 'Alisher and Amir Shaikh Ahmad Suhaili. DAULAT SHAH died in A. D. 1495.

Literary value of the Tazkira.—His *Tazkira* is an important and valuable work, and furnishes much useful information that cannot be found elsewhere. The style is often bombastic, and some of the statements are not borne out by facts. The anecdotes and traditions he collected are thrown together without regard to chronological order or historical sequence. Notwithstanding these minor defects, his book is one of the main sources of our knowledge of Persian poets.

Jami: the last great classic poet of Persia.—Nur-ud-Din 'Abdur-Rahman JAMI, the last great classic poet of Persia, was born in A. D. 1414 at a village in Herat called Jam. This saintly man had a

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very gentle disposition, and was endued with such extensive and varied learning that he was thought peerless in his age. Even princes who were themselves men of erudition and possessed great talents lavished upon him the most unbounded praises and the highest honours. He was an intimate friend of Sultan Abu Sa'id of Herat. After his death, his son and successor Sultan Husain Mirza treated the poet with the utmost kindness and respect. Amir 'Alisher and other distinguished men of letters had genuine feelings of admiration for the vast learning and exemplary character of JAMI. He died in A. D. 1492, mourned not only by his friends, but by the whole city of Herat. His funeral expenses were defrayed by the Sultan, and a magnificent train of the most illustrious nobles accompanied his body to the tomb. 'Alisher, his friend, built a splendid monument over his remains later on.

Jami's works: prose and poetry: his style and diction.—JAMI was a voluminous writer. His seven poems commonly called *Haft Aurang* are *Silsilat-uz-Zahab*, *Salaman wa Absal*, *Tuhfat-ul-Ahrar*, *Sabhai-ul-Ahrar*, *Yusuf wa Zulaikha*, *Laila wa Majnun*, and *Khirad-namā*. Of these *Yusuf wa Zulaikha* is one of the finest compositions in Persian. Among his prose writings the chief works are his *Baharistan*

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(an imitation of *Bostan-i-Sa'di*), *Ruq'at*, *Risala-i-Mu'amma*, *Lawaih*, *Sharh-i-Lam'at* and *Shawahid-un-Nubuwat*. His other well-known works are *Sikandar-nama*, *Nafahat-ul-Uns*, *Khurshed wa Mah*, *Futuh-ul-Haramain*, *Diwan-i-Jami*, 'Aqaid-nama, *Sarf-ul-Lisan*, *Kulliyat*, *Nisab-i-Tajnis-ul-Lughat*, and *Naqd-un-Nusus fi Sharh-il-Fusus*. He has a lucid, fascinating style and a magnificent diction, and his pronounced mysticism has lent a subtle indescribable charm to his writings. Some of his characters are beautiful embodiments of sweetness, patience, moral courage, and pure unflinching devotion. His insight into the realities of life, his unbounded and serene faith in the ultimate victory of goodness, his tender sympathy with the struggling and the oppressed, and his power to soothe, heal, and uplift the weary soul, give him a very high place in the literature of Persia, and make him not only a great poet but a great moral writer and teacher.

Jamal-i-Husaini: his works.—Amir 'Ata-Ullah, generally known as JAMAL-I-HUSAINI, is the author of the valuable and much admired work *Rauzat-ul-Ahbab*, which contains the history of Muhammad, of his companions, and of the twelve Imams. This book, like other great books of this period, was written at Herat in A. D. 1494, and dedicated to

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Amir 'Alisher. It is in three big volumes, and covers a period of three centuries from A. D. 571 to 879. The events related in it are of vital religious importance, and the author has handled the whole subject in an exhaustive manner. He has also written another work on the art of writing poetry entitled *Kitab-i-Takmil-us-San'at*. It is a singular fact that this great writer too was a minister of Sultan Husain Mirza, and died in A. D. 1512.

Sultan Husain Mirza: a poet and a story-writer.

Sultan HUSAIN MIRZA, surnamed Abul Ghazi Bahadur, was himself a man of great talents. He surrounded himself with the most cultured spirits of the age, and appointed them to responsible and lucrative posts. The *Majalis-ul-'Ishq* is his composition. It is a very entertaining work, and contains a variety of stories on the subject of love. He has also left a *Diwan* in Turkish.

Ulagh Beg : a prince Astronomer.—ULAGH BEG MIRZA is another prince of this period whose name is intimately connected with the advancement of learning. He made peaceful studies the chief object of his life, and was celebrated for his knowledge of Astronomy. During his reign he assembled all the astronomers of his kingdom, and the celebrated tables known as *Zij-i-Ulagh Beg* were the result of

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his labours. He also published a catalogue of fixed stars which greatly facilitated the study of Astronomy.

Wa'iz Kashifi; a prolific writer: his works. Maulana HUSAIN WA'IZ KASHIFI was a prolific writer. He held the office of herald in the time of Sultan Husain Mirza. Almost all his productions are standard works. His commentary on the Quran entitled *Mawahib-i-'Aliyyaf*, now known as *Tafsir-i-Tafsir-i-Husaini*, is a book of great authority. *Jawahir-ut-Tafasir* is another commentary which he produced later on. His *Rauzat-ush-Shuhada* is an excellent history of Muhammad. *Dah Bab* is an abridgment of this work. His *Akhlaq-i-Muhsini* is a most valuable system of Ethics, and is taught in Persian schools and colleges. The *Anwar-i-Suhaili*, dedicated to Amir Shaikh Ahmad Suhaili, seal-bearer to Sultan Husain Mirza, is a translation of Pilpay's Fables made in A. D. 1494. He is also the author of *Sahifa-i-Shahi*, *Lubb-i-Lubab*, *Makhzan-ul-Insha*, *Saba'-i-Kashifiyya*, *Asrar-i-Qasimi*, *Matla'-ul-Anwar*, and *Lataif-ut-Tawaif*. He died in A. D. 1505.

Ali Yazdi: his works.—SHARAF-UD-DIN 'ALI YAZDI was a very learned man and composed several works. He lived at the court of Sultan Ibrahim, at whose request he wrote the *Zafar-nama*, also called *Tarikh-*

i-Sahib Qirani, a history of Timur. This celebrated work was finished in four years and dedicated to Shah Rukh, the father of Sultan Ibrahim, in A. D. 1425. Sharaf-ud-Din was not so much a historian as a panegyrist of Timur. He is also the author of *Sharaf-nama-i-Yazdi* and a *Diwan*. He died in A. D. 1446.

Jalal-ud-Din Dawwani and his works. - Mulla JALAL-UD-DIN DAWWANI is a famous man of letters belonging to this period. He was deeply versed in Ethics, Philosophy, and Logic. His two works, *Akhlaq-i-Jalali*, a treatise on Ethics, and *Sharh-i-Tahzib*, a standard work in Philosophy, are perfectly familiar to those who have any pretensions to Persian scholarship. His other works are *Sharh-i-Haikal*, *Sharh-i-'Aqid*, *Sharh-i-Tajrid*, *Isbat-i-Wajib* (on the existence of God,) *Risala-i-Zaura* (on Sufism), *Hashia-i-Shamsiyya*, and *Anwar-i-Shafiyya*. DAWWANI was a great philosophical writer, and possessed a wonderful command over the Persian language. He died in A. D. 1502.

Other celebrated writers of this age. Other celebrated writers of this period are 'ABD-UR-RAZZAQ, the author of *Matla'us-Sa'dain*; SAIF-UD-DIN HAJI b. Nizam-ul-Fazli, the author of *Asar-ul-Wuzara*; SHAMS-UD-DIN KATIBI, poet and writer, the author

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of *Majma'-ul-Bahrain*, *Husn wa 'Ishq*, and *Bahram wa Gulandam*: QASIM ANWAR, a great mystical poet and writer of odes: AMIR YAMIN-UD-DIN, the author of *Misbah-ul-Qulub*, *Mishkat-ul-Talibin* and *Fath wa Fatuh*: YAHIA NAISHAPURI, the author of *Shibistan-i-Khayal*: REYAZI of Herat, the author of a *masnawi* containing an account of the reign of Sultan Husain Mirza; KHWAJA MAS'UD and MAULANA HAIRANI, the authors of many poetical works. SHAIKH AZARI ISFARAINI, Maulana LUFT ULLAH, and NIA'MAT ULLAH WALI are authors whose voluminous productions are seldom read now.

Persian Literature produced in India under the Moghuls.—Properly speaking, the Persian Literature produced in India belongs not to this period, but to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The reason why we decided to sketch it briefly in this chapter is that the Mughal emperors under whom it flourished were descendants of Amir Timur; therefore it seemed natural to describe it under the Timurides. Soon after the establishment of the Mughal empire in India, hosts of poets and writers left Persia and flocked to the court of the Mughal emperors. Babar himself was a cultured man, and greatly honoured the men of letters. His descendants kept a magnificent court, and invited the most learned men to visit

it from all parts of India and Persia. Their unbounded liberality and generous treatment gave a most opportune encouragement to the leading scholars, and India became another Persia. But contact with the Hindus and complete separation from the homeland corrupted the language of the conquerors, who gradually amalgamated with the Indian Mahomedans, and began to speak *Rekhia* or *Urdu*—a mongrel offspring of Persian and Hindi. In course of time Urdu got the upper hand, and superseded its mistress.

Famous Patrons of Learning in India of the Mughal times. Besides the Mughal emperors who patronised learning, there were the nobles and grantees who extended their support and encouragement to the cultivation of letters. Abu'l Fath Gilani, 'Abdul-Rahim Khankhanan, 'Ali Quli Khan and Khan-i-zaman, Zafar Khan the Governor of Cashmere, Khan-i-'Azam Kokaltash, and the famous Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II of Bijapur, are celebrated for their liberal patronage of wits, poets and scholars. Abu'l Fazl, the renowned historian of Akbar, mentions about sixty men of letters who were attached to the court of this world-famous sovereign. It is impossible to give space to all of them here, so we shall just briefly describe the most distinguished among them.

Poets and writers of the court of Akbar: Badauni, Khan Khanan, Abul Fazl and Faizi. Shaikh ABD-UL-QADIR BADAUNI, a very learned scholar, was frequently employed by Akbar to translate Arabic and Sanskrit standard works. He composed *Najat-ur-Rashid*, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, and *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, an exceedingly valuable work. He died in A. D. 1598. Abd-ur-Rahim KHAN KHANAN, the prime minister of Akbar, translated the memoirs of Babar from Turkish into Persian.

Shaikh ABU'L FAZL 'ALLAMI, the light of Akbar's court, was a minister and Secretary of State. His works, the *Akbar-nama* and the *Ain-i-Akbari*, written in an elegant and pure style, are to this day the models of literary excellence and historical accuracy. His epistles known as *Maktubat i-'Allami* and his *Diwan* are familiar to all scholars of the Persian language. He died in A. D. 1602. FAIZI, the eldest brother of Abu'l Fazl, was a man of profound learning and an accomplished Sanskrit scholar. He composed about a hundred books, and translated mathematical and poetical works from Sanskrit. He was made poet-laureate after the death of Amir Ghazali. His most celebrated works are his *Diwan*, *Nal Daman*, *Sawati'-ul-Ilham*, *Markaz-i-Adwar*, and *Tarjama-i-Lailawati*. He died in A. D. 1595.

Zahuri and his works.—Mulla ZAHURI *TARSHIZI came to the Deccan from Persia, and attached himself to the court of Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II. He is the author of many celebrated works among which are his *Saqi-nama*, *Mina Bazar*, *Ruqa'at-i-Zahuri*, *Sih Nasr.*, *Risala-i-Nauras*, *Gulzar-i-Ibrahim*, and *Khwan-i-Khalil*. He died in A. D. 1617.

'Urfi.—Jamal-ud-Din 'URFI, the most popular poet of this period, came to the Deccan from Shiraz. After a few years he came to Agra, and spent several years in the service of Hakim Abu'l Fath Gilani. Later on, at the death of this eminent patron of letters, Khankhanan introduced the young poet to Akbar. His works, especially his odes and panegyrics, were so popular that they were sold in every street of the capital in his life-time. He died in A. D. 1591, aged 36 years only. *Farhad wa Shirin* is the longest masnawi attempted by 'URFI; but it is seldom read now. His *Diwan* is still vastly admired and studied.

Amin Razi.—AMIN-RAZI is the author of the famous biographical dictionary called *HAFI IQLIM*. TALIB-I-AMULI was made poet-laureate of the court of Jahangir at the early age of 20 years. He died in

*Reuben Seny in his 'Persian Literature' writes: Mulla Zahuri of 'Tehran' and not of 'Tarshizi.'

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A. D. 1625 aged about 100 years. His *Diwan* is greatly esteemed both in India and in Persia.

Abu Talib Kalim and others.—ABU TALIB KALIM revisited India in the reign of Jahangir and was made poet-laureate by Shahjahan. The *Zafar-nama-i-Shahjahan* is his master-piece. He died in A. D. 1651. JAMAL-UD-DIN HUSAIN-ANJU was the author of Persian dictionary called *Farhang-i-Jahangir*. ‘ABD-UR-RASHID flourished in the reign of Shahjahan, and composed *Farhang-i-Rashidi*, *Muntakhab-ul-Lughat* and *Risala-i-Mu‘arrabat*. MUHAMMAD QASIM wrote his well-known *Tarikh-i-Firishta* in the Deccan at the request of Ibrahim ‘Adil Shah II of Bijapur. Shaikh ‘ABD-UL-HAQQ, the traditionist, was the greatest theological writer of this period. His best known works are the *Madina-i-Sakina*, *Takmil-ul-Iman*, *Matali‘-ul-Anwar*, *Madarijun-Nubuwwat*, *Jazb-ul-Qulub*, *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, *Risala-i-Shamail*, and *Miftah-ul-Futuh*. He died in A. D. 1642, aged 86 years. His son NUR-UL-HAQQ is the author of the *Zubdat-ut-Tawarikh*. NUR-ULLAH SHUSTARI composed the great biographical work *Majlis-ul-Mominin*. He was a courtier of Akbar and died in A. D. 1610.

The general characteristics of the Persian Literature produced in India.—*The Persian Literature*

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produced in India abounds in masnawis, diwans, kulliyats, biographies, local and general histories, commentaries, lexicons, books on metaphysics, theosophy, medicine, logic, philosophy, rhetoric and so forth. Most of them are out of date now, and are interesting only to the antiquarian. For detailed accounts of other men of letters who flourished in India, *vide* Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Lutf 'Ali Beg's *Atishkada-i-Azar*, Amin-i-Razi's *Haft Iqlim*, Hazin's *Tazkirat-ul-Mu'asirin*, and Sher Khan Lodi's *Mirat-ul-Khayal*.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PERSIAN LITERATURE AFTER

A. D. 1500

Downfall of the Timūrīdes in Persia: the Safawids, the Qachars, and the Pahlawids.—The year 1500 A. D. marks not only the downfall of the Timurides in Persia, but the close of the classical period of Persian literature as well. Under the **SAFAWIDS**, who ruled in Persia from A. D. 1500 to 1736, there was a great change in the religion of the people—a change which had a far-reaching effect on the political relation of Persia to other Powers. Isma‘il, the first monarch of the Safawid dynasty, was a most zealous and uncompromising Shi‘a. He established the Shiite faith as the national or state religion, and made Persia altogether an independent kingdom. **NADIR SHAH** rose to power after the downfall of the Safawids in A. D. 1736, and reigned till his assassination in A. D. 1747. From this year to A. D. 1783 when **AGHA MUHAMMAD**, the founder of the Qachar dynasty, made himself master of Persia, we read of nothing but wars and battles and interne-cine feuds. The Qachars held sway over Persia for

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about one hundred and twenty-two years, A. D. 1783—1905, the most famous among them (from the literary point of view) being the Shahs Fath 'Ali and Nasir-ud-Din. It was during the Persian Revolution of 1905-06, that this dynasty was overthrown, and the last Qachar had to fly for his life. He went to Europe and took up his residence at Paris in France where he has only recently died an exile. Riza Shah (formerly Riza Khan) is the genius who rose to the dictatorship of the country during the troubled days of the revolution and is now at the helm of affairs of the Persian Government as His Majesty the King Riza Shah Pahlawi. He traces his descent back to one of the ancient ruling families of Persia and has established the Pahlawi dynasty. Under his expert guidance Persia is rapidly becoming one of the prominent powers of the East.

Persian Literature of the sixteenth century essentially modern.—After this brief statement, it only remains to take a cursory view of the literature of the last four centuries. It is certainly true that the sixteenth century brought with it a new way of thinking, and gave a new direction to human interests and national affairs. It is not easy to define exactly what it was, nor to show it clearly in the altered conditions of the times. Still, from this period on-

wards there is visible a marked change in tone and spirit, in temperament and outlook. It is a definite break from a way of thought which had been continuous since the Mongol invasion. Putting it broadly one may say that from this time Persian literature becomes essentially modern in form, colour, and temper. Its manner is different, its plane of thought is different, its ends and objects are different. The ancients have only a purely literary interest for it; they are out of date and out of fashion. It lays stress on observation and detail, matter of fact and accuracy, analysis of feelings and emotions. Its temper is positive, its attitude is realistic, and its spirit is critical. Consequently biographies, histories, novels, commentaries, expositions and so forth are the characteristic productions of these times.

Some important Authors.—It is a period of surpassing richness in prose and poetry. There is no lack of poets or writers. But, with few honourable exceptions, their works are of an average merit and seldom acquired more than local reputation. So, it is hardly worth while to trouble ourselves about all of them. In the following pages we shall attempt to give a short account of important authors and their writings.

Khondamir: his works: literary merits.—Ghayas-ud-Din Muhammad Khond Amir, usually called

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KHONDAMIR by European writers, is a voluminous writer of the sixteenth century. He was the son of the famous MIRKHOND who wrote the *Rauzat-us-Safa*, and was born in A. D. 1498. He composed the *seventh* volume of this valuable history, and brought it down to A. D. 1523. His most celebrated works are the *Habib-us-Siyar*, the *Maasir-ul-Muluk*, the *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, the *Dastur-ul-Wuzara*, the *Makarim-ul-Akhlaq*, and an abridgment of *Tarikh-i-Wassaf*. Two other works are also ascribed to him, viz., *Gharaib-ul-Asrar* and *Jawahir-ul-Akhbar*. He died in A. D. 1535. MIRKHOND had a fine faculty for narration, and the vigorous rapidity and point of his style enabled him to sketch a character or sum up a dialectical position very surely and effectively. His writings have a kind of spare and masculine force about them. They give us the impression of intellectual strength, logical precision, and a clear, vivid grasp of the subject.

Hatifi; his works.—Maulana HATIFI, the nephew of Jami, was born in A. D. 1521. He was the author of *Khusraw-wa-Shirin*, *Hafz Manzar*, *Laila wa Majnun* (written in imitation of Nizami) *Timur-nama*, and *Futuh-i-Shahi*. HATIFI was a most popular poet of this period. He was neither subtle, nor imaginative, nor profound, but he had a rare gift of putting things with

perfect felicity and wit. His works are exquisite pieces of workmanship, breathing the very spirit of the time.

Hilali ; his works.—His contemporary HILALI of Astarabad who died in A. D. 1533 was a protege of Alisher. He was the author of *Shah-wa-Darwesh*, *Sifat-ul-Ashiqin*, and a *Diwan*.

Fighani ; the Little Hafiz.—Mulla Jami's friend and a contemporary of Hatifi was Baba Fighani. He, for sometime, enjoyed the patronage of Sultan Husain Mirza, the last of the Timurides in Persia. But soon the jealousy of rivals obliged him to say good-bye to Herat and to proceed to Tabriz where he met with warm reception at the court of Prince Aq-Qyunlu. Fighani is well-known for his new and charming methods of composition and entirely untouched similes. His skill in composing beautiful odes has earned for him the well-deserved title of Hafiz-i-Kuchak or the Little Hafiz.

Zain-ul-Abidin, Al-Ghaffari, and Kashani.—KHWAJA ZAIN-UL-ABIDIN (died A. D. 1580) was for many years Secretary of State in Persia. He is the author of the celebrated work *Jam-i-Jamshed*, Ahmad b. Muhammad Al-GHAFFARI (died A. D. 1567) was the author of *Nigaristan* and *Naskh-i-Jahanara*, a valuable history from the earliest times to A. D. 1525. *Gharaib-ul-Masail*, containing dissertations on divers ethical and religious questions and divided into forty sections, was composed

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by Fazil MUHAMMAD PIR DARWESH in A. D. 1568. Muhammad Qasim KASHANI composed in A. D. 1599 his celebrated work *Majma'ul-Furs*. It was the first *critical* dictionary of the Persian language.

Muhammad Rafi' and Mirza Tahir Wahid.—

Muhammad Rafi' Wa'iz, Mirza Tahir Wahid, and Mirza Saib were all connected with the court of Shah 'Abbas II of the Safawid dynasty. This prince who reigned from A. D. 1642 to A. D. 1666 was a great patron of letters. MUHAMMAD RAFI is the author of the admirable treatise on ethics called *Abwab-ul-Janan*. This book contains eight chapters corresponding to the eight gates of Paradise. MIRZA TAHIR, the historian of 'ABBAS, was the author of a charming work entitled *Mir'at-ul-'Aajaz*.

Saib: the leader of Romantic Revival in Persia.—

Saib, the poet-laureate of 'ABBAS, was in many respects an original author. He created a new style in lyric poetry, and thus became the leader of the romantic revival in Persia. He looked at things in a new way, and put them into a new poetic form. His imagination was sensitive to fine impressions, and to finely graded shades of difference. Outward objects and philosophical ideas increased in their content and meaning, and acquired a new thrilling power in his odes. There is a strange, nameless fascination about his lines which make him a subtle powerful poet. SAIB died in A. D. 1677, and left a *Diwan* containing about eighty thousand couplets.

Zulali; his works.—Hakim ZULALI of Khawansar is another great poet of modern times. He is the author of many poems among which are *Sulaiman-nama*, *Azar wa Samundar*, and *Zarra wa Khurshed*. *Mahmud wa Ayaz*, his last and longest composition, was completed in about twenty years. It is a clever romance full of brilliant touches and graceful lines. ZULALI died about A. D. 1620.

Zamiri.—Maulana ZAMIRI deserves a passing notice here as a singer of sweet and tasteful odes and the author of *Naz wa Nayaz*, *Wamiq wa 'Azra*, *Bahar wa Khizan*, *Laila wa Majnun*, and *Jannat-ul-Akhyar*. He died in A. D. 1568.

Majlisi.—MUHAMMAD BAQIR MAJLISI is one of the most learned scholars that Persia ever produced in general literature, law, and theology. It is said that Shah SULAIMAN, the son and successor of 'ABBAS II pressed upon him the hand of his daughter, but he refused to marry her. His *Haqq-ul-Yaqin* and *Bahr-ul-Anwar* are among the greatest theological works produced by the Shi'as. The *Haqq-ul-Yaqin* is a noble commentary on the Shi'a doctrines, and extends to fourteen folio volumes; while the *Bahr-ul-Anwar* treats exclusively of Shi'a traditions.

Baha-ud-Din Muhammad 'Amili.—Baha-ud-Din Muhammad 'AMILI was another great Shi'a doctor

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of this period. He flourished in the reign of Shah 'ABBAS I, surnamed the Great (1571—1629), and was a great mathematician, lawyer, and scholar. His works on various subjects are much read in Persia, particularly his *Kashkol* which is a miscellany of literature. The first five books of the *Jami'-i-'Abbasi*, a comprehensive exposition of Shi'ite law, were written by him. The remaining fifteen books were subsequently written by NIZAM b. HUSAIN of Sawa.

Iskandar Munshi.—ISKANDAR MUNSHI composed the *Tarikh-i-'Alamara-i-'Abbasi*, a history of the Safawid kings from Isam'il I, to 'Abbas the Great (1500—1629).

Shafai.—Sharaf-ud-Din Hasan SHAFAI is the author of the *masnawi* poems *Namakdan i-Haqiqat*, *Mihr-o-Mahabbat*, and *Dida-i-Bedar*.

Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad.—NIZAM-UD-DIN AHMAD wrote the delightful work *Majmuat-us-Sana'i* in A. D. 1650.

Muhammad Tahir.—MUHAMMAD TAHIR NASRABADI wrote in A. D. 1672 his well-known *Tazkira* which gives the best summary on Persian literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Khayal.—Muhammad Taqi KHAYAL is the author of *Bostan-i-Khayal* (written between 1742 and 1756), a prose romance in fifteen large volumes.

Walih-i-Daghistani.—'ALI QULI KHAN' surnamed

Walih-i-Daghistani, is the author of *Reyaz-ush-Shua'ra*. It is an universal biographical dictionary of Persian poets, and contains about twenty-five hundred articles. This work was composed in A. D. 1748.

Hairat.—Qayam-ud-Din HAIRAT composed in A. D. 1760 the biography called *Tazkira-i-Maqalat-ush-Shu'ara*.

Mirza Mahdi Khan.—MIRZA MAHDI KHAN, confidential secretary to Nadir Shah, is the author of the *Durra-i-Nadira* and *Tarikh-i-Nadiri*.

'Ali Hazin.—Shaikh Muhammad 'Ali HAZIN was a voluminous writer both in prose and verse. His most celebrated works are *Tazkirat-ul-Mu'asirin*, *Risala dar bayan-i-ahwal-i-Hazin* (an autobiography), *Wadi'at-ul-Badai'* (a treatise on ethics), seven *masnawis* and four *diwans*.

Lutf Ali Beg Azar.—LUTF 'ALI BEG is another well-known author of modern times. His biography of poets, entitled *Atishkad-i-Azar* was composed in A. D. 1766. It is a standard work of great literary beauty and importance, giving the lives of over eight hundred poets arranged according to their native towns or provinces. Lutf 'Ali Beg is nowadays much quoted in Persia and Europe and in this respect he has far excelled his predecessor 'Ali Hazin. His diwan is worth reading. The versatility of his genius is well displayed in his romantic masnawi *Yusaf-u-Zulaykha*.

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Fauqi Yazdi.—FAUQI YAZDI was a contemporary of Azar and is known for his vulgarity. His compositions are obscene and immoral. Some orientalists have given him the title of 'Apostle of Vulgarity.'

Muhammad Aslam.—MUHAMMAD ASLAM is the author of *Farhat-un-Nazirin*, a compendium of general history from the earliest times down to A. D. 1771.

Abu 'l Hasan Qazurni.—Abu'l Hasan b. Ibrahim QAZURNI composed in A. D. 1796 that excellent history of modern Persia which is known as *Fawaid-i-Safawiyya*. This book gives a comprehensive account of the Safawid dynasty in a very lucid and masterly way.

Fath 'Ali Shah Qachar: poets and writers of his time.—Fath 'Ali Shah Qachar (A. D. 1797—1836) was a commanding figure of the nineteenth century. He was himself something of a poet and composed verses the collection of which has been published under the title of *Diwan-i-Khaqan*. He was an accomplished scholar too. Following in the footsteps of the great Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, he tried, though with very little success, to assemble at his court a galaxy of the luminaries of learning. Of the numerous proteges of this Shah, and other poets and writers who flourished in the first half of the nineteenth century, here will be noticed only the most eminent ones *i. e.*, Sahab, Mijmar, Saba, Nashat, Wisal, Qaim-maqam, Qaani, Furughi and Yaghma.

Sahab.—Sayyid Mohammad Isfahani, poetically surnamed as Sahab, died in A. D. 1807. Fath 'Ali Shah entertained a very high opinion of his talents. He was an excellent panegyrist, and besides composing several encomiums in praise of the Shah, he wrote and dedicated to him a book of memoirs entitled *Rashhat-i-Sahab* which has become rare in these days.

Mijmar.—Mujtahidu'sh-Shuara Sayyid Husain-i-Tabatabai of Ardistan, a village near Isfahan the old capital of Persia, was presented at the court by Mirza 'Abd-l-Wahhab Nashat his fellow-villager and friend. Haji Mirza Yahya of Daulatabad reckons him as a poet of the first class. He died in A. D. 1811 and was still very young. His skill in composing riddle-poems was extraordinary.

Saba.—Fath 'Ali Khan Kashani, the poet laureate to Fath 'Ali Shah Qachar, had for sometime been the governor of Qum and Kashan, but later in life became devoted to the person of the Shah, and died in A. D. 1822-23. *Shahinshah-nama* which is an imitation of *Shah-nama-i-Firdausi*, *Khudawand-nama*, *Ibrat-nama*, and *Gulshan-i-Saba* are his principal works besides a big *Diwan* of some twelve thousand verses.

Nashat.—Mirza ‘Abd-ul-Wahhab of Isfahan, a calligraphist, a poet and a linguist—perfect master of three languages—Persian, Arabic and Turkish—was a patron of learning; spent lavishly on men of letters, poets and mystics until he himself became almost penniless. It was at this stage of affairs that he attracted the notice of Path ‘Ali Shah who conferred upon him the title of Mutamadud-Dawla’ and finally raised him to the office of Foreign Secretary. Nashat’s Diwan comprises many beautiful odes. He died in A. D. 1829.

Wisal.—Mirza Mohammad Shafi, also known as Mirza Kuchak, was a native of Shiraz and one of the most eminent of the modern poets. He was a versatile genius and the incomparable master of three arts (1) calligraphy, (2) music and (3) poetry. He has composed very fine qasidas and ghazals; completed Whashi’s Farhad-u-Shirin, and translated into Persian Atwaqu-z-Zahb of Zamakhshari. Wiqar, Mirza Mahmud Hakim; Miza ‘Abu-u-l-Qasim Farhang, Dawari, Yazdani and Himmat are his sons all of whom have an equal claim to renown as high class poets and writers of their times.

Qaim-maqam.—Mirza ‘Abul-Qasim, of Farahan, son of Mirza-i-Buzurg Mirza ‘Isa who had been Deputy Prime Minister to Prince ‘Abbas Mirza, bore like

his father the title of Qaim-maqam and held the same office till his execution on June, 26, 1835. His fame rests more upon his prose than his poetry which he wrote under the pen-name of Thanai. His prose comprises chiefly of diplomatic documents and letters published under the title of Insha-i-Qaim-maqam.

Qaani; the most melodious of all the Persian poets.—Mirza Habib, son of Mirza Mohammad 'Ali Gulshan, was born at Shiraz in A. D. 1808. He had been the most melodious of all the Persian poets. He composed Kitab-i-Parishan an imitation of Sadi's, Gulistan when he was only thirty. Very few poets have such a wonderful command of the language as he had. But it is very much to be regretted that he made no good use of his vast capabilities owing to his petty aims and ignoble principles. He excels chiefly in panegyrics, the strophe-poems and the multiple-poems. The reader can judge for himself the sweet melody, the swing and the grace of Qaani's compositions from the following opening verses of two of his poems :

Banafsha rusta az zamin bi-tarf-i-juy-i-barha;
 Wa-ya gusasta, hur-i-in zi zulf-i-khesh tarha.
 Zi rang agar na-didai chisan jihad shararha;
 Bi-barghay-i-lala bin mayan-i-lalazarha—
 Ki chun sharar mi-jihad zi sang-i-kuhsarha.
 Nasim-i-khuld miwazad magar zi juy-i-barha;
 Ki buy-i-mushk midihad hawayi-marǧzarha.

Faraz-i-khak u khishtaha damida sabz kishtaha
Chi kishtaha, bahishtaha, na dah na sad, hazarha.

Qaani also composed a stammering poem which shows that he could also portray in real colours the actual peculiarities of speech. He died in A. D. 1854.

Farughi: a Sufi poet.—Mirza ‘Abbas, son of ‘Aqa Musa of Bistam, first composed under the nom de plume of Miskin and later under that of Farughi; was a lyrical poet and excelled in odes. He is supposed to have adopted Mysticism in its extremest form ‘I am God’, but when Nasir-ud-Din Shah Qachar questioned him as to its truth he denied the charge and described it as a ‘sheer calumny.’ Here we give the three first verses of one of his typical odes, which however, are a strong proof of his Sufi tendencies :

Kay rafta-yi zi dil ki tamanna kunam tura;
Kay buda-yi nihufta ki payda kunam tura.
Ghaybat na karda-yi ki shawam talib-i-huzur;
Pinhan na gashta-yi ki huwayda kunam tura.
Ba sad hazar jalwa birun amdi ki man;
Ba sad hazar dida tamasha kunam tura.

Yaghma : the inventor of lamentation-elegies.---

Mirza Abu-l-Hasan Jandaqi, better known as Zangahba, whom Qaani calls the Guide of the Miscreants *i.e.*, ‘Murshid-i-Ashrar’, is undoubtedly the most notorious of all the vulgar, abusive and obscene Persian poets.

Besides his Hazalyat or ribald-poems which comprise masnawis, Tarjibands, Tarkib-bands, Qitaat and Rubaiyat, he has composed a quantity of serious verse mainly odes, and elegies on the deaths of the Imams. He is the inventor of a new form of elegy called by him 'Nuha-i-Sinazani or the Breast-beating Lamentation. The nature of such poems is well exemplified in the following quotation :

Shikwa az charkh-i-sitamgar chi kunam gar na-
kunam, chi kunam gar na-kunam.

Gila az gardish-i-akhtar chi kunam gar na
kunam, chi kunam gar na kunam.

Gham-i-'Abbasbala-hast chi kasham gar na
kasham, chi kasham gar na kasham, etc., etc

and

Zada-i-Zahra bi-kam-i-zada-i-Marwan nigar—
Ah, ah, gardish-i-dauran nigar.

In bi-khari an bi-i'zzat in bi-bin u an nigar—
Ah, ah, gardish-i-dauran nigar.

Nasir-ud Din Shah Qachar: poets and writers of his time.—Nasir-ud-Din Shah, the great-grand son of Fath 'Ali Shah was contemporary with Queen Victoria, and reigned from A. D. 1848 to A. D. 1896. Thrice he visited Europe and recorded his experiences and observations in a journal which is now available in print, under the title of Safarnama-i-Shah-i-Iran.

This well-read book is written in very simple language and affords easy-reading and much interest. Of the professed writers and poets of Nasir-ud-Din's reign the most notable are: Riza-quli Khan Hidayat, Sipihr Kashani and Shaybani Kashani.

Riza-Quli Khan Hidayat and his works.—Riza-quli Khan, poetically surnamed 'Hidayat and, also known as Lala-bashi, was an able poet whose compositions comprise chiefly of lyrics, epics and religious masnawis. It is not for his poetry but for his three great biographical works that he is well known to the Orientalists. These are Majma-ul-Fusaha, Riyaz-ul-'Arifin, and a supplement to Mirakhonds Rauzatus-Safa. He had for sometime been tutor to Muzaffar-ud-Din Shah when he was a prince of very tender age, and also served the State as its representative at the court of the King of Khwarazm. The records of his journey to and from and stay at Khiva are preserved in another of his works, the Sifarat-nama. He died in 1872.

Sipihr Kashani and his works.—Mirza Mohammad Taqi Khan of Kashan entitled Lisan-ul-Mulk, wrote poetry under the pen-name of Sipihr. His fame in the sphere of literature depends upon two of his historical works: (1) the Nasikhut-Tawarikh and (2) the Barahin-al-'Ajam.

Shaibani a pessimist.—Abu'n-Nasr Fathu'llah Khan of Kashan, poetically surnamed 'Shaibani' was a contemporary of Hidayat. He is perhaps the first Persian poet in whose compositions the direct influence of Persia's contact with Europe is clearly visible in the form of pessimism and ultra-realism, which no doubt resembles to some degree, the pessimism of 'Umar Khayyam and other poets who imitated him, but is totally devoid of mysticism.

The Babism: a religious movement and its effects on politics and literature of Persia.—In 1844, *i.e.*, four years before Nasir-ud-Din Shah Qachar ascended the throne of Persia, Mirza 'Ali Muhammad of Shiraz proclaimed himself as the promised Mahdi and thus a powerful religious movement was launched in the land. 'Ali Muhammad assumed the title of Bab and preached that it was through him alone that the knowledge of Truth could be gained. Through this title, Bab, the movement came to be known as Babism. Its teachings purport to be an outcome of Shia'ism mixed with Sufism pantheistic and theosophic in nature. But what made the movement so formidable and feared by the government of the country, is the way in which the Babi convictions are applied. These are at once communistic and universal. The Persian Government have, from the

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very outset striven, to crush this movement by killing, banishing and persecuting in various other cruel, inhuman and brutal ways, the adherents of Bab and of his still more famous disciple Baha-ullah after whose name a majority of them is called the Bahais. The diabolically hostile attitude of the Government, however, produced the sentiment of dire hatred in the hearts of the Babis, and the first visible symptom of this hatred appeared in the shape of an attempt on the life of Nasir-ud-Din Shah by three Babis in A. D. 1852. The unfortunate Shah although escaped unhurt, was yet destined for the same fate and forty-four years after this incident was assassinated by a Babi youth, in A. D. 1896. This and several other causes, especially the bad administration of the monarchical government in conjunction with some active influences of foreign origin, led to the great national upheaval of 1905-06, and as one of its essential results, to the ultimate overthrow of the Qachar dynasty. Leaving aside history and the question of the future prospects of this great religious movement of the nineteenth century we come now to the literature.

Bab and Baha's works.—Bab himself wrote several treatises both in Arabic and Persian. The Bayan and the Dalail-i-Saba 'are of the first rate importance among his Persian works. Baha-ullah his foremost disciple and

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successor wrote two books (1) the 'Iqan and (2) the Alwah-i-Salatin. Then there came into existence quite a multitude of works mostly apologetic, written by the prominent Babis and Bahais. These books taken collectively form a literature in itself.

Qurratu-l-'Ayn: the Babi poetess and heroine.—

Before concluding this paragraph on Babism it would only be fair to devote a few lines to the beautiful and gifted Babi poetess Qurratu-l-'Ayn. It was in A. D. 1852, during the frightful persecution of the Babis which followed immediately the attempt by three of their sect on the life of the Shah, when some thirty of the more or less prominent among them were most cruelly done to death, that this heroine met her end after a series of long and unspeakable torture. She composed two excellent Babi poems in one of which occurs this verse on the martyrdom of Bab:

Man u ishq-i-an mah-i-khubru ki chu shud
sala-i-bala baru ;
Binshast u qah-qah shud firu ki 'Anal Shahid
bi-Kerbala.

CHAPTER XIV

THE POST-REVOLUTION POETS AND WRITERS

The new school of political verse.—After the epoch-making events of 1905-06, the Persian poetry ceased to be a mere amusement for the rich patrons and a means of earning bread for the poverty-stricken poets. Political verse became popular with the people and there came into existence the modern school of political poets and writers. Qasida especially its madhiyya form became out of fashion chiefly for two reasons : firstly because it brought little or no reward to the poet, and secondly because the establishment of purely national press in the country had so enkindled the fire of enthusiastic patriotism in the young hearts that instead of following the old traditions and attaching themselves to any single patron, almost all the poets, old or young, began to compose for the benefit of their nation and thus became national in the truest sense of the word. Masnawi, ghazal and Rubai, however, are still the popular verse-forms and would continue to be so as long as the Persian-mind takes infinite interest in Mysticism, Love and

Epigram. The answer as to why the Political Verse became so much popular with the Persians will be found in its real originality, merit and humour. Adib-ul-Mamalik, Dakho, 'Arif, Ashraf, and Bahar are the most eminent of the masters of this new school.

Adib-ul-Mamalik.—Mirza Sadiq Khan of Farahan, better known by his title Adib-ul-Mamalik was a great grandson of Mirza Abu'l-Qasim, the celebrated Qaim-maqam. He was born in A. D. 1860. He was an accomplished scholar, an eminent journalist and a political poet of astounding capabilities. He contributed his compositions to as many as ten leading journals and newspapers of his time and had been the founder and editor of as many as four. He took part in the capture of Tehran in 1910 and subsequently held the office of the President of the High Court of Justice at Sanman and Yazd. He died at Tehran in 1918.

Adib-ul-Mamalik's poems are original in style and faithfully reflect the varying mood of the Persian mind during the great transition period of six years, A. D. 1906—1912. The following two quotations from his verses would give some idea of his style :

On the Russian aggression in Persia :

Chun barra-i-bichara bi-choparash na-paiwast ;
Az bim bi-sahra dar na-khuft u na bi-nishast.

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Khirse bi-shikar amad u bazush firu bast ;
Shud barra-ma tu'ma-i-an khirs-i-zabardast.
Afsos baran barra-i-nau-zada-i-sarmast ;
Faryad azan khirs-i-kuhan sal-i-shikam khar

On the grand National Assembly :

Shad bash ay Majlis-i-Milli ki binam a'nqarib ;
Az tu ayad dard-i-Millat ra darin dauran tabib.
Shad bash ay Majlis-i-Milli ki bashad mar tura ;
Shar'a pushtiban u Daulat hafiz u Millat naqib.
Ta tu bar-pa-yi darin kishwar na ranjad ashua ;
Ta tu bar-ja-yi darin saman na farsayad gharib.

Dakho.—Mirza 'Ali Akbar Dakho (or Dih-khuda) of Qazwrin is the youngest but at the same time the most versatile of all the poets and writers of Persia. Two of his poems, (1) the 'Kablay' beginning :

Mardud-i-khuda randa-i-har banda, a Kablai ,
Az dalqak-i-maruf numainda, a Kablai ,
Ba shukhi u ba maskhara u khanda, a Kablai,
N'az murda guzashti u na az zinda, a Kablai,
Hasti tu chi yak-pahlu u yak-danda, a Kablai.

and (2) the Wasiyyat-nama-i-Dost-i-yadgar-i-man which is an elegy on his friend Mirza Jahangir Khan editor of the Sur-i-Israfil, and begins ;

Ay murgh-i-sahar chu in shab-i-tar,
Biguzasht zi sar siyah kare, etc.

are typical of his style. Professor F. G. Browne,

in his monumental Literary History of Persia, gives two specimens of Dakho's prose writings that appeared in the Charand-parand column of the Sur-i-Israfil.

A'rif.—‘A'rif of Qazwin is also a contemporary political poet and writer of Persia. His Diwan has only recently been published. Here we give the first stanza and the refrain of one of his poems which he composed at a time when Mr. W. Morgan Shuster the American Treasurer-General of Persia owing to Russian Government's pressure, was to resign his post in January, 1912. The poem is entitled ‘Dar bab-i-harkat-i-Mosiu Shuster az Iran :

Nang-i-an khana ki mihman zi sar-i-khawan birwad;
Jan nisarash kun u ma-guzar ki mihman birwad.
Gar rawad Shuster az Iran, rawad Iran bar-bad ;
Ay Jawanan maguzaraid ki Iran birwad.

Bijism-i-murda jani, tu jan-i-yak jahani,
Tu ganj-i-Shaygani, tu umr-i-jawidani,
Khuda Khuda kunad bi-mani,
Khuda Khuda kunad bi-mani.

Ashraf.—Sayyid Ashraf-ud-Din of Gilan who writes poetry under the nom de plume of ‘Ashraf, is very much admired for his political, historical and natural poems. The following are a few lines from one of his mustazad-poems :

Gardida watan gharqa-i-anduh u mihan way
Ay way watan way !

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Khezed rawed az pay-i-tabut u kafan way—

Ay way watan way !

Az khun-i-jawanan ki shuda kushta darin rah—

Rangin tabaq-i-mah !

Khunin shuda sahra u tal u dasht u diman way—

Ay way watan way !

Ku himmat u ku ghairat u ku josh-i-fatuwwat—

Ku jumbish-i-Millat !

Darda ki rasid az du taraf sail-i-fitan way—

Ay way watan way !

Afsos ki Islam shuda az hama janib—

Pamal-i-ajanib !

Mashruta-i-Iran shuda tarikh-i-Zaman way—

Ay way watan way !

Bahar.—Malik-ush-Shua'ra Bahar of Mashhad is a high class poet and a leading journalist of Persia. He was the founder and the editor of the famous Persian newspaper Bahar which after its suppression re-appeared under the title of 'Nau Bahar and continued to render appreciable services to the country in the fields of politics and literature. As a specimen of Bahar's political poems we give here a few lines from one of his well-known satires.

Bikh-i-qaumiyyat-u-milliyyat-i-ma yaksara sust,

Na waziran-i-amin u na wakilan-i-durust,

Na rah-i-shusa u ahan na tilgaraf na pust,

Lik dar waqt-i-ifada hamgi chabuk-u-chust,
 Hama Khurshid-kulah u hama Shamshir hilal
 Hama dar jah Sulaiman u bi-hikmat Luqman,
 Hama Jam-jah-u-Siyaush-rukhs u ham Giv-a'nan.
 Hama Tahmuras u Hushang u Kyumars-nishan
 Hama Kay-khusraw-i-Fatih hamgi Naushirwan
 Hama Bahman hama Dara hama Rustam hama Zal.

Other notable poets and writers of the modern times.—Besides the already mentioned five great masters of the Modern Persian School of Political Verse there is a host of others more or less celebrated in the spheres of poetry, journalism and other forms of popular diction. The most notable among them being Mirza Ibrahim 'Ulfat, Saudai Mashhadi, Abul-Qasim Khurasani, Habib Khurasani, Haji Mirza Habib, Aqayi-Tawfiq, Aqay-i-Ashraf-ud-Din, Sayyid Mohammad Ali Jamal-zadeh, Sayyid Hasan Tabasi, Mudabbir-ul-Mamalik, Agha Ismail Nassaj, Mahdi Buqrat-ul-Hukama and Farrukh Tehrani. Space does not allow us to give here full notices of these Persian gentlemen who are engaged with their pens in the laudable work of spreading light and awakening among their ignorant and mostly illiterate countrymen.

PERSIAN DRAMA

Earliest traces of Drama in the Persian Literature: the ta'ziya and the tamasha.—We cannot conclude this introductory history of the national literature of Persia without saying a few words about the Persian drama. The old Aryan Persians exhibit no taste for drama, as is amply evidenced by the remains of their earlier literature. Nor do we find any trace of it in Pahlawi or Middle Persian. Drama in Persia has only sprung up in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Like the Greek drama and the miracle-plays of the European middle ages, it was in its beginning a purely religious thing. In its later development we find two species—the religious drama or mystery and the popular comedy or farce—making their appearance side by side, though they are widely different from one another. The Persian name for the former is ta'ziya, and for the latter tamasha.

Most recent developments in the ta'ziya.—The subject of the taziyas or miracle plays is generally derived from religious history, and is more or less connected with the martyrdoms of the house of 'Ali. Originally, these plays were religious ceremonies. But gradually the inherent human capacity for mimicry and drama took the upper hand, and from

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ceremonies they naturally and inevitably developed into religious performances. These performances take place during the first ten days of the month of Muharram. After the establishment of the Safawid dynasty in Persia early in the sixteenth century, the Shiites obtained royal sanction for these plays. They are usually performed in courtyards of mosques, palaces, and inns in towns; while in the country temporary structures are put up for the purpose. These performances are frequently provided by the court or by other wealthy persons, and are generally intended to please the people or secure divine favour. No farther back than the beginning of the nineteenth century, these plays were still only elegies chanted especially in honour of the martyrs who fell on the bloody field of Kerbela in A. D. 680. Lately, the narrow range of dramatic subjects has been considerably widened and Biblical stories and Christian legends are now frequently brought upon the stage. So these miracle plays have now come to be a continuous succession of dramatic scenes. It is an interesting fact that fifty-two of them have been taken down in writing, and thirty-seven published in translations.

The tamasha and the Luti.—Next in order of development after the ta'ziyas or miracle

plays is the *tamasha*—a kind of comedy or farce. It is performed by wandering minstrels, called *lutis*, who are a class by themselves. The rise of this professional class bids fair for the success of this most interesting and important movement. Companies of strolling players and singers travel about from place to place, and seek only the patronage of the people. They amuse the spectators by their improvised entertainments. These comic performances are much on the same level as 'moralities' or 'interludes' of the early Elizabethan stage, and are generally designed to enforce some ethical lesson or portray some aspect of every-day life. Their tone is not always reverent; but they contain within them the seeds of future development. Even at the present stage, they have gone so far as to exhibit pastoral and city manners taken straight from life.

Mirza Ja'far of Qaraja-dagh and his plays.—In several directions these plays have admitted Western influences. As in the case of such comedies as *Wukala-yi-Murafa'a*, *Hakim-i-Nabat*, *Mard-i-Khasis*, *Khirs-i-Duzd-Afgan*, *Wazir-i-Khan-i-Lankaran* and *Musta'li Shah*, all of which are translated from the Turkish into the Persian Language by the well-known scholar Mirza Ja'far of Qaraja-dagh.

THE POST-REVOLUTION POETS AND WRITERS

Prince Malkom Khan. A dramatist.—The late Prince Malkom Khan is another accomplished Persian who has written three Persian plays entitled (1) *Sarguzasht-i-Ashraf Khan Hakim-i-Arabistan dar hiney-ki-dar Tehran bud* (2) *Tariq-i-Hukumat-i-Zaman Khan Burujirdi* and (3) *Sarguzasht-i-Shah Quli Mirza*. All these plays are rather political pamphlets satirising the administrative conditions of the country although they seemingly unveil the defects of the Persian Social structure. It is curious enough to know that none of these plays has ever been acted on the stage. It is, therefore, evident that Drama has not yet attained such popularity in Persia as it has in the neighbouring Turkish Republic.

SOME IMPORTANT RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Sherlock Holmes in his Persian guise.—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous Detective stories which portray the wonderfully adventurous career of the immortal Sherlock Holmes, have travelled into Persia through Russia only in the recent years. In 1905-06 the first three stories, *i.e.*, 'The Episode of the Golden Pince Nez', 'the Account of Charles Augustus Milverton' and 'the Veiled Lodger' were translated by Mir Ismail Abdu'llah-Zadeh from a Russian version into Persian

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and were printed at the Khurshed Press in Tihran. Since that date a number of other stories also has appeared in Persian, translated by different authors and published in various journals.

Siyahat-nama-i-Ibrahim Beg.—The late Hajji Zaynu'l-'Abidin of Maragha is the author of this book. He has in a simple yet forcible style recorded his own travels in the Persian Domains under a fictitious name—Ibrahim Beg. The book is a bitter satire on the then monarchical government of Persia along with the social conditions then prevalent there. The apparent object of writing this book was to arouse discontent in the hearts of the Persians, and Mirza Mohammad 'Ali Khan Tarbiyat is right in concluding that it had an appreciable effect in precipitating the Persian Revolution of A. D. 1905-6.

Morier's Hajji Baba of Isfahan.—Hajji Baba of Isfahan is another satire on the Persians, written by Morier, an Englishman, in his own language. This book was translated into Persian by Hajji Shaykh Ahmad "Ruhi" of Kirman and published by Colonel D. C. Phillot at Calcutta in 1905.

APPENDIX

In this Appendix is given some necessary information regarding the most important of the inscriptions of ancient Persia. A map is also attached to show their situation and that of important towns and provinces connected with the literary history of the land.

Bihistun.—It is the greatest and the most important of all the cuneiform inscriptions in which Darius I sets down his ancestry and relates at length the events of his life time. It is situated at a distance of twenty-four miles north of Kermanshah on the Khurasan highway, and is originally a huge rock on which carvings are made at a height of no less than 300 feet and measuring 1,700 feet from end to end. The story of transcription and decipherment of this inscription is very interesting, especially from the Archæological and Philological points of view. Grotenfend, a German Orientalist, was perhaps the first European who in A. D. 1802 when the language as well as the script of this inscription were both unknown quantities in Europe, succeeded, by the method of comparing two short parallel pieces and noting the difference, in deciphering the names Darius and Xerxes. But, despite his efforts, his findings could lead him no farther. Hence the honour of furnishing the world with a

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key to the vast cuneiform literature of Persia, in the form of the final decipherment, rests with the eminent British scholar and archæologist Sir Henry Rawlinson, who visited this magnanimous piece of antiquity in person and at a great risk to his own life, did the work of transcription and decipherment on the spot. In 1904, two more Englishmen L. W. King and R. C. Thompson visited the Bihistun and ascending the rock recopied the inscriptions for the British Museum.

Naqsh-i-Rustam.—It is another important cuneiform inscription comprising a number of rocks situated north of Shiraz on the right bank of the river Pulvar or 'Murghab'. One of these rocks contains the tomb of Darius I, and under the grave of that great king is a fine relief exposing the Emperor Valerian on his knees before Shahpur I riding a fine horse. The face of this rock also contains many Sassanian reliefs the most important among them being the one in which the god Ahura Mazda is shown presenting the ring of kingship to Ardashir-i-Papakam, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty.

Pasargadæ.—It is a city of the very ancient times built by Cyrus the Great in B. C. 559. Among its ruins are the Tomb of its founder known as Dakhma-i-Madir-i-Sulaiman, a temple and some three or four

APPENDIX

palaces. It is situated north of Shiraz at a distance of some fifty miles.

Persepolis.—It is also one of the great capitals of ancient Persia now lying in ruins at the foot of Kuh-i-Rahmat and about thirty miles south of Pasargadæ. Its astounding ruins contain a huge terrace resting on forty tall graceful columns which it is said were erected by Darius I and completed and finished by his descendants Xerxes I and Artaxerxes I in their respective times. The complex of once high edifices of Achæmenian times in this city, is nowadays called by the Persians Takht-i-Jamshid Chihil Minar, Chihil Satun or Hazar Satun.

Istakhar.—It is also an important ancient town lying in ruins a few miles south of Persepolis.

Taq-i-Bustan.—The wonderful rock-carvings of Taqi-Bustan lie at a distance of some four miles north of Kirmanshah just off the highway leading to that city. These carvings date from the time of Khusraw II (A. D. 590—629) and are, therefore, essentially of the Sassanian Period. The huge rock is cut into two unequal but deep grottoes the larger one being 30 feet high, 24 feet wide and 24 feet deep. It contains Sassanian bar-reliefs of variegated descriptions. A popular legend attributes these marvels to Farhad, the unfortunate lover of Shirin.

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