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TRÜBNER'S

ORIENTAL SERIES.

THE

SHÁHNÁMA OF FIRDAUSÍ

DONE INTO ENGLISH BY

ARTHUR GEORGE WARNER, M.A.

AND

EDMOND WARNER, B.A.

"The homes that are the dwellings of to-day
Will sink 'neath shower and sunshine to decay,
But storm and rain shall never mar what I
Have built—the palace of my poetry."

FIRDAUSÍ

VOL. III

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ERRATA

Page 14, line 30 end, *add* reference number 5.
Page 36, line 8, *for* 'Tis' *read* ''Tis.'
Page 45, line 23, *for* 'that' *read* 'thou.'
Page 68, line 18, *for* 'stoneand' *read* 'stone and.'
Page 134, line 6 end, *add* !
,, ,, line 15 end, *add* "
Page 148, note, *for* 'Pehlevan' *read* 'Pehlewan.'
Page 151, line 4 from bottom, *add* full stop at end.
Page 172, note, *for* 'Car' *read* 'car.'
Page 194, line 8, *for* 'Khan' *read* 'Khán.'
Page 213, line 22, *for* 'Oleader' *read* 'O leader.'
Page 234, note, *for* 'Et' *read* 'et,' *and* for '*comblan*' read '*comblant.*'
Page 237, line 6, *prefix* "
Page 241, line 22, *delete* 'far.'
Page 251, note, *for* 'Sur' *read* 'sur.'
Page 275, line 10 end, *delete* !
Page 285, line 8 from bottom, *for* 'fraicheur' *read* 'fraîcheur.'
,, ,, last line, *add* reference number 2.
Page 287, side reference, *for* 'V. 1063' *read* 'V. 1065,' *and subsequent side references consecutively, i.e.* 'V. 1066,' 'V. 1067,' *etc., up to page* 305.
Page 298, note, *for* 'La' *read* 'la.'
Page 304, line 11, *delete* semicolon *and insert* comma.
Page 305, line 25, *add* side reference 'V. 1086,' *and read subsequent side references consecutively, i.e.* 'V. 1087,' 'V. 1088,' *etc., up to page* 356.
Page 318, note, *for* 'Il' read 'il.'
Page 348, line 15, *add* comma at end.
Page 376, col. 2, line 15, *for* 'Púláwand' *read* 'Púládwand.'

THE SHÁHNÁMA

VOL. III.

ABBREVIATIONS

C.—Macan's edition of the Sháhnáma.
L.—Lumsden's do.
P.—Mohl's do.
T.—Tihrán do.
V.—Vullers' do.

BAG. A History of Ancient Geography. By E. H. Bunbury, F.R.G.S.

CIG. Corpus Inscriptionum Græcarum.

DZA. Professor Darmesteter's Trans. of the Zandavasta in the Sacred Books of the East. Reference to Parts[1] and pages.

GIP. Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie.

GKS. Kleine Schriften von Alfred von Gutschmid.

HAP. History of Art in Persia from the French of Georges Perrot and Charles Chipiez.

JP. Persia Past and Present, by Professor A. V. Williams Jackson.

LPC. A View of the History and Coinage of the Parthians. By John Lindsay, Esq.

MGN. Narrative of a Journey through the Province of Khorassan, &c. By Colonel C. M. MacGregor, C.S.I., C.I.E.

MHP. History of Persia. By Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B.

NIN. Das Iranische Nationalepos von Theodor Nöldeke.

RM. The Mahábhárata translated into English Prose. By Pratápa Chandra Ráy, C.I.E.

RP. Professor Rawlinson's Parthia in the Story of the Nations' Series.

ZT. Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-Ben-Djarir-Ben-Yezid Tabari. Traduite sur la version Persane d'Abou-'Ali Mo'hammed Bel'ami par M. Hermann Zotenberg.

[1] The second edition of Part I. is referred to unless otherwise specified.

NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION

á as in "water."
í as in "pique."
ú as in "rude."
a as in "servant."
i as in "sin."
u as in "foot."
ai as *i* in "time."
au as *ou* in "cloud."
g is always hard as in "give."
kh as *ch* in the German "buch."
zh as *z* in "azure."

II

THE KAIÁNIAN DYNASTY

(*Continued*)

XIII

KAI KHUSRAU

HE REIGNED SIXTY YEARS

ARGUMENT

Kai Khusrau succeeds to the throne during the lifetime of his grandfather, Sháh Kai Káús, and swears to him to avenge the death of Siyáwush. This he achieves after long wars and vicissitudes of fortune ; and then, fearing that, like Jamshíd, he too may fall away from holiness by reason of his great successes and half descent from Túr, prays that he may be taken from the world, its temptations, and its evil. His prayers are granted, and, having appointed his successor, he is caught up alive to heaven. In the course of the reign the poet tells two episodic stories, that of the dív Akwán, and that of Bízhan and Manízha.

NOTE

Kai Khusrau is the last of the Sháhs in whose names we can trace a connexion with Indian mythology. In the Vedas he appears as Sushrávas. In the Zandavasta he is Kavi Husravah and is mentioned often. Like his grandfather Kai Káús he originated in the ancient nature-worship of the Aryan race, and a trace of his divine origin still clings to him in the Sháhnáma, as is shown by his exemption from death. The story of his birth and youth will be found in the reign of Kai Káús, Parts IV. and V.[1]

The reign of Kai Khusrau is the longest in the Sháhnáma and forms more than a fifth of the whole poem. It is nearly twice as long as "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" combined. It is divided into seven Parts, of which Parts IV. and V. are episodic.

[1] See Vol. ii.

The others carry on and bring to a conclusion the story of the old epic cycle of Írán, the deaths of Íraj, Naudar, Ighríras, and Siyáwush are avenged, and the royal house of Túrán becomes extinct. Early in the reign a new motive of great importance is introduced, that of the slaughter of the descendants of Gúdarz, who in Part VI. has his revenge on Pírán, just as in Part VII. Kai Khusrau avenges himself on Afrásiyáb. By the end of the reign a clean sweep has been made on the Túránian side, while on the Íránian a great clearance has been effected. Many heroic names drop out of sight, Kai Khusrau and his half-brother Farúd leave no issue,[1] and in the next reign the curtain rises on a complete change of scene and motive. Only Zál and his descendants—great relics of the heroic past—still continue to play their part among "new faces, other minds."

The story is one of almost unceasing warfare, for even the episodes end with battles against Afrásiyáb. Omitting these, four campaigns are fought, the first in Part I., the second in Parts II. and III., the third in Part VI., and the fourth in Part VII. The successive campaigns become more and more elaborate in the method of their presentation, and set forth the gradual progress of the Íránian arms from total defeat to absolute triumph.

In the course of the reign we find a mass of subject-matter of comparatively late growth. It is only in Part VII. that the older legendary strata crop up, and we again find ourselves in touch with the Zandavasta, while it is not till the concluding scenes of all that we come upon the ancient legend which may be regarded as the bed-rock of the whole. Another version of it occurs near the end of the great Indian epic, the Mahábhárata.[2] This will be given in the Introductory Note to Part VII. in Vol. IV. of this translation, where it may be compared most conveniently with its Íránian equivalent.

It was stated in the Introduction[3] that the Sháhnáma was divisible into two periods—a mythic and a historic—and the distinction was based not so much on the nature of the subject-matter as on the names of the chief characters which at a certain point cease to be mythic and become historic. As regards the names of the Sháhs, which were there referred to, this is correct. We are still far from the point in the poem at which such names begin to appear in their proper historic connexion of time and

[1] In the Zandavasta, however, Kai Khusrau is represented as having a son named Akhrura, whose legend is lost. DZA, ii. 223.

[2] RM, Vol. x., Mahápraslhánika Parva.

[3] Vol. i. p. 49.

place, but it does not follow that all the names occurring before that point is reached are wholly mythical. Real dynastic, family, and personal names are found thrown back upon and incorporated with a mythical past with which they have no connexion whatever. The dynastic title of Cæsar, for instance, occurs in the reign of Minúchihr,[1] while the personified name—Káran—of a family famous in Ashkánian (Parthian) and Sásánian times is very prominent in the Pishdádian dynasty. The most striking instances of personal names and personalities being thus thrown back occur in the Kaiánian dynasty and in the reigns of Kai Káús and Kai Khusrau. These we will now proceed to consider.

About A.D. 40 the Parthian king Artabanus III. died. He left at least two sons living at his death—Vardanes, who succeeded him, and Artabanus. Shortly afterward, and during the absence of Vardanes from the capital, a certain Gotarzes assumed the supreme power and caused Artabanus with his wife and son to be murdered. The relationship of Gotarzes to Artabanus III. has been a matter of considerable difference of opinion, but seems fairly settled now by two pieces of contemporary evidence. On the rock of Bihistún, some three hundred feet below the inscription of the great Darius, Gotarzes has left a memorial tablet of himself. Unfortunately it is now almost defaced,[2] but when the late Sir Henry Rawlinson examined it in 1836 he made out, in addition to the name Gotarzes, which is still legible,[3] the word Mithrates, and Gotarzes' description of himself as "Satrap of Satraps." In one corner of the tablet the words "Gotarzes Geopothros" (Γωτάρζης Γεόποθρος) were also found. Sir Henry Rawlinson's account was read before the Royal Geographical Society in January 1838.[4]

In the first element in the word "Geopothros" we have, as now seems generally admitted, the historical original of the Gív of the Sháhnáma. In the second element we have the old Persian word "puthra," which means "son." The whole word therefore means "son of Gív." This historical Gív seems to have been prince of Hyrcania and the father-in-law of Artabanus III.[5] He was also, if we accept the evidence of the inscription, the father of Gotarzes.

The second piece of contemporary evidence is a very rare coin of Gotarzes in the corrupted legend on which he is described as "the king of kings, the Arsacid, the adopted son of Artabanus"

[1] *Id.* p. 262. [2] JP, p. 209. [3] *Id.*
[4] See Journal, Vol. ix. p. 114, and CIG, Vol. iii. No. 4674.
[5] GIP, ii. 504.

(*υἱὸς κεκαλούμενος* or *κεκλημένος* 'Αρταβάνου).[1] It appears therefore that Gotarzes was closely connected with the reigning Parthian family both by marriage and adoption, but was not really one of the sons of Artabanus III. as was formerly supposed.

Vardanes, on hearing of Gotarzes' usurpation of the kingdom, hurried back and expelled him. Gotarzes withdrew into his hereditary principality of Hyrcania, where, with the assistance of the Dahae, who dwelt between the Caspian and the Aral, he prepared to renew the struggle. The opposing forces met on the Bactrian plains, but hostilities were averted. Gotarzes had discovered a plot, on the part of the Parthian nobles on both sides, to kill him and Vardanes, and set up a new king in their place. He informed Vardanes of this, and the two combined against the common enemy. Gotarzes then withdrew to Hyrcania and Vardanes retained the crown. Subsequently another war broke out between the two and several battles were fought. Tacitus, the chief authority for this part of history, tells us[2] that Vardanes advanced to meet Gotarzes as far as the river Erinde,[3] at the passage of which severe fighting took place in which Vardanes was victorious, who then in several successful engagements subdued all the nations between that river and the river Sinde, which divided the Dahae and the Aryans.[4] He returned in triumph, but shortly afterward was assassinated while hunting, A.D. 46. Upon this Gotarzes became king, but his ferocity and self-indulgence speedily rendered him unpopular, and a Parthian deputation arrived in Rome in A.D. 49 for the purpose of obtaining from the Emperor Claudius permission for Meherdates, who resided there, to accompany them back to Persia. Meherdates was the son of a former Parthian king, Vonones I. As was to be expected in the circumstances the character of Gotarzes was depicted in very unfavourable colours by the envoys. He had killed all his relations, whether near or distant, with their wives and children; he was sluggish at home, unfortunate in war, and sought to cloak his sloth by

[1] LCP, p. 153 and Plate 3, 70; GKS, iii. 68.

[2] Ann. xi. 10.

[3] Generally assumed to be the Charinda mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus (xxiii. 6) and by Ptolemy (vi. 2), who describes it as parting Media from Hyrcania.

[4] The rivers Erinde and Sinde have not been identified, but the latter *may* be intended for the Oxus. That river was confounded with the Indus (Sind) in ancient times (see Vol. i. p. 71) and flowed into the Caspian in the days of Tacitus, so it might be regarded as dividing the Dahae and the Aryans.

cruelty.[1] Meherdates was sent accordingly, but was defeated and taken prisoner by Gotarzes, who, however, rather belied his character for ferocity on this occasion. He spared the life of Meherdates and merely cut off his ears—a mutilation that disqualified him for the Parthian crown. It was to commemorate this victory that Gotarzes had the bas-relief already referred to carved on the rock of Bihistún, in the neighbourhood of which the battle probably was fought. Gotarzes is represented as charging at the head of his troops, while above him a winged Victory is setting the crown upon his head.[2] He died in A.D. 51.

In the lists of the kings of the Ashkánian (Parthian) dynasty, compiled by oriental historians,[3] the name Gúdarz occurs in several connexions. We also find the name Bízhan given as the son of one Gúdarz and as the father of another. We also find the name Bahrám. Firdausí, when he reaches Ashkánian times, includes the above three names in his very scanty list of the kings of that dynasty. He admits that he knows nothing about any of them, being wholly unaware, as naturally he would be, of their identity with some of his own most favourite heroes.

In the Sháhnáma Gotarzes becomes Gúdarz, who is represented as being the father, not the son, of Gív. Vardanes becomes Bahrám and is the son, not the adopted brother, of Gúdarz. Bízhan becomes the son of Gív and the grandson of Gúdarz. Similarly other names of the Parthian period appear in the poem. Meherdates (Mithradates, Mithrates, Mithradát, Mihrdát) appears as Mílád, the father of Gurgín, who plays such a prominent part in the story of Bízhan and Manízha, (Part V.). Phraates—a common Parthian name—becomes Farhád, and there are other instances.[4] Some of the names thus transplanted have flourished amazingly, and Gotarzes' reputation has not suffered by the change.

We conclude this note with a few instances in which the events of Parthian history summarized above may be traced in a distorted form in the Sháhnáma. In the war between Gotarzes and Vardanes we seem to have the origin of the campaigns of Tús against Túrán in Parts I. and II. The scene of operations is the same in both cases, and the battle at the river Erinde seems reproduced in that of the river Shahd.[5] The assassination of king Vardanes on the hunting-field is reproduced in the episode in which Bahrám, having lost his whip on the battlefield, insists on returning to look for it, and is, after a gallant defence, mortally wounded by the enemy.[6] It is because Meherdates, after march-

[1] Ann. xii. 10.
[2] See HAP, p. 39, and RP, frontispiece.
[3] GKS, iii. 24.
[4] NIN, p. 7.
[5] See p. 117 *seq.*
[6] See p. 95 *seq.*

ing through Armenia to attack Gotarzes,[1] is let off after his defeat with a slight mutilation that, in the story of Bízhan and Manízha, Gurgín the son of Míláđ and Bízhan the grandson of Gúdarz set forth together on an expedition to Irmán, that Gurgín treats Bízhan badly and, after having brought him into deadly peril, is lightly punished, then pardoned, and in the end forgiven by Bízhan himself,[2] while lastly it may be noted that the battle with Afrásiyáb, consequent on the release of Bízhan, is stated to have taken place in the neighbourhood of Mount Bístún.[3]

[1] Tacitus, Ann. xii. 12.

[2] See pp. 292 *seq.*, 316, 331 *seq.*, 345.

[3] *Cf.* pp. 11, 350.

PART I

HOW KAI KHUSRAU TO AVENGE SIYÁWUSH SENT A HOST AGAINST TÚRÁN

ARGUMENT

The poet, first having set forth the various qualities that kings ought to possess, proceeds to tell how Kai Khusrau becomes joint Sháh with Kai Káús, who exacts from him an oath that he will avenge the death of Siyáwush. He accordingly assembles the host, and sends it, under the command of Tús, against Afrásiyáb, strictly enjoining the former not to attack Farúd—the half-brother of Kai Khusrau—on the march. Tús out of dudgeon with Kai Khusrau disobeys, and Farúd is slain. The Íránians subsequently are surprised in a night-attack by Pírán and defeated. Kai Khusrau recalls Tús and appoints Fariburz leader, who arranges a month's truce with Pírán, after which the fight is renewed and the Íránians are overthrown at the disastrous battle of Ládan. They retreat to Írán, and Pírán is splendidly rewarded by Afrásiyáb. The poet in this part records various heroic exploits of Gív, his son Bízhan, and his brother Bahrám, who is slain.

NOTE

§§ 1 and 9. There are two Preludes in this Part. The first may be regarded as introductory to the whole reign, specifying as it does the ideal kingly qualities that are to be exemplified in the person of Kai Khusrau, while the second is meant to impress upon the reader the real motives that underlay the conduct of Tús with reference to his treatment of Farúd. Tús, as we have seen, was a disappointed man.[1] Although he was the direct representative of the ancient Pishdádian Dynasty his claim to the crown invariably had been ignored. Despairing, moreover, of ever becoming Sháh himself he had just been advocating the claims of

[1] Vol. ii. p. 335.

Faríburz to the kingship, in opposition to those of Kai Khusrau, in the hope of becoming at all events a king-maker and the power behind the throne. Again his plans are frustrated, and he vents his spite on Khusrau's half-brother, Farúd.

§ 6. The name of the slave of Tazháv appears variously as Isnapwí and Ispanwí. We adopt the latter.

§ 7. In Rustam's account of the conquest of part of Zábulistán by the Turkmans we seem to have a reminiscence of the permanent occupation of that country (*c.* 100 B.C.), from which it received the name of Sístan.[1] Similarly in Kai Káús, Part II., we had a reference to the invasions of Mesopotamia by the Arabs.[2]

§ 10. Kalát is a word used for forts in general, but if, as seems probable, the particular stronghold referred to is that which is now known as Kalát-i-Nádirí, we here find ourselves in the poet's own neighbourhood. Tús, his native place, is said to have been founded by the legendary hero of that name, who plays so prominent a part in this portion of the Sháhnáma, because, in consequence of the death of Farúd, he was afraid to return to the court of Kai Khusrau,[3] but we find nothing to this effect in the Sháhnáma. Kalát-i-Nádirí was so called because Nádir Sháh (A.D. 1736–1747), one of the most remarkable of Persian sovereigns, whose uncle was the ruler of this fortress,[4] was born in its neighbourhood and made it his favourite residence. It is situated some forty miles to the north of the ruins of Tús. "It is upon a very high hill, only accessible by two narrow paths. An ascent of six or seven miles terminates in a plain about twelve miles in circumference, watered by several fine streams and covered with verdure and cultivation. A second ascent, by a route of ten or eleven miles, leads to another plain of greater elevation, but of equal richness."

"It is a district or a basin," says another account, "fortified in the most wonderful way by nature. In shape it is something like a foot, and it must have a length of twenty miles by a breadth of two to four miles . . . if the term impregnable can be used anywhere, it can here. For the fifty miles of its circuit, nature has indeed left hardly anything for man to do."[5]

§ 15. The Rívníz slain by Farúd should be distinguished from the hero of the same name slain at Ládan (§ 30). The former was descended from Pashang[7] and therefore of Pishdádian descent. He is quite appropriately the son-in-law of Tús. The latter is a son of Kai Káús and therefore a Kaiánian.

[1] Vol. i. p. 19. [2] Vol. ii. p. 81. [3] C. Persian Preface, p. 32.
[4] MHP, ii. 4. [5] *id.* i. 34, *note.* [6] MGN, ii. 53, 56.
[7] See p. 25.

§ 18. Bízhan's friendship with Gustaham, the son of Gazhdaham, is one of the features of this reign. Another is Gív and Bízhan's anxiety about one another when either is courting danger. The father can never bring himself to realise that his son is grown up and well able to take care of himself, while the son, with all the insolence of youth, persists in regarding his father as played out—touches not foreign to human nature.

§ 30. The battle of Lúdan is also known by the name of the battle of Pashan, and there is a legend that when Firdausí was on his way to seek his fortune at the court of Mahmúd he chanced to enter a garden where three of the seven poets of Mahmúd's court were revelling. He asked to be allowed to join them, and they consented on the condition that he should cap their three rhyming verses with a fourth. Firdausí at once obtained the needful rhyme by a verse referring to the battle of Pashan, whereby he showed his superior knowledge of the epic history of his country.[1] In this connexion the word has sometimes been understood as equivalent to Pashang, the name both of the father and of one of the sons of Afrásiyáb, but Firdausí's line was intended to celebrate the prowess of Gív at the battle of Pashan or Lúdan. It is possible, however, that these are the names of distinct battles though fought in the same campaign, in which case we may regard the former as the night-surprise and the latter as the occasion when Gúdarz lost nearly all his descendants. Gív distinguished himself at both battles.

The "mountain-skirt" to which the Íránian army withdrew after its defeat seems to be that of the northern scarp of the province of Khurásán which still goes by the name of Dáman-i-Kuh—the term used in the poem, *cf.* p. 10.

§§ 31–33. See pp. 10, 11. The historical Bahrám (Vardanes) was, according to Tacitus, a king of exceptional valour and brilliancy.[2]

§ 1

The Prelude

THIS much achieved, the poet will present
Another tale of yore—how Kai Khusrau
Sat on the throne and sent an armament
Against Túrán. Thus, if God's grace allow
Me life and health, shall I one story more V. 765
Leave to the world from this famed book of lore.

[1] See C. Persian Preface, p. 27. [2] Ann. xi, 10.

When in the garth a cypress sendeth off
A shoot, whose green top mounteth palace-high,
The tree rejoiceth in the height thereof,
Its prudent carriage, and prosperity,
The heart of fortune nourisheth the shoot,
And all the world partaketh of the fruit.

If sovereignty to native worth be due
The wearer of the crown must needs do right;
Three aspects of the matter let us view,
And presently a fourth will come in sight:
Accomplishment thou wilt not fail to find
With high birth and with native worth combined.

Such are the three, and all in one content,
For save in company with native worth
How can there ever be accomplishment,
And, lacking that, what scion of high birth
Hast thou beheld? High birth the father's seed
Produceth, which may well fair fruitage breed.

V. 766 Accomplishment thou learnest painfully
From others, at the cost of many a groan,
While native worth is greatest of the three—
A robe of honour given by God alone.
To these be wisdom added, that which will
Discriminate for thee 'twixt good and ill.

When any man possesseth all the four
He hath repose from travail, greed, and grief,
But not from death; that is an evil, sore
Beyond all others; there is no relief.
Now Kai Khusrau possessed all four, and he
Was fashioned thus by heaven's destiny.

§ 2

How the Nobles did Homage to Kai Khusrau

When Kai Khusrau acceded, and the world
Had been apprised, he sat upon the throne
Of king of kings and donned the crown of greatness.
He meted justice out to each, uprooting
Injustice from the earth. Then all the nobles,
Possessed of crowns and sprung of royal race,
With foreign monarchs, potentates, and magnates,
Resorted to Khusrau: there was no head
Not taken in his toils. He cultivated
Waste lands and freed the mourners' hearts from woe;
The moisture rained down from the clouds in spring,
And cleansed the face of earth from rust and sorrow;
'Twas decked like Paradise with goodly havings
By reason of his justice and his bounty.
The world was full of happiness and peace, V. 767
The hands of Áhriman were barred from ill,
While envoys came from all the provinces,
From every man of name and potentate.
When tidings had been carried to Nímrúz,
And reached the chief, the Lustre of the earth:—
"The glorious prince is seated on the throne,
And hath his foot upon the sky of power,"
He summoned his retainers from all sides
To go to offer homage to the Sháh,
Departing on the journey in great state
And much content with Zál the son of Sám
The son of Narímán, and all the nobles,
Both great and little of Kábul—a host
Which made the desert as 'twere ebony
What while the tymbals split the leopards' ears.
Zál with an escort led the way; behind
Came Rustam followed by the violet flag.

When tidings reached the Sháh: "The loyal Rustam
Is on his way," the people as one man
Arose prepared to go to welcome him.
The Sháh was glad and bade the courier: "Take
Thy pleasure here, for Rustam reared my father,
And all eyes recognise his excellence."
The monarch ordered Gív, Gúdarz, and Tús
To set forth with the tymbals and the pipes,
The drums beat at the portal of the Sháh,
And all the warriors assumed their helms.
From every quarter of the land all went
With flag and kettledrum to welcome Rustam;
While those in chief command with many troops
Went forward two days' journey to receive him.
As soon as Rustam's standard came in sight,
And when the host's dust mounted o'er the sun,
V. 768 Shouts rose with sound of trump and kettledrum,
And from the centre Gív, Gúdarz, and Tús
Approached in haste the elephantine chieftain,
And gave him salutations joyfully.
All three of them embraced him; he meanwhile—
The lion-queller—asked about the Sháh.
From Rustam they proceeded next to Zál,
The son of Sám, with open hearts and happy,
Then turned to Farámarz, rejoiced to see him.
Thence they approached the Sháh, approached to gaze
Upon the glorious crown. Now when Khusrau
Beheld the elephantine warrior
Tears trickled from his eyelids down his cheeks.
Descending from the throne he greeted Rustam,
Who kissed the ground. The Sháh said: "Paladin!
Live ever glad and happy, for thou art
The foster-sire of Siyáwush and likewise
Art of all men most wise and reticent."
He clasped upon his breast the head of Zál,
And sorrowed for his own sire's sake the while,

Then seated both chiefs on the royal throne,
And blessed them in God's name. When Rustam marked
From head to foot the person of the Sháh,
And how he sat, held converse, and advised,
The hero's cheek flushed up and his heart ached,
So much reminded him of Siyáwush.
He thus addressed the world's king: "To the world
Thou art, O Sháh! the memory of thy sire.
I have not seen a king with Grace like thine,
Or one so like thy father."
When they rose
They had the tables spread and wine prepared.
Khusrau slept not till night was far advanced,
But held more converse touching what had chanced.

§ 3

How Kai Khusrau made a Progress through his Realm

When Sol had drawn its shining scimitar,
And dark night's head had vanished, rose the blare
Of trumpets from the court-gate, and such chiefs
As Tús, Gúdarz, and valiant Gív, Gurgín, V. 769
Ruhhám the Lion, Gustaham, and others,
Came to the Sháh in that famed audience-hall.
Now when they had assembled at his throne
He said to them: "I purpose to survey
The glorious realm and marches of Írán.
Go we in hunting wise and fleet a while
In happiness."
The nobles all agreed.
The monarch of the world went forth to hunt
With Rustam, that illustrious paladin,
With Gív, Gúdarz son of Kishwád, Shápúr,
Bahrám, a wielder of the scimitar,

Gurgín, Bízhan expert in archery,
Farhád and Zanga son of Sháwarán,
And one among the fighting-men, Guráza—
A host that darkened both the sun and moon
With helmets, maces, coats of mail, and casques.
The tracks and trackless waste were like a field
Of battle with the corpses of the game.
Khusrau passed through the country of Írán,
And subsidised and peopled all the lands
That then were uninhabited or ravaged,
Or ruined by misgovernment; he found
No toil in justice or munificence.
He tarried in each city and set up
His throne as fitted fortune's favourite,
Called for his purse and cup, and with dínárs
Decked all the world; then sought another city,
Conveying with him crown and throne and wine,
V. 770 Until with all the great men and the nobles
He reached at length Ázar Ábádagán;
Then quaffing wine, and urging on his steed,
Approached the temple of Ázargashasp,
Prayed in that Fane of Fire and praised the Maker.
He left in state to go back to Káús,
With whom they sat—a merry company—
Not ceasing for a moment from their mirth
Till to their heads the sparkling liquor rose,
And all went eagerly to seek repose.

§ 4

How Kai Khusrau sware to Kai Káús to take Vengeance on Afrásiyáb

When morn brought forth bright day, and scattered gems
Upon the dusky ground, the world-lord sat

With Kai Káús—both noble, prosperous Sháhs—
With Zál and valiant Rustam. Kai Káús
Discoursed at large on matters great and small,
And, first, in speaking of Afrásiyáb,
Bathed both his cheeks with blood-drops from his eyes,
Recounting what that king had perpetrated
On Siyáwush, and how he had sent up
Dust from Írán, how many paladins
Had died, and how their wives and children suffered,
Thus saying: "Thou beholdest many cities
Waste in Írán, wrecked by Afrásiyáb.
Since every needful, God-sent gift is thine—
Men, knowledge, might of hand, Grace, majesty,
And favouring stars—and thou in every point
Of native worth art raised o'er other kings,
I claim of thee an oath, and thou must keep it,
That vengeance on Afrásiyáb shall fill
Thy heart, and thou shalt not allay that flame,
Regardless of his kinship with thy mother, V. 771
And heeding not what any one may urge.
Thou shalt not be seduced by wealth or power,
Howe'er thou be exalted or abased,
Nor shalt thou turn aside to treat with him
For mace or sword or throne or diadem.
I will declare the sanction of thine oath—
One binding on thy wisdom and thy soul:
Swear by the righteous Judge of sun and moon,
By crown, throne, casque, and signet, by the justice
Of Farídún and by his precedent,
The blood of Siyáwush, thy life, O Sháh!
The Grace, and by the favouring stars divine,
That thou wilt never turn aside to ill,
Wilt ask no arbiter but sword and mace,
And rise above thyself in thy resolve."
Whenas the youthful monarch heard the words
He turned both face and soul toward the Fire,

And took an oath: "By God, the Lord of all,
By day resplendent and night azure-dim,
By sun and moon, by throne and casque and signet,
By sword and by the Sháh's own diadem,
I never will incline toward amity
For him, or dream of looking on his face."
V. 772 This they recorded in the olden tongue
With scented ink upon a royal roll,
And Zál and Rustam signed as witnesses,
And likewise all the other mighty men.
The written oath attested in due form
Was put for safety into Rustam's hands.
When this was done they called for wine and feast,
And held a session of another kind;
The nobles passed a week with harp and wine
Within the hall of Kai Káús. Khusrau
Upon the eighth day bathed, composed himself,
Then sought the place of prayer, and, in the presence
Of circling heaven's Lord, adored the Maker.
That night until the rising of the sun
He cried aloud with eyes fulfilled with tears,
And said: "O righteous Judge, the only God,
The World-lord, the Sustainer, and the Guide!
Thus didst deliver me, a hostless boy,
Out of the Dragon's breath. Afrásiyáb
Thou knowest reckless, not afraid to injure;
His curse is on the waste and peopled lands;
Revenge against him filleth guiltless hearts.
V. 773 He hath poured fire upon these goodly coasts,
Hath sifted o'er the brave the dust of woe,
Unjustly shed the blood of Siyáwush
Upon the earth, and rent our souls thereby.
The hearts of kings are filled with dread of him;
His throne and diadem are this world's bane.
Thou knowest that he is of evil nature,
And both a miscreant and sorcerer."

He laid his cheek full oft upon the ground,
And uttered praises to the Lord of all.
Departing thence he went back to the throne,
And thus harangued the exalted paladins:—
"O ye my men of name, my gallant hearts,
And swordsmen! I have ridden through Írán,
But, from the temple of Ázargashasp
To this place, seen not any one heart-glad,
Possessed of riches or of lands in culture.
All have been injured by Afrásiyáb,
All hearts are filled with blood, all eyes with tears.
I am the first whose liver thus he wounded,
So that my soul and body smart through him,
And next there is that noble Sháh—my grandsire—
Who from his heart still heaveth chilly sighs,
While men and women groan throughout Írán V. 774
At massacre and pillage, war and raid.
So now if ye are all my trusty friends,
Devoted to me in your hearts indeed,
I will make ready to avenge my father,
And turn this evil from the Íránians.
If ye will, all of you, renew the fight,
Strive, and contend like pards, so too will I;
Plains in the battles of the brave shall turn
To mountains, and for all the blood shed there
Afrásiyáb the criminal shall be
Responsible. If any of our host
Shall fall, their place is Paradise above.
What say ye then? What answer do ye give?
Advise me well. Afrásiyáb, ye know,
Began the wrong. Requital should not rest."
The chiefs prepared to answer and arose
With rancour in their hearts. They said: "O Sháh!
Keep thy heart glad and ever free from care.
Our bodies and our souls are wholly thine,
And thine our grief and joy, our loss and gain.

We all of us are mother-born to die,
And all of us, though free men, are thy slaves."
Whenas he heard this answer from the throng,
From Tús, Gúdarz, and elephantine Rustam,
The Sháh's cheek grew as red as cercis-bloom,
For he was young in person and in fortune.
V. 775 He called down blessings on the company;
"May earth be peopled by the brave," said he.

§ 5

How Kai Khusrau numbered the Paladins

With matters in this stay the sky revolved
Till Sol appeared in Virgo; then the Sháh
Called all the archimages of the realm,
And spake to them at large in fitting terms.
He closed the door of audience for two sennights,
And had the muster-roll compiled afresh.
He bade the commissaries to call over
The names of great and small, and had them written
In solemn form befitting paladins.
The kin of Kai Káús five score and ten—
Chiefs of the host—came first upon the list,
And at their head was Faríburz the son
Of Kai Káús—the new Sháh's kinsman. Next
He chose him eighty scions of Naudar,
All armed with maces and all warriors.
Their leader was Zarásp the general,
Who used to make their welfare his concern
In everything—a crown of kings, the son
Of Tús—the lord of iron mace, of scimitar,
And drum. Gúdarz son of Kishwád came next,
Whose counsels were the safeguard of the host.
His sons and grandsons numbered seventy-eight—
Brave mountaineers and horsemen of the plain;

They carried Káwa's standard and illumed
The throne and fortune of the Kaian race.
The seed of Gazhdaham were sixty-three,
And great men all; their chief was Gustaham.
The kinsmen of Mílád—a hundred horsemen—
Had for their chief victorious Gurgín.
Tawába's kindred numbered eighty-five
Brave cavaliers, the wardens of the treasure,
While Barta was the warden over them,
And most illustrious of them all in fight.
Next three and thirty scions of Pashang, V. 776
Brave men, who bore the double-headed dart
In battle-time, their chieftain was Rívníz—
A mighty man both valiant and discreet,
Who used to go before the drums in war,
The warriors' warden, son-in-law to Tús.
The kinsmen of Barzín, three score and ten
In sum, all Lions on the day of battle,
Had over them Farhád, himself an Anvil
Of steel in fight. Guráza led in person
His kinsmen—five score and five warriors.
Apart from these, the lords and paladins,
The princes and the mighty men of worship,
Were more than any archimage could reckon,
So many were the chiefs with Grace and glory!
They wrote upon the monarch's muster-roll
The names of all efficients, and the Sháh
Bade them to quit the city and march out
Toward the wastes and plains. He said to them:—
"About the ending of the month must rise
The clarion-blast and sound of Indian bells,
And all must march with joy against Túrán."
They bent their heads before him to the ground,
And all called blessings down upon him, saying:—
"O Sháh possessed of Grace divine and glory,
Who givest lustre to the crown and girdle!

We all are slaves, thine is the sovereignty,
From Aries to Pisces all for thee."

§ 6

How Kai Khusrau bestowed Treasures upon the Paladins

Wherever there were horses running wild
Their keepers drove them to the camp in herds.
The Sháh commanded: "Let the lasso-throwers—
The warriors brazen-bodied in the fight—
V. 777 Catch these swift Arab chargers in the noose."
Anon the conquering world-lord took his seat
With mace in hand upon the throne of gold,
Unlocked his treasury of dínárs, and said:—
"The treasures of the great should not be hidden.
In times of strife and fighting for revenge
They look with scorn on treasure and dínárs;
So all our wealth and thrones will we bestow
Upon the brave, to make our Tree fruit sunward,
And why delay since treasure helpeth them?"
A hundred pieces of brocade of Rúm
With jewelled patterns on a golden ground,
With beaver-skins, gold raiment, and a goblet
Of royal gems—he had these brought. "Behold,"
Said he, "the price set on the worthless head
Of that fierce Dragon, murderous Paláshán,
Now made commander by Afrásiyáb[1]
That he may slumber while that chieftain watcheth.
Who in our camp will bring his head and sword
And steed to dust upon the day of battle?"
Bízhan the son of Gív sprang to his feet
Forthwith, he undertook to slay that Dragon,
And carried off the stuffs and cup of gold,

[1] Pírán was at that time in disgrace with Afrásiyáb, owing to the escape of Kai Khusrau. See Vol. ii. p. 390.

With all the jewels, blessing Kai Khusrau,
And saying: "May this crowned head live for ever!"
Then went back to his seat retaining still
The goblet with the jewels in his hand.
The Sháh then bade his treasurer to bring V. 778
Two hundred robes of gold embroidery
With beaver-skins, brocade, rich painted silk,
And two slaves rosy-cheeked with girded loins,
And thus he said: "These presents will I give,
And will confer more favours on, the man
That bringeth unto me, or to the chieftains
Assembled here, the crown worn by Tazháv,
Which crown Afrásiyáb set on his head,
And hailed him as a high-born son-in-law."[1]
Again Bízhan the son of Gív arose,
Who had a hand far reaching in the fight,
And seized upon the presents and the slaves
While all assembled wondered; he exclaimed:—
"May earth be prosperous under Kai Khusrau!"
Then sat down gladly giving many thanks.
The Sháh commanded and the treasurer
Brought out ten slave-boys with their girdles on,
Ten steeds of rapid pace with golden bridles,
And ten veiled maidens in their bravery;
The watchful ruler of the people said:—
"These steeds and all these Beauties are for one
Who, when Tazháv hath fled, need not possess
A lion's heart. Tazháv hath by his side
In battle one whose voice would tame a leopard,
A slave with cheeks like spring, of cypress-stature,
With reed-like waist and with a pheasant's gait,
A Moon-face, Ispanwí by name, a Jasmine
In visage, heart-alluring, breathing musk.
Her captor must not strike her with the sword,
For swords are not for such a cheek as hers,

[1] Tazháv, an Iránian by birth, had gone over to Afrásiyáb. See p. 75.

But noose her waist and take her to his bosom."
Bízhan smote on his breast and volunteered
Again. He drew anigh the all-conquering Sháh,
V. 779 Began to laud the monarch of the world,
And supplicate the Maker. The great king
Rejoiced in him and spake thus: "Famous chief!
May paladín like thee ne'er help our foes,
Ne'er may thine ardent soul and body part!"
Then said the world-lord to the treasurer:—
"Bring forth ten golden beakers from the hoard,
And let them put pastilles therein; bring also
Ten goblets of pure silver brimmed with jewels,
One topaz goblet filled with musk, and one
Of turquoise, one of lapis-lazuli,
With emeralds and carnelians showered therein,
Mixed with rose-water and with musk; ten boy-slaves
With belts, and ten fine steeds with golden bridles.
These are," he said, "for him who, having strength
To fight Tazhav upon the day of battle,
Shall bear his head off from the stricken field,
And bring it to the warriors of the host."
Then Gív son of Gúdarz smote on his breast,
And undertook to fight that paladin,
Whereat they brought those noble slaves and gifts,
And set them in array in front of him.
He called down many blessings on the Sháh,
And said: "May crown and signet ne'er lack thee."
The Sháh commanded then the treasurer:—
"Set out ten golden trays before the throne,
And mix in them dínárs and musk and jewels;
Set too ten Fairy-faced with crowns and girdles,
Two hundred beaver-skins, brocade of gold,
Ten girdles, and a royal diadem.
This is for him," he said, "that grudgeth not
His labour for the sake of fame and treasure.
Let such depart hence to the Kása rúd,

And there salute the soul of Siyáwush.
He will behold a mighty pile of fire-wood,
Whose height is greater than ten lassos' length.
It is a pile raised by Afrásiyáb
Upon the spot whereat he crossed the river.
He wished that none should pass there from Írán
Túrán-ward. Some bold warrior must go hence, V. 780
And make the Kása rúd a sheet of flame,
So that if e'er it be the scene of fight
The wood may prove no cover for the foe."
Again Gív spake: "This is my quarry; mine
Shall be the task to set the pile a-blaze.
I fear not combat if the foe shall come,
But will invite the vultures to a feast."
The Sháh bestowed on Gív those goods as well,
And said to him: "Famed chieftain of the host![1]
May this bright crown ne'er lack thy sword. So be it.
Oh! may the Brahman never lack the Idol!"
He ordered: "Let the treasurer produce
Forthwith a hundred divers-hued brocades,"
Chose from his hoards a hundred lustrous pearls—
"All drops of water frozen," thou wouldst say—
And brought out from the women's bower five handmaids,
Whose heads and tresses were concealed by crowns.
He said: "This is a present meet for one
Whose wisdom is the king of his pure mind—
A daring, prudent man and eloquent,
Who turneth not from lions in the fight—
If he will carry to Afrásiyáb
A message, weeping not for dread of him,
And will convey his answer back to me.
Who of this noble company will dare?"
Gurgín son of Mílád held forth his hand,
And gat him ready for that enterprise.
The Sháh bestowed on him the slaves, the robes

[1] Reading with P.

Of gold-embroidery, and royal gems.
He called down blessings on the Sháh and said:—
"May wisdom wed the soul of Kai Khusrau!"
V. 781 Whenas earth's face grew black as raven's plumes,
And when night's Lamp rose o'er the hills, the Sháh
V. 782 Went to his palace, and his mighty men
Departed, each one to his home again.

§ 7

How Kai Khusrau sent Rustam to the Land of Hind

When daylight made the hills like sandarac,
And cockcrows reached the clouds, the matchless Rustam
With Farámarz and with Zawára came
Before the Sháh to speak about Írán,
The crown, the state, and matters great and small.
Then Rustam said: "Illustrious, glorious Sháh!
There is a district in Zábulistán,
That formed a portion of the realm of Túr
Till Minúchihr drave all the Turkmans out.
It is a goodly and a glorious land;
But when Káús grew hoar and spiritless,
When fame, the Grace, and prowess quitted him,
Túránians seized it and Íránians ceased
Therein.[1] The folk now carry to Túrán
Both toll and tribute, heeding not the Sháh.
V. 783 The march is full of elephants and treasure.
The innocent are troubled by this folk
With constant pillage, massacre, and raid,
And all the insolency of Túrán.[2]
Now that the kingship of Írán is thine,
Thine from the ant's foot to the lion's claws,

[1] See Introductory Note to this Part.
[2] Or "And have rebelled against Túránian pride."

'Twere well to send a valiant paladin,
And mighty host, to make this people bring
Their tribute to the Sháh and look to him.
This region ours we can defeat Túrán."
The Sháh said: "Live for ever! Thou art right.
Take order for sufficiency of troops,
Selecting all the famous warriors,
For since the district marcheth with thine own
Its purchase will be worthy of thy fame.
Commit a mighty host to Farámarz,
As many warriors as shall suffice.
The business will succeed with him; his hook
Will catch the crocodiles."
The paladin
With flushing cheeks called many a blessing down
Upon the Sháh, who bade the chamberlain
To spread the board, bring wine, call minstrelsy, V. 784
And listened spell-bound to their melody.

§ 8

How Kai Khusrau reviewed the Host

When bright Sol rose above the hills, and when
The minstrels tired of song, the kettledrums
Clanged at the court-gate and the troops drew up
Before the palace. On the elephants
They bound the tymbals and the trumpets blared.
Upon one elephant they set a throne;
That royal Tree bore fruit; the Sháh came forth,
And took his seat, crowned with a jewelled casque.
He wore a torque of royal gems and held
An ox-head mace. Two earrings, decked with pearls
And precious stones, depended from his ears;
His bracelets were of jewels set in gold;
His belt was pearls and gold and emeralds.

His elephant with golden bells and bridle
Proceeded to the centre of the host.
He had with him the ball within the cup;
The shouting of the army rose to Saturn;
The earth grew black and heaven azure-dim
With all the swords and maces, drums and dust;
Thou wouldst have said: "The sun is in a net,"
Or "Water hath o'erwhelmed the arching sky!"
The clearest sight could not behold the world,
Or gaze upon the sky and stars for spears;
Thou wouldst have said: "The billows of the sea
Are rising," as the host marched troop by troop.
They brought the camp-enclosure from the palace
Forth to the plain, and shoutings frayed the skies.
V. 785 The custom was that when that famous Sháh
Upon his elephant let fall the ball
Within the cup, and girt his loins, no place
Remained for any one throughout the realm
Save at the Sháh's own gate. Such was the token
To all his realm of that famed king of chiefs.
The Sháh remained upon his elephant
On that broad plain to see the troops march past.
First to defile before the world's new lord
Was Faríburz with golden boots, with mace,
And sword. Behind him was his flag sun-blazoned.
He rode a chestnut steed, his lasso coiled
Was in the saddle-straps. He passed along
In pride with Grace and lustre, his retainers
Were buried in their gold and silver trappings.
The world-lord blessed him, saying: "May the greatness
And Grace of heroes ever be thine own,
Thy fortune triumph in each enterprise,
Thy whole existence be a New Year's Day;
May health be thine in all thy goings forth,
And no infirmity on thy return."

Behind him was Gúdarz son of Kishwád,
Whose counsel brought the world prosperity.
A lion clutching mace and scimitar
Was charged upon the flag that followed him.
Upon his left hand marched the brave Ruhhám,
And on his right the noble Gív; Shídúsh
Behind him bore the banner lion-charged,
Which threw a violet lustre on the ground,
While thousands of exalted warriors followed,
All cavaliers and armed with lengthy lances.
Behind Gív and accompanied by troops
His sable banner came charged with a wolf,
While of Ruhhám, that man of high ambition,
The flag rose cloudward tiger-charged. These sons
And grandsons of Gúdarz were seventy-eight
In number, and they crowded that broad plain,
Each followed by his flag distinct in hue— V. 786
All valiant men with swords and golden boots.
"The whole world," thou hadst said, "is 'neath Gúdarz,
The chiefs' heads are beneath his scimitar."
He called down blessings on the crown and throne
As he approached; the Sháh returned the blessings
On him, on Gív, and all his warriors.
The next behind Gúdarz was Gustaham,
The son of Gazhdaham the vigilant;
His weapon in the battle was a spear,
His comrades were a bow and poplar arrows;
And when a shaft went flying from his arm
'Twould pierce a rock or anvil to the core.
He was attended by a mighty host
With maces, scimitars, and rich array.
His banner blazoned with a moon waved o'er him,
And raised its head resplendent to the clouds.
He called down benedictions on the Sháh,
Who gloried in him. Next came shrewd Ashkash,

Endowed with prudent heart and ready brain.
His troops were from Balúchistán and Kutch,
And very rams to fight. No one had seen
Their backs in battle or one finger mailless;
Their banner was a pard with claws projecting.
Ashkash felicitated Kai Khusrau
At large upon the happy turn of fortune.
V. 787 Meanwhile the Sháh upon his elephant
Surveyed the troops, whose ranks stretched out two miles,
And in abundant satisfaction blessed
His sleepless fortune and his glorious land.
Behind Ashkash was well approved Farhád,
Who tendered all the troops, and everywhere
Was like their foster-father in the fight.
He had a banner charged with a gazelle,
Whose shadow fell upon him as he rode.
His troops were all equipped with Indian swords,
With Turkman armour and with Sughdian saddles.
They all were princely scions of Kubád,
And all were dowered with God's Grace and with justice;
The face of each was like the shining moon,
And like the shining sun in battlefield.
Farhád beheld the throne's new occupant,
And called down blessings on the youthful Sháh.
Guráza, eldest offspring of Gívgán,
Came next accompanied by all his kin,
A favourite in whom the Sháh rejoiced.[1]
Upon his saddle was a lasso coiled;
He bore a banner blazoned with a boar;
His troops were warriors and lasso-flingers.
These cavaliers and heroes of the plain
Saluted many times and then marched past.
Behind him Zanga son of Sháwarán

[1] Reading with P: ‖

Came rushing with his gallant hearts and chieftains.
Behind him was his flag charged with an eagle,
And as a moving mountain so moved he.
Ofttimes he called down blessings on the Sháh, V. 788
His mien and stature, sword and signet-ring.
All that were from the country of Baghdád
Were armed with lances and steel swords, and marched
Beneath the eagle while their general
Himself was seated on an elephant.
Behind him was the valiant Farámarz
Of noble stature, Grace, and majesty,
With tymbals, elephants, and many troops,
All eager for the fray, and mighty men
Brought from Kashmír, Kábulistán, Nímrúz,
All noble and the lustre of the world.
He had a banner like his valiant sire's—
That Rustam who could be surpassed by none—
With seven heads, "The heads as of a dragon
That had escaped from bonds," thou wouldst have said.
In favour like a fruitful tree he came,
And uttered many a blessing on the Sháh,
Who with a heart that joyed at Farámarz
Gave him much prudent rede and said to him:—
"The nursling of the elephantine chief
Will be pre-eminent among the people.
Thou art the son of wary-hearted Rustam,
Thou art from Zál—Sám's son—and Narímán.
Now is the land of Hindústán thine own,
All from Kannúj up to Sístán is thine;
So bear thyself that harm may not befall
Him that assayeth not to fight with thee.
In every place be thou the poor man's friend, V. 789
Be noble unto those of thine own kin,
See heedfully what friends thou hast, and who
Are men of wisdom and can soothe thy griefs,

Give, entertain, and never say: 'To-morrow.'
How know'st thou what to-morrow will bring forth?
I have bestowed on thee this kingship. Hold it.
Make no war anywhere in wantonness,
Be not in youth acquisitive of treasure,
Aggrieve not any that hath not grieved thee,
And trust not thou this treacherous dwelling-place;
Tis sandarac and ebony by turns.
Thy duty is to leave a noble name,
And mayst thou never have a sorry heart.
For thee and me alike the day will pass,
And turning heaven reckon up thy breaths.
Thou need'st a happy heart, a body hale;
Consider if a third thing is to seek.
May He who made the world be gracious to thee,
And smoke fill thy foes' hearts."

The chief, on hearing
The words of this new master of the world,
Dismounted from his fleet steed, and invoked
Full many a blessing on the young Sháh, saying:—
"Mayst thou wax even as the new moon waxeth."
He kissed the ground and, having done obeisance,
Turned and departed on his longsome journey,
While matchless Rustam, with his brain distraught
At losing Farámarz, accompanied
V. 790 His son two leagues, instructing him withal
In warfare, feast, and wisdom, wishing him
V. 791 A life of joy; then sadly turned and went
Back from the desert to the tent-enclosure.
The Sháh got off his lusty elephant,
And, mounting on a rapid-footed steed,
Withdrew in state to his pavilion,
With aching heart and deeply pondering.
When Rustam had returned the wine was brought;
Khusrau filled up a mighty bowl, and said:—
"Mirth as thy mate sufficeth, and no sage

Will name to-morrow. Where are Túr and Salm
And Farídún? All lost and one with dust!
We go about and toil and gather wealth,
Yet frustrate all the wishes of our hearts,
Since in the end the dust will be our share,
And not one of us will escape that day.[1]
Fleet we the darksome night with goblets brimmed,
And when day cometh with its measured steps
We will command that Tús shall blow the trumpet,
That tymbal, kettledrum, and clarion sound;
Then shall we see o'er whom the turning sky
Will stretch its hand in love in this campaign.
And yet what profit is our toil to us
Since from the first what is to be will be?
We shall be quit alike of good and ill;
Why should a wise man gorge himself with care?
Still by the aid of Him who made us all
I will take vengeance for my father's fall."

THE STORY OF FARÚD THE SON OF SIYÁWUSH

§ 9

The Prelude

Let no king, great and warlike though he be, V. 792
Intrust his army to an enemy,
One from whose eyelids tears of envy pour,
Tears such as leeches know no drugs to cure;
For such a man, if of a noble race,
Will chafe to be denied the highest place,
To be a slave with wish insatiate,

[1] The speaker, however, proved to be an exception.

And only speak as others may dictate.
No wisdom can the monarch's heart attend
Who calleth such a man as this a friend,
For if heaven hostile to his wishes prove,
And hath no blessing for him in its love,
He will be prone to act no friendly part;
The thwarted wish will rankle in his heart.
No sage would reckon him a man at all
That hath not wisdom for his pedestal,
And thou wilt see, when thou shalt hear this tale,
How far an evil nature may prevail.

§ 10

How Tús went to Turkistán

When Sol arose in all its majesty,
And sat upon its lofty eminence,
Ascendant in the Sign of Aries,
While all the world became like golden wine,
The tymbals sounded from the court of Tús
With blare of trump and roll of kettledrum.
The battle-shout went up throughout the realm,
The air was full of war-cries, earth of turmoil.
The neighs and the shouts frayed Luna from her course,
While from the clash of arms and trumpeting
Of elephants thou wouldst have said: "The Nile
Hath overflowed the world!" The air was yellow,
V. 793 Red, blue, and violet as Káwa's standard
'Mid cavaliers—the kinsmen of Gúdarz—
Waved. Kai Khusrau with crown and mace and trumpets
Came to the entering in of his pavilion.
Tús with the golden boots and Káwa's flag
Set forth and with the great men that wore torques

And crowns—the aspiring kindred of Naudar—
Went proudly from the host before Khusrau.
The banner o'er them bore an elephant,
Its golden staff-head rising to the clouds.
They went together, like a darksome mountain,
And sun and moon ceased shining. When they came
With flags and helms in haste before the Sháh
He bade the chieftain Tús present to him
The warriors of distinction in the host,
And thus addressed them: "Tús is chief; he hath
The flag of Káwa; do as he commandeth."
Then in their sight he gave his signet-ring
To Tús, and said: "He is your chief and leader."
To Tús himself he said: "Be true to me,
And mark mine institutions and commands:
No one must be molested on the march,
Such is the custom of my crown and throne.
Let no cold blast befall the husbandman, V. 794
Or artisan, or one that armeth not
Against thee; strive but with antagonists.
Refrain from troubling those who are at ease
Since all will have to quit this Wayside Inn.
Thou shalt on no account pass by Kalát,
For, if thou dost, things will go hard with thee.
To Siyáwush (his soul be as the sun,
His place all hopeful in the other world!)
The daughter of Pírán once bare a child[1]
But little shown in public by his sire.
He is my brother and resembleth me.
He is a youth of mine own age, high-fortuned,
And liveth with his mother at Kalát;
A world-lord he who hath the Grace and troops.
He knoweth no Íránian e'en by name,
And from that quarter thou must turn thy bridle,
For he hath troops and famous men of war

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 291.

Upon a mountain steep and hard to reach.
He is a brave and warlike cavalier,
Great through his native worth and famed of person,
And therefore thou must take the desert-road:
It is not well to touch the claws of lions."
Tús answered: "In thy counsels is success,
By that way which thou biddest will I go,
For good alone must come of thy behest."
He then departed quickly, and the Sháh
Returned with loyal Rustam to the throne,
Where sitting with that elephantine hero,
The lords, archmages, and the stainless princes,
V. 795 He spake at large about Afrásiyáb,
His own heart's anguish and his father's wrongs.
Tús for his part with all his warriors
Came to a place where two roads met; the one
Went through a desert dry and waterless,
The other by Kalát and toward Charam.
The elephants and kettledrums were halted
Till Tús the general should come up, that so
The host might take the road that pleased him best.
When Tús had at his leisure reached the chiefs
He spake about the waterless, hot road;
Then to Gúdarz: "Although this arid waste
Yield ambergris for dust and musk for soil,
Still on a long and toilsome march we need
Repose and water. Our best route will be
Kalát, Charam, encamping at Mayam,
V. 796 With streams and fertile country on both sides:
Why choose a desert and its miseries?
I went along that way in former times,
When Gazhdaham was leader of the host,
And never saw so troublesome a road
Although the ups and downs are few enough.
'Tis best to march along the other route,
And measure not the desert and its leagues."

Gúdarz replied: "The noble Sháh made thee
Commander of this host; lead as he bade;
Make not the troops' march grievous. They should not
By disobedience to the great king's orders
Be injured thus."
Tús said: "O famous warrior!
Think not such things; this will not vex the Sháh,
And therefore need not be a grief to thee."
He spake and bade the army to proceed,
And march toward Kalát and to Charam;
And, since Khusrau's commands he minded not,
See what a Tempest proved at last his lot!

§ 11

How Farúd heard of the Coming of Tús

News reached Farúd: "The bright sun's face is darkened
By dust raised by the feet of elephants V. 797
And camels; earth is like the river Nile.
Thy brother's army marcheth from Írán
Against Túrán for vengeance, purposing
To take the road that leadeth to Kalát.
I know not where their battlefield will be."
The inexperienced youth on hearing this
Grew very sore of heart and dark of soul.
He came down from the hold, unbarred the gate,
And going forth surveyed the lofty mountain.
At his command they brought in all the camels,
The sheep, and horses; none remained on waste
Or hill; he drove them all toward Mount Sapad
And toward Ambúh, returned, secured the gate,
And mounted on a rapid-footed steed.
When from Mayam the sound of drums arose,
And from Charam dust-clouds like ebony,

Jaríra, gazing from the castle-roof,
Felt her heart throb in terror of that host.
To her, his mother, came the young Farúd,
And said: "O chief of ladies! from Irán
A host hath come with elephants and tymbals,
And Tús the general is in command.
V. 798 What sayest thou? What is the course to take?
We must prevent him from attacking us."
Jaríra said to him: "O warrior!
Be all thy days as fortunate as this!
Thy brother is the new Sháh of Írán:
A world-lord shrewd is Kai Khusrau, and he
Well knoweth both thy name and native worth.
One father's blood and bone are in you both,
And Siyáwush was peerless in the world.
Well may the age applaud him! At the outset
Pírán gave me to him; he would not else
Have sought a Turkman spouse. Thus thy descent
On both sides is illustrious and royal.
Now, since thy brother seeketh to avenge,
And vindicate, the soul of Siyáwush,
Thou shouldst be foremost in the race for vengeance,
In making ready and exacting it.
Don Rúman mail and go with raging heart,
And shouts of battle ringing in thy head,
For, since he seeketh vengeance on your grandsire,
Thy part should be revenge, not policy,
In that this grief may well make leopards wail,
And crocodiles come groaning from the river.
The birds too and the fishes in the water
Call curses down upon Afrásiyáb,
For in the whole world not one sovereign
That girdeth girdle is like Siyáwush
In prowess, manhood, fortune, and high birth,
In glory, weight, intelligence, and justice.
Thou art the son of that world-famous chief,

Art of the Kaian seed and look'st it too!
Thou must gird up thy loins then to avenge V. 799
Thy sire and prove thy birth and native worth.
See who the leader is of yonder host,
Show hospitality, invite the lords,
And set upon the tables wine and gifts
Of scimitars, of helmets, of horse-armour,
Of coats of mail, and Indian swords. Thy brother
Is wealth sufficient for thee in this world.
Shall such just vengeance fall to aliens?
At this conjuncture lead his troops thyself,
New in revenge as he is new in reign."

Farúd said: "Which of them must I address
Since I must have some helper 'mid these men,
These men so haughty on the day of battle,
Because I know not one of them by name?
How shall I send them greeting and a message?"

Jaríra answered: "In the dust afar
Raised by the host look for two cavaliers,
Bahrám and Zanga son of Sháwarán.
Search for the blazons of these two great heroes,
For thou and I have nothing hid from them.
Oh! may thy head and name survive for ever,
And may the soul of Siyáwush be bright!
He and these twain were never separable,
They were his lords, he was their over-lord.
Go with Tukhár, but with no further escort,
And do not in thy heart misprize my words:
When thou shalt ask about the chiefs and warriors
The brave Tukhár will point them out, for he,
Well knowing all the Íránians, great and small, V. 800
Will show thee sheep and shepherds."

"Noble lady!"
Replied Farúd, "thy rede enlighteneth
Thy kin and folk."

A watchman from the look-out

Came, told Farúd about that host, and said:—
"The mountains, vales, and plains are filled with troops,
And thou wouldst say: 'The sun is put in duress!'
The expanse of rock up to the castle-door
Is all flag, elephant, and warrior!"

§ 12

How Farúd and Tukhár went to view the Host

Tukhár departed with Farúd—a youth
Whom fortune had abandoned. Whensoever
The sky above us is untowardly
No gentleness or rage availeth thee.
They chose the summit of a lofty mountain,
Commanding all the army of Írán,
And marvelled at the troops and their equipment.
The youth said to his confidant Tukhár:—
"Conceal not aught of what I ask of thee.
Tell me the names of all that thou beholdest—
The man of rank, the bearer of the flag,
The lord of partisan and golden boot—
All whom thou recognisest of Írán."
The Íránian host defiled between two mountains,
And what with golden helm and golden shield,
With golden ax and golden partisan,
Thou wouldst have said: "No gold is left unmined,
A cloud hath risen and rained jewelry!"
V. 801 The roar of kettledrums along the pass
Affrayed the vultures as they flew o'erhead,
While thirty thousand sword and buckler men
Marched bravely on in all points dight for war.
Now when Tukhár had scanned the host, the prince
Began to question him. That expert answered:—
"I will clear up what is obscure to thee:
Know that yon flag charged with an elephant,

Those horsemen, and those blue steel scimitars,
Belong to noble Tús the general—
A bad opponent when he seeketh vengeance.
Behind him is another standard bearing
A blazing sun: 'tis that of Faríburz,
Son of Káús, a general, thine uncle,
A man of Grace and purpose. Next to him
There is a mighty flag, its charge a moon,
With many valiant warriors. The chief
Call Gustaham the son of Gazhdaham,
Whom no two-headed dart or club affrayeth.
Next yon tall flag charged with an onager,
Encompassed by a band of warriors,
Is over Zanga son of Sháwarán,
Whose troops are mighty men. The flag behind
That hath a moon on red, with musk-black fringes,
Belongeth to Gív's son Bízhan who spurteth
Blood to the sky. The flag charged with a tiger—
One that would make a mighty lion burst,
And, thou wouldst say, is leaping from its field—
Is borne by brave Shídúsh, while that behind him,
Whose blazon is a wild boar, 'One to bring,'
As that wouldst say, 'the heavens to the shears,'
Pertaineth to a brave chief hight Guráza,
Who counteth it but sport to fight a lion.
The next flag blazoned with a buffalo,
With cavaliers behind and chiefs in front,
Is famed Farhád's, the choicest of the chiefs:
Thou wouldest say: 'His stature is sky-high.'
The banner with a wolf for its device V. 802
Betokeneth the valiant chieftain Gív.
The banner with the lion wrought in gold
Is floating o'er Gúdarz son of Kishwád.
The streaming standard blazoned with a pard
Precedeth proud, imperious Rívníz.
The banner that is charged with a gazelle

Belongeth to Nastúh son of Gúdarz,
And to his troops; that with the mountain-sheep
Pertaineth to another son—Bahrám.
They all are lion-men—brave cavaliers;
To name each one were tedious."
Thus he told
The blazons of the chiefs to prince Farúd,
Who viewed all, great and small. His heart grew glad,
His cheek flushed,[1] and he spake thus to Tukhár:—
"We shall take vengeance for my sire with ease!
I will not leave in Chín or in Máchín
A cavalier, when battling for revenge,
But catch the Dragon [2] and reduce their throne
To straits."
Now when the Íránians had descried
Farúd upon the mountain with Tukhár,
Tús the commander was incensed, and caused
The drums and elephants to halt. He said:—
V. 803 "We need an enterprising cavalier
To hasten to the mountain-top to learn
Who these two warriors are and wherefore there.
If they be ours let him bestow on them
Two hundred lashes on their heads, if foes
Bind them and drag them hither faces downward;
If they be slain still let him drag them hither
Along the dust and have no fear of any,
While if they shall prove spies, who want to take
The number of our forces secretly,
Let him cleave both asunder on the spot,
Then fling them down the mountain and return;
But if a countless host be ambushed there,
Whereof a straggling few have shown themselves,
Let him return and give the intelligence
To us forthwith, and we will drive them thence."

[1] Reading with P.
[2] Afrásiyáb.

§ 13

How Bahrám came to Farúd upon the Mountain

Bahrám son of Gúdarz said to the chief:—
"This matter shall not be concealed from us.
I will go forth to do as thou hast said,
And scale the mountain-top."
He struck his steed,
And went full of surmise toward the height.
Farúd said to Tukhár: "Who is this man
That cometh hither with such insolence?
Good sooth! he taketh no account of us
At all, but cometh up the steep apace!
He rideth a bay charger with a lasso
Hung in his saddle-straps."
The counsellor
Replied: "He is not one to treat with rudeness.
I know him not by token or by name,
But take him for a kinsman of Gúdarz.
When Kai Khusrau departed from Túrán
He took a helmet of Afrásiyáb's;[1]
It is methinketh on that horseman's head, V. 804
And he hath royal mail to correspond.
He must be of the kindred of Gúdarz;
So let us ope our lips and question him."
Bahrám, when he came nearer to the crest,
Cried as a cloud might thunder: "Who art thou
Upon the mountain-top? Dost thou not see
Yon countless host, or hear their clamouring
And din of drums? Or art thou not afraid
Of Tús their watchful leader?"
Then the prince:—
"Thou wast not rudely treated: be not rude.
Good words, O veteran! Let no harsh challenge
Pollute thy lips. Thou art no warlike lion,

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 377.

And I am not a desert-onager;
We are not to be treated in this fashion.
Thou art in no way my superior
In courage or in manliness or strength,
While as for head, foot, hand, heart, brain, and wits,
Tongue speaking fluently and eyes and ears—
See if I too possess them and, if so,
Forbear to threaten in thy foolishness.
If thou wilt answer I will ask thee somewhat,
And shall rejoice if thou advise me well."
Bahrám said: "Ask away! Thou art in heaven
And I am on the earth."
"Who is your leader,"
Inquired Farúd, "and wherefore make ye war?"
Bahrám said: "Tús is leader for he hath
The drums and Káwa's flag. Of warriors
There are Gúdarz, Ruhhám, and Gív, Shídúsh,
Gurgín, Farhád the valiant, Gustaham,
With Zanga son of Sháwarán, and chief
Of all the clan of fighting-men—Guráza."
Farúd returned: "Why nam'st thou not Bahrám,
And leavest thus the matter incomplete?
V. 805 In him of all the offspring of Gúdarz
We most rejoice, and yet thou nam'st him not!"
Bahrám replied to him: "O lion-man!
Who spake to thee in such wise of Bahrám?"
Farúd said: "From my mother heard I of him.
She said to me: 'Now when the host approacheth
Meet it and summon forth Bahrám, and also
A noble, Zanga son of Sháwarán,
Because they are thy father's foster-brothers,
And thou mayst well inquire for news of them.'"
Then thus Bahrám: "O fortune's favourite!
So thou art Fruit of that Imperial Tree!
Thou art Farúd, young prince! Live long and happy!"
He answered: "Yea, I am indeed Farúd:

The fallen Cypress hath put forth a Shoot."
Bahrám rejoined: "Display to me thy person,
Display to me the mark of Siyáwush."[1]
Thereat Farúd showed to Bahrám his arm.
A mole of ambergris on rosy flesh
Was there—a picture such as none on earth
Could skill to limn with compasses from Chín.
Bahrám perceived: "He cometh from Kubád
Through Siyáwush," then blessed him, did obeisance,
And scaled the lofty steep. The prince dismounted,
Sat on a rock, rejoicing, and thus said:—
"Exalted, shrewd, and Lion of the fight!
Were my two eyes to see my sire alive
In sooth it would not be a greater joy
To me than to behold thee glad and happy,
Accomplished, wary, and a paladin.
I came upon this mountain-top to ask V. 806
About the heroes of the Íránian host,
And learn who are their chief and men of name.
I will provide a feast such as I can,
Will entertain their paladin with joy,
Give many gifts of horses, maces, belts,
And scimitars, then march forth seared of heart
Before the host against Túrán for vengeance.
The quest befitteth me who am fierce fire
When mounted on my saddle in the combat.
Be pleased to ask the paladin to come
With glad heart to the mountain, there to spend
A week that we may well advise together.
Upon the eighth day, when the tymbal soundeth,
And Tús the general mounteth on his steed,
I will make ready to avenge my father,
And, in the anguish of my heart, provide
A conflict which shall teach the warrior-lion,

[1] Similarly Gív desired to see the birth-mark of Kai Khusrau, Vol. ii. p. 372.

While vultures' feathers testify aloft,
That 'tis no common noble of the world
Who girdeth him for vengeance such as this."
Bahrám replied: "O prince young and accomplished,
And valiant cavalier! I will report
Thy words to Tús, and kiss his hand while urging
Compliance. Still our chieftain is not wise,
His head and brains brook not good counselling.
He is accomplished, rich, and nobly born,
But nameth not the Sháh. When Gív brought home
That glorious one, Tús was provoked with him,
Gúdarz, and Gív, supported Faríburz,
And said: 'I am descended from Naudar:
The kingship of the world is rightly mine.'
V. 807 He very well may disregard my words,
And in his anger quarrel with myself.
If any one but I shall come to thee
Let him not look upon thy head and helmet.
Tús said to me: 'See who is on the summit,
But ask him not what he is doing there.
To talk with sword and mace will be enough,
For why should any one be there to-day?'
When he is calm I will return to thee
With good news and conduct thee to our host,
Rejoicing; but if any one approach
Except myself put little faith in him.
More than a single horseman will not come
To thee, such is our noble leader's rule.
Consider well what is the wisest course,
Take refuge in the hold and quit this spot."
Farúd took from his belt a turquoise mace
With golden haft. "Accept of this," he said,
"A keepsake from me; it will prove of service.
If Tús the general be well-disposed
We will have merry hearts and great content,

And I will furnish further other things,
Steeds, sells, gold, crowns, and royal signet-rings."

§ 14

How Bahrám went back to Tús

Bahrám returning said to Tús: "May wisdom
And thy pure soul be mates! This is Farúd,
The son of guiltless, murdered Siyáwush!
He showed to me the mark which all the race
Inherit from Káús and Kai Kubád."
The overbearing general replied:— V. 808
"The host, the trumpets, and the drums are mine.
My words to thee were: 'Bring the man to me,
Ask him no questions.' If he be a king
Who then am I, and wherefore am I here
With this array? A man of Turkman race,
Like some black raven on the mountain there,
Is hindering the progress of the troops!
Among the froward offspring of Gúdarz
I can see naught but mischief to the host.
Thou wast afraid of one unskilful horseman!
It was no savage Lion on the height.
He saw our host, and duped thee. Thou hast gone
Both up and down for naught!" Then to the chiefs:—
"O men of name and slayers of the foe!
I need some noble and aspiring man
To face the height and Turkman, to behead him,
And bring his head to me before the host."
Rívníz girt up his loins for that encounter,
Which cost his life. Then said Bahrám to Tús:—
'O paladin! stain not thy soul so rashly.
Revere the Ruler of the sun and moon:
Respect the Sháh, for yonder is his kinsman—
A famous horseman and a warrior;

And even if a hundred cavaliers
Should go against him to the mountain-top
They would not 'scape his clutches with their lives:
Thou wilt but bring glad hearts to misery."
V. 809 This angered Tús, who would not be advised,
But bade some chiefs to hasten to the mountain,
And many valiant men rushed forth and raised
Their heads to make an onslaught on Farúd,
But "Hold not," thus spake brave Bahrám to them,
"This matter lightly; he on yonder height
Is of Khusrau's own kin, one hair of whom
Is better than a hundred paladins.
He that ne'er saw the face of Siyáwush
Will find repose in gazing on his son."
Now when Bahrám told of Farúd the men
That had set forth retraced their steps again.

§ 15

How Rívníz was slain by Farúd

Then for the second time the son-in-law
Of Tús came forth—the laughing-stock of heaven-
And left the road that leadeth to Charam
For Mount Sapad, his fierce heart set on outrage.
Farúd descried him from the mountain-top,
And, drawing from its case his royal bow,
Said to Tukhár the veteran: "Tús hath spurned
The message, for a horseman not Bahrám
Hath come! My heart is confident but heavy.
See if thou canst remember who he is.
Why is he clad in mail from head to foot?'
Tukhár replied: "A valiant cavalier,
Rívníz by name. He is an only son
With forty sisters like the jocund spring.
He is unscrupulous, sly, plausible,

Accomplished, young, and son-in-law to Tús."
Farúd returned: "Such talk is not for war-time.
If he approach for combat I will send him
To sleep upon his sisters' skirts. If merely
Mine arrow make him feel its wind in passing,
And he surviveth, hold me not a man.
Which shall mine arrow slay—the horse or rider? V. 810
How sayest thou, O veteran Tukhár?"
Tukhár replied: "The time for strife hath come.[1]
Loose at the man; perchance the heart of Tús
May be perturbed for him. Tús knoweth not
Thy resolution for thou soughtest peace;
If he attacketh thee in wantonness
He will but bring disgrace upon thy brother."
When sword in hand Rívníz drew nigh, Farúd
Strung his curved bow, shot down a poplar shaft,
And pinned the Rúman helmet to the head
Of him that came. He fell. His fleet steed left him.
Rívníz came headlong to the dust. When Tús,
The general, beheld this from Mayam
The mountain disappeared before his eyes!
Now wisdom hath a saw in this regard:—
"Man's evil nature is its own reward."

§ 16

How Zarásp was slain by Farúd

Then Tús said to Zarásp: "Let thy heart flame
As 'twere Ázargashasp, don horsemen's armour,
And take good heed of thine own life and person.
Thou mayst perchance avenge this noble chief,
Or if not I myself will seek for vengeance."
Zarásp departed and assumed his helm.
With vengeful heart and windy pate he went

[1] Inserted from C.

Toward Mount Sapad, like some fierce, vengeful lion,
V. 811 And scaled the mountain, with uplifted head,
Loud shouts, fierce gestures, and impetuous heart.
Farúd, that raging Lion, told Tukhár:—
"Another challenger is on his way;
See now who this Íránian horseman is
That cometh galloping upon the mountain."
Tukhár declared at once: "It is the son
Of Tús, by name Zarásp, who wheeleth not
His charger from an elephant of war.
His sister was the consort of Rívníz.
This atheling hath come for vengeance too!
As soon as he can see thine arm and casque
Let loose a poplar shaft that he may come
Down from his charger headlong to the dust.
Sure am I that the heart of Tús will be
As 'twere a leaf in winter at his death,
And that insensate chief will understand
That we are not here to be sport for him."
When in the sight of all the Íránian host
Zarásp drew near upon the mountain-top,
The valorous Farúd urged on his charger,
Shot at Zarásp and pinned him through the mail
And loins against the saddle. His spirit flamed
Upon the point. He fell. His windfoot steed
Abandoned him and galloped back full speed.

§ 17

How Tús fought with Farúd

A shout ascended from the Íránian host,
And all the warriors put on their helms.
Tús with a full heart and with weeping eyes
Donned his cuirass in haste. He greatly mourned
Those gallant chiefs and trembled like a leaf.

He mounted on his saddle and appeared
As 'twere the mountain-mass that men up pile
Upon the back of lusty elephants,
And turned his charger's reins toward Farúd
With heart revengeful and with head a-fume.
Tukhár the spokesman said: "A Mountain cometh V. 812
In fury toward the height. 'Tis Tús the chief!
Contend not with the veteran Crocodile.
Secure thee in the hold and wait on fortune.
Expect no merrymake since thou hast slain
Alike his son and son-in-law in battle."

The young Farúd, wroth with Tukhár, replied:—
"When war and strife confront us what care I
For Tús or elephant or mighty lion,
For warrior-leopard or for tiger? These
But give a man the heart to fight, and serve not
To scatter earth upon the raging fire."

Then said Tukhár the much-experienced: "Kings
Despise not counsel. Iron though thou be,
And able to uproot a mount of flint,
Yet art thou but a single cavalier;
And thirty thousand warriors of Írán
Will come against thee to the mountain-top.
No strong-hold will be left here, stone or dust:
They will sweep all away, and furthermore
If evil by this means shall come to Tús
His downfall will cause sorrow to Khusrau,
And so defeat the vengeance for thy sire—
A breach which nevermore will be repaired.
Why combat with a Lion in thy rage?
Go to the hold and fight not foolishly."

This, which he should have spoken at the first,
He left unsaid till then; so to Farúd
All through this worthless, foolish minister
Resulted battle and the loss of life.
The youth had eighty moon-faced female slaves

At home who stood upon the roof to watch him,
V. 813 And babbled ceaselessly. He could not brook
The thought of a retreat before their eyes,
But raised his reins and rushing on like wind
Set to his string another poplar shaft;
But first Tukhár said: "If thou meanest fight,
The best for thee, or else thou mayest not conquer
The noble Tús, will be to overthrow
His steed, for monarchs do not war afoot,
However much they may be put to it;
Besides one wooden arrow from a bow
Will never set a period to his life,
And when the general shall reach the summit
His warriors will follow, and thou hast not
The power to oppose; thou hast not looked
His arrows in the face."
The youth attended
To what Tukhár said, strung his bow, and shot.
The poplar arrow struck the general's steed—
A bow-shot worthy of a cavalier—
The charger came down headlong and expired
While Tús both raged and blustered. He returned
To camp, his buckler hanging from his neck,
On foot, all dusty, and distraught in mind,
Farúd the while with gibes pursuing him:—
"What ailed the noble paladin, and how
Will he proceed amid the ranks of war
Who cannot fight a single horseman here?"
The women-slaves began to laugh, and sent
Their peals of laughter through the sky. They cried:
"The old man staggereth down the mountain-slope,
Affrighted at the arrows of a youth!"
When Tús descended from the height the chiefs,
Full of concern, approached him, did obeisance,
And said: "O famous paladin of earth!
What can be better than thy safe return?

We have no cause to bathe our cheeks in tears."
The noble Gív was grievously distressed
Because the valiant general had come back
Afoot, and said: "This youth exceedeth bounds V. 814
In turning thus our chieftains' faces pale!
What though he be a king and weareth earrings,
Is he to flout so great a host as this?
It is not right that we should acquiesce
In his pretensions thus. If Tús displayed
Some hastiness, Farúd hath filled the world
With tumult. We would die for Siyáwush,
But we must not forget this injury.
Farúd hath given to the winds Zarásp,
That noble cavalier sprung from Naudar!
The body of Rívníz is drowned in blood!
What further shame is ours? Farúd, though he
Jamshíd's own son, Kubád's own marrow, be,
Hath made a new departure witlessly."

§ 18

How Gív fought with Farúd

Gív spake, armed in hot haste, and came forth proudly
Like wild sheep on the mountain. Seeing him
Farúd heaved from his breast a chilly sigh,
And said: "This warrior-host discerneth not
Between uphill and down! Each combatant
Is braver than the last—the crown of hosts—
But wit is lacking in their paladin;
A witless head is like a soulless body.
I fear me they will fail in their revenge
Unless Khusrau himself invade Túrán;
Then back to back will we avenge our sire,
And haply get our foes within our clutches.
Now tell me who this noble horseman is, V. 815

Whose hand and brand will shortly ask for tears?"
Thereat Tukhár glanced at the plain below,
And said to him: "It is the raging Dragon,
Whose neezings make birds topple from the air,
Who put Pírán thy grandsire's hands in bonds,
And brake two Turkman hosts![1] He hath unfathered
Full many a little child. His foot hath been
On many a river, mount, and wilderness.
Full many a father too hath he unsonned,
And treadeth underfoot the lion's neck.
'Twas he that bare thy brother to Írán,
And crossed Jíhún although he saw no boat.[2]
They call him Gív—a very Elephant
Or river Nile upon the day of battle.
When thou shalt set thy thumbstall to the bow-string
Thy poplar arrow will not pierce his mail,
Because he weareth that of Siyáwush;[3]
So draw thy bow and let the arrow fly
Against his steed. The great beast may be wounded,
And Gív the rider may return afoot
With shield on neck as did their general."
The brave prince bent his bow until the top
Was at his shoulder, shot, and struck Gív's charger
Upon the breast. Gív came down and retreated.
Then from the battlements of Mount Sapad
A shout rose. Gív's brain shrank before the jeers,
But all the mighty men approached him, saying:—
"Praise be to God, exalted warrior!
Because the horse is hurt and thou art not,
Nor art thou captured but can'st go again."
Bízhan the warrior came to Gív like wind,
And uttered words most unacceptable:—[4]
V. 816 "My father—lion-quelling paladin,
Whose might is greater than an elephant's!

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 378 *seq.*
[2] *Id.* p. 392.
[3] *Id.* p. 377.
[4] Reading with P.

Why did a single horseman see thy back?
Thy hand was wont to be the heart of fight,
But now because a Turkman shot thy steed
Thou wentest reeling like a drunken man!"
Gív answered saying: "Since my horse was wounded
I should have forfeited my life to him
Immediately."
He spake in savage tones,
Which when Bízhan perceived he showed his back,
And Gív in fury at his levity
Lashed at Bízhan's head with a riding-whip,
And said: "Did no one ever teach thee this—
That circumspection is required in war?
Thou hast no wisdom, providence, or brains,
And may he cease to be that nurtured thee."
Bízhan was pained because his sire was wroth,
And swore an oath before the Almighty Judge:—
"I will not take the saddle off my steed
Until I have avenged Zaráspor perished."
Departing with a heart oppressed by care,
And head all vengeance, unto Gustaham
He spake thus: "Let me have a steed of thine—
A handy one, such as will climb with ease
The mountain-side—so that I may assume
My mail that one of us may seem a man.
A Turkman hath ascended to the heights,
So as to draw the eyes of all the host,
And I desire to go and fight with him
Because my soul is darkened by his deeds."
But Gustaham: "This is not well. Climb not
The height so rashly! When we have to march
The world will be all ups and downs and waste.
Now of my horses fit to carry armour
I have but two remaining, and if he
Destroy one I shall not obtain another V. 817
To take its place in action, strength, and size.

Zarásp—a world-lord—with Rívníz, and Tús,
Who holdeth all the world of no account,
And thine own sire, that hunter of fierce lions,
Who recketh not how heaven's wheel may turn,
Have all retreated from him with sore hearts;
None made a fight against that Mount of Flint.
Would that we had a vulture's wings or eagle's,
For none will get inside the hold afoot!"
Bízhan replied to him: "Break not my heart,
Break not mine arms and shoulders too just now,
For I have sworn a great oath by the moon,
The world's Judge, and the Sháh's own diadem,
That if I am not slain I will not ride
Back from the mountain but avenge Zarásp."
Then Gustaham replied: "This is not good,
For wisdom doth not recognise such fierceness."
Bízhan responded: "I will go afoot,
And so avenge Zarásp: I need no horse."
Then answered Gustaham: "I would not have
A single hair to perish from thy head;
And if I had a hundred thousand steeds,
Whose manes and tails were full of royal gems,
I would not keep them or my treasure, life,
Or iron mace or falchion back from thee.
Go thou, inspect my horses each in turn,
And take whichever of them thou preferrest.
Bid that be saddled. If 'tis slain so be it."
He had one charger that was like a wolf,
Long in the barrel, tall, and spirited:
They mailed it for the brave, young atheling.
Gív, mindful of Farúd's deeds, fumed at heart
Thereat, then sent and summoned Gustaham,
And uttered many a saw concerning youth.
V. 818 He sent Bízhan the mail of Siyáwush,
Besides a royal helmet of his own.
When Gustaham had brought the mail Bízhan

Incased himself as quick as dust and went
To Mount Sapad as one on vengeance bent.

§ 19

How Bízhan fought with Farúd

Farúd said to Tukhár: "Another chief
Hath come! Look forth, see who he is, and who
Will weep for him."
That man of words replied:—
"There is not one to match him in Írán,
For he is Gív's son and a valiant hero
Victorious like a lion in all combats.
Gív hath no other son, and this is dearer
To him than life and wealth. Direct thy hand
Against the steed, and break not the Sháh's heart.
Bízhan too hath the mail, and Gív hath linked
The gorget of the helm, of Siyáwush
Thereto. These neither double-headed dart
Nor shaft can pierce. Bízhan may fight afoot.
Thou wilt not shine as his antagonist;
He graspeth, look! a sword of adamant."
Farúd's shaft struck the charger of Bízhan:
Thou wouldst have said: "It had no life." It fell,
And when Bízhan had disengaged himself
He made toward the summit, sword in hand,
And shouted: "O thou valiant cavalier!
Remain and see now how a Lion fighteth,
And realise how heroes though unhorsed
Will still advance to battle with the sword.
Thou shalt behold it if thou wilt await me,
For thou shalt never think of fighting more."
Farúd above was angered too because V. 819
Bízhan withdrew not, and again that Lion
Discharged a shaft. Bízhan the brave held up

His shield above his head. The arrow pierced
The shield but missed the mail. Bízhan sped on,
And, when he reached the summit, drew his sword.
Farúd the noble turned away from him;
The ramparts rang with cries. Bízhan pursued
Apace, sharp sword in hand, and gashed the bards
Upon the noble steed which came to dust.
Farúd howbeit gained the castle-gate,
The garrison secured it with all speed,
And showered many stones down from the walls
Upon Bízhan, who knew that 'twas no spot
To loiter at. He cried: "O famous one!
Hast thou—a warrior and cavalier—
Thus turned from one on foot and felt no shame?
Woe for the heart and hand of brave Farúd!"

He left the scene of combat, came to Tús,
And said: "To fight so brave a warrior
Would need a famous lion of the desert,
And if a mount of flint should turn to water
In strife with him the chieftain need not marvel:
Imagination boggleth at such prowess!"

The general Tús swore by the Lord of all:—
"I will send up this hold's dust to the sun.
To avenge beloved Zarásp the cavalier
I will attack without delay, will make
This Turkman wretch a corpse, and with his gore
Engrain the stones like coral to the core."

§ 20

How Farúd was slain

Now when the shining sun had disappeared,
And dark night led its host across the sky,
V. 820 The daughter of Pírán approached her son—
Farúd—with anxious mind and aching heart,

And lay down near her darling, but all night
Remained the spouse of grief and misery.
She dreamed that from the lofty castle rose
A flame in front of him she loved so well,
Illuming Mount Sapad and burning all
The castle and the women-slaves. She woke
In pain, her soul in anguish and dismay,
Went out upon the wall and looking round
Saw all the mountain filled with mail and spears.
Her cheek flushed up and fuming at the heart
She hastened to Farúd, and cried to him:—
"Awake from slumber, O my son! the stars
Are bringing down disaster on our heads!
The mountain is all foes, the castle-gate
All spears and mail!"
He said: "Why such to-do?
If life is o'er for me, and thou canst count not
On further respite for me, mine own sire
Was slain in youth, my life is wrecked like his.
Gurwí's hand put a period to his days,
And now Bízhan is eager for my death;
Yet will I struggle, perish wretchedly,
And not ask quarter of the Íránians."
He gave out mail and maces to the troops,
He placed a splendid helm upon his head,
And with a Rúman breastplate girt about him
Came with a royal bow grasped in his hand.
Now when the shining sun displayed its face,
And proudly mounted to the vault of heaven,
The war-cries of the chieftains rose on all sides, V. 821
While massive maces whirled amid the din
Of clarions, tymbals, pipes, and Indian bells.
Farúd descended from the castle-ramparts
With all his gallant Turkmans. Through the dust
Raised by the horsemen, and the feathered shafts,
The mountain-top was like a sea of pitch.

There was no level ground or room to fight;
The rocks and stones played havoc with the steeds,
While shouts ascended as the armies strove.
Tús ready armed for battle, grasping shield
And trenchant falchion, led the way in person,
Escorted by the chieftains of the host
Afoot. Thus they attacked till noon was high,
And then the troops of brave Farúd were thinned,
The hills and valleys had been filled with slain,
The youth's good fortune had abandoned him.
The Íránians marvelled at him, none had seen
So fierce a Lion, but as battle pressed him
He saw his fortune adverse; of the Turkmans
No cavalier remained with him; he fought
V. 822 Alone; he turned and fled down toward the hold.
Ruhhám sought with Bízhan to intercept him:
They charged him from above and from below.
When on the lower ground Bízhan appeared,
With stirrups firmly pressed and reins held loose,
The youth espied the helm, drew out his mace,
And went like some fierce lion at his foe,
Not knowing what the vaulted sky decreed.
He thought to strike Bízhan upon the head,
And smash both head and helmet with one buffet.
Bízhan was staggered by the young man's stroke,
And lost both sense and power. Ruhhám behind
Saw this and shouted, clutched his Indian sword,
And struck the lion-man upon the shoulder;
His hand fell useless. Wounded he cried out,
And urged his steed which, as he neared the hold,
Bízhan came up and houghed. Farúd himself
Afoot with certain of his followers,
Thus stricken in the battles of the brave,
Reached and secured with speed the castle-gate.
Woe for the heart and name of brave Farúd!
His mother and the slaves drew near, embraced him,

And sadly laid him on his ivory throne:
His day, his season for the crown, were over.
His mother and the female slaves plucked out V. 823
The scented tresses of their musky hair,
While the beloved Farúd plucked out their lives:
The throne was strewn with hair, the house all sorrow.
Then with a faint glance and a sigh he turned
Toward his mother and the slaves, and said,
With one last effort to unclose his lips:—
"It is no marvel that ye pluck your hair;
The Íránians will come with girded loins
To sack the hold and make my slave-girls captive,
Make castle, castle-wall, and rampart waste.
Let all whose hearts and cheeks burn for my life
Go fling themselves down from the battlements
That none may be the portion of Bízhan.
I follow soon because he severeth
My blameless life and is, in this my day
Of youth, my death."
He spake, his cheeks grew wan,
His spirit soared away 'mid grief and anguish.
As 'twere a conjurer this drunken sky
Deludeth us with tricks—threescore and ten—
At whiles employing blast or cloud and then
The sword or dagger or the agency
Of some unworthy wight. At whiles to one
Plunged in calamity 'twill grant relief,
At whiles allot crown, treasury, and throne,
At whiles chain, dungeon, bitterness, and grief!
Man must accept his lot whate'er it be;
Mine own affliction is my poverty.
The man of wisdom, had he died at birth,
Had suffered not the heat and cold of earth,
But, living after birth, hath want and stress,
Constrained to weep a life of wretchedness.

Woe for his heart, his usance, and intents!
His pillow is the dust in all events.

§ 21

How Jaríra slew herself

V. 824 Now when in failure thus had passed away
Farúd, the hapless and inglorious son
Of Siyáwush, the slave-girls scaled the roof,
And dashed them to the ground. Jaríra kindled
A pyre and burned the treasures. Sword in hand
She locked the stable of the Arab steeds,
Hamstrung, and ripped them up. All blood and sweat
She sought the couch of glorious Farúd,
Upon whose coverlet a dagger lay,
And, having pressed her cheeks upon his face,
Ripped up herself and died upon his breast.
The Íránians forced the portal of the hold,
Prepared for pillaging, but when Bahrám
Approached those walls his heart was rent with sorrow.
He sought the couch of glorious Farúd,
With cheeks all tears and heart a-fume, and thus
Addressed the Íránians: "Here is one by far
More wretched and dishonoured than his sire,
For Siyáwush did not destroy his slaves,
Nor was his mother slain upon his couch,
Though round him likewise all his palace flamed,
And all his home and goods were razed and burned.
Still heaven's hands are long enough to reach
The wicked, and it turneth not in love
V. 825 O'er men unjust. Shall ye not shame before
Khusrau who, charging Tús so earnestly,
Sent you to take revenge for Siyáwush,
And gave you much advice and parting-counsel?

When he shall hear about his brother's death
He will cut short respect and clemency,
And for Ruhhám and passionate Bízhan
The world will have but little pleasure left."
With that came Tús the general with the drums
Along the road that leadeth to Kalát,
While with him were the chiefs Gúdarz and Gív,
And therewithal a host of warriors.
The general marched along to Mount Sapad,
Advancing swiftly and without remorse;
But when he reached the throne where wretchedly
The poor, slain man lay pillowed with his mother,
While on one hand beside the pillow sat,
All tears and wrath, Bahrám, and on the other,
With all the men of battle crowding round
About him, Zanga son of Sháwarán,
While tree-like on the ivory throne the hero—
A moon in face, a teak in stature, slept—
A Siyáwush upon his throne of gold—
With coat of mail and helmet, mace and girdle,
While Gív, Gúdarz, the other men of name
And gallant chiefs, bewailed him bitterly,
Then Tús poured out his heart's blood down his cheeks
In anguish for Farúd and his own son,
While Gív, Gúdarz, and all the warriors
With sighs and tears turned and upbraided him:—
"Thy fury beareth thee remorse as fruit:
Sow not the seeds of fury in the garden.
Thus in thy haste and fury hast thou given V. 826
A youth of Kaian stock with all his Grace,
His stature, form, and bearing to the wind,
Hast given Zarásp, that chief sprung from Naudar,
And given too—that victim of thy rage—
Rívníz! Ill fortune hath left naught undone!
But parts and wisdom in the passionate
Are like a sword that groweth blunt with rust."

While thus they spake Tús wept; his rage and fury
Abated; he replied: "From evil fortune
No lack of toil and moil befalleth man."
He gave directions to his men to build
Upon the mountain-top a royal charnel
Wherein they placed a throne of gold, the mail,
Sword, mace, and girdle, then prepared the corpse,
Requiring roses, camphor, musk and wine,
And with the camphor they embalmed his head,
His body with rose-water, musk, and gums.
They set him on the throne and left him there;
That famed, accomplished, lion-hearted man
Thus passed away. Beside the prince they set
Rívníz and great Zarásp, while Tús, with beard
Like camphor, shed a stream of tears of blood.
'Tis always thus! However long we stay
Proud Elephant and Lion must away!
The hearts of stoneand anvil quake with fear
Of death; no root and leaf escape it here.

§ 22

How Tús led the Host to the Kása Rúd, and how Paláshán was slain by Bízhan

v. 827 When Tús the general had made an end
Of fighting with Farúd, and left the heights,
He halted at Charam three days. The blare
Of trumpets rose upon the fourth; then Tús
Led forth the host and sounded pipe and tymbal,
While all the earth from mountain unto mountain
Turned ebon. Whatso Turkman troops he saw
He slew and flung them down upon the road,
Left all the marches neither woof nor warp,
And thus proceeded to the Kása rúd,
Where he encamped the army: all the earth

Was covered by his tents.
"Troops from Írán
Are at the Kása rúd!" Such tidings reached
Túrán, and from the Turkmans there came forth
Shrewd Paláshán, a youthful warrior,
The leader of their host, to view the foe,
And count the camp-enclosures and the flags.
Within the lines there was a rising ground
On one side, and unoccupied by troops:
There Gív was sitting with Bízhan, conversing
On matters great and small. Appeared the flag
Of Paláshán, come from the Turkman host,
Upon the road, whereat the gallant Gív
Unsheathed his sword. "I will go forth," quoth he,
"Behead, or bring him captive to our folk."
Bízhan said: "Man of name! the Sháh bestowed
A robe of honour on me for this end;
According to his order I must gird V. 828
Myself to fight the warrior Paláshán."
"Haste not to battle with this savage Lion,"
Gív answered. "God forbid that thou shouldst fight
him,
And straiten mine own day. A Lion he,
This desert is his feeding-ground, he preyeth
On none but warriors."
Bízhan replied:—
"Oh! put me not to shame before the world-lord
By speaking thus, but let me have the armour
Of Siyáwush. Be mine to hunt this Leopard."
Then gallant Gív gave him the coat of mail.
Bízhan, when he had made the buckles fast,
Bestrode a rapid charger, and rode off
Upon the desert with a spear in hand.
Now Paláshán, who had brought down a deer,
Was roasting some kabáb upon a fire,
And eating with his bow upon his arm,

The while his horse was ranging free to graze
It saw afar the charger of Bízhan,
Neighed loudly, and ran in; so Paláshán
Knew that a horseman came prepared for fight,
And shouted to Bízhan: "I fling down lions,
And fetter dívs. Declare thy name; thy star
Shall weep for thee."
He said: "Bízhan am I—
A brazen-bodied dív when fight is toward.
My grandsire is a Lion of the fray,
My sire is gallant Gív, and thou shalt see
My prowess. This brave day, when battle breatheth,
Thou, like a carrion wolf[1] upon the mountains,
Eat'st ashes, smoke, and blood! How cometh it
That thou art leading troops upon the waste?"
He answered not but gave his mighty steed
V. 829 The rein. The warriors closed, the dark dust flew.
Their spear-points brake; both took their scimitars,
Which shivered with their strokes. The riders shook
Like leaves upon a tree, the steeds were drowned
In sweat, and staggered. Then the noble Lions,
The combatants, drew forth their heavy maces.
Thus went it till Bízhan with mace on shoulder
Sent up a shout, struck valiant Paláshán
Upon the waist, and brake his spine. His corpse,
All helmed and mailed, fell headlong from his charger.
Bízhan, dismounting with the speed of dust,
Cut off the warrior's head and carried it
Together with the arms and steed to Gív,
Who had been troubled o'er the fight, and thought:—
"How will the wind of battle blow to-day?"
And groaned and fidgeted upon the watch
Until Bízhan's dust rose upon the road.
The youth came bringing head and mail and charger,

[1] Bízhan compares Paláshán at his meal to a wolf at a deserted camp-fire.

And placed them all before his sire who cried:—
"For ever be victorious, O my son!"
They went with joy toward the chief's pavilion,
And brought to him the breastplate, helmet, steed,
And head of Paláshán. Tús gladdened so
That thou hadst said: "He will pour out his soul."
"Son of the Backbone of the host," said he, V. 830
"Head of the famed of our Sháh's diadem!
Live ever joyfully, aspiring still,
And banished far from thee be foeman's ill."

§ 23

How the Íránians suffered in a Snowstorm

Thereafter tidings reached Afrásiyáb:—
"The marches of Túrán are like a sea:
A host hath reached the Kása rúd, and earth
Is blackened in revenge for Siyáwush."
The king said to Pírán: "Khusrau hath made
His object clear; perchance we may prevent him
By marching forth with flags and drums in force;
If not the army from Írán will come,
And we shall see not shining sun or moon.
Go gather troops together from all quarters;
Few words are needed."
On the Íránian side
A tempest rose and none took thought of fight;
A dense cloud came like flying dust, their lips
Congealed with cold, the tents and camp-enclosures
Were turned to ice, snow carpeted the mountains,
And for a sennight's space earth disappeared.
There was but little food or rest or sleep:
Thou wouldst have said: "Earth's face is turned to stone."
They slew and ate their horses. Multitudes

Of men and cattle perished. None at last
Possessed a charger. When the eighth day came
The sun prevailed, the earth was like a sea,
The troops were mustered, and Tús spake of fight;
V. 831 He said: "The host hath suffered greatly here;
'Tis well that we proceed upon our march.
Cursed be these fields and fells, all from Kalát
And Mount Sapad down to the Kása rúd!"
Then from the warrior-throng thus spake Bahrám:—
"I needs must tell the general my mind
Concerning this. Thou makest us keep silence!
Thou fightest with the son of Siyáwush!
I told thee: 'Do not so: it is not right.'
See what a loss hath followed and what ill
May yet confront thee, for the buffalo
Is still within its hide!"
"Ázargashasp
Is not more famed than was Zaráspthe brave,"
Said Tús, "nor was Farúd slain innocent.
'Twas written thus, and what hath been hath been.
Look through the host and see whom thou canst find
In courage and in aspect like Rívníz,
Through whom my cup was filled with wine and milk.
His form was youthful but his words were sage.
Now let us speak no further of the past,
Or whether he was justly slain or not;
And since Gív took a present from the Sháh
That he might set that mass of faggots blazing,
Which now is in the way, 'tis time to do it,
And light up heaven with the conflagration;
Thus we may gain a passage for the troops."
Gív said to him: "This will not be a toil,
Or, if it be, a toil not unrequited."
Bízhan was grieved: "I cannot give," he said,
"Consent to this. Thou rearedst me in stress
And hardihood, without a chiding word:

It must not be that I a youth sit still, V. 832
While thou an old man girdest up thy loins."
Gív said: "My son! I took this enterprise
Upon my shoulders; 'tis the time for arms,
Not for indulgence and decrepitude.
Be not in dudgeon at my going, I
Can burn a flinty mountain with my breath."
He passed the Kása rúd albeit with stress,
The world for warp and woof had ice and snow,
And when he reached the barricade of faggots
Its length and breadth were more than he could tell;
He used a javelin-point to kindle fire,
Threw it upon the mass and burned the pile.
For three weeks conflagration, wind, and smoke
Allowed no passage through the burning mass,
But when the fourth week came the army went
Across the river for the fire was spent.

§ 24

How Bahrám captured Kabúda

Tús, when the host was mustered, left the fire
For Giravgard. They marched in fair array,
Camped on the hills and plains, took due precautions,
And hurried out the scouts on every side.
Tazháv the cavalier—one used to fight
With lions—dwelt at Giravgard and kept
The herds there, driving them from hill to hill.
News came: "A host hath come forth from Írán:
The cattle must be driven out of reach."
He sent a warrior with all dispatch
To tell a herdsman of Afrásiyáb's—
Kabúda hight, an able man withal,
And there was need for his ability:—
"Depart at dark and keep thyself unseen; V. 833

Observe how large the Íránian army is,
And see whose are the standards and the crowns.
My purpose is to make a night-attack,
And fill the mountains and the plains with blood."
When it was dark Kabúda drew anigh,
Like some black dív, the army of Írán.
That night Bahrám, whose lasso snared the heads
Of elephants, was on the outpost-guard,
And, when Kabúda's charger neighed, Bahrám
Pricked up his ears, sat firm, and strung his bow;
Then urged his mighty charger from the spot.
Without a word he let an arrow fly,
Though darkness hid Kabúda from his sight,
And struck the royal herdsman on the belt;
His face turned black; and falling from his steed
He begged for life. Bahrám said: "Tell me truly:
Who sent thee hither? Whom wouldst thou attack?"
Kabúda said: "If thou wilt grant me quarter
I will reply to all thy questioning:
My master is Tazháv. I am his servant,
And sent by him; so put me not to death,
And I will guide thee to his dwelling-place."
Bahrám replied: "Know that Tazháv to me
Is as a bullock to a rending lion."
He cut Kabúda's head off with a dagger,
Secured it to his royal saddle-straps,
Took it to camp and flung it down in scorn
As that of one unfamed, no cavalier
To fight.
The voice of chanticleer and lark
Arose, and yet Kabúda came not back:
Tazháv the warrior was sad at heart,
Aware that evil had befallen him;
Then summoned all the troops that were about
Available, and promptly led them out.

§ 25

How the Íránians fought with Tazháv

Now when the sun had set up on the plain V. 834
Its standard, and its sword had turned the rear
Of night to violet, Tazháv the chieftain
Led forth his men. Shouts from the look-out reached
The Íránians: "From Túrán a host hath come
To fight. Their leader is a Crocodile
With flag in hand."
Then from the nobles Gív
Went forth to him, escorted by a troop
Of valiant warriors, fiercely asked his name,
And said: "O lover of the fray! hast come
With such a force as this to meet the claws
Of Crocodiles?"
The bold Tazháv replied:—
"A lusty heart and lion's claws are mine.
Tazháv am I, I fling down men and pluck
The heads of valiant Lions from their trunks.
By birth and worth I am Íránian,
Sprung from the warriors and the Lions' seed.
Now I am marchlord of the country round—
A chosen chief, the king's own son-in-law."
Gív said: "Nay say not so, 'twill dim thy glory.
Would any leave Írán and settle here
Unless he lived on blood or colocynth?
If thou art marchlord and king's son-in-law
How is it that thou hast not mightier powers?
With such a band as this seek not the fray,
Nor go with vehemence against the brave;
For I who speak—a hero worshipful
And famous—trample on the heads of marchlords.
If thou with all thy troops wilt do my bidding,
And hence depart Íránward to the Sháh,

Go first of all to Tús our general,
Apply to him, and hearken to his words.
I will take care that thou shalt have a gift
From him—goods, slaves, and steeds caparisoned.
This seemeth well to me, O prudent man!
What say'st thou? Shall I have to fight to-day?"
V. 835 Tazhav the traitor said: "O gallant one!
None lowereth my flag. Now I have here
The throne and signet, horses, flocks, and soldiers;
Moreover in Írán no person dreameth
Of such a king as is Afrásiyáb.
Slaves too have I, and herds of wind-foot steeds,
Which wander over mountain, vale, and plain.
Look not upon my little band but me,
And at the mace upon my saddle-bow,
For I will maul thy troops to-day till thou
Repent thy coming."

Then Bízhan exclaimed:—

"O famous chief—engrosser of the fight,
Exalted and shrewd-hearted paladin!
In age thou art not as thou wast in youth.
Why givest thou this counsel to Tazhav?
Why so much love and amity for him?
Our business is to draw the sword and mace,
And to cut out these peoples' hearts and brains."

He urged his steed; the battle-cry went up;
They laid upon their shoulders sword and mace.
A cloud of murky dust rose in the midst
So that the sun became invisible,
The world grew gloomy as a winter's cloud,
And men beheld not shining star or moon.
Bold Gív who used to rob the sky of lustre
Was in the midst, Bízhan the deft of hand,
Who dallied not in action, led the van.
Tazhav, who wont to fight the rending lion,
And wore his crown, opposed them with Arzhang

To help him and Mardwí the Lion—two
That wearied not of fight yet gat small fruit
That day, for brave Arzhang withdrew himself,
The more part of the Turkman troops were slain,
And froward fortune turned its head away.
Tazháv the valiant fled. That famous Lion,
Bízhan, pursued him, shouting eagerly,
And with a spear in hand. Thou wouldst have said:— V. 836
"It is a maddened, roaring elephant!"
One spear-blow struck Tazháv upon the waist,
And all his lustihood departed from him.
The man reeled, but the Rúman coat of mail
Gave not, nor did the fastenings of it break.
Bízhan flung down his spear and made a clutch,
Like leopard springing at a mountain-sheep,
And then, as falcon bindeth lark, snatched off
That crown of great price which Afrásiyáb
Had set upon his head, a crown that never
Was absent from his thoughts and from his dreams.
He urged his steed toward the castle-gate,
Pursued thus by Bízhan at lightning-speed,
And, when he neared the castle, Ispanwí
Came wailing with her face suffused with tears,
And cried out loudly to him: "O Tazháv!
Where are thy host, thy mettle, and thy might
That thou shouldst turn thy back upon me thus,
And leave me in this castle shamefully?
Give me a seat behind thee; let me not
Be left inside the castle for the foe."
The heart of proud Tazháv was set on fire,
And his cheeks flamed. She mounted swift as wind
Behind him on his steed and clasped his waist.
He rushed along like dust with Ispanwí;
They made toward Túrán. The charger sped V. 837
Awhile till man and beast were both fordone,
And then Tazháv addressed his handmaid, saying:—

"O my fair mate! here is a grievous case!
My charger is exhausted with this work,
Foes are behind, in front is a ravine,
And though we race Bízhan some distance yet
Still they will have their will of us at last;
So as they are not enemies to thee
Remain behind while I urge on my horse."
Then Ispanwí alighted from the steed:
Tazháv's face was all tears at losing her,
Yet sped he on to reach Afrásiyáb,
And all the while Bízhan was in pursuit,
Who when he spied the moon-faced Ispanwí,
Her musky hair descending to her feet,
Came to her, took her with all gentleness,
Made room for her behind him, and returned
Toward the army of the paladin.
He reached the entrance of the tent of Tús,
Rejoicing, whence arose the sound of drums,
Because Bízhan, that horseman brave and wary,
Was coming with his quarry from the fight.
Tús and the chiefs—those lovers of the fray—
Then set themselves to pillaging the hold,
And afterward they went to seek the herds
That roamed about the desert of Túrán.
They took, as warriors are wont, their lassos,
And quickly furnished all the host with steeds,
While in the palace whence Tazháv had fled
Were fierce Íránian horsemen lodged instead.

§ 26

How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of Tús and his Host

v. 838 Now when Tazháv with wet eyes and in dudgeon
Came to the presence of Afrásiyáb
He spake thus: "Tús the general arrived,

And brought a host with trump and kettledrum,
While as for Paláshán and other nobles,
Their heads were brought down to the dust in anguish.
The foeman fired the marches and the fields,
Destroying all the herds."

Afrásiyáb
Was grieved thereat and sought a remedy.
He spake thus to Pírán the son of Wísa:—
"I bade thee: 'Gather troops from every side,'
But thou hast loitered through old age or sloth,
Or disaffection; many of our kin
Are slain, and watchful fortune's face is from us;
But now we may not tarry, for the world
Hath grown strait even to the vigilant!"
Then all in haste Pírán the general
Went from the presence of Afrásiyáb,
Called up the troops from all the provinces,
Served arms out, paid the soldiers, and marched forth.
The frontier passed he gave each man his post.
The right wing to Bármán and to Tazháv— V. 839
Two cavaliers whose strength was that of lions—
The left wing to the valiant Nastíhan—
One in whose clutches lions were as lambs.
The world was filled with blast of clarions,
And clang of cymbals and of Indian bells,
Air was a blaze of or, gules, and purpure
With all the spears and divers-coloured flags,
While what with troops, steeds, elephants, and camels
There was no passage left 'twixt sea and sea.
Pírán went forth in haste. Afrásiyáb
Departed from his palace to the plains,
And numbered all the army man by man
To see how many noble warriors
There were. He made the total five score thousand—
All lion-men and wielders of the sword—
Then bright and glad oft blessed Pírán, and said:—

"Thou settest forth with joy to victory:
Ne'er may thine eye behold the bale of time."
The army marched along troop after troop,
No plain was visible or sea or height;
Pírán commanded: "Quit the accustomed route,
Take the short road; the foeman must not hear
Of these my noble and illustrious troops,
So may I bring this great host like a mountain
Down unawares upon yon army's head."
He sent intelligencers out forthwith,
And shrewdly sought to learn how matters stood;
Then, stubbornly proceeding on his march,
Advanced toward Giravgard prepared for battle.
V. 840 The chiefs reported what the spies announced:—
"Tús the commander tarrieth where he was:
No sound of drums hath risen from the troops,
For all of them are drinking themselves drunk,
And wine is in their hands both day and night.
He hath no mounted outpost on the road,
Not recking of the army of Túrán."
Pírán, when he had heard this, called the chiefs,
Spake unto them at large about the foe,
And said thus: "Never in the fight have we
Held such a vantage o'er the enemy!"

§ 27

How Pírán made a Night-attack on the Íránians

Out of that noble host Pírán made choice
Of thirty thousand horse with scimitars,
Who marched at dead of night; no tymbal sounded,
No trumpet blared, none raised the battle-cry.
Now when the wary chief led forth his troops
Seven leagues remained betwixt them and the foe,
And first they came upon the Íránians' herds

At large upon the desert of Túrán,
Took many beasts and bore them off withal—
Mishap unparalleled! The overseers
And herdsmen were all slain, the Íránians' fortune
Had grown averse. Thence like a murky cloud
The Turkmans marched upon the Íránian host—
All drunken and disposed in groups unarmed;
Howbeit Gív was in his tent alert,
Gúdarz the chieftain sober. Then arose
The war-cry with the crash of battle-axes,
And Gív—that fight-engrosser—was astound.
There stood in front of his pavilion V. 841
A steed caparisoned in battle-gear.
The gallant hero lion-like arrayed
His body in the mail of Siyáwush,
And, raging like a leopard at himself
In shame for his own indolence and sloth,
"Up! Up!" quoth he. "How is it that to-night
My brain is filled with fumes instead of war?"
Then having mounted rushed forth like a blast.
He saw the heaven dark with night and dust,
And entering the chief's pavilion
Exclaimed: "Up! Up! The enemy hath come
While we—the warriors of the Sháh—are sleeping!"
Departing thence he visited his sire,
An ox-head mace in hand. As quick as smoke
He went about the host, awoke the sober,
And chode Bízhan: "Is this the place for wine
Or fighting?"
The Íránians were hemmed in,
The war-cry rose, the tumult dazed the drunken,
A cloud ascended and its rain was arrows.
Soft pillows were beneath the drunkards' heads,
Above were sword, hot mace, and scimitar.
Now when dawn showed forth from the Sign of Leo,
And gallant Gív surveyed the host, he saw

The waste all covered with Íránian slain,
And watchful fortune's head averse from them.
Gúdarz too looked about on every side;
The foemen's number grew continually;
Against the little force there ranged itself
A host like ants and locusts. Tús too looked,
And saw no fighting-men save Gív, Gúdarz,
And other cavaliers all sore bestead.[1]
V. 842 The flags were rent, the kettledrums o'erturned,
And the survivors' cheeks like ebony,
For sires had lost their sons and sons their sires,
And that great host was utterly o'erthrown,
Since so the swiftly circling vault, which now
Affordeth pleasure and now pain, decreed.
Unable to resist they turned their backs,
Abandoning their camp in their confusion,
Disorganised, without their drums and baggage,
And sorely stricken both on left and right.
On this wise fared they toward the Kásа rúd—
A strengthless mob. With vengeful souls and tongues
All jeers the Turkman horsemen followed Tús,
And thou hadst said that maces from the clouds
Rained in the rear on hauberk, helm, and mail.
None made a stand, the warriors took refuge
Among the mountains, foundered like their steeds,
And had no spirit, strength, or staying power.
Now at the heights the Turkman host turned back,
Exhausted by the fight and long pursuit,
And Tús no farther feared the foe's assault.
The Íránian troops bewailed their many lost,
Who if they lived were wounded or in bonds—
Alike a cause for tears. No crown or throne
Remained, no tent, no steed, no warrior;
The land was barren and provided nothing,
While nobody went forth to seek the wounded.

[1] Inserted from C.

The son bewailed the father bitterly,
And burned in anguish for the suffering.
The use and custom of the world is this:
To keep back from thee what its purpose is.
Its juggling tricks behind a veil are done, V. 843
It acteth harshly and capriciously,
While in greed's grip we travail long, and none
Can tell appearance from reality.
From wind thou camest and to dust wilt go:
What They[1] will do to thee how canst thou know?
The more part of the Íránian troops were slain,
The rest had come back wounded; at their beds
No leeches were, but grief and tears of blood.
Tús battle-maddened was beside himself,
So to Gúdarz the hoary veteran,
Deprived of child and grandchild, home and land,[2]
There came the other veteran warriors
With broken hearts to seek his leadership.
He placed a watchman on a mountain-top
To keep his eyes intently on the foe,[3]
While outposts went their rounds on every side
To find perchance a cure for this distress.
He bade a noble of the Íránians
To girdle up his loins to give the Sháh
The news of what the captain of the host
Had done, and how, by their ill day opprest,
They had small profit from their vengeance-quest.

[1] The Powers supreme that be.

[2] With regard to the first part of this line, the loss of Gúdarz' sons and grandsons properly seems to belong to the subsequent battle (p. 89); the last part seems more applicable to the historical than to the legendary Gúdarz.

[3] "Il plaça sur la montagne une sentinelle pour observer la route d'Anbouh" (Mohl).

§ 28

How Kai Khusrau recalled Tús

The courier carried to the Sháh the tidings
Of that eclipse of fortune. Brave Khusrau
Was troubled when he heard, his bosom throbbed
With grief. To anguish at his brother's case
Was added anguish on the troops' account.
V. 844 That night he uttered malisons on Tús
Till cock-crow. Summoning a prudent scribe,
And pouring out the fulness of his heart,
He wrote a letter in a wrathful strain,
With eyes all tears in mourning for his brother,
To Faríburz the son of Sháh Káús—
A letter for the chieftains of the host.
First in the letter came the praise of Him,
Who made both earth and time, thus: "In the name
Of Him Who is the Lord of sun and moon,
And giveth power alike to good and bad!
From Him come triumph and defeat, from Him
Both good and bad get might and their desire.
He fashionèd the world and place and time,
He fashionèd ant's foot and massy mountain,
And hath bestowed life, lustihood, and wisdom,
High throne and majesty and diadem.
No man can free himself from that control;
The lot of one is Grace and throne, another's
Misfortune, want, grief, suffering, and hardship;
Yet see I that All-holy God is just
In everything, from yonder shining sun
To darksome dust.
Tús with the flag of Káwa,
And forty warriors wearing golden boots,
I sent out with a host against Túrán,
And, first fruit of revenge, my brother perished!

Let not Irán have such another chief!
Let not the host have such another leader!
Alas! Alas! my brother, young Farúd—
The head of nobles and the stay of heroes!
I was in tears of anguish for my sire,
A long while was I burning in that sorrow,
And now my brother is the cause of tears!
I know not who are friends and who are foes.
'Go not,' I said to Tús, 'toward Charam;
Breathe not upon Kalát or Mount Sapad,
Because Farúd is with his mother there.
He is a warrior of royal race;
He knoweth not this army whence it is, V. 845
And if they be Iránian troops or what;
He will come forth to stop the way and stake
His head upon the issue of a fight.'
Alas! that warrior of royal birth
Whom wretched Tús hath given to the wind!
If he had been commander heretofore
It had been evil hap for Sháh Káús,
And furthermore he slumbereth in battle,
And only rouseth to sit down to drink.
There is no prowess in his neighbourhood,
And may a soul so darkened cease to be!
When thou shalt read this letter stir thyself;
Put far away from thee food, rest, and sleep;
Send Tús back with all speed, observe mine orders,
And heed not other counsels. Thou art chief,
The captain of the host; 'tis thine to wear
The golden boots and hold the flag of Káwa.
Illustrious Gúdarz will counsel thee
In all; haste not to fight, keep far from wine,
Abstain from slumber, seek not at the first
To fight through anger, tarry as thou art
Until the wounded are restored to health;
Then Gív will lead thy van for he possesseth

Grace, stature, and the clutches of a leopard;
Bring from all sides material for the war,
And God forfend thou think of banqueting!"
They sealed this letter with the Sháh's own signet,
Who thus enjoined the messenger: "Depart
Upon the road; repose not night or day,
And take another horse at every stage."
So sped the messenger until he came
To Faríburz and gave him the dispatch,
Who summoned Tús and Gív and all the chiefs,
V. 846 Spake of the past, read the Sháh's letter to them,
And then a new Tree fruited in the world.
The nobles and the Lions of Írán
All called a blessing down upon the Sháh,
The leader Tús gave up the royal standard,
The drums, the elephants, and golden boots
To Faríburz, and said to him: "They come
As worthy comrades to a worthy man.
May fortune always give thee victory,
Be every day of thine a New Year's Day."
Then Tús took all the kindred of Naudar,
Those warlike cavaliers and their command,
And making no delay upon the road
Came from the field of battle to the Sháh,
And kissed the ground before him, while Khusrau
Vouchsafed not so much as to look at him,
And only spake to utter malisons,
Disgraced Tús in the presence of the court,
And said at last: "Thou man of evil mark!
Let thy name cease among the illustrious.
Dost thou not fear the holy Lord of earth?
Hast thou no awe or reverence for heroes?
I gave to thee a royal helm and girdle,
And sent thee forth to fight against the foe.
Did not I say: 'Go not toward Charam'?
Yet didst thou go and give my heart to sorrow,

Didst first of all take vengeance on myself,
And minishedst the race of Siyáwush!
My noble brother—brave Farúd—whose peer
The age had not thou slewest, and to fight
With him 'twould need a host of men like thee!
Thereafter when thou wentest to the fray V. 847
Thou wast absorbed in minstrelsy and feasting!
Thou hast no place among the throng of men,
The things for thee are chains and straps and madhouse;
Nor hast thou business with the men of rank,
Because thou hast no wise considerance.
Thy white beard and descent from Minúchihr
Have given thee hope of life; else had I bidden
One of thine enemies to be thy headsman.
Go! Let a prison be thy home henceforth,
And let thine evil nature be thy jailor."
He drave Tús out, put him in bonds, and tore
The root of gladness from his bosom's core.

§ 29

How Faríburz asked a Truce of Pírán

So Faríburz, since he was paladin
As well as prince, assumed the casque and bade
Ruhhám display his name and native worth
By going from the mountain to Pírán
To treat with him: "Go to Pírán," he said,
"Convey to him a friendly embassage,
And say: 'The process of the turning sky
Hath been fraught ever thus with hate and love:
It lifteth one to heaven on high, another
It maketh vile, sad, and calamitous,
Him specially that seeketh warriors' hurt.
Now night-attacks are not the wont of heroes
And mighty men that brandish massive maces.

If thou wilt cease from arms we too will cease;
If thou preferrest war then we will fight,
V. 848 But let there be a one month's armistice
In order that the wounded may recruit.'"
The brave Ruhhám went out from Faríburz,
And took with him the message and the letter.
He went his way, the Turkman outposts saw him,
And asked him who he was and whence he came.
Ruhhám replied: "A warrior am I,
A man of prowess, weight, and watchfulness—
The bearer of a message to Pírán
From Faríburz the son of Sháh Káús."
A horseman of the outpost went like dust
To tell the tidings, and thus spake: "Ruhhám,
Son of Gúdarz, hath come to see the chief."
Pírán commanded him to be brought in,
And treated with all honour and respect.
The eloquent Ruhhám approached in dread
Of what the foe might purpose, but Pírán,
On seeing him, received him graciously,
And placed him on the throne. Ruhhám then told
His business, and Pírán said: "'Tis no trifle;
Ye stirred up strife; we marked no sloth in Tús;
He crossed the border like a savage wolf,
And slaughtered great and small remorselessly.
What multitudes he slew or carried off!
Our country's weal and woe were one to him.
Still now, although they took us unaware,
The Íránians are repaid for their ill deeds;
So if thou art the captain of the host
Demand of me according as thou needest.
If thou wilt have a month of armistice
None of our horsemen shall go forth to fight.
If thou wilt fight I too am fain for war;
Prepare and set the battle in array.
V. 849 If ye will use the month that we accord

In marching from the frontiers of Túrán,
And in a swift retreat to your own borders,
Ye will behold your reputation saved;
But if not we will close with you in fight;
Ask not for any armistice henceforth."
He gave a robe of honour to Ruhhám,
One suited to a man of his repute,
And brave Ruhhám conveyed to Faríburz
A letter like the one that he had brought.
When Faríburz had gained a month's delay
He clutched in all directions like a lion.
They loosed the fastenings of the money-bags,
They gathered bows and lassos from all sides;
They went about, reorganised the host,
And partially regained what had been lost.

§ 30

How the Íránians were defeated by the Turkmans

When with the ending of the month came war,
For they observed their compact honourably,
The soldiers' shouts went up on every side,
And all set forward to the battlefield;
The din of trumpet, drum, and bell shook heaven,
While what with chargers' crests, reins, hands, and swords,
Bows, battle-axes, lances, maces, bucklers,
And lassos, gnats could find no way. "The world,"
Thou wouldst have said, "is in the Dragon's maw, V. 850
Or heaven level with earth!"
Upon the right
Was Gív son of Gúdarz, an archimage
And marchlord, on the left the skilled Ashkash,
Who shed blood in a river when he fought;
Before the standard at the army's centre

Was Faríburz, the son of Sháh Káús,
With men of battle. He harangued his troops,
And said: "Till now our prowess hath been hidden,
But we will fight to-day as lions fight,
And make the world too narrow for our foes;
Else will our maces and our Rúman casques
Laugh at the host for this disgrace for ever."
They made a heavy rain of arrows fall
Like autumn tempests beating on a tree.
For arrows and the dust of shouting troops
No bird had room to fly, the falchions shone
Like diamonds and flamed amid the dust.
Thou wouldst have said: "Earth is a negro's face;
The stars are warriors' hearts." The multitudes
Of maces, spears, and trenchant scimitars
Brought Doomsday on the world. Gív from the centre
Advanced with lips a-foam and raised his war-cry.
He with the noble kinsmen of Gúdarz,
With whom the issue lay for good or ill,
V. 851 Strove with their spears and arrows, showering sparks
From steel. Gúdarz fought fiercely with Pírán,
And slew nine hundred of his kin. Lahhák
And Farshídward saw how their mighty host
Was going up in dust and charged on Gív,
Upon his mace-men and his valiant troops.
Shafts fell in showers from the chieftains' bows
Upon those famous warriors clad in mail
Till none could see the surface of the ground,
Earth was so hidden by the mass of slain,
While no man turned his back upon another
Or left his post. At length Húmán spake thus
To Farshídward: "We must attack the centre,
And, routing Faríburz, deprive the host
Of his support; it will be easy then
To beat the right wing and to seize the baggage."
They fell upon the centre, Faríburz

Fled from Húmán, the fighting line was broken,
The haughty chiefs gave way, each took his course,
Not one Íránian warrior stood his ground.
They saw the drums and standard in position
No more, and so with eyes bedimmed with fighting
They turned their backs upon the enemy,
And in that action only grasped the wind.
The tymbals, spears, and standard were o'erthrown,
Men could not tell the stirrup from the rein,
For they had lost all stomach for the fight; V. 852
The mountains and the plains were drenched with blood.
Then Faríburz, as foes were gathering
On every side, made for the mountain-skirt
With those Íránians whose life was whole,
Although for such a life one needs must weep.
Gúdarz and Gív with many warriors
Of fame among the troops still held their own;
But when Gúdarz observed the centre bare,
No flag of Faríburz, no chiefs or troops,
He turned with heart afire as if to flee:
'Twas Doomsday for the kindred of Gúdarz.
Gív said to him: "O ancient general!
Much hast thou seen of mace, and sparth, and arrow,
And if thy purpose is to flee Pírán
I needs must scatter dust upon my head.
Of chieftains and of veteran warriors
There will remain not one alive on earth.
For thee and me there is no cure for dying.
Death is the very last calamity,
And, since our ruggéd hour hath come upon us,
The foe should see thy face and not thy back.
I will not quit my post, let us not shame
Thy father's dust. Hast thou heard never then
This ancient saying from some man of lore:—
'When buttressed back to back two brethren stand
A mountain-mass is but as dust in hand'?

Thou art alive with seventy valiant sons,
And thou hast many Elephants and Lions
Among thy kindred. Break we with our swords
The foe's heart and uproot him though a Mountain."
Gúdarz, when he had heard the words of Gív,
And marked the helmed heads of his warrior-kin,
Repented of his cautious rede and took
A firmer stand. Guráza, Gustaham,
With Barta and brave Zanga came to them,
And made a compact by a binding oath :—
V. 853 "Though maces stream with blood we will not quit
This field, but, back to back, strive to retrieve
Our honour lost."
They took their stand and plied
The mace. Full many a noble foe was slain,
But fortune favoured not the Íránians.
Then old Gúdarz said to Bízhan: "Depart
Hence quickly, take with thee thy mace, and arrows,
Direct thy horse's reins toward Faríburz,
And bring me Káwa's standard. It may be
That Faríburz will come with it himself,
And flush the face of earth with violet."
Bízhan on hearing this urged on his steed,
Came like Ázargashasp to Faríburz,
And said to him: "Why art thou hiding here?
Employ thy reins as warriors use to do,
And stay no longer on the mountain-top;
But if thou wilt not come entrust to me
The flag and horsemen with their blue steel swords."
But Faríburz, no mate for wisdom then,
Cried out: "Away! Thou art in action rash
And new to war. The Sháh gave me the standard,
The host, crown, throne, and leadership. This flag
Becometh not Bízhan the son of Gív,
Or any other warrior in the world."
Bízhan laid hand upon his blue steel sword,

Struck at the standard, clove it in the midst,
Seized half thereof and, rushing from the throng,
Made off to bear the banner to the host.
Now, when the Turkmans saw it on the way,
A band of lion-hearted warriors
Went toward Bízhan and drew their iron sparths,
And blue steel swords, to fight for Káwa's standard.
Then spake Húmán: "Yon is the violet flag
Wherein is all the virtue of Írán;
If we can take it we shall make the world V. 854
Strait to the Sháh."
Bízhan strung up his bow
As quick as dust, discharged a shower of arrows
Upon his foes, and, as he drove them back,
Prepared a banquet for the ravening wolf.
The cavaliers hard by said unto Gív
And Gustaham: "The Turkmans are retreating;
Perchance Bízhan is coming with the standard."
The brave chiefs of the Íránian host advancing
With massive maces slew the Turkman horse
In numbers. Famed Bízhan arrived apace,
And thence the chieftains held the ground for him
Up to the host. Like lion fierce he came
With Káwa's flag, the soldiers gathered round it,
And air grew violet-dim with horsemen's dust.
Once more the Íránian host advanced to fight,
And in the foremost rank Rívníz was slain,
Who was as dear as life to Kai Káús,
A younger son, a prince who wore a crown,
Beloved by Faríburz. When that head fell
Full many a noble hero rent his clothes,
And Gív exclaimed: "Chiefs, valiant warriors!
Upon this field of battle Faríburz,
The son of Sháh Káús, esteemed Rívníz
Above all else. The grandson and the son
Of old Káús—Farúd the son of Siyáwush

And now Rívníz—have perished all in vain!
What greater wonder hath the world in store?
V. 855 We must not let his crown fall to the foe
Amid the ranks of war, for that would be
Disgrace upon disgrace through it and through
The slaughter of Rívníz."
Now brave Pírán,
The noble chieftain, heard the words of Gív,
And o'er that crown the battle rose afresh.
On both sides many fell and fortune quitted
The Íránians, yet Bahrám the warrior
Charged lion-like the foe and carried off
The crown upon his spear-point, while both hosts
Stood wondering, the Íránians full of joy
At rescuing that crown so late assumed.
The combat waxed more fierce, none turned aside,
They raged and smote each other on the head
Until the day grew dark, and eyes were baffled.
Eight of the kinsmen of Gúdarz survived;
The rest had fallen on the battlefield.[1]
Of Gív's seed there had perished five and twenty—
Men who were fit for diadem and treasure—
With seventy of the offspring of Káús,
All cavaliers and Lions in the fight,
Besides Rívníz that crownèd warrior,
No unit merely in the reckoning.
Nine hundred horsemen, kinsmen of Pírán,
Were missing in the battle on that day,
While of the lineage of Afrásiyáb
The fortunes of three hundred slept, howbeit
The field, the day, and therewithal the standard—
The lustre of the world—were with Pírán:
V. 856 'Twas not the Íránians' day for combating;
Their combat-seeking ended in mishap,

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 4. The eight survivors include Gúdarz himself and his grandson Bízhan.

They turned their faces from the battlefield,
Abandoning the wounded to their fate.
Now Gustaham had had his charger killed
As fortune turned away, and he in mail
Went spear in hand afoot like one bemused.
Bízhan, approaching him as day grew dark,
Said to him: "Ho! Get up and ride behind me:
There is none dearer to me than thyself."
So both of them bestrode a single charger.
When day was done they sought the mountain-skirt,
Abandoning the battle in a rout.
The Turkman cavaliers, with joyful hearts
Released from travail and anxiety,
Returned to their own camp with haughty mien
And fit for fight, while on the Íránian side
The ears were deafened by heart-rending cries,
As all mourned on the mountain friend or kinsman.
Such is the process of this ancient sky!
Turn as it may there is no remedy,
And still it turneth o'er us loving none,
But treating friend and enemy as one,
Well may it be a cause of dread to all
Whose fortune's head is bending to a fall!

§ 31

How Bahrám returned to look for his Whip on the Battlefield

That night, when both the armies were at rest,
Bahrám came to his sire in haste and said:— V. 857
"O mine illustrious sire and worshipful!
When I retrieved that crown, and raised it cloudward
Upon my spear, I lost a whip of mine.
Those villain Turkmans, when they pick it up,
Will break their jests upon the great Bahrám;
The world will be all ebon in mine eyes.

The Turkman general will use a whip
That hath my name inscribed upon the leather.
I will go quickly and recover it
However great and long the toil may be.
Doth this ill come upon me from the stars
That my renown may go down to the dust?"
Said old Gúdarz: "O son! thou wilt but end
Thy fortunes. Wilt thou face the foemen's breath
So madly for a stick bound round with leather?"
Gív said: "My brother! go not forth. New whips
Have I in plenty—one whose haft is gold
And silver, two with handles of fine pearls
And other gems. When Farangís unlocked
The treasury and gave so many arms
And belts to me I took this whip and breastplate;
The rest I left unheeded in Túrán.[1]
Moreover Sháh Káús bestowed upon me
V. 858 A whip resplendent as the moon with jewels,
And five I have besides of golden work
Inwrought with royal gems, and all the seven
Will I bestow upon thee. Go not forth
And wantonly provoke a new engagement."
Said brave Bahrám to Gív: "I cannot hold
This shame of small account. Your talk is all
Of colour and design, mine of a name
Now wedded to disgrace. I will recover
My whip or, by endeavouring this, will bring
Mine own head to the shears."
Bahrám misread
God's purpose, and his fortune proved averse.
The fool is all agog to take his leap
Just when his fortune falleth into sleep!
Bahrám pricked forth by moonlight to the field,
And bitterly bewailed the slain, those luckless
And heart-seared ones. The body of Rívníz

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 376.

Was whelmed in blood and dust, his tunic rent.
Bahrám the Lion wept for him and cried:—
"Alas! O young and valiant cavalier!
Men slain like thee are but a pinch of dust!
For nobles palaces, for thee a trench!"
Among his brethren flung on that broad plain
He roamed. One, stricken by the scimitar,
Of all those chiefs still lived. He marked Bahrám,
Wailed, asked his name, and said: "O Lion! I live,
Though flung among the slain, and I have craved
For two days bread and water and a robe
To sleep upon!"
Bahrám made haste to him
With loving spirit and a kinsman's heart,
Began to weep and lacerate his cheeks, V. 859
Rent his own raiment into strips to bind
The wounds, and said: "Fear not; 'tis but a scratch,
And merely needeth binding. Thou shalt go,
When I have bound it, to the host again,
And speedily recover of thy hurts."
He thus restored one that was lost but knew not
That he himself was doomed to lose his way.
He said: "Stay here, youth! till I hurry back.
While I was fighting for the crown I dropped
My whip; when I have found it I will come,
And take thee to the army with all speed."
Thence hasting to the centre of the field
He searched about until he found the whip,
Which was amid a heap of wounded men
With much dust showered thereon and blood withal.
Alighting from his steed he took it up,
And heard the sound of neighing. His steed likewise
Perceived the neighing of some mares, became
As nimble as Ázargashasp, rushed off,
And turned its head toward them while Bahrám
In dudgeon followed after in his tunic

And helmet, with the sweat upon his face
With hurrying, until he reached the horse
And, having caught it, mounted carrying
In hand an Indian sword; but, when he spurred,
The steed moved not a foot. Both man and horse
Were covered o'er with dust and sweat. Bahrám
Was so chagrined that with his scimitar
He slew the steed. Thence to the battlefield
He went as swift as wind. There all the plain
Was covered with the dead, and all the ground
V. 860 Like cercis-bloom. "How can we make our way
Upon the plain," he said, "without a horse?"
The foe grew ware of him and from the centre
There hasted forth a hundred cavaliers
To capture him and from the battlefield
Convey him to Pírán. Bahrám the Lion
Strung up his bow and showered shafts upon them-
A hero's shafts—so who could bide about him?
He slew or wounded most of them and sprang
Like some fierce lion at his enemies.
The rest withdrew and sought Pírán, exclaiming:—
"Behold a Lion both in pluck and might,
Who though afoot will do his kind in fight!"

§ 32

How Bahrám was slain by Tazháv

The troops on their return informed Pírán
Of that youth's deeds, and much talk passed thereon.
Pírán inquired: "Who is this man? What name
Hath he among the noble?"
One replied:—
"Bahrám the lion-queller, the host's lustre."
Pírán said to Rúín: "Arise. Bahrám
Can not escape. If thou canst take him living

The age will rest from strife. Take troops enough,
For he is famed and valiant."
Hearing this V. 861
Rúín went off on hostile thoughts intent.
Bahrám perceived him quick as dust and showered
Shafts on him, sitting on a mound the while,
A Lion bold with shield before his head.
Rúín son of Pírán was arrow-pierced,
The others lost all keenness for the fight.
They came disheartened to the paladin,
Full of concern and dudgeon, saying thus:—
"None ever fought so, and we have not seen
In any stream so fierce a crocodile."
Pírán was sore distraught at this account,
And trembled like the leaf upon the tree;
Then mounting on his fiery steed went forth,
Accompanied by many warriors,
And coming to Bahrám said: "Famous chief!
Why is it that thou combatest afoot?
When thou wast in Túrán with Siyáwush [1]
Thou usedst to be prudent, shrewd, reserved:
We should eat bread and salt together, we
Should sit together and become fast friends.
With such high lineage and native worth,
Such lion-manhood and exceeding prowess,
Thy head must not be levelled with the dust,
And kin and country sorrow for thy sake.
Come let us make a covenant by oath
On such wise as shall satisfy thy heart;
Then will I make affinity with thee
And, having made it, will advance thee more.
Thou canst not fight against these famous troops
On foot! Be not a traitor to thyself."
Bahrám said: "Paladin wise, shrewd, and ardent,
My lips have tasted nothing for three days,

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 249 *seq.*

And day and night have I been combating;
V. 862 But yet I must resume the fight forthwith
Unless thou wilt provide me with a steed
To bear me back to the Íránians,
Back to the old Gúdarz son of Kishwád."
Pírán said: "Know'st thou not, O atheling!
That I can countenance no such design?
What I suggested is the better course:
Thou art a brave man; act not recklessly.
Consider that the horsemen of our host
Hold it no small dishonour to themselves
That many of the scions of the great—
Men who wore diadems, well skilled in war—
Were killed or wounded by thee in the fight,
And smirched with dust. Who will approach Írán
Now but with tingling in his blood and brain?
If there were no fear of Afrásiyáb,
And that his heart would be enraged at me,
I would, O youth! provide thee with a steed
To bear thee homeward to the paladin."
He spake thus, turned about, and went his way,
Love in his heart but prudence in his head,
While from the host Tazháv—a man whose might
Surpassed an elephant's—came forth to meet him,
And asked him what had passed. Pírán replied:—
"There is no warrior equal to Bahrám.
I gave him out of kindness much good counsel,
Showed him his course, and proffered goodly league;
Mine offers found no access to his heart;
He fain would go back to the Íránian host."
Tazháv replied: "Love will not win his soul;
Now I will go and if I capture him
Afoot will put him 'neath the stones forthwith."
V. 863 He hurried to the field impetuously,
Where brave Bahrám was all alone in arms,
And, when he saw Bahrám with spear in hand,

Cried loudly like a furious elephant,
And said to him: "Thou wilt not get away
In this fight from these famous warriors.
Dost thou expect to go back to Írán?
Dost thou expect to lift thy head on high?
Thou hast cut off our princes' heads. Abide,
For now thine own time draweth to a head."
He bade his mates: "Lay on and give it him
With arrow, double-headed dart, and dagger."
The troops closed in a body on Bahrám,
All who were chief among the valiant men,
While he the hero having strung his bow
Dimmed with his shafts the brightness of the sky.
When arrows failed he took his spear in hand,
Till plain and hill were like a sea of gore,
And when the spear was cloven he still shed blood
With mace and sword like raindrops from a cloud.
The fight continued on this wise: Bahrám
Was wounded by the shafts of his brave foes,
And, when the hero's strength and vigour failed,
Tazháv came up and struck him from behind
A sword-cut on the shoulder. Brave Bahrám
Fell from the hillock on his face; the hand
That used to wield the sword was smitten off;
He ceased from combating and all was over.
E'en fell Tazháv grew hot of heart for him,
And, as in shame and grief he turned his reins,
He felt the warm blood tingling in his veins.

§ 33

How Gív slew Tazháv in Revenge for Bahrám

When bright Sol showed its back, Gív, heart-oppressed
About his brother, spake thus to Bízhan:—
"Joy of my heart! my brother cometh not!

V. 864 We must go forth and ascertain his case;
Let us not have to sorrow for the slain."
The valiant pair departed swift as dust
Toward the battlefield—the place of strife.
They sought him everywhere and, having found him,
Rushed anxiously toward him, shedding tears
Of blood. He lay—a wreck of gore and dust;
One hand was severed; all was over with him.
The gallant Gív fell from his charger's back,
And roared out like a lion. At the sound
Bahrám moved, turned, and gaining consciousness
Spake thus to Gív: "O seeker after fame!
When thou hast shrouded me upon my bier
Avenge me on Tazháv; that Bull may not
Withstand the Lion. From the first Pírán,
The son of Wísa, proved a friend to me,
Unlike the chiefs of Chín who sought revenge,
And then Tazháv, the injurious, gave these wounds,
Forgetting birth and rank."
Gív, when Bahrám
Had spoken this, wept tears of gall and said:—
"I swear by God the Judge Omnipotent,
By white day and by azure night that till
I shall avenge Bahrám my head shall see
No covering save a Rúman helm."
All vengeance
And grief he mounted, Indian sword in hand.

V. 865 Now when the world's face dusked Tazháv returned
From outpost duty. Spying him afar
Brave Gív rode toward him with a freer breath
On seeing him thus parted from the host,
No chiefs or warriors near. Gív loosed his lasso,
And caught the foe about the waist forthwith,
Then placed the lasso 'neath his thigh, wheeled round,
And lightly dragged Tazháv from saddle-back,
Flung him to earth disgraced and all forlorn,

And springing from the saddle bound his hands.
Gív, mounting, like a madman haled Tazháv
Along the ground who begged for mercy, saying:—
"No fight is left in me, thou valiant man!
What have I done that of this countless host
Thou givest me to-night a glimpse of Hell?"
Gív struck him with the whip two hundred times
Across the head, and answered thus: "No words!
Dost thou not know, thou wretch! that thou hast set
A fresh tree in the garden of revenge—
One that will reach to heaven, one whose trunk
Is fed on blood while daggers are its fruit?
Since thou must hunt Bahrám thou shalt explore
The Crocodile's strait gullet, for the ill
That robbed Bahrám of life wrung Gív's heart too."
"Thou art the eagle and the lark am I,"
Tazháv replied. "I bore Bahrám no grudge,
Nor caused his death; the cavaliers of Chín
Had slain him ere I came."
"Pernicious wretch!"
Said Gív, "spare thine excuse and futile words."
Gív dragged him to Bahrám, the wounded Lion. V. 866
And said: "Behold this faithless head! I pay
The savage with the meed of savagery.
I thank the Maker, the Omnipotent,
That fate hath granted to me time enough
To take thy foeman's life before thine eyes."
Tazháv begged quarter, saying: "That hath been
Which was to be. How will it profit thee
To take my head?"
Then wallowing in the dust
Before Bahrám he cried: "O noble man!
I will be thy soul's slave and wait upon
The keeper of thy tomb."
Then said Bahrám
To Gív: "Whoever liveth hath to die.

Though he hath done me hurt he need not taste
The pangs of death, so spare his guilty head
That he may keep my memory alive."
But Gív, who saw his brother with such wounds,
And him that did the hurt a captive, seized
Tazháv's beard with a shout and headed him
As 'twere a lark! Bahrám wept blood and marvelled
At heaven's processes, then raised a cry
Whose like, so strange it was, none ever heard:—
"If I shall slay, or thou slay in my presence,
My brothers or my kinsmen will be slain!"
This said, the brave Bahrám gave up the ghost.
'Tis ever thus with this world! He that would
Obtain the reins must bathe his hands in blood,
Slay or be slain! Shun thou ambition's mood.
V. 867 Brave Gív wailed o'er Bahrám and strewed dark dust
On his own head, then, having bound his brother
Upon Tazháv's steed, mounted presently.
He brought the body from the battlefield,
And had a royal sepulchre prepared.
He filled the skull with spicery and musk,
Enwrapped the corpse in silk of Chín, and set it
In royal state upon an ivory throne
To sleep, suspending over it a crown,
And painting the tomb's portal red and blue:
Thou wouldst have said: "Bahrám hath never been."
The famous warriors were absorbed in grief
For fortune changed, and for Bahrám their chief.

§ 34

How the Íránians went back to Khusrau

When bright Sol topped the mountains, and the head
And crown of white day showed, the scattered troops
Began to gather, and their converse ran:—
"Full many of the Íránian host are slain!

Our leader's fortune hath deserted him,
So mighty were the Turkmans' hands in fight!
The army must not tarry longer here:
We verily must go before the Sháh,
And see how fortune turneth. If his heart
Be not intent on war then thou and I
Have no occasion to exert ourselves.
The sires have lost their sons, the sons their sires,
And most are wounded or in sore distress;
But if the Sháh shall bid us to engage,
And shall equip a noble host, then we
Will march, our hearts filled with revenge and strife,
And make the world too narrow for our foes."
Thus minded they retreated from those marches,
Their eyes surcharged with tears, their hearts with anguish,
As brother sorrowed over brother's blood, V. 868
And sighs were on their tongues for kinsmen slain.
They marched together to the Kása rúd,
Farewelling with their tongues their fallen friends.
The scouts that went forth from the Turkman host
Saw none remaining on the battlefield,
And tidings reached Pírán the son of Wísa:—
"The land is cleared of the Íránians."
Pírán, on hearing this, without delay
Sent forth spies secretly on every side
And, being certified that that proud foe
Was gone indeed, released his heart from care.
He set forth with an escort at the dawn,
And went about to view the battlefield.
The plain and mountains, valleys and ravines,
Had tents and tent-enclosures numberless.
He gave them to the soldiers, marched away,
And marvelled at the process of the world:
One day a rise, another day a fall,
Now all is gladness and then terror all,

In sooth our best course is the cup to raise
That maketh earth look bright, and fleet the days.
Pírán sent one to tell Afrásiyáb,
Who heard and joyed released from care and trouble.
The multitude light-hearted in their gladness
Adorned the road whereby Pírán must pass;
They decorated all the roofs and doors,
And poured out drachms in showers upon his head.
As soon as he approached Afrásiyáb
The king went forth with gifts to welcome him,
And called down many a blessing on him, saying:—
"Thou hast no peer among the paladins."
Then from the palace of Afrásiyáb
For two weeks rose the sounds of harp and rebeck,
While on the third Pírán resolved to go
Rejoicing to his home. The Turkman king
V. 869 Made ready presents for him: thou wouldst be
Impatient if I told of the dínárs,
The royal jewels, belts of gold with gems,
The Arab steeds with golden furniture,
The Indian scimitars with golden sheaths,
The splendid throne of teak and ivory,
The couch of turquoise and the amber crown,
The girls from Chín, the boys from Rúm, with beakers
Of turquoise filled with musk and spicery.
This wealth Afrásiyáb sent to Pírán,
And added many other gifts beside,
While as the general left the royal presence
The king addressed him thus: "My loyal hero!
Be prudent, keep the fellowship of priests,
And guard the army from the enemy.
Dispatch in all directions trusty men
To act as spies and privily withal,
For Kai Khusrau is now possessed of wealth;
Beneficence and justice deck his land.
Since noble lineage and crown and throne

Are thine desire not any good beside.
Be not secure because the foe hath gone,
But seek fresh tidings as occasion serveth.
Thy soul will suffer if thou sleep'st at ease
So long as Rustam is the paladin—
The only man that giveth me concern—
For his whole business is to seek revenge.
I fear that he will rouse himself and lead
The armies of Írán against Túrán."
Pírán, as captain of the host and kinsman,
Accepted all the counsel of the king,
And set forth with his troops toward Khutan.

Now that the story of Farúd is ended
Hear the campaign wherein Kámús contended.

PART II

THE STORY OF KÁMÚS OF KASHÁN

ARGUMENT

THE poet, having offered up his praises to the Maker, goes on to tell of the wrath of Kai Khusrau with the host. Ultimately, however, at Rustam's request, he restores Tús to favour, and sends him against Túrán. Tús is again unsuccessful, and is beleaguered on a mountain. The news reaches Kai Khusrau, who dispatches Rustam with reinforcements, while Afrásiyáb sends Kámús of Kashán and the Khán of Chín with vast hosts to assist his general Pírán. Fierce fighting follows, and Kámús is slain by Rustam.

NOTE

In its earlier scenes this campaign is a variant of the preceding one. In both Tús commands the Íránians and is defeated, in both the Gúdarzians suffer great losses, in both there are a snow-storm and a night-attack, and in both the Íránians take refuge on a mountain. Naturally the details vary, but the general similarity is unmistakable. Nothing but the existence of a variant can account for the fact that Tús is put in command again after his behaviour in the first campaign, and there is a legend, probably known to Firdausí, which puts a different complexion on the matter.[1] In the poem the difficulty is got over by the intervention of Rustam, who begs the culprit off, as he does later on in the case of Gurgín.[2] In the second night-attack, in which the positions of assailants and defenders are reversed, Húmán takes just the part that Gív is represented as taking on the first occasion.

If we are content to regard the account given in the poem of the latter part of this campaign merely as Firdausí has presented it, perhaps we may identify the Kashán with which Kámús' name is associated as that mentioned by Tabarí[3] and situated in

[1] See p. 14. [2] See p. 331. [3] ZT. iv. 184.

Ferghána, which is now a province of Russian Turkistán. We ought not, however, to overlook the probability that reminiscences of the Parthian civil wars of the days of Gotarzes and Vardanes have been embodied in the story. In this case, as in that of the wars of Gushtásp and Arjásp later on, what in reality were civil broils came in time to be looked back upon as wars between Írán and Túrán. With the historical fact of the great Persian satraps ranging themselves in opposing camps before us, there seems no reason why the Kashán originally intended may not have been the one in Persia on the highroad between Ispahán and Tihrán. Firdausí's account, however, clearly favours that in Turkistán, and we must not forget that the nomads took part in the contention between the rival Parthian princes.[1]

§ 28. The story of Rustam's fight with Ashkabús is famous both on account of its own merits and for the curious legend told in connexion with it. One day, it is said, at the court of Mahmúd a discussion arose as to the merits of Firdausí as a poet, and it was arranged between his supporters and detractors in the presence of the Sultán that he should put one of the legends, of which nothing but the bare facts remained, into verse the same day, to ascertain how far his version could be considered an improvement on the original. The story chosen was that of Rustam's fight with Ashkabús of Kashán. Firdausí's rendering of the episode delighted the assembly, the lines about the stringing and discharging of the bow especially fascinating Mahmúd, who repeated them several times and praised them highly. That night Firdausí dreamed that he met Rustam at the gate of Makná Bád. The hero was on foot, fully armed, of terrible aspect, and with bow in hand, just as the poet had described him. Rustam greeted the poet graciously, but wept and said: "I desire to pay my debt to thee, but have not power to do so. However, when I took the torque from the neck of the foe, and desired not to retain it, I made a hole in the ground yonder with the head of my spear, and buried the torque there. Go now and take it up." He pointed out a little hillock on the sand, and, having placed an arrow upon his bow, shot at it. Firdausí remembered the dream and, some time afterward, happening to pass by Makná Bád in attendance on the Sultán, he made the story known. The mound was excavated, and several torques of red gold were discovered. The Sultán gave them to Firdausí, who refused to keep them for himself, and distributed them among the other court poets.[2]

[1] See p. 10.

[2] C. Persian Preface, pp. 39–41.

§ 1

The Prelude

V. 870 In His name Who is Lord of moon and sun,
The name revealed by wisdom to the heart,
The Lord of being and uprightness—One
That brooketh not perverseness on thy part—
The Lord of Saturn, Mars, and Sol, from Whom
Our gospel are, our hopes, and dread of doom!

I know not how to praise Him though in thought
I pour my soul. He fashioned space and time;
The emmet's foot with proofs of Him is fraught.
From yonder circling sun to earthly grime,
Bright fire, air, water, all are witnesses,
And give thy soul assurance, that He is.

Let it be thine the Maker to revere,
Who hath no need of aught, no need of crown
And throne, of minister and treasurer,
Of less or more, of fortune's smile or frown;
Yet, though He needeth naught, His slaves are we,
And bow before His bidding and decree.

Since He created wisdom and the mind,
Past doubt, and set the heaven and stars on high,
In Him supreme the sole Creator find,
And Source of happiness and misery,
V. 871 Of night and day, of circling sphere above,
Of food and sleep, of anger and of love.

Of Rustam's wondrous deeds there is no scant,
His legend in the hearts of all is rife;
A crocodile in water, elephant
On land, wise, shrewd of heart, a man of strife,

Consummate both in war and valiancy,
A man of knowledge, wit, and weight was he.

His battle with Kámús I next present
In mine own words but based on document,
So turn now to the rustic minstrel's lay,
Mark what that man world-proven hath to say.

§ 2

How Khusrau reviled Tús

The troops with Faríburz, Gúdarz, and Gív—
The shatterer of hosts—went to Írán
In grief with tearful cheeks. When they had reached
The road toward Charam and had Kalát
Above, the waters of Mayam below,
They spake about the conflict with Farúd,
And all their gain was anguish and remorse.
Fear of the Sháh filled every heart with pain,
For they were guilty and their eyes wept blood.
They came before Khusrau with souls abashed,
With wounded livers, and as men in fault
For having slain their monarch's blameless brother,
And yielded crown and signet to the foe;
They came with hearts seared and with folded arms,
As slaves are wont, before their sovereign.
Khusrau regarded them with angry looks;
His heart was full of pain, his eyes of tears,
And thus he spake to God: "O righteous Judge!
Thou gavest to me fortune, throne, and prowess,
But now I shame before Thee. Thou dost know,
Far better than I know, the why and how
Of things, or else I should command to set
A thousand stakes forthwith upon the open,
And Tús and all that carried arms with him

V. 872

Should be impaled. I mourned my father's death,
My heart was filled with sorrow, pain, and trouble,
And now there is new vengeance for Farúd,
For I must needs smite off the head of Tús.
I said: 'Avoid Kalát, avoid Charam,
Though people should shower drachms upon thy head,
Because Farúd is with his mother there.
He is a hero of the Kaian race—
A warrior.' Should he know vile Tús or why
The army marched? Of course he would attack,
And from the mountain slaughter many chiefs.
Why did inhuman and insensate Tús
March in such haste against that hold? Good sooth!
The Master of the sky no longer favoureth
Him and the host. The kindred of Gúdarz
Fared ill through him. Be he, his elephants,
And drums accursed. I gave him robes of honour
And gifts, and sent him forth to fight—my brother!
Away with chiefs like Tús son of Naudar!
May no such paladins be generals!
Alas! alas! the son of Siyáwush—
Farúd—with that stout heart, that mace and sword,
Who, like his sire, was slain though innocent,
Slain by my general and by my troops!
None know I worse than Tús, and he is ripe
For chain and pit. Brainless and veinless too
The wretch is as a dog to me."
He writhed
With stricken liver to avenge his brother
And father's blood, dismissed the troops disgraced,
V. 873 Wept his heart's blood, and shut to them the door
Of audience, being wounded to the soul
With anguish for Farúd. The warriors
Went sad and sorry to the court of Rustam,
And thus excused themselves: "God willed it so!
Who wished to fight Farúd? Still when the son

Of Tús was slain the chieftains' heads grew dark
At that disgrace and, when his son-in-law
Rívníz fell too, misfortune's worst was done.
Who knew the name and bearings of Farúd,
And wished to wound him through our monarch's heart?
Plead with the Sháh. Perchance he will refrain
From vengeance on the host. Was not Rívníz,
The son of Kai Káús, slain grievously
In fight as well—a younger son and warrior,
Dear to the father of moon-faced Khusrau?
Such is the issue that all battles have,
To this a crown, to that a narrow grave!"

§ 3

How Khusrau pardoned the Íránians

When Sol had gilt earth's face, and darksome night
Was taken in the toils, shouts rose before
The palace portal and the peerless Rustam
Came to the Sháh, and said: "O great Khusrau!
Throne, crown, and signet-ring rejoice in thee.
The Sháh is wroth with Tús and with the host,
But pardon their wrong-doing for my sake.
When Tús beheld his son and son-in-law
Both slaughtered, prudence left his brain and heart,
For first, he is not wise but choleric,
And next, a son's life is no light concern;
So when Rívníz was slain before his face,
And that proud cavalier Zarásp withal,
No wonder if he blazed. The Sháh should not
Take vengeance on him. Then again the host V. 874
Was ill disposed toward thy glorious brother
Because he had not visited the Sháh.
Know that the date when each must die is fixed,

And be not grieved hereat. Our spirit passeth,
Or else is made to pass. Three hundred spells
Will not delay it."

Kai Khusrau replied:—

"O paladin! I sorrowed for this youth,
But now thy rede is solace to my soul,
Though still I ache at heart."

Then Rustam kissed
The ground before the monarch of the world.
So when the sun had shot its rays on high,
And hastened to ascend upon its curve,
When it had rent its turquoise robes of gloom,
So that its ruddy, shining form showed through,
The general, Gív, and other warriors
Approached the Sháh with blessings, and Tús said:—
"Live fortunate till time shall be no more.
Be earth the basis of thy crown and throne,
And heaven the guardian of thy Grace and fortune.
My heart is sorrowful, my liver wounded
With pain for my misdeed, my mind is full
Of shame, my tongue is all excuse, my soul
All fault, I burn as 'twere Ázargashasp
In anguish for the pure souls of Farúd
And of Zaráspa. If I am guiltier
Than others I am writhing for my deed.
When valued with Bahrám and with Rívníz
Mine own life is not worth a single mite;
So if the Sháh will cease from wrath with me,
And with this noble but offending host,
I will go forth to cancel this disgrace,
And will exalt our fallen heads anew;
V. 875 I will share all the army's toils myself,
Be it to keep my life or lose my head.
Henceforth I will not look at throne and crown,
My head shall see naught but a helm of Rúm."
The monarch graciously received these words;

His heart grew fresh as roses in the spring.
He counselled much with Rustam, with the chiefs
And warriors, then sent Tús 'gainst Túrán
With elephants and shawms and kettledrums.
The company dispersed without delay,
And Rustam also homeward took his way.

§ 4

How Khusrau sent Tús to Túrán

When bright Sol showed, and when from night's bent bow
Dawn brake, Tús with the great men of the host
Came to Khusrau who said: "Trace of this feud
Is never lost. Begun by Salm and Túr
It had fresh impulse given by Minúchihr,
But never was a Sháh so shamed as I,
Or earth so glutted with his warriors' gore!
The hills have girt them with Gúdarzians' blood
For whom weep bird and fish by land and sea.
O'er the Túránians' waste the Íránians' hands
And feet and trunks lie scattered! Are your counsels
Auspicious? Are ye all heart-stirred to vengeance?"
The gallant warriors, with folded arms
Before that sunlike and aspiring one,
All kissed the ground together—warriors,
Such as Ruhhám, Gurgín, Gúdarz, and Tús,
Kharrád and Zanga son of Sháwarán,
Bízhan and Gív and other men of might.
They said: "Well starred, good-hearted Sháh who hast V. 876
The heart withal to pluck out lions' hearts!
We all of us are slaves of thine and hang
Our heads in reverence, O Sháh! before thee.
If now the Sháh so biddeth we will all

Pour out our souls in fight, nor shall he mark
Aught ill from us if sun and moon shall lour not."
Khusrau then summoned Gív and seated him
Upon the throne of greatness, praised him much,
Bestowing many a gift and mark of favour,
And said: "Thou seekest toil on mine account,
But sharest not my treasures. Tús though leader
Must not employ the drums and elephants
Against thy counsel rashly. Didst not see
How in Bahrám's case (may his soul rejoice!)
Great skill in warfare fashioned for itself
A dark, strait dwelling through the quest of fame
And ill advice? Brief though our sojourn be
Fame should remain behind us, not disgrace."
Khusrau gave money, called the commissaries,
Spake much with Tús, and sought a lucky day
According to the stars for setting forth.
The chieftain Tús then came as general,
Received the standard, elephants, and drums,
And did obeisance while the soldiers shouted.
The earth heaved underneath the chargers' tramp;
V. 877 A dust-cloud gathered from the horses' hoofs;
The trumpet's blast went up. What with the mass
Of mail and Káwa's flag earth's face all turned
To violet. "The sun," thou wouldst have said,
"Is quenched, the sky and stars are all asleep."
The Sháh abode upon the plain with mace
And elephant till Tús the general
Had passed, who on an elephant outspread
A turquoise litter and thus Shahd-ward sped.

§ 5

The Message of Pírán to the Army of Írán

A cameleer bore blast-like to Pírán
This message: "I have reached the river Shahd
In arms and ready to contend with thee."
Pírán, on hearing this, was sorely grieved
That, 'gainst his will, he needs must pack the loads,
And went forth with his chiefs—choice cavaliers
And brave—to learn about the Íránian host,
How many chiefs, and who, were there with Tús.
He drew his troops up on his side the stream,
And sent a greeting to the Íránian chief.
He said: "I everywhere showed kindliness
To Farangís and to the Sháh. I cried,
And seethed as on fierce fire, for Siyáwush;
But now the antidote doth bear the bane,
I share in all these ills."
Tús was distressed,
Grieved at the words and sufferings of Pírán,
And said: "Go to Pírán of ardent soul, V. 878
And say: 'If thou speak'st sooth we have no quarrel.
Drop fealty, abandon thy surroundings,
And bar this door of fear and road of loss.
Go to the Sháh alone, he will requite thee,
Give thee a royal crown and paladinship.
When he recalleth thy good deeds thy pangs
Will pain him to the heart. Gúdarz and Gív
And other chieftains, nobles shrewd of heart,
Agree herein.'"
The envoy went like wind
Back to Pírán and told what he had heard
From Tús and from Gúdarz of ardent soul.
Pírán made answer: "I by night and day
Will ope my lips to praise the chieftain Tús.

I will go over, taking of my kin
Those who are wise and list to mine advice,
And send them, bag and baggage, to Írán.
An honoured head is more than crown and throne."
He did not purpose acting in this way,
But sought to gain occasion by delay.

How Afrásiyáb sent an Army to Pírán

Pírán dispatched a camel-post by night
To tell Afrásiyáb: "Troops have arrived
With shawms and tymbals from Írán, commanded
By Gív, Gúdarz, and Tús, whom I have duped
And much advised with. Choose a warrior-host
Or else the war will be inglorious.
We may uproot the foe and fire their land,
V. 879 Else in their vengeance for prince Siyáwush
The Íránian army ne'er will rest from strife."
Afrásiyáb thereat convoked his captains,
Told what had chanced, and said: "Prepare for war."
Afrásiyáb arrayed a power that dimmed
The eye of Sol; that host, so great that earth
Was hidden, on the tenth day reached Pírán,
Who having victualled and disposed the troops,
And loaded up the baggage, marched in haste,
Regarding not his promise, to the Shahd.
A scout came in to Tús and said to him:—
"Bind thou the drums upon the elephants
Because Pírán, perceiving downfall nigh,
Spake guilefully. We see the tyrant's standard
And army drawn up on the river-bank."
Tús put his battle in array. They ranged
The elephants and tymbals on the plain.
The two lines, like two mountains, clashed in fight—

The Íránian horsemen and the Turkman troops.
The dust-clouds of the hosts so dimmed the sun
That fire rose from the stream—the flash of sword, V. 880
Of dart and javelin—and thou hadst said:—
"Earth planted air with tulips!" With the stir
Of horsemen with their golden belts, and all
The golden helmets and the golden shields,
A cloud in hue like sandarach arose,
And earth became like ebony with dust.
The horsemen's heads beneath the mighty maces
Seemed anvils 'neath smiths' hammers. Thou hadst said:—
"The river is a wine-press running blood,
The air is like a reed-bed with the spears!"
Then many heads were caught in lasso-coils,
Then many an honoured form was cast away.
The shroud was mail, the pillow blood and dust;
The bosom had been hacked by scimitars.
Earth was a cercis-bloom, air ebony;
The din of tymbals filled the starry heaven.
What though the ambitious man a crown may gain,
Or but the battle's surge of blood and dust,
Yet from this world of our's depart he must,
Whate'er his portion—antidote or bane.
I wot not of the end but, this I know,
It is a cause for tears to have to go.

§ 7

How Tús slew Arzhang

There was a famous Turkman named Arzhang,
One whose renown in warfare reached the clouds.
He sent the dust up from the battlefield,
And challenged the Íránians. Tús from far
Saw him and shouted, drew his sword and asked

That son of Zira: "What name bearest thou?
Who is thy fellow in the Turkman host?"
He said: "Arzhang am I, a warrior—
A noble Lion who can bide his time.
Now will I make the earth quake under thee,
And cast thy head upon the field of fight."
V. 881 Tús, hearing but disdaining all reply,
Smote with the glittering falchion in his hand
That chieftain on the helm, and thou hadst said:—
"His body never bore a head at all!"
Pírán grieved sorely and the Turkman host,
And none came forth, but all the warriors
And chieftains of Túrán drew scimitar
And massive mace, and shouted to each other,
Those Lions: "Let us charge and make the world
Strait to the heart of Tús."
Then said Húmán:—
"To-day we will prepare. Be not cast down.
If any noble of the Iránians
Shall come to challenge us we will dispatch
A man to fight him and will mark the issue,
But not provoke them rashly. What we need
Is respite for a day, but when the host
Is stirring, and the tymbals sound in camp,
Then from beyond the stream be onslaught made
With mace in hand if God and fortune aid."

§ 8

How Húmán fought with Tús

Húmán bestrode and spurred his eagle-steed.
Thou wouldst have said: "He is an iron wall,
Or Mount Alburz in mail!" He came before
The host to fight and grasped a glittering spear.
Tús too advanced; earth rang with clarion-blare.

"And so from luckless Wísa," he exclaimed, V. 882
"A miserable Tree like this up-springeth!
Hast thou indeed come forth to fight since thou
Hast come forth mounted and with spear in hand?
By the Sháh's life and head I would oppose thee
Without my breastplate, mace, and Rúman casque,
Just like a pard that clutcheth at its prey
Among the mountains. Thou shalt see how heroes
Fight if thou venturest."

Húmán replied:—

"Be not o'er-weening for it is not good.
Though fate hath come upon one luckless chief,
And by thy hand, hold not the rest in scorn.
Arzhang had deemed himself no man at all
If matched with me upon the day of battle.
But have the Íránian warriors no shame?
Doth not the warm blood boil in any breast
In that their leader hath to champion them?
Have their hands failed to fight? Where are Bízhan
And Gív—those noble ones—and where Gúdarz,
Son of Kishwád, that taker of the world?
If thou art paladin why hast thou left
The centre for the field? The wise will own not
Thy kinship and the sane will hold thee mad.
Go, hold up Káwa's standard; generals
Come not to fight in person. Look for one
On whom the Sháh bestowed a robe of honour,
Some warrior in quest of crown and signet,
And order him to battle with the Lion,
And bring the hand of the high-handed down.
Ill would befall this noble host of thine
If thou wert slain by me, thy troops become
Abandoned, spiritless, and, if they lived, V. 883
Discomfited. Save Rustam son of Zál,
And Sám the cavalier, I see no noble
Like thee within Írán whose ancestors

Were men renowned and Sháhs. No need of army
If thou wilt fight in person! Go thy way
That some aspirant from the host may face me;
Besides, if thou wilt list to true advice,
Wherein my soul and heart confirm my tongue,
The bravest smart when they encounter me."
Tús said: "Exalted man! I am the leader,
But am withal a horseman of the fray.
Thou art a leader of the Turkman troops
Thyself! Why then hast thou come on the field?
If thy heart will accept advice of mine
Seek, 'tis my counsel, for a league with me.
Come with the noble captain of thy host
Before the Sháh because, while one surviveth,
These troops will rest no jot from this revenge.
Give not thyself thus madly to the wind,
And may my counsel ne'er recur to thee.
Leave those who should be slain to fight with us,
For not one guilty shall escape our vengeance,
So act the wise man's part. The Sháh directed:—
'Harm not Pírán. He is my foster-sire,
Experienced, and my friend. Strive not with him
Unjustly, wantonly, and see that he
Hear thine advice.'"
Húmán said: "Right or wrong,
When bidden by a king of glorious race,
V. 884 We must go forth: we have no remedy,
But must surrender all our heart to him.
Pírán himself desireth not this strife,
For he is noble, good, and generous."
While Tús was parleying, the face of Gív
Resembled sandarach, he left the host
Like wind, "O Tús of glorious race!" he cried,
"A wily Turkman with his lips afoam
Hath come between the lines; why should he speak
So long with thee apart? Seek not the door

Of peace, speak only with thy scimitar."
Húmán, on hearing, raged and said to Gív
Of sleepless fortune: "Wretchedest of all
The free! perish Gúdarz son of Kishwád!
Upon the day of battle at Ládan
Thou sawest me with Indian sword in hand
Where not one of his seed survived that read not
The inscription thereupon. For thee, thy fortune
Is like the face of Áhriman, and mourning
Is ever in thy house. If Tús slay me
Men still will use the mace and kettledrum.
Pírán is living and Afrásiyáb,
Who will avenge me promptly, but if Tús
Shall perish by my hand none of his troops
Will reach Írán. Bewail thy brothers' pangs,
Why railest thou at Tús son of Naudar?"
"What wrath is this?" said Tús, "I am thy foe; V. 885
Come let us wheel about, begin the encounter,
And bend our brows in battle."
Then Húmán:—
"All heads beneath a crown or helm must die.
Since death must come 'tis best upon the field,
And by the hand of some skilled cavalier,
A leader, prince, and ardent warrior."
Then, grasping each his massive mace, they charged.
Earth reeled, day darkened, and a dust-cloud gathered
Above the scene of strife. Thou wouldst have said:—
"The night hath come on them by day, the sun—
The lustre of the world—is blotted out!"
Those mighty maces clashed and bent like bows
Of Chách, the ring of steel rose to the sky,
The wind of that contention reached the Shahd!
Thou wouldst have said: "Stone heads are in those helms,
Those warriors' blows have blackened death's own face!"
They took in hand their Indian scimitars,

And sent sparks streaming out of stone and steel
V. 886 Till with the chieftains' might the trenchant blades
First bent, then shivered. Dust-smirched and athirst
Each warrior clutched the other's leathern belt,
And pressed with all his weight upon the stirrups,
But neither came to dust. Húmán's belt snapped.
He leapt upon a fresh steed while Tús took
His quiver, strung his bow, and set thereon
A poplar arrow. He began to shower
His shafts upon his noble foe and wheeled
To left and right as horsemen use to do.
The points of steel and eagle-plumes bedimmed
The mid-day sun, the world became as 'twere
Night's second watch, its face like diamonds.
Pierced by a poplar shaft Húmán's steed fell;
He raised his shield to save his face and head.
On seeing him afoot upon the field,
And holding not his own, the Turkman chiefs
Brought him a noble mount, but when Húmán
Had seated him upon the bark-lined saddle,
With Indian sword in hand, the men of name
And warriors all drew near to him and said:—
"It groweth dark, there is no time, and strife
Is over for the day. May evil eyes
Be far from thee and fighting end in feast."
V. 887 Húmán the warrior turned his rein (Tús raising
His own lance to him), left the field, and sought
Pírán. A shout rose from the Turkman host:—
"How didst thou fare when face to face with Tús,
O warrior? Our hearts were full for thee!
God only knoweth what we felt!"
That Lion
Replied: "O brave and veteran warriors!
The day will bring us triumph, we shall take
Yon shining flag, all joy will be your portion,
And I shall have the stars of heaven for mine."

Tús for his part was shouting through the night
Till cock-crow: "Is Húmán the man for me?
A raging lion should my foeman be."

§ 9

How the Íránians and Túránians fought the second Time

Now when high heaven had made its Crown of Jet,
And flung Pastilles on Lapislazuli,
The pickets hurried forth on every side,
And set the watch around the camps, but when
Sol showed in Cancer, and the world became
Fair as a Rúman's face, from both the camps
The sound of tymbals rose, the world was filled
With the blare of clarions, air was thick with flags,
Which gleamed red, yellow, black, and violet,
The warriors bared their weapons, and rode forth V. 888
To battle. Thou hadst said: "Heaven, earth, and time
Don iron," while the radiant sun was veiled
By dust of caracoling cavaliers,
And, what with neigh of steeds and din of drums,
Heaven kissed the earth. Húmán the chieftain wheeled
Before the ranks, a shining dart in hand,
And cried: "When I shall raise the battle-shout,
Urge on my charger and seethe up with rage,
Then draw ye forth your falchions as one man,
And hold your shields of Chín above your heads.
See nothing but your horses' crests and reins,
I want no bow, I want no lance's point,
But armed with sword and club and massive mace,
As is the use and wont of warriors,
Throw down your reins upon your horses' necks,
And give and take the buffets as they come."
This said, the gallant horseman lion-like
Went to Pírán: "O paladin!" he cried,

"Unlock the weapons of our warriors,
Keep not dínárs within the treasury,
And hoard not arms. If we prevail to-day
Thy heart shall pluck the fruit of favouring stars."
On his side Tús arrayed his host as 'twere
The eye of chanticleer. The warriors blessed him,
And hailed him as the paladin of earth,
Who triumphed in the battle, and whose valour
Sent dust up from Húmán. Then to Gúdarz,
Son of Kishwád, said Tús: "Let all wot well
That if we march forth, and our foes prevail,
Our trust must be in God, not in ourselves:
V. 889 He may assist us, else the day is lost.
At present let the chiefs with golden boots
Remain with Káwa's standard. Let none quit
The mountain; this is not the day and season
For strife and stir. Good sooth! the enemy
Out-number us two hundred times or more!"
Gúdarz replied: "If God will but avert
Our evil day the fact of more or less
Importeth not. Daunt not the Íránians,
For if the sky turn over us for ill
To wait is no avail. Array the host;
Dash not our souls with what may be."
So Tús,
The chieftain, put the battle in array—
Men, drums, and elephants of war; the footmen
Went with the baggage to the heights, Gúdarz
Was on the right, Ruhhám shared with Gurgín
The left, the troops were ranked, anon the sky
Shook with the roar of drum and clarion,
V. 890 The heart of circling heaven was rent, the sun
Was choked with dust, none saw the ground beneath him,
The murky clouds rained showers of diamonds,
Fire flashed from helm and sword, the spear-heads gleamed,

And massive maces whirled. Thou wouldst have said:—
"The air is mace and iron, and the earth
Horseshoes and mail." The plains and dales ran blood,
And swords were lamps that lit a world of night.
No one knew head from foot, such was the din
Of drum and clarion! Tús said to Gúdarz:—
"Night cometh and the astrologer hath told me:—
'To-day until the night's third watch is passed
The warriors from their scimitars will pour
Blood on the field, like rain from some dark cloud;
But victory, I fear me, in the end
Will rest with our revengeful foes.'"
Shídúsh,
Ruhhám, Gív, Gustaham, Kharrád, Farhád,
And brave Barzín came forth between the hosts,
Came liver-wounded, eager for revenge,
Like troops of dívs upon a murky night,
While in all quarters din assailed the clouds.
Húmán on his side mountain-huge led forth
His army troop on troop, and none could tell,
Amid the mass of maces, mallets, swords,
And spears, the stirrups from the reins. He said:— V. 891
"Our work to-day must not be like the fight
Of yesterday, but we must sweep the earth
Of foemen lest they seek revenge hereafter."
Then Tús advanced with foot-men, elephants,
And kettledrums, while spear-men, pavisers,
And javelin-men drew up before the horse-men.
"Leave not your posts," he said, "and hold your shields
And spears in front of you, and we will see
The massive mace-play of their chivalry."

§ 10

How the Túránians used Sorcery against the Host of Írán

Among the Turkmans there was one Bázúr
By name, adept in magic, versed in guile
And sorcery, and learnéd in the tongues
Of Chín and ancient Persia. To that warlock
Pírán said: "Scale the mountain-top and send
V. 892 Snow, cold, and blast upon the Íránians."
That sorcerer sped thither, and forthwith
Came snow and storm. The Íránian spearmen's hands
Failed in the snow and stress. Amid the tumult
And icy blast the warriors' war-cry rose,
And arrows rained. "Let all the army charge,"
Pírán bade. "While their hands freeze to their spears
None can show prowess."
With a shout Húmán
Charged like a lusty dív. They slaughtered so
That 'twixt the lines there was a sea of gore,
The vales and wastes were filled with snow and blood,
The horsemen of Írán were overthrown,
Till corpses left no room to wheel; the ground
Was blocked by snow and fallen. Tús the leader
And other chiefs cried bitterly to heaven:—
"O Higher than all knowledge, sense, and reason,
Not at, or in, but everywhere! we all
Are Thy transgressing slaves and in our straits
Appeal to Thee, for Thou wilt help the helpless,
And art the Lord of fire and icy blast.
Deliver us from this excessive cold;
We look for aid to Thee and Thee alone."
A sage approached Ruhhám and showed the height
V. 893 Where bold Bázúr was stationed with his spells.
Ruhhám wheeled round and quitting field and host,
And girding up his mail-skirts to his waist,

Clomb to the mountain-top. The warlock saw him,
And, grasping a steel mace of Chín, advanced
To fight. Ruhhám, approaching, quickly drew
His trenchant scimitar and hacked away
The warlock's hand. Like Doomsday came a blast,
And swept the murk from heaven. Staying thus
The sorcerer's hand the brave Ruhhám descended,
Regained the plain, and mounted while the air
Resumed its azure vault and radiant sun.
Ruhhám said to his sire: "'Twas sorcerer's work,
And how he played the mischief as we fought!"
The Sháh's troops saw the field a sea of blood
Strewn with Íránian heads and headless trunks.
Then spake Gúdarz to Tús: "No need have we
For elephant or drum-beat. Let us all
Draw sword and charge, and slay or else be slain.
Good sooth! our time is coming to an end;
This is no day for lasso, shaft, or bow."
Tús said: "O thou experienced veteran!
The sky is ridded of that icy blast.
Why should our heads be scattered to the winds,
Now that the Helper giveth Grace and strength?
Expose not thou thyself, for in this strife
Our warriors will avail to do our will.
Go not to meet thy fate or recklessly
Advance against our foes but tarry thou
With Káwa's standard at the army's centre,
And blue steel sword in hand. Bízhan and Gív
Together lead the right; upon the left
Is Gustaham; Ruhhám is with Shídúsh V. 894
Before the lines; Guráza's lips are foaming
For vengeance. If I shall be slain, retreat
Back to the Sháh, but death is nobler far
For me than shame and every foeman's jeers.'
Such is the world, all anguish and all woe
Seek not addition if thou canst forbear,

For that will bite thee some day and will ne'er
Prolong existence for thee here below.
Again arose the blast of clarions,
The clangour of the gongs and Indian bells.
What with the din of warlike cavaliers,
The gleam of sword and crash of battle-ax,
What with darts, maces, shafts, and javelins,
The earth became as 'twere a sea of pitch.
The plain was filled with trunkless heads and arms,
The crashing of the maces filled all ears,
But, since the face of cruel fortune loured
The Íránian warriors showed the foe their backs.
Then Tús, Gúdarz, and gallant Gív, Shídúsh,
Bízhan, and lion-like Ruhhám all took
Their lives in hand and went in quest of fame
Before the embattled lines. All those with Tús,
The nobles and the chiefs, poured out their blood
Before the host, but those behind them fled.
Then said an archmage to that warrior-chief:—
"The army is no longer at thy back:
The foe must not surround thee and destroy
Both host and general."
Tús said to Gív:—
"Our soldiers' brains and wisdom are no mates
Since they have left us thus, and in their folly
Turned from the fight; go thou and rally them;
Protest our foemen's jeers, our monarch's shame."
Gív went; the host returned; the plain and desert
Seemed filled with slain. Then Tús addressed the captains:—
"This is a struggle and a strife of chiefs!
V. 895 But since the cheek of day is darkling now,
And all the land is like a sea of blood,
Seek we a resting-place if night can rest.
Our slain perchance a bed of sand may have,
And coverlet of earth by way of grave."

§ 11

How the Íránians retreated to Mount Hamáwan

The Íránians drew back with heads abashed
And livers wounded for their friends, and when
The moon rose o'er the mountains as it were
A king triumphant on his turquoise throne,
Pírán the chieftain called his warriors,
And said: "Not many of the foe remain,
And, when the Topaz Sea shall dash its waves
Upon the Realm of Lapislazuli,
I will destroy those that survive and make
The Sháh's heart writhe."
The troops went off rejoicing,
And all the night before the tent-enclosure
Sat sleepless through the sounds of harp and rebeck;
But for their part the Íránians mourned, the sires
Lamented for their sons, the killed and wounded
Hid all the plain, earth ran with great men's blood.
To right and left the field was strewn with hands
And feet unsortable. All night men raised
Their stricken friends, bound up and stitched their wounds,
Left strangers to their fate, and burned the slain.
Full many of the kindred of Gúdarz
Were hurt or killed or captive. At the news
He wailed, earth shook beneath the Íránians' cries,
The chiefs all rent their raiment, he himself V. 896
Cast dust upon his head, exclaiming: "None
With hoary head hath seen such ills as mine!
Why must I still survive with my white hairs
Now that so many of my sons are laid
In dust? Since that dark day when I was born
I have not doffed my tunic. When I went
With heroes and my cavaliers to war

My grandsons and my sons supported me,
But none of them surviveth our first fight
Upon Túránian soil! May be my sun
Was once for all extinguished with Bahrám,
And hence I see so many chieftains slain."
Tús, hearing of Gúdarz, wept tears of blood,
And turned as pale as sandarach. He raised
A bitter Magian cry: "Had not Naudar,
That holy man," he said, "set in life's garth
My feet and roots then travail, pain, and grief,
Woe for the dead and anguish in the strife,
Had ne'er been mine, for since I girt my loins
My heart hath oft been pierced though I survive.
Now where there is a pit inter the slain,
Restore each trunk its head, and bear the baggage
Toward Mount Hamáwan. Take all the army,
The tents, and tent-enclosures to the mountain.
We will dispatch the Sháh a camel-post;
His heart will burn and he will send us troops.
I purposed when I sent the cavalier
To carry news of us before the battle,
That Kai Khusrau should send the son of Zál
To lead the reinforcements to the field."
He loaded up and, thinking of the slain
With anguish, called his men to horse again.

§ 12

How the Host of Túrán beleaguered Mount Hamáwan

V. 897 Now when the bright sun showed its crown, and strewed
The Ivory Throne with Camphor, Tús, good sooth!
What while the foe were sleeping with fatigue,
Had marched ten leagues, and fared thus day and night
With heart all sorrow and unbroken fast.
He reached Mount Hamáwan and ranked his troops

Upon its outskirts. Every eye was bloodshot,
Their hearts were seared, their souls like ravens' plumes
With anguish. Then spake Tús to Gív and said:—
"O full of wisdom and illustrious chief!
For three days we have marched with neither food
Nor sleep! Come eat a little and repose
At ease without thy mail; Pírán no doubt
Will follow us anon intent on fight.
Go to the mount thyself, and leave behind
The freshest of our soldiers with Bízhan."

Gív bare the wounded, weary of the world
And sick of life, up to the mountain-hold,
And chose the freshest of his troops for duty.
"This mountain-top," he said, "must be our home.
We must recruit."
The outpost-guards descended
To hold the approaches that no foe might pass,
And, what with challenges and sound of gongs,
Thou wouldst have said: "The stones and rocks cry out!"

Now when the sun rose o'er the mountain-tops
The Turkmans' hearts were full of eagerness.
A sound rose from Pírán's pavilion
As of an earthquake. He led forth the host V. 898
Like fire, and told Húmán: "The contest surely
Will soon be over. All their cavaliers
Are slain or, being wounded, cannot fight."

He beat the drums: a shout rose from the waste;
He led in person. When they reached the field
They only found a camp without an army,
And one who went to spy came to Pírán,
And said: "There is not an Íránian here!"

A shout of triumph rose, the troops awaited
The orders of Pírán who thus addressed
The wise men: "Sages famed and worshipful!
What shall we do now that our foes have fled?"

The horsemen of the host, both old and young,
Wroth with the paladin, exclaimed: "The Íránians
Have fled defeated, and the battlefield
Is full of dust and blood! This is no time
To fear them. We should follow up the foe.
Strange if thou partest with thy wits and wisdom
The fugitive from wind plunged into water,
And we had better hasten than delay."
Pírán replied: "In war the foot of haste
Is feebler than delay's. A sea-like host
Is gathering before Afrásiyáb;
Let us delay till that great power with all
Its warriors and fighting-men shall come;
Then will we leave none living in Írán:
Such is the counsel of the wise. Enough.
Húmán said to Pírán: "O paladin!
Vex not thy soul so much on this account.
V. 899 A host—all paladins and cavaliers,
Brave men who wield the lasso and the sword—
Have left their ground, their tents, and tent-enclosures,
Abandoned all and fled. Be sure of this,
That they were forced to flee and once for all
Show us their backs. We will not let them reach
Khusrau and muster at his court afresh;
Then from Zábulistán will Rustam march
Upon us, this delay cause fearful loss.
Now is the time for me to fall on them,
And put in practice ruse and artifice.
We have the certainty of laying hands
Upon Gúdarz and Tús the general,
The royal standard, elephants, and drums:
Shall we do better by delaying here?"
Pírán replied: "Be still thus shrewd and ardent.
So do because thy star and rede are good,
And heaven's vault is not so high as thou."
He set forth with his army in pursuit,

And bade Lahhák: "Now tarry not but ply
The rein with ten score cavaliers and loose not
The girdle from thy loins till thou hast seen
Where the Íránians are."
He went like wind,
And took no thought of rest and food. At midnight
The Íránian outpost-guards caught sight of him
Upon the dusky plain, and from the mountain
Rose shout and sound of gong. 'Twas not the time,
He saw, to tarry, went back to Pírán,
And gave him tidings of the Íránian host:—
"'Tis on Mount Hamáwan with front well guarded."
Pírán said to Húmán: "Ply rein and stirrup
In haste, take with thee cavaliers enough, V. 900
Take nobles, warriors, and men of name,
For with their flag and troops the Íránians
Have taken refuge on Mount Hamáwan.
This war involveth further toil, so sharpen
Thy wits to find a remedy; if thou
Canst capture Káwa's legacy—his standard—
Then daylight will be darkened to our foes.
If thou prevailest cleave the flag and staff
To pieces with thy trenchant scimitar.
Lo, I will follow after thee like wind,
And dally not."
Húmán chose thirty thousand
Túránian horse with shields and scimitars.
Now, when the shining sun displayed the face
That filleth earth with love, that army's dust
Appeared afar and from the look-out rose
The watchman's shout: "An army from Túrán
Appeareth! Upward to the darksome clouds
Its dust ascendeth!"
Tús, on hearing this,
Assumed his mail, rose din of trump and drum,
And all the Íránian chivalry in mass

Ranged on the mountain's foot. Whenas Húmán
Beheld that mighty army brandishing
Sword, mace, and spear, and raging like fierce lions
With Káwa's standard in their midst, he shouted
Thus to Gúdarz and Tús: "Ye left Írán
With elephants and drums to be avenged
Upon Túrán and to invade our coasts;
Now to the mountain have ye fled like game,
In utter rout and all fordone with fight!
Feel ye no shame hereat and no disgrace?
Are food and rest and sleep in rocks and stones?
To-morrow, when the sun shall top the hills,
Will I turn this thy stronghold to a sea.
V. 901 Will bring thee from this lofty mountain down,
Will make thy hands fast in the lasso's coils,
And send thee to Afrásiyáb, deprived
Of provand, rest, and sleep, and thou shalt know
That this thy shift is but a shiftless one,
And one to be deplored."
He sent Pírán
A camel-post full speed. "What sort of fight
Did we expect?" he said. "Our thoughts were other,
And we made ready to attack the foe,
But all the mount is troops and kettledrums,
The standards wave behind Gúdarz and Tús!
Take order that as soon as bright day shineth,
And when the world's Light showeth in the sky,
Thou mayst be here with troops in war-array,
And make the plain's face dark with hosts of men.'
The message roused Pírán; no time was lost;
That night he marched on with a sea-like host.

§ 13

How Pírán went in Pursuit of the Íránians to Mount Hamáwan

When Sol, aweary of its veil of gloom,
Had bursten through it and come forth, Pírán,
The leader, reached Mount Hamáwan, and earth
Was hidden by the dust of troops. "Abide,"
Thus said he to Húmán, "here where thou art;
Set not the troops in motion for a while.
I will hold parley with the Íránian leader,
And say: 'Why hast thou set up Káwa's standard?'
Who told him of Mount Hamáwan and now
When there what hopeth he?"
In hate and vengeance
He came anear the Íránian host and cried:—
"Illustrious Tús, the lord of elephant,
Of mace and kettledrum! five months have passed V. 902
Since thou provokedst war, and on the field
The noblest kinsmen of Gúdarz lie headless,
While thou hast fled, thy soldiers panting after,
And like a mountain-sheep hast taken refuge,
Full of revenge and rancour, in the heights!
But thou wilt surely come within the toils."
Exalted Tús replied: "I mock thy falsehoods.
Thou didst set wreak afoot among the mighty
Throughout the world for Siyáwush. Hast thou
No shame of thy vain words? Hot though they be
They will not bring me to those toils of thine.
Ne'er may the world possess a paladin
Like thee among the men of might and name.
Thou by an oath didst ruin Siyáwush,
And wreck earth with his blood, thou madest him
Stay in Túrán; now war and vengeance stay
In earth through him. Alas! for that great prince

And noble man whose face once gladdened all!
Thou by this practice, such deceit and lies,
Wilt gain no lustre in a true man's sight.
We could not forage on the battlefield,
And therefore have I marched to Hamáwan.
News now hath reached the monarch of the world,
Who with his mighty men will come anon.
The great men of the host have gathered—Zál
And Rustam of the elephantine form;
And when the Sháh is fairly on the march
I will not leave Túrán field, fell, or crop.
Since thou art here behold a task for men:
This is no time for ruse and ambuscade."
Pírán on that sent forward troops to seize
V. 903 The approaches, and the army mountain-like
Moved, troop on troop, upon that mountain-skirt.
Pírán, when thus the foemen's foraging
Was straitened, laid his plans.
"We," said Húmán,
"Must get possession of the mountain's foot,
And I will deal so that the Íránians
Shall never gird themselves for vengeance more."
Pírán replied: "The wind is in our face,
And none would think of fighting with it so;
But as they have not room for foraging,
And nobody would guard a barren rock,
They will no longer heed their general;
With warlike eyes grown dim the troops will come
To seek not fight but quarter; 'tis a day
For grace and not for setting in array."

§ 14

How the Íránians made a Night-attack

Gúdarz and Tús suspected this; the chiefs
Were in dismay. Said old Gúdarz to Tús:—
"We must fight now. If we have three days' provand
We have not more, and not one road is open!
We have no tents, no huts, no baggage-train,
And this great host will starve! So, when the sun
Is wan of face and night's dark veil is seen, V. 904
Choose we brave cavaliers, descend the heights,
And try our fortune in a night-attack,
To perish one by one, or else to gain
The hero's crown. Such is the end of battles!
One hath the dust, another rank and glory."
Tús hearkened to Gúdarz; his heart was full
Of pain and of the ancient feud. He bode
Till night appeared. The sun set; all was dark.
When one watch passed, and men had fallen silent,
Tús made him ready, called the men of action,
Gave one wing to Bízhan, one to Shídúsh
And bold Kharrád; the glorious flag he gave
To Gustaham with much advice and counsel,
Then, shouldering with Gív, Ruhhám, and others
The massive mace, made for Pírán and shocked
Like fire the Turkman centre. All the field
Grew like a sea of blood, a mighty shout
Rose from the host, the standard of Pírán
Was cloven, and his troops were panic-stricken.
Húmán, when he had heard that cry, bestrode
His Arab black, came up, saw many slain,
And many turning from the fight dismayed,
Wept tears of blood upon his breast, and shouted:—
"Was there no outpost here? Had ye no stomach
For fight? We are three hundred to their one;

It is ill sleeping on the field of battle!
V. 905 Ho! out with sword and mace, and up with shield
Of Chín. Now that the moon o'er yonder height
Is drawing forth its sword, cut off the foe
On every side and let none, combatant
Or laggard, 'scape."
Arose the clarions' blast,
The warriors pressed forward, and surrounded
The Iránian cavaliers like savage lions.
Sparks flashed from helm and sword: thou wouldst have said:—
"The sky is raining maces from the clouds!"
Night, scimitars, and dust concealed the stars
And shining moon. Thou'dst said: "The Íránians
Are walled by coats of mail and in a murk
As of a sea of pitch!" Then to his men
Húmán exclaimed: "Enough! slay not the chiefs;
Bring me them captive and not arrow-pierced."
They shouted back: "Their plight is hopeless now.
Lay on, lay on with mace and javelin,
And crown these chieftains' heads with crowns of blood."
Then Tús said to Ruhhám and Gív: "Good sooth!
Our lives are but a jest! Unless the Almighty
Shall save our souls and bodies from this scath
We are but poised upon an eagle's wings,
Or struggling in the waters of the deep!"
Like savage lions leaping from their lairs
They charged together, while the sound of drum
And pipe and clang of Indian bells and gongs
Rose from the foe, men could not see their reins,
The horses' crests, or spear-points at their eyes.
"Ye have no room," exclaimed Húmán, "for fight
V. 906 Or flight, and evil fortune drave you forth,
That ill might reach the guilty."
'Mid such strife
Abode that warrior-three with paltry powers!

Much thought they then of Rustam, everywhere
The prowest in the fray, and of Shídúsh,
Bízhan, and Gustaham, of great and small;
"Good sooth!" said they, "one of the Íránian host
Would help us here! We came not to a fight,
But madly to the maw of crocodiles!
Woe to the throne and portal of the Sháh,
For they will capture us anon! Great Rustam
And Zál are in Zábulistán! Írán
Will be destroyed!"
The din of mace and drum
Reached the Íránian host, and Gív and Tús
Returned not! Said Shídúsh and Gustaham,
The Lion: "Tús is long engaged!"
Guráza
Said to Bízhan: "Our leader's task is long!"
Anon the din of drums rose from the plain,
Air turned pitch-dark and earth to ebony.
The warriors made toward the voice of Tús.
The field ran blood. As they came up behind
All drew their massive maces. Tús, aware
That succour had arrived, roared tymbal-like, V. 907
Loosed rein, and pressed his stirrups, for he felt
His fortune rising, while Ruhhám and Gív,
Cheered by the voice of brave Bízhan, became
Like lions. Thus they fought till break of day,
Until the world's Light shone above the mountains,
Then they recalled the host and drew it off
Toward the rocky heights. The chieftain Tús
Harangued the troops: "From set of sun to drum-beat
Far from the noble be the evil eye,
And may our fighting end in festival.
I never heard of warriors displaying
Such gallantry as I have seen in you.
My first prayer is that Holy God will keep
Afar from us the eyes of evil ones.

He is my refuge evermore and He
Will take you out of this. I trust withal
In Him that presently and swift as smoke
An army may come up to our support.
Assuredly my speedy camel-post
Hath reached ere now the monarch of the world.
My letter will inflame his heart anew,
The elephantine chief will come to aid us,
And with a noble company of Lions.
We shall return in triumph, well content,
And eager to behold Khusrau again.
We will report to that triumphant world-king
All that hath passed in public and in private,
V. 908 And through his kindness and his satisfaction
Obtain, each one of us, the fruits of fortune."
Both hosts ceased fighting,[1] breathed themselves, and left
The battle drawn. On both sides scouts advanced
Upon that plain of valiant warriors.
Húmán came forth, saw corpses block the road,
And thus addressed Pírán: "Withdraw to-day;
The battle hath not answered our desires,
But when our warriors, approven horsemen,
And men have rested I will make a fight
Such as the sun and moon ne'er saw."
They went,
Their converse done, each on his schemes intent.

§ 15

How Kai Khusrau had Tidings of his Host

News reached Khusrau: "Pírán hath gained the day,
Tús hath retired upon Mount Hamáwan,
And many a chieftain of the host is missing.

[1] Reading with P.

The portal of the palace of Gúdarz,
Son of Kishwád, is void of men of war
And chiefs. The very stars are wailing them,
The rose no longer groweth in the garden,
The world through them is filled with dust and blood,
And Tús' high star hath fallen!"
Kai Khusrau,
The famous, heard, and his heart quaked. He bade
The elephantine Rustam come to court,
And with his host. The sages and the archmages,
Famed and experienced of Írán, all came;
Khusrau, the chief of chieftains, loosed his tongue, V. 909
Told how the host had fought, and said to Rustam:—
"Exalted one! our ancient state, I fear,
Is tottering, whereat my heart is full
Of dread. Thou fosterest the crown and throne,
World-ruling fortune hath its light from thee,
The heart of heaven is on thy sabre's point,
And under thee are sky and time and earth.
Thou didst dig out the White Dív's heart and brain:
The age's hopes are based upon thy love,
Earth is the servant of thy charger's dust,
And time to thee is like a loving mother.
The sun is set a-burning by thy sword,
And Venus weepeth at that mace of thine.
Thy plumed and pointed shafts make lions weary
Of fighting with thee on their day of bale.
Since thou hast been a man and worn a helm
No foe hath cast his eye upon Írán.
Now Tús, Gúdarz, and Gív and other chiefs,
With many of the warriors of this land,
Have with full hearts and eyes that flowed with tears
Fled from the soldiers of Afrásiyáb.
Full many of the kindred of Gúdarz
Fell on the day of fight and sleep in dust.
Those of the army that escaped with life

Are broken-hearted on Mount Hamáwan;
Their heads are lifted heavenward; they pray
The Almighty, who is Lord of time and place,
That elephantine Rustam may perchance
Come to them in God's strength at my command.
As I perused the letter in the night
I shed my heart's blood freely on my cheeks.
V. 910 I told the thing to no one for three days
Save only unto God the Succourer,
But now, because the matter hath surpassed
All bounds, my heart is full of care therefor.
Thou art the hope of host and general:
Mayst thou be sound in health and bright in mind;
May thy head flourish and thy heart rejoice,
Be thy pure person free from hurt of foe.
Ask me for plenty of whate'er thou wilt,
Of steeds, of arms, of treasure, and of troops.
Go with good counsels and a joyful heart:
So great a work must not be slackly done."
The hero answered: "May the signet-ring
And crown ne'er lack thee. Heaven remembereth not
A king like thee for Grace, for stature, justice,
And rede. Khusrau hath heard that ever since
Kubád assumed the imperial diadem
I have been girded in Íránian quarrels,
And have not sat at rest a single day.
Mine have been waste, gloom, lion, elephant,
Enchanters, lusty dragons, mighty men
Both of Túrán and of Mázandarán,
Dark nights, and massive maces, and withal
Long journeyings and thirsts, for I preferred
The door of travail to the stead of ease.
So many toils and hardships have I seen
That I have never asked a day of pleasure.
Thou art the world's king, and a slave am I
Girt to perform thy hests. Let not the Sháh

Grieve for the slain, but let thy foes look wan.
With belted waist will I draw near to Tús, V. 911
And gird me to avenge the Íránians,
For liver-wounded have I been and girt
With mourning for the scions of Gúdarz."
When Kai Khusrau heard Rustam's words he wept,
And said: "Without thee I desire not life,
Or majesty or crown or royal throne.
Now be the welkin in thy lasso's noose,
And crowned heads in thy bonds."
The treasurer
Unlocked the royal hoard of jewels, crowns,
Dínárs, helms, lassos, bows, and belts, oped too
The sacks of drachms. The Sháh gave all to Rustam,
Thus saying: "O illustrious warrior!
Go with the mace-men of Zábulistán,
And mighty men and warriors of Kábul,
Swift as the blast, not tarrying thyself
Or bidding others tarry. From the host
Choose thirty thousand swordsmen dight for war,
And give to Faríburz son of Káús
Some troops to go on first and seek revenge."
The peerless Rustam kissed the ground and said:—
"The bridle and the stirrups are my mates.
We will urge on the chiefs; far be repose
And idleness from us."
He paid the troops,
Went forth upon the plain, prepared for war,
And said to Faríburz: "Lead forth at dawn,
Conduct the van, and sleep not day or night
Until thou come to Tús the general.
Say to him: 'Risk not fight, use guile, gain time,
And be not rash. Lo! like a blast I come,
Not dallying upon the road. Gurgín,
Son of Mílád, approved in war, will know V. 912
What to advise thy host in weal and woe.'"

§ 16

How Faríburz asked to Wife Farangís, the Mother of Kai Khusrau

"O warrior, distributor of crowns,
Lord of the breastplate, battle-ax, and Rakhsh!"
Said Faríburz, "I have a secret wish
That I can tell to no one in the world
Except to thee, O paladin of earth,
Who well deservest ring and crown and signet,
And art the stay and refuge of the host!
In thee the warriors exalt their helms.
Know great one of Írán! and may God bless thee,
That I and noble Siyáwush were brothers,
And one in blood. 'Tis fit that I should take
His widow as my wife, exalted chief!
Urge this upon the Sháh, and thou wilt set
A crown upon my head."
Then Rustam answered:—
"'Tis thine to bid. I will achieve thy wish."
The elephantine chief went in and said:—
"O famed Khusrau! I have a thing to ask
That will exalt my head above the moon,
And I will ask it with the monarch's leave,
For God approveth. Love and justice reach
All men through thee, twin-visaged like the sky.
Now Faríburz among the chiefs and princes
V. 913 Hath not a peer; withal for rede and prowess
I do not see his match, and he desireth
This of the Sháh—the place of Siyáwush,
So that, when he is marching to avenge
His brother's blood, the guardian of his house
And wealth, the confidant in all his cares,
May be the daughter of Afrásiyáb,
None else, they twain to be as sun and moon."

Khusrau on hearing gave consent and said:—
"O famous man! the feet of fortune trample
All that reject thy counsel. Naught but good
Will come from words of thine. Live ever glorious!
I cannot urge this, as thou know'st. Such speech
To her would be misplaced, but I will give
My mother, if she will consent to listen,
The counsels most conformable with wisdom."
They went together to the moonlike dame—
The peerless Rustam and benignant Sháh,
Who said to her: "Thou memory of my sire,
In good and ill my refuge! I may govern,
But thou art Sháh to me. Thou know'st the toil
And travail of the army in this war,
How many of our mighty men have perished
In battle with Túrán! I mean to send
A host with Rustam son of Zál as chief,
While Faríburz will lead the van, and Rustam
Himself be champion. He would have thee be
The wife of Faríburz. What is thy pleasure V. 914
Therein? Be greatness and all good thy mates."
On hearing this she thought about old times,
Distressed and vexed at heart; at length in tears
She said: "I blame not Rustam; if I did
It would be misplaced now, for only heaven
Can say him nay when he requesteth aught."
Then Rustam said to her: "O dame of dames,
Extolled for spotless worth! Oh! may thy foes
All perish! Thou, may be, wilt hear my counsel.
Thou knowest that a woman cannot rest
Without a spouse, the young without the young,
And best of all a mate of Kaian race,
For man is for the woman's sake, and she
Is far more eager than her spouse for her.
Victorious Faríburz son of Káús,
Fit for the crown, the lustre of the throne,

The brother and the peer of Siyáwush,
Is ruler of the more part of Írán;
The peopled land and desert both are his.
By leave, advice, and order of the Sháh
Do I approve thee as the prince's spouse.
What sayest thou? Is he approved by thee?
Doth Faríburz appear a fitting mate?
Thou wilt do well to hearken to my words:
Heed what I tell thee and the Sháh's advice."
The Sháh of ladies held her peace awhile
In grief, ashamed to speak before her son,
Then sighing deeply answered Rustam thus:—
"O full of prowess, leader of the folk!
V. 915 Although there is none like him in Írán
He cannot take the place of Siyáwush;
Yet is my tongue, as thou mayst say, in fetters
By reason of thy words, O paladin!
What doth the famous monarch now command?
I must be girded to perform his will."
Thus, blushing like the roses in the spring,
The monarch's mother gave consent. The matter,
Since Rustam was so instant, was soon sped:
They called the archmages and drew up the contract.
Then Faríburz became Sháh's sire-in-law,
And being franked by Kai Khusrau and Rustam
Increased his quality and dignity,
And gained a robe of honour and new crown.[1]
Three days prepared, the fourth achieved, the business,
Then Rustam with his gallant warriors
Fared toward the plain, while Faríburz with troops
Went in advance, resplendent as a star
In heaven. Arose the din of clarions,

[1] "C'est ainsi que Feribourz devint, par l'ordre de Keï Khosrou, beau-pere *du roi*, et Rustem fut alors libre *de partir*. *Khosrou* combla d'honneurs le Pehlevan, et lui donna, un rang plus élevé, une robe d'honneur et une nouvelle couronne" (Mohl).

And matchless Rustam led his army forth.
The Sháh, the world-lord, with his mind all care,
Fared with him for two leagues, while Rustam turned
Two stages into one upon his way,
And rested not at all by night or day.

§ 17

How Tús saw Siyáwush in a Dream

One night, about the hour of drum-beat, Tús, V. 916
Heart-scared and full of trouble, slept and dreamed
That from the deep a radiant lustre rose
About an ivory throne, and Siyáwush
Thereon with Grace and crown, with smiling lips
And tongue fair-spoken, turned a sun-like face
Upon him. "Stay the Íránians here," he said,
"For thou shalt conquer in the fight. Lament not
The kindred of Gúdarz, for there is here
A rosary all new, and we will quaff,
How long we wot not, underneath its blooms."
With joyful heart released from pain and grief
Tús woke. Then to Gúdarz: "World-paladin!
I have beheld a vision in my sleep!
Take note that Rustam like a rushing wind
Will come anon!"
He bade the pipes to sound,
The troops upon the mountain left their posts,
The warriors of Írán girt up their loins,
And set up Káwa's standard, while Pírán
Upon the other side led forth his powers;
The dust-clouds dimmed the sun; its eye was dazed
By warriors' shouts and by the rain of arrows.
The two hosts met, but not a champion showed
Before the lines. Húmán said to Pírán:—
"We must attack. Why hesitate? The troops

Are not out hunting. Man and beast bear weight."
Pírán said: "Peace! 'Tis not the time for haste
Or argument. Yestreen from yonder lines,
And unawares, three with a paltry force
Assailed us, hungry lions they, we sheep
Whom cold is driving from the mountain-tops.
V. 917 I found the whole plain like a stream of blood,
And famous heads laid low. The Íránians hold
A barren rock, their chargers sniff at thorns
Like musk. Wait till they burn upon the crags,
And die resourceless. Leave no way to pass,
Side, front, or rear-ward. Since without your fighting
The foe will come to hand, why change delay
For haste? Why should we fight? Ten horse will serve
As scouts upon the plain. Wait we until
Our foes lack food and drink, and ask for quarter.
Unless they can subsist on thorns and flints
When provand faileth they will take to them
And die."
They left the field, went to their tents,
And scouts were posted while the warriors loosed
Their belts and turned to sleep and banqueting.
The chieftain Tús went also to his camp,
With full heart and with cheeks of ebony,
And thus addressed Gúdarz: "Affairs grow dark;
The fortunes of the Íránians are distraught.
Troops compass us, our beasts' feed is all thorny,
And food is not o'er-plenteous with the host!
Unsheathe at dawn. Rank on the mountain-skirts.
If our good star prove helpful it will give us
Our will upon our foes, while if the Judge
Of heaven shall end us with the scimitar,
No more or less can hap than His decree,
So measure not your breaths in your dismay.
Death too with high renown is goodlier

Than life with fear and overthrow."

They closed V. 918
With what their fortune-favoured chief proposed.

§ 18

How Afrásiyáb sent the Khán and Kámús to help Pírán

When from the sign of Cancer Sol reached out,
And rent the musk-hued Veil, a messenger
Came from the monarch to Pírán and said:—
"Troops throng from every side—a host whose dust
Would make a desert of the sea of Chín
Upon the battle-day. A chief is there
From Má wara 'u'n-Nahr; his head is raised
O'er circling heaven; a hundred lions' strength
Is his; he quelleth mighty elephants!
In height a cypress and in looks a moon,
A potentate whose toys are crowns and thrones,
Kámús, this chief of chiefs, will have his will
Upon Gúdarz and Tús. The troops comprise
All those that dwell 'twixt Sipanjáb and Rúm.
I reckon first the Khán of Chín, whose crown
Is heaven, his throne the earth, next brave Manshúr,
Whose falchion layeth warriors' heads in dust,
And next Kámús, the swordsman of Kashán,
Whose eyes ne'er saw defeat. His works all prosper;
When he is wroth he bringeth blast and snow."
Pírán harangued the army of Turán,
And said: "Ye chiefs and warriors of the king!
Rejoice ye, young and old! at this good news,
Sent by the king, and be ye bright of soul;
Now must we wash the trouble from our hearts
I will not leave Írán field, fell, or crop.
The pains and troubles of the king are over
In seeking vengeance and arraying troops,

V. 919 And ye shall see Afrásiyáb supreme
By land and sea, at home and in Írán."
From those approaching powers fresh messengers
Kept coming to the captain of the host
With joyful news: "O famous paladin!
Live glad and bright of soul for evermore.
Be thy heart joyful to behold these kings,
And may thy soul cease troubling. From Kashmír
All, till thou comest to the river Shahd,
Is elephants and litters, flags and troops,
While from Sakláb Kundur the lion-man
Is coming with that warring Heaven Bíward
Of Kát, with Garcha from Sagsár, Shangul
From Hind. Flags fill the air and swords the earth.
Chaghán hath sent Fartús, the Light of hosts,
Gahán hath sent Gahár, who scorcheth heroes,
With Shamírán of Shakn, first of the age,
Who scattereth poison with his spear and sword.
Now lift thy head and take thy pleasure here,
For this glad news would make an old man young."
Pírán laughed out with all his heart and soul,
Thou wouldst have said: "He that was dead reviveth!"
Thus spake he to Húmán: "I will go forth
To meet them. They have had a longsome march,
Equipped for fight and full of care. They hold
Their heads as high as doth Afrásiyáb,
For they have treasure, lustre, throne, and state.
I will go forth and see what men they are,
How many, with what chiefs and warriors,
Will do obeisance to the Khán of Chín,
And kiss the ground before his throne withal:
I will behold Kámús, the exalted one,
And find Tús an opponent in Shangul.
Returning hither I will gird myself
To rob the Íránians of the breath of life,
And, if they cannot hold their own, will make

Day dark and strait to them. I will secure
With heavy bonds about their feet and necks V. 920
Those that survive among the Íránian chiefs,
And then dispatch them to Afrásiyáb,
Not taking rest or sleep till it be done,
Behead the common soldiers that I capture,
Burn them, commit their ashes to the winds,
And take no thought about the place again.
Then will I part our army into three,
And darken the Íránian monarch's day.
I will dispatch one army unto Balkh,
And make day bitter to the Íránians,
Another to Kábulistán and bring
Kábul the ashes of Zábulistán,
And lead the third compact of mighty Turkmans
And Lions 'gainst Írán. I will spare none,
Not women, little children, young or old,
But overthrow Írán, both field and fell.
May not a hand or foot be left to them!
But till I order matters seek not fight."
Thus spake Pírán and went with wreakful heart;
Thou wouldst have said: "His very skin hath burst."
Húmán said to the troops: "Away with care!
For two days let us labour but to keep
Watch on Mount Hamáwan, for fear our foes
Steal off by night just when our flags will fill
Completely road, plain, valley, stream, and hill."

§ 19

How the Khán of Chín came to Hamáwan

Pírán on reaching his allies beheld
The plains and valleys full of horses' hoofs.
The tents and tent-enclosures filled the world
With red and yellow, blue and violet.

Amidmost each enclosure was a standard
Wrought of brocade of Chín and painted silk.
V. 921 He stood amazed and asked himself in wonder:—
"Is this a paradise, or banquet-hall,
The starry heaven, or orbit of the moon?"
He came afoot and kissed the ground before
The Khán, who, seeing him, embraced him, marvelled
At such a chest and neck, much greeted him,
Made much of him, set him upon the throne,
And said: "Oh! well is me that I should sit
In such good spirits by the paladin!"
He then asked: "Of the army of Írán
Who hath the signet, and who hath the crown?
What troops have they? Who are their warriors,
And wherefore sit they on the mountain-top?"
Pírán replied: "O monarch! live for ever,
And may the Maker bless thee who hast joyed
Thy slave's heart with thy questions. Through thy fortune
I am both well and happy, and my soul
Desireth but the dust upon thy feet.
The king inquireth of the Íránians:
They have no signet, diadem, or throne,
And, having longed for war beyond all measure,
Are left with only rocks to gaze upon;
For foiled, dishonoured, and reduced in strength,
They went in full flight to Mount Hamáwan.
Their general is Tús, a man of valour,
Who feareth not a lion in the field.
Their chieftains are Gúdarz son of Kishwád,
Gív, and Ruhhám—all men of noble birth.
Now by the fortune of the illustrious Khán
This is the last host that their chief shall see.
They come not on the plain at battle-time,
And save the flinty rocks have naught to hand."
The Khán said: "Stay, and bring thy comrades too.

Content of heart to-day will we quaff wine, V. 922
And not anticipate."
He decked the tents
Like gardens in the spring: "'Tis Paradise,"
Thou wouldst have said, "for colour and device."

§ 20

How the Íránians took Counsel how to act

Now when Sol mounted to the vault of heaven
The hearts of Tús and of Gúdarz grew troubled:—
"Why are the Turkmans still to-day? Are they
At counsel or bemused? But be they sad
Or glad I look for ill! Know that if aid
Hath come to them ill hap hath come to us!
Consider all the Íránian troops as slain
Or, if still living, fleeing from the fight.
If Rustam cometh not upon the field
Disaster will befall us from yon host,
And we shall have no sepulture, no grave,
But horses' hoofs will trample on our heads!"
Gív said to Tús: "O general of the Sháh
What aileth thee to think upon mishap?
We need not look for ill; God is thy Helper;
We are His worshippers, and have broadcast
Much seed of good. Such fortune hath the Sháh,
The lord of scimitar and throne and crown,
That God will not withdraw His help from us,
And leave our enemies to work their will.
With Rustam's coming all our soldiers' cares
Will end. Let no man cease to trust in God
Though day should turn to night. Let not thy heart
Be straitened needlessly because our foes
Forbear to fight one day: they have not shut
Heaven's door on us. Fear not the foe's designs.

V. 923 If God most high ordaineth loss for us
Quit vain imaginings for come it will.
Let us construct a trench before the host,
As warriors use, then draw the sword, provoke
A fight and slay our foes; we shall no doubt
Perceive their aims and lay their secret bare.
News from Írán will come and there will be
Light on the boughs of our tall Cypress-tree."

§ 21

How Gúdarz had Tidings of the Coming of Rustam

Gúdarz departed from the host and clomb
The mountain-summit. From the look-out came
A grievous cry: "The Íránian warriors
Are ruined now! As yon bright sun declined
The whole world eastward grew as dark as night
With dust, which standard-bearing elephants
Sent up, and through that dust the shining sun
Was lustreless!"
Gúdarz heard that and cried:—
"Dark earth is my sole hiding-place!"
His cheeks
Became as pitch, and like one arrow-pierced
He cried: "My share is ever strife and battle,
My lot ill-hap and bane for antidote.
I had a host of sons and grandsons, men
Reputed in the land, but all were slain
For Siyáwush, and all my luck hath gone!
V. 924 I hope no more from life, my day is dark!
Would that my mother had not brought me forth,
High heaven ne'er turned o'er me!"
To the watch
He said: "Long-sighted man and bright of mind!
Look forth upon the hosts and see who cometh.

Where is the banner of the Íránian chief?
Look to our left and right."
The watchman answered:—
"I see no movement and reconnaissance
On our side, but on theirs all is astir;
Of us thou wouldest say: 'They are asleep.'"
Thereat the paladin shed bitter tears,
And cried in sorrow: "Saddle me my steed,
And for the future make my bed of brick!
I go to fill mine eyes and arms once more,
Embrace Shídúsh, Bízhan, Ruhhám, and Gív,
Those brave, impetuous cavaliers, kiss each
Farewell upon the cheek and shower tears."
His gallant bay was saddled when there came
The watchman's shout: "Rejoice, world-paladin!
And banish care, for on the road that leadeth
Toward Írán a black, day-darkening dust
Ariseth; many standards like the moon
Are lifted from the centre of a host;
The first one hath a wolf, a moon the next,
The third a dragon with a lion's head
In gold upon the staff!"
"Then live for ever,
And may the evil eye be far from thee!"
Gúdarz exclaimed. "When what thou utterest
To such good purpose shall be brought to pass
I will bestow on thee such varied treasures V. 925
That thou shalt have no need to toil henceforth.
Hereafter, when we go back to Írán,
Some day, and to the monarch of the brave,
I will forthwith present thee at his throne,
And lift thy head above the nobles there.
Now prithee leave thy look-out-post, approach
Our generals, and tell what thou hast seen;
Be quick; use whom thou wilt upon the road."
"I may not leave the look-out for the host,"

The watchman said, "but when 'tis grown so dark
That I can see no longer I will carry,
Like the Símurgh, the tidings to the troops
Down from my station here."
The paladin
Rejoined: "Be shrewd of heart and bright of soul.
Look forth from this high mountain yet again,
And see how soon they will be here."
He answered:
"Yon host will reach Mount Hamáwan to-morrow
At dawn."
The paladin conceived such joy
As would have brought a corpse to life.
Pírán,
For his part, swift as flying dust-clouds led
Those reinforcements[1] to the battlefield.
A horseman went on first to tell at large
The joyful news which when Húmán had heard
He laughed and said: "Now surely sleepless fortune
Is with us."
From the field a shout of joy
Rose cloud-ward from the army of Túrán.
The Íránian nobles full of care and pain,
With faces sallow and with livid lips,
Dispersed themselves upon the mountain-side
To give their last instructions. Everywhere
Groups gathered and bewailed themselves, and said:-
"Woe for these warriors of royal race,
Who are forgotten by the Íránians,
V. 926 For now the lions' maws will be their tombs,
And earth be saturate with heroes' blood!"
The chief bespake Bízhan: "Arise, explore
This secret, scale the mountain-top and mark
The character and number of this host.
See by what road they are approaching us,

[1] See §§ 18 and 19.

What camp-enclosures and what thrones they have."
Bízhan the son of Gív then went apart,
And climbed the mountain's solitary peak,
Saw flags and horsemen, elephants and troops
On all sides, ran back to the general,
With heart all pain and soul all care, and said :—
"Earth's surface hath become like indigo,
So many are the troops and elephants!
The flags and spears pass count, the sun is dim
In heaven with dust, the troops are countless, boundless,
The ear is deafened by their kettledrums!"
Tús listened, sad at heart and face all tears,
Then called to him the captains, sorely grieved
About his men, and said: "Time showeth me
Naught but the woes of war. I have experienced
Full many a rise and fall, but never fear
Like this. We have but one resource: although
Our arms and troops are few we will get ready,
Attack to-night, and make earth a Jíhún
With blood. If we shall perish in the fray
There will be generals while there are kings:
Men shall not say: 'He died ingloriously,'
Although they have to lay me in the dust."
The leaders present all agreed thereto.
Now when the face of earth became like pitch,
When Venus, Mars, and Mercury were hidden,
And when the moon rose from the Sign of Pisces, V. 927
And to the navel rent the robe of night,
The watchman with a face like sandarach
Ran in to Tús and said: "O General!
The Shah hath sent an army from Írán!"
The leader Tús laughed with the other chiefs,
And said: "O men of name and warriors!
We need not now seek fight since aid hath come,
We have our times for haste and for delay.
The elephantine hero by God's strength

Will come to our assistance with this host;
Then on the Turkmans will we satisfy
Our lust, and our renown shall reach the sun."
They thought no more about a night-attack;
The troops and leader joyed; the watchman made
Their spirits bright again, and young and old
Told those glad tidings. Tús sent forth his scouts,
Shouts and the clang of bells rose from the mount,
And all the folk, grown happy and soul-bright,
Talked of the chief of paladins all night.

§ 22

How the Khán of Chín went to reconnoitre the Army of Írán

Whenas the sun arrayed its host in heaven,
And black night disappeared, the Khán of Chín
Assembled the Túránian chiefs and warriors,
And thus addressed Pírán: "We will not fight
To-day, and we do need a day's repose,
But, while our proud chiefs and man-slaying horsemen
Rest from the travail of the tedious road,
And from their hurried march o'er hill and dale,
V. 928 I will survey the Íránians—how they fare
Upon the field."
Pírán replied: "The Khán
Is a wise king and worshipful, so let him
Do what he will to-day for he is leader."
There rose a clamour from the camp-enclosure
With sounds of kettledrum and clarion.
They mounted seats upon five elephants,
Housed with brocade of Chín of turquoise hue,
And broidered with gold thread. The seats themselves
Were gemmed with emeralds, the fittings golden,
The saddle-flaps were made of leopard-skin,

And golden were bells, gongs, and rattle-boxes.
The drivers' heads were decked with crowns, and all
Wore torques and ear-rings. With so many flags
Of painted silk the air was yellow, red,
And violet like some bázár in Chín.
The troops marched to the field as if to keep
A feast, the earth was beauteous as the eye
Of chanticleer with trappings, colours, drums,
And pipes. The kings set forth, the air was filled
With blare of clarions, the spearpoints gleamed,
The plain was black with troops. Tús from afar
Saw them and ranged in line what men he had,
The warriors of Írán girt up their loins,
And Gív brought Káwa's standard. From the plain
Of battle to the summit of the mount
The army of Írán stood troop on troop.
Now when Kámús went forward with Manshúr,
Bíward, Shangul the prescient, and the Khán
To view Mount Hamáwan, they never thought
To face a foe, but when the Khán afar
Looked forth and heard the Íránian horsemen's war-cry
It pleased him and he said: "Behold a host
Of men-o'erthrowing, warlike cavaliers!
Pírán the chieftain told us otherwise, V. 929
But brave men's qualities should not be hidden.
The chieftain masketh the pit's mouth with brambles,
And thither will his horse speed at the chase.
What better is it vainly to besmirch
The foemen's prowess on the day of fight?
I have not looked on cavaliers and chiefs
So stamped with chivalry and manliness."
"Men reck not of so few," Pírán replied,
"Upon a field like this."
"But," said the Khán,
"What shall we do?"
Pírán said: "Thou hast fared

Far over hill and dale. Let us remain
Three days to rest the troops. I will divide
The host; the day of fight and fear is over.
Half of our warlike, glorious cavaliers
Shall fall upon the foe from dawn till noon
With double-pointed dart, sword, bow, and mace;
And then till night ariseth from the hills
The other half shall strive. At dark will I
Bring up the rested troops and press the foe;
We will not let them have a moment's peace—
We and our eager cavaliers in arms."
Kámús replied: "Not good! No such delay
For me! With all these men and such strife toward
Why seek so long a respite? Let us both
Attack and straiten dale and height for them.
Hence we will march upon Írán, will leave not
Throne, crown, or diadem, lay waste all fields
And fells, and act as warriors and Lions.
No women, little children, old or young,
No Sháh, or man of rank or paladin
V. 930 Will I leave in Írán, no field or fell,
No hall or palace or four-footed beast.
Why should we pass so many evil days
To get but care and grief and needless pain?
But ope not to our foes a door to-night
To get away. As soon as morning breatheth
The troops must move. I with the king of Hind
Will bear my flag up yonder height. To-morrow
Thou shalt behold a heap of corpses there
To make the Íránians weep that look thereon."
The Khán said to Pírán: "There is no course
Save this: he is a peerless general."
The nobles all agreed to what Kámús,
The conqueror of Lions, had proposed.
The conference being o'er they went their way,
And passed all night in ordering their array.

§ 23

How Faríburz reached Mount Hamáwan

Whenas the sun had pitched a camp-enclosure
Of gold brocade upon the azure realm
A loud cry from the look-out reached Gúdarz:—
"O captain of the host! the troops have come!
They are at hand! Their dust hath dimmed the day!"
Gúdarz sprang up, had his swift charger brought,
And rode toward that dark dust with anxious heart.
He came. When near to them he spied the flag
Of Faríburz the chief, who led the van, V. 931
The well approven and the new Sháh's kinsman.[1]
Then old Gúdarz alighted as withal[2]
Did Faríburz the wise, the army's Lustre.
The twain embraced. Gúdarz wept tears of blood
Upon his breast. "Old chief," said Faríburz,
"Still forced to fight! revenge for Siyáwush
Hath cost thee dear! Alas! those cavaliers
Gúdarzian! May much good news of them
Still reach thee, may the fortune of the foe
Be over-turned! Praise to the Lord of sun
And moon that I have seen thee safe and sound."
Gúdarz wept blood for those that slept in dust.
"Observe," he made reply, "how evil fortune
Is ever bringing evil on my head!
No son or grandson hath survived this strife,
No soldiers, flags, and kettledrums are left!
But I dismiss all thought of conflicts past;
Now is the time for fighting and emprise.
The troops on plain and dale have made earth like
A raven's wing, so many are they, and all
The host of Tús is as the one black hair

[1] With a slight change of reading.
[2] Reading with P.

Upon a white bull by comparison!
The wastes and settlements of Chín, Sakláb,
Of Rúm and Hind, can have no creature left!
All must have girt themselves to fight with us!
But till thou tellest me where Rustam is
My back will not be straightened from its griefs."
"He is behind me," Faríburz replied,
"Intent on war. All through the night till dawn
He marcheth with all speed. Now where shall I
Encamp and whither lead this little band?"
Gúdarz made answer: "What did Rustam say?
His words should be reported."
V. 932 Faríburz
Replied: "Illustrious one! the peerless Rustam
Bade us not fight. 'Stay on the field,' he said.
'Ye must not show yourselves before the host,
But take your ease until my flag appeareth.'"
Then Faríburz, Gúdarz in company,
Marched toward Mount Hamáwan right speedily.

§ 24

How Pírán took Counsel with the Khán of Chín

When from his look-out the Túránian watch
Espied these troops he went back to the host.
"Gird all your loins for fight," he told Pírán,
"For from Írán an army hath arrived,
Advancing o'er the plain!"
The general
Went to the Khán of Chín, and said: "An army
Is coming from Írán, how great I know not,
Or who the leader is. What shall we do?"
Kámús said: "Keep thyself to thine own force.
Thou hast the warriors of Afrásiyáb—
An army like the waters of the sea—

Yet what hast thou accomplished in five months
Against a foe so small? Now that the earth
Is full of troops led by the Khán, Manshúr,
And me, let us display our prowess; thou
Hast locked the door but we will bring the key.
Although the world's face be as silk of Chín
With soldiers from Kábul, Zábul, and Hind,
Yet, should I fight alone, the Íránians
Were nothing. Thou wilt say of them: 'They are not.'
Thou wouldest scare me with illustrious Rustam;
Him will I slaughter first; if once I catch him
His name shall not be talked of any more.
Thou art oppressed and fearful of this host
Approaching from Sístán, but once behold V. 933
My hand in battle, when the dust-cloud riseth
Upon the plain, and thou wilt recognise
A hero in the world, what brave men are,
And what fight is."
Pírán said: "Live for ever!
May evil's hand be always far from thee.
Enough! may what thou sayest be fulfilled,
And no one prove thine equal."
Said the Khán:—
"Thou hast allowed Kámús to lead the attack;
He will perform his word, for he hath Mountains
As his allies and Elephants for mates.
Daunt not the troops, for these Íránians
Are no great matter, and I will not leave
One noble in Írán, but send up dust
From hill and vale; as for the men of worship,
I will dispatch them to Afrásiyáb
In heavy fetters and behead the rest.
We will not leave Írán a leaf, a tree,
A Sháh, a palace or a crown or throne."
Pírán with smiles did reverence to the chiefs,

And to the Khán of Chín, then went rejoicing
Back to the camp, where all the nobles sought him,
Such as Húmán, Lahhák, and Farshídward—
Great men and Lions on the day of battle.
"A host," they said, "arriveth from Írán,
Led by a sable flag; a noted scout
Went forth to spy and is but now returned.
They say 'tis Faríburz son of Káús,
A noble, loyal soldier."
Said Pírán:—
"Let us dismiss our cares. In Rustam's absence
We need not be afraid of Faríburz;
His breath is no cure for a bane like this.
But though according to Kámús indeed
The elephantine Rustam is no man
V. 934 In war, God grant he come not though Kámús
Be such a Crocodile!"
Húmán replied:—
"Why dost thou keep thy spirit dark with care?
This is not he, or army from Sístán:
Here are the blood and dust of Faríburz."
Pírán said: "I have given up the throne
And state in dudgeon with the sun and moon,
For when I heard that from Írán a host
Marched, and was coming to this battlefield,
My brain went, anguish filled my soul and head,
And from my heart I drew a chilly sigh."
Kulbád said: "Why this grief? What need is there
To weep because of Rustam or of Tús?
With all our soldiers, maces, elephants,
And scimitars we block the wind itself.
Why fear then Rustam, Tús, and Kai Khusrau?
What are the Íránians but as dust to us?
They were dispersed in flight from yonder field,
And straggled to their tents."
Anon Tús heard:—

"The land is full of beat of kettledrum,
And elephantine Rustam hath arrived
With Faríburz and soldiers from Írán."
He bade bring forth the drums, Mount Hamáwan,
Wherefrom shouts rose, grew ebon with dark dust,
And earth shook underneath the trampling steeds.
Then Tús harangued the troops, he spake at large
About Mázandarán, what Rustam did
In battle with the dívs, and how he triumphed.
The soldiers called down blessings on their chief,
They said: "Be ware of heart and bright of mind.
We may pour out our souls at this good news,
Which easeth them. When peerless Rustam cometh
Yon host will not withstand the Crocodile.
Then will we battle on this mount forthwith
To cast this shame off from the Íránians.
The standard of the illustrious Khán, the crown,
The golden shields, and throne of ivory,
His elephant-attendants' crowns of gold, V. 935
Their golden girdles and their golden torques,
Their golden cymbals and their golden bells,
Unmatched on earth, his jewelled parasol
Of peacocks' tails, these will we seize, and more,
When we are fighting with our lives at stake."
Tús said: "We are exposed to fear and blame;
Our foes surround the mount, our nobles' heads
Are snared. When Rustam cometh he will speak
Upbraidingly, not asking what hath chanced,
And say: 'Thou wast a bird caught in a net;
The cause was sodden but the fight was raw.
As with the general so with the host
I have not seen one eager for the fray!'
So let us charge like lions, and the foe
May yet be shifted on this side the mount."
The troops replied to him: "Soar not so high.
Refrain from words like these, let none advance

Till Rustam hath surveyed the scene of strife.
We will make prayer to God, the Guide to good.
By His command, Who holdeth sun and moon,
The matchless Rustam will approach this field.
Why have disaster for thy star? Bestow
Dínárs and drachms upon the poor."
The troops
Raised shouts of joy upon the mountain-top
As merrily they sought their place of rest,
Each man to spend the night as seemed him best.

§ 25

How Gív and Tús fought with Kámús

When Sol laid hand on Taurus, and the larks
Began to carol o'er the plain, a shout
V. 936 Ascended from the encampment of Kámús,
That man-o'erthrowing chief who led the van.
He massed his troops and gave out mail; his heart
Was full of fight, his head of vapouring.
He changed his robe for armour, donned a helm
Instead of crown, a breastplate for a tunic,
And chose troops panoplied in steel and iron.
The armies' dust began to show itself,
Men could not see their way for scimitars
And coats of mail. Then from the Íránian look-out
A shout rose: "On our side a host hath come;
The standard of the elephantine chief
Is visible behind it. On the other[1]
Túránian troops have clouded all the air.
Their leader is a horseman like a rock,
And earth is shaken by his charger's hoofs.
His mace's head is like a buffalo's;
Troops follow him and spearmen lead the way.

[1] Reading with P.

Thou well mayst muse at one that shouldereth
A mace like that!"
On his side Tús sent up
The drum-roll to the clouds, he heard the watchman,
His soul grew bright, he joyed, while from Gúdarz
A horseman sped to Faríburz to say:—
"The army of Túrán arrayed for battle
Is near at hand. They must not in full force
Assail us scattered thus and overthrow us.
Act as thy nature biddeth, for thou art
A noble and Sháh's son. The dust of Rustam
Is rising from the road, and he is entering
The field."
Then Faríburz joined force with Tús
And Gív. They ranged the host on Hamáwan, V. 937
And raised the glorious flag. All being ready,
Right, left, and centre, rear and baggage-train,
The clarions blared and all the host came on
As 'twere the starry sky; so when Kámús
Advanced to fight he had no need to wait,
But, like a river speeding down a height,
Led on his troops and fronted Hamáwan.
Air was like indigo and earth was hidden.
When he was near he faced toward the mount,
And with his cheeks all smiles addressed his powers:—
"It is a coward's business to oppose
The Íránians, yet a vast, brave host is here
And not Pírán, Húmán, and all that crew!
What champion have they to contend with me?"
Then shouting to Mount Hamáwan he cried:—
"Ye lion-men upon the day of battle!
Behold my breast, my stature, and my bearing,
This arm of mine, this sword and mace!"
Then Gív,
On hearing, flared up, raged, and drew his sword,
But said, when he drew nearer to Kámús:—

"None but a furious elephant can match him!"
He took and strung his bow, he called on God,
The Giver of all good, and showered arrows
From bow like clouds in spring upon Kámús,
Who, when he marked Gív's mastery, concealed
His own head 'neath his shield, and with his lance
Charged wolf-like. Air was full of dust, and earth
Of death. On drawing near his foe he speared
V. 938 Gív's waist, who reeled and, as he reeled, Kámús
Plucked out his own sword, shouted, raged, proclaimed
His name, came grimly on the cavalier,
And clave his lance obliquely like a pen.
Tús from the centre saw the fight with grief,
And thought: "Gív is not man enough; I only
Can wield a spear like that."
He left the centre
With shouts to succour Gív and join the fray.
Kámús wheeled, rode between the chiefs, and struck
The steed of Tús a sword-blow on the neck;
That prince's face became like ebony.
The charger fell, the gallant rider rose;
Then like a roaring lion took his stand,
And on the battlefield with spear afoot
Contended with Kámús before the hosts.
Two noble warriors fought one cavalier;
He of Kashán was still insatiate!
Thus, till the sun's place darkened, all the field
Was in confusion and, when it grew ebon,
Kámús and Tús gave o'er. The hosts again
Went to their several camps on mount and plain.

§ 26

The Coming of Rustam

Now when heaven's sphere grew void of sun and moon,
And when the scouts came forth from both the hosts,

The watcher in the look-out loosed his tongue:—
"The plain is full of dust, the night is dark,
The level and the upland ring with cries,
And there are many lights among the troops.
Good sooth! the elephantine chief hath come, V. 939
And with an army from Zábul."
Gúdarz,
On hearing this, descended mid the murk
The rocks in haste, the dragon-standard shone
Though night was dark and earth was violet-dim.
He lighted from his steed, while Rustam too
Alighted and advanced like rushing wind.
The twain embraced and from them both arose
A bitter cry o'er those Gúdarzian chiefs,
And that gain-seeking which had proved a loss.
Gúdarz said: "Brave, wise, ardent paladin!
Both crown and throne receive their light from thee,
And what thou utterest is truth indeed.
More art thou to the Iránians than father
And mother, treasure, throne, and precious stones.
Without thee we are fish on land, our heads
Are petrified, our bodies in the grave.
When I observed thy goodly countenance,
Thine eager salutations and thy love,
I grieved no longer for the dear ones gone:
Through thy good fortune only smiles remained."
Then Rustam answered him: "Be glad of heart,
And very heedful of thy noble self,
Because the world is but deceit and toil,
It showeth thee its wealth and that is all.
One man is rich, another poor; this man V. 940
Is honoured, that despised, but all must go,
There is no remedy; I know no worse
Calamity than death, but may that pang
Afflict not thee, and may we all die fighting."

When Tús, Gív, and those valiant warriors,
The Íránian cavaliers, had heard the news
Of Rustam's coming to Mount Hamáwan,
And being seen by veteran Gúdarz,
They went like wind, shouts rose, and clarions blared.
The soldiers and the chiefs approached afoot,
Their loins were girded but their hearts at ease.
They raised a cry of anguish for those slaughtered
Amid the dust of fight; the heart of Rustam
Was moved; he girt himself anew for vengeance;
Then, hearing what had chanced in that campaign,
Lamented all the sufferings of the troops,
And gave much counsel, saying: "Ye chiefs! to-day
A grave strife faceth us, and war's result
Is feast to one and funeral to another."
That warrior, that Lustre of the world,
Set up his camp-enclosure while his powers
Encamped behind him on Mount Hamáwan,
And raised their leader's standard. Mighty Rustam
V. 941 Sat on the throne and all the chiefs assembled.
Here sat Gúdarz and Gív, there Tús and others,
While Rustam, with a lamp in front of him,
Discoursed at large of matters great and small,
How chiefs and troops had fought, and whether now
Bright sun and shining moon would favour them.
The chiefs spake to the gallant paladin
Of that innumerable host of foes,
Spake of Kámús, Shangul, the Khán of Chín,
Manshúr, and of the warriors of Túrán:—
"About Kámús himself we cannot speak,
For we have had no means of seeing him.[1]
He is a Tree whose Fruits are mace and sword,
And, though the clouds rained stones upon his head,
He would not flee from elephants of war:
His head is full of wreak, his heart of strife.

[1] "Car nous n'osons pas le regarder" (Mohl).

Earth is not able to contain Manshúr;
No warrior ordereth a host like him;
And from this mountain to the river Shahd
Stretch flags and litters, elephants and troops,
Whose helmets and cuirasses pass compute.
Grim are the looks of all upon the plain,
Which is a mass of tents, around are pitched
The tent-enclosures of brocade of Chín,
And had the captain and the host not come
All had been lost. Praise to the Lord of victory,
Who thus hath put a period to our stress!
Past doubt we live through thee; we all despaired
Of respite."

For a while the paladin
Grieved for the slain, wept, and grew dark of soul,
Then said: "Look from the orbit of the moon
Down to the gloomy face of sombre earth;
All is distress and anguish, care and toil.
Such is the manner of this Wayside Inn,
Such is the manner of the circling sky—
Whiles strife and poison, and whiles sweets and love!
We die by nature or by violence; V. 942
'Tis better not to mark the why and how,
For all must go as soon as time is up.
Blame not the circling of the sky. Now may
The all-victorious World-lord be our aid,
And may our foemen's fortunes be o'erthrown.
Henceforward we will take our full revenge,
And rid the world of foes."

The mighty men
Praised him and said: "Live ever famed and glad
With signet, crown, and sword, and never be
The court of Kai Khusrau bereaved of thee."

§ 27

How the Íránians and Túránians arrayed their Hosts

When o'er the hills the world-illumer shone,
When day seized on the two dark curls of night,
And, having cast aside its pitchy weeds,
Bit with its teeth the moon's lips till they bled,
The sound of drums rose from the camp-enclosures,
The warriors came forth. Húmán the chieftain
Went out to reconnoitre every side,
And thought: "What reinforcement have the Íránians
To need those tents and those pavilions?"
He saw a camp-enclosure of brocade
Of turquoise hue with many slaves about,
And in its front a general's flag and spear:
It seemed to him that fortune had changed sides.
He saw another army's camp-enclosure
With flags as bright as moons, for Faríburz,
Son of Káús, with elephants and drums
Had pitched near Tús. Húmán in deep concern
Went to Pírán and said: "To-day is wedded
To heavy toil. The Íránians' cries and clamour
Were greater yesternight than heretofore;
So went I forth alone from camp at dawn,
And viewed the foe on all sides. From Írán
A mighty host hath come to succour them.
Now one pavilion is of green brocade;
Its standard hath a dragon for device,
V. 943 And soldiers from Zábul are round about
With bucklers and with falchions of Kábul.
I think that Rustam, sent forth by the Sháh,
Hath come with reinforcements to the field."
Pírán made answer: "'Tis an evil time!
If Rustam taketh part in this campaign
He will not spare Kámús, the Khán of Chín,

Shangul or any warrior of Túrán."
With that he left the camp and going forth
Observed the forces of the foe, and thence
Came hurrying to Kámús, came to Manshúr
And to Fartús, and said: "I went this morn,
And made the circuit of the Íránian host.
Great reinforcements have arrived and chiefs
Both numerous and eager for the fray.
Methinketh too that elephantine Rustam,
Of whom I spake before the company,
Hath come to succour them, all bent on vengeance,
Straight from the Sháh."
"O wise one!" said Kámús,
"Thy heart produceth naught but ill surmise.
Know thou that Kai Khusrau hath come to war,
But do not therefore vex thy heart in vain.
Why harp so much on Rustam? Name no more
Zábulistán. If he beholdeth me
With flag in hand his heart will mourn at fight.
Go thou, array the host, lead forth the troops,
And bring the standards to the battlefield.
When I go forth to combat with the host
Ye must not loiter. Now shalt thou behold
The combating of men. The wilderness
Shall be a sea of blood."
The paladin V. 944
Rejoiced to hear and ceased to fret at Rustam.
He came with joyful heart and resolute,
And bathed his spirit in the stream of valour.
He gave out helms and mail to all the troops,
And kept in mind the language of Kámús,
Then going to the Khán he kissed the ground,
And said to him: "O monarch, live for ever!
May wisdom feed upon thy thoughts. The way
That thou hast trod was long and difficult;
Thou boughtest toil, foregoing feasts for us,

And to do reverence to Afrásiyáb
Hast crossed the sea.[1] Our soldiers' backs are straightened
By thee. Now act as native worth requireth,
Bedeck the elephants with bells and gongs,
And stun the world with blare of clarions.
To-day I make the attack; do thou remain
At the army's centre with the elephants
And kettledrums, keep guard upon my rear,
And help to raise my helmet to the clouds.
Kámús said thus to me: 'Lead thou the van,'
And brandishing his mace swore many oaths,
And said: 'I will not fight save with this mace
To-day though stones should shower from the clouds.'"
The Khán on hearing bade the clarions sound:
Thou wouldst have said: "The very dust hath feet!"
Both earth and heaven shook at the tymbal-din,
And put all love away. He gave command
To set a litter on an elephant,
And earth's face seemed like indigo. He reached
In state the army's centre, and the sky
Was like a dark cloud with the flying dust.
There was a sound of gongs and Indian bells,
And thou hadst said: "Men's hearts are in their mouths!"
V. 945 The many turquoise thrones upon the backs
Of elephants and that blue sea of flags
Took all the lustre from the eyes of men,
And none possessed his soul in quietude.
Dust filled the eyes and gullet of the sky:
Thou wouldst have said: "Its face is smeared with pitch!"
Now when the Khán had reached the army's centre
The moon went erring from its way in heaven.
The right led by Kámús was like a mountain;

[1] "la mer de la Chine" (Mohl).

They took the baggage-train toward the waste.
Pírán went toward the left wing, and with him
There went Húmán his brother and Kulbád.
When Rustam saw the movements of the Khán
He too arrayed his troops, bade Tús bind on
The drums and dress the army like the eye
Of chanticleer. He said: "We shall behold
O'er whom the heaven turneth in its love,
What are the revolutions of the sky,
And which of these great men hath lived his time.
I loitered not, Rakhsh made three stages one,
But now his hoofs are tired; he is o'erwrought
By march and toil. I dare not tax his strength
By going forth myself as challenger;
Assist me then to-day and work your will
Upon the foe."
The captain of the host
Struck up the fifes and drums; the war-cry rose,
And trumpet-blare. Gúdarz drew up the right,
And sent the baggage to Mount Hamáwan,
While Faríburz arrayed the left; the world
Seemed all a reed-bed! At the army's centre
Was Tús son of Naudar. Earth was all dust,
And air all storm, so that the world was hidden; V. 946
The warriors could not even see themselves!
The mighty Rustam climbed the heights to view
The Khán and army of Túrán; he saw
A host so mighty that the sea of Rúm
Seemed but a lump of wax compared to them!
The troops were from Kashán and Shakn and Wahr,
With divers coats of mail and divers helms,
Troops from Chaghán and Chín, Sakláb and Hind,
Gahán and Rúm, Sind and the Indus-banks.[1]
In every quarter there were alien tongues,
Strange flags and meats! What with the elephants,

[1] So Mohl.

The adornments of the thrones of ivory,
The armlets and tiaras, torques and crowns,
The world was like the garth of Paradise—
A goodly but terrific spectacle!
He stood astonied on the height and thought:—
"When will the sky show love to us again?
What will the next jest of old heaven be?"
He gat down from the mount but lost not heart,
Went not before the army and its chief,
But said: "Since first I girt me ne'er have I
Dwelt anywhere a year, and I have seen
Full many a host, but greater never saw."
He bade advance the drums, and Tús the general
Marched from the mountain to the plain to battle,
Prepared to dip his wreakful spear in blood.
They marched till noon, then ranked them two leagues long,
V. 947 The daylight vanished in the army's dust,
The sun divided not 'twixt night and day,
The air was dark with spears and javelins,
The sun became confounded, and the din
Of horsemen and of horses on the plain
Rose over Mars and Saturn. Rocks of flint
Fled at the horsemen's shouts and crash of axes,
Both sword and forearm reddened o'er with blood,
The ground groaned underneath the horses' shoes:
The body of the coward lost all heart,
While brave men turned their mail to winding-sheets.
Kámús addressed the host: "Since we must tread
The sky to-day, bring all your lassos, maces,
And swords upon this glorious battlefield.
The aspirant's head beneath the stones will lie
Unless he quit himself with valiancy."[1]

[1] More literally, "take his life in hand."

§ 28

How Rustam fought with Ashkabús

A warrior named Ashkabús, whose voice
Was like a kettledrum's, came forth to challenge
The Iránians, bent to lay some foeman's head
In dust. He cried: "Which of you famous men
Will come to fight with me, that I may make
His blood to flow in streams?"
Ruhhám on hearing V. 948
Sent up his battle-cry, stormed like the sea,
Took up his bow—the horseman's ambuscade—
And showered arrows on that famous chief,
But he was clad in panoply of steel,
And arrows were like wind upon his tunic.
Ruhhám then raised his massive mace. The hands
Of both grew weary, but Ruhhám's mace failed
Upon the other's helm, much as he sought
To deal a fatal blow, till Ashkabús,
His heavy mace in hand, while earth seemed iron
And heaven ebony, smote brave Ruhhám
Upon the helm and smashed it, who thus worsted
Wheeled round and sought the heights. Tús at the centre
Raged and spurred forth to go at Ashkabús,
But matchless Rustam said to him in wrath:—
"Ruhhám's fit comrade is a bowl of wine.
He holdeth swords as playthings in his cups,
And vaunteth of himself among the brave;
Now whither hath he gone, who was a match
For Ashkabús, with cheeks like sandarach?
Keep in the army's centre—thy fit place—
And I will fight afoot."
He slung his bow
Upon his arm, stuck arrows in his belt,

And shouted, saying: "O thou man of war!
Thine adversary cometh: go not back."
He of Kashán laughed in astonishment,
Then checked his steed and, calling to his foe,
Said, laughing still, to him: "What is thy name,
And who will mourn thee when thy head is off?"
V. 949 The peerless Rustam answered: "Hapless one!
Why askest thou my name among the folk?
My mother called me by this name—'Thy death!'
Fate made me for the hammer of thy helm."
He of Kashán replied: "Without a horse
Thou givest up thyself to slaughtering!"
Then peerless Rustam: "Senseless challenger!
Hast thou ne'er seen foot-soldiers lay proud heads
Beneath the stones? Do lions, crocodiles,
And leopards fight on horseback in thy country?
Now I, foot-soldier as I am, will teach
Thee how to fight, O mounted warrior!
Tús for this purpose sent me forth afoot
That I might get a horse from Ashkabús.
He of Kashán like me will foot it then,
And all will laugh at him. Afoot one man
Is worth three hundred cavaliers like thee
Upon this plain, this day, and in this fight."
He of Kashán inquired: "Where are thine arms?
I see not aught but mockery and jests."
Quoth Rustam: "Thou shalt see the bow and arrows
Whereby thy life shall end."
He marked the pride
Of Ashkabús in his fine steed, and shot
An arrow at its breast; the charger fell
Headforemost. Rustam laughed and cried aloud:—
"Sit by thy noble comrade! Prithee nurse
Its head and rest thee from the fight awhile."
V. 950 Then Ashkabús, his body quivering,
His face like sandarach, strung up his bow,

And showered shafts on Rustam, who exclaimed :—
"In vain thou weariest thy wicked soul,
Thine arms, and body."
Choosing from his girdle
A shaft of poplar wood he drew it forth
Bright-pointed, feathered with four eagle-plumes;
Then took his bow of Chách in hand and set
His thumbstall to the deer-hide string; he straightened
His left arm, curved his right; the bent bow sang;
The shaft's point reached his ear; the deer-hide hummed;
The shaft's point bussed his finger and its notch
Was at his back; he loosed and struck the breast
Of Ashkabús; the sky kissed Rustam's hand;
Then destiny cried: "Take!" and fate cried: "Give!"
The heavens cried: "Excellent!" the angels: "Good!"
He of Kashán expired, thou wouldst have said:—
"His mother never bare him!"
Both the hosts
Beheld that fight. Kámús marked with the Khán
The lofty stature, strength, and fire of Rustam,
And, when he had withdrawn, the Khán dispatched
A cavalier, who drew the arrow forth
All bloody to the plumes! They passed it round
And thought it was a spear! The Khán's heart aged
When he beheld the feathers and the point.
He spake thus to Pírán: "Who is this man?
What is his name among the Íránian chiefs?
'They are a paltry remnant,' were thy words,
'Not on a par with men of high degree,'
Whereas their arrows are like spears! A mountain V. 951
Hath little heart to fight them; thou didst make
The matter small indeed, but thine account
Was false throughout!"
"None know I of this class,"
Pírán replied, "within the Íránian host,

None who can send his arrows through a tree-trunk,
Nor know I what this miscreant's aims may be.
The men possessed of stature, Grace, and prowess
Among the Íránian host are Tús and Gív,
And in the fight Húmán hath often made
The world as black as ebony to Tús.
I know not who is this Íránian,
Or who among our troops will prove his match;
But I will go and ask among the tents;
We will make out his name at all events."

§ 29

How Pírán held Converse concerning the Coming of Rustam

Pírán went full of care and pale of face
To ask the chiefs. Húmán the valiant said:—
"Wise men do not depreciate their foes.
The nobles of Írán are in good heart;
'They would break iron,' thou may'st say; and now
That reinforcements reach them from Írán
They raise their war-cry on the battlefield."
Pírán replied: "Whatever cavalier
Shall come forth from Írán to succour Tús
We need not fear if Rustam be away.
I shall not break my heart about Ruhhám
Or yet about Gurgín; for be assured
That saving Tús they have no warrior;
Gurgín and Faríburz match not Kámús.
V. 952 Each soldier of our host too, with so great
A fight in view, will seek his own renown."
Thence sped he to Kámús, went to Manshúr
And to Fartús, and said: "To-day was fought
A great fight and a Wolf showed 'mongst the Sheep!
See to the cure and who hath shown himself
So harmful in the infliction of these wounds."

Kámús replied: "Our fight to-day was such
That fame was turned to shame since Ashkabús
Was slain therein while Gív and Tús rejoiced.
My heart was riven at this man on foot
Because our troops were panic-stricken at him.
He is the tallest man on earth, we have not
One in the host to fight him. Thou didst see
His bow; the shaft is here. A savage lion
Hath not his strength; he surely is the warrior,
The man of Sigz, of whom thou spakest oft,
And he hath come upon the field afoot,
Come to give succour to the Íránian host."
Pírán replied: "He is not like this one,
But an exalted cavalier and hero."
Kámús, whose wary heart was all intent
Upon the matter, said: "Describe to me
How fareth on the field that lion-man.
What knowledge hast thou of his height and strength?
What language holdeth he with chiefs in fight?
What sort of man is he, and what his aspect?
On what wise shall I go to combat with him,
For if he be the one that hath arrived
I take the field myself?"
Pírán replied:—
"Forbid it, heaven! that Rustam should come hither,
And purpose fight! Thou wouldest see a hero,
Tall as a cypress, and with Grace and beauty,
From whom Afrásiyáb on many a field
Hath turned with tears; a warrior-liege is he, V. 953
The first to draw the scimitar, and fighteth
In wreak for Siyáwush his foster-child.
No one can wield his arms though many try.
In battle, when he girdeth up his loins,
His body hath a savage lion's strength.
No crocodile can lift his mace when dropped
In fight; his bow-string is of lion-hide;

His arrows, shaft and point, weigh ten sitír.
If any flint-rock should encounter him
'Twould turn to wax or something softer still.
He weareth, when he goeth forth to battle,
Chain-mail, and buckleth o'er it his cuirass,
And over that a garb of *leopard-skin*.
'Babr-i-Bayán' he calleth it; 'tis more
Than tunic and cuirass to him, not burning
With fire and wetting not with water. He
Hath wings when wearing it. The steed whereon
He rideth is, thou wouldst say, Mount Bístún
In motion, ever neighing in the fight,
And making sparks fly out of dust and stone;
But, wondrous as he is, it well may be
That thou wilt hold him not a man in battle,
And 'tis not strange that thou art worshipful
Who hast such limbs and shoulders, neck and arms."
Whenas Kámús, the man so prudent, heard
He gave his eyes and ears up to Pírán,
Whose words in sooth proved grateful. All afire
He answered: "Paladin! be shrewd of heart
And bright of mind. Propose what oaths thou wilt—
Oaths such as kings of wakeful fortune take—
And I will swear a greater oath to thee,
One that will cheer thy wounded heart, that I,
v. 954 In His strength Who is Master of the sun,
Will not take off the saddle from my steed
Till I have made thy spirit glad and bright,
And this world as a needle's eye to them."
Pírán called many blessings down on him,
And said: "Shrewd-hearted king who sayest sooth!
We are in all things subject to thy will,
Which leaveth little of the fray to us."
Pírán then went the circuit of the host,
And, visiting the enclosures and the tents,
Apprised the Khán and all of these events.

§ 30

How the Íránians and Túránians set the Battle in Array

Whenas the air glowed with the setting sun,
And dark night 'gan to stalk athwart the sky,
The warriors of the army of Túrán,
The men of wisdom and the scimitar,
Came in a body to the Khán's pavilion,
Full of revenge and fight—the lion-man
Kámús, the conqueror of elephants,
Manshúr the brave, the arbiter of battle,
With Shamírán from Shakn, Shangul from Hind,
The king of Sind and from Sakláb Kundur.
They all advised at large about the war,
And spake much of Írán, till all agreed
That they must wash their hands in blood, then parted,
Each to his tent, for rest or pleasure there;
But when the moon, then slender grown and humped,
Left the dark chevelure of gloomy night,
And, being in the presence of the sun,
Arose with watery looks and bathed its cheeks,
The soldiers of both hosts began to stir, V. 955
And, as their shouts arose, the Khán of Chín
Exclaimed: "We must not hesitate to fight
As yesterday we did and had to deem
Pírán—the man most needful—non-existent.
Far have we marched with succours to this war,
And if we slack to-day as yesterday
We shall disgrace our name for manliness.
To-morrow too Afrásiyáb will praise us,
And we may rest. Attack we then in force,
And mountain-like advance against our foes;
The nobles of ten provinces are here,
We must not sleep or feast."

The mighty men

Arose and said: "The conduct of the host
Is thine to-day. Thine are the realms of Chín
And of the Turkmans. Mark thou here to-day
How scimitars shall shower from darksome clouds!"
On his side Rustam thus harangued the troops:—
"The time hath come; if we have lost a few
There is but one in several hundred slain;
Let not *your hearts be straitened; for my part*
I will not live except with fame and honour.
With cheeks like ebony the Turkman troops
Withdrew from Ashkabús, so fill ye, all!
Your hearts with vengeance, frown, ye cavaliers!
For I have put the shoes on Rakhsh to-day,
And on him will incarnadine my sword.
Be instant for to-day we start afresh,
And all the earth is now the treasury
Of Kai Khusrau. Arm for the strife. Win crowns
And earrings. Purses shall ye have of me,
Gifts from Zábul and turbans from Kábul."
V. 956 The mighty blessed him: "Ne'er may crown and signet
Lack thee!"
He donned his armour and went forth
With confidence upon the battlefield.
He put his chain-mail under his cuirass,
And over it he donned Babr-i-Bayán.
He wore a helmet wrought of steel of Chín—
One to make foemen meditate on death.
He girded up his loins by God's command,
And mounted Rakhsh like some mad elephant.
The heavens were confounded at his mien,
Earth darkened where his charger's hoofs were seen.

How Alwá was slain by Kámús

The drums and trumpets sounded from both hosts,
No room remained for guile or grammarye;
The mountains and the plains were all a-quake,
The earth was troubled by the tramp of steeds.
Kámús commanded the Túránian right,
Behind him were the mighty elephants
And baggage. On the left the lord of Hind
Stood clad in mail, a Rúman sword in hand,
And in the centre was the Khán of Chín.
The sky grew dark, the earth shook. Faríburz,
Like Sol irradiant in Aries,
Commanded on the left wing of Írán.
Gúdarz, son of Kishwád, encased in steel,
Was on the right, and in the centre Tús,
Son of Naudar, in front were drums and clarions.
From all parts of the host a shout arose—
A shout which rent the ears of elephants—
And e'en from water rose the fumes of fire: V. 957
It was a fight surpassing warriors' dreams.
The first man that appeared between the lines,
His heart's blood all afoam upon his lips,
Was that famed chief Kámús accompanied
By soldiers, elephants, and kettledrums.
He, bearing in his hand an ox-head mace,
Cried like a furious elephant trumpeting:—
"Where is that man on foot who challengeth
Illustrious heroes? Let him come and see
A bow and arrow that will cost him life."
The gallant warriors—illustrious Tús,
Ruhhám, and Gív—beheld Kámús, but none
Desired to strive with him; the field remained
Void of Íránian chiefs; none had the strength

To fight with him for he was like a pard;
They were like deer. Yet was there one, Alwá,
A Zábulí, who promptly drew his sword.
He used to bear the spear and guard the back
Of Rustam, was a skilful cavalier,
And had with liver-burning toil and trouble
Acquired from him the use of arrow, mace,
And spear. What said the sage, the eloquent,
The ancient man? Now listen and perpend:—
"Let not thy prowess fill thee with conceit,
But look well to the ground beneath thy feet;
V. 958 To match a rivulet against the sea
Would be a contest of insanity."
Now when Alwá adventured on Kámús,
Who for his part was eager for the fray,
They cleared an ample space. He of Kashán
Came wolf-like, with his spear unhorsed his foe
With ease, then wheeled his steed and trampled o'er
The fallen till the dust was red with gore.

§ 32

How Kámús was slain by Rustam

The peerless Rustam grieved about Alwá,
Let loose the twisted lasso from its straps,
And took his massive mace as for a strife
Of chiefs. He roared like some mad elephant
As he advanced with lasso on his arm
And mace in hand. Kámús said: "Bluster not
So much about a thread of sixty coils."
"The lion roareth bravely," Rustam said,
"On catching sight of game. Thou wast the first
To put the girdle on in this dispute,
And thou hast slain a noble of Írán.
Thou sayest that my lasso is a thread;

Now shalt thou see how tight the knots will hold.
Thy fate doth drive thee on, man of Kashán!
Since here no place is left thee save the dust."
Kámús the valiant urged his dun steed on,
His foe a lasso-bearing Elephant,
And let out with his glittering glaive, intent
To sever Rustam's head. The point alighted
On Rakhsh's neck and clave the battle-mail,
But failed to wound. The elephantine hero
Coiled, whirled, and flung the lasso round his foe, V. 959
Then spurred away and made the leather fast
Beneath his thigh while Rakhsh flew eagle-like.
Kámús undaunted tightly gripped his steed,
Pressed firmly on the stirrups, loosed the reins,
And sought by force to break the twisted thong,
Becoming frantic, but the raw hide held.
The elephantine hero, checking Rakhsh,
Wheeled, jerked Kámús headforemost to the ground,
Came up, secured him in the lasso's coils,
And said to him: "Thou art not dangerous now.
In vain are all thy charms and spells; thy soul
Hath made a fruitless bargain with the Dív."
He bound his prisoner's hands behind the back,
Firm as a rock, then grasped the coils, returned
Afoot, his foe beneath his arm, and told
The warriors: "This lover of the fray
Essayed to match himself with me in strength,
But 'tis the wont with this deceitful world
At times to elevate, at times bring low.
It causeth both our happiness and grief,
And one is whiles on earth, whiles in the clouds.
Now this illustrious warrior, who ever
Was wont to prove the lion's match in fight,
Set forth to desolate Írán, to make
A den of lions of our fields and fells,
And leave behind no palaces or bowers

Of roses in Zábul or in Kábul.
He would not lay aside that mace of his
Till he had slaughtered Rustam son of Zál;
But now his helm and hauberk are his shroud,
His crown is dust, and his juppon the grave.
V. 960 On what wise do ye purpose slaying him,
Because Kámús the warrior's work is done?"
Then Rustam flung Kámús upon the ground
Before the chiefs; the warriors left their ranks,
They hacked his body with their scimitars,
And drenched the stones and dust beneath with blood.
Such is the course of heaven and destiny,
Now causing joy, then pain and misery!
All is toil, anguish, trouble, and distress;
Thy courage will not make it more or less.
Thy body hath a load of guilt to bear,
Thy spirit dwelleth in a world of care;
And let not bravery thy thoughts elate,
For stretched above thee is the hand of Fate.
With all thy might incline to virtue's ways,
And offer unto God—the Guide—thy praise.

The strife with brave Kámús hath reached its goal
In death when He that gave took back the soul.
Now valour and revenge will fill the scene:
I tell the battle with the Khán of Chín.

PART III

THE STORY OF RUSTAM AND THE KHÁN OF CHÍN

ARGUMENT

There are abortive negotiations, but the campaign continues. Many Túránian chiefs are slain by Rustam, who takes the Khán of Chín prisoner. He also slays Káfúr, the man-eater. Afrásiyáb summons Púládwand to his aid, but again Rustam is triumphant. He returns victorious to Irán, is welcomed and rewarded by Kai Khusrau, and then departs to Sístán.

NOTE

§ 14. It is said that when Firdausí was buried in his own garden at Túس,[1] the great Shaikh of the time—Abúl Kásim of Gurgán—refused to be present because, he said, Firdausí, though a learned and religious man, had deserted his principles and spent his time in discoursing of men of bad religion and fire-worshippers. That night the Shaikh had a dream of Paradise. He saw a magnificent palace with a jewelled throne, and asked whose it was. "It is for Firdausí," was the reply. Then the poet appeared wearing a green robe and an emerald-coloured crown upon his head. "O Firdausí!" said the Shaikh, "whence this rank and splendour?" The poet answered: "From a couplet or two confessing the Unity of God." The Shaikh, when he woke, went and prayed at Firdausí's tomb. Probably the lines referred to are those at the end of this section.[2]

§ 20. Cannibalism was not unknown in former times among the savage tribes of the North, as we learn from Herodotus. On the upper waters of the Borysthenes (the Dnieper) dwelt the Androphagoi proper, who seem to have been of Finnish race, some tribes of which appear to have retained their cannibalistic

[1] *Cf.* Vol. i. p. 45.

[2] C, Persian Preface, p. 60, and *note*.

propensity as late as the Middle Ages.[1] On the steppes east of the Caspian dwelt the Massagetæ, and to the north of them, and south-east of the Ural Mountains, the Issedones. Both these tribes were to some extent cannibals.[2] The legend in the text of a man-eating community can be accounted for without difficulty.

§ 1

How the Khán of Chín had Tidings of the Slaying of Kámús

Now, O enlightened sage! speak but to name
God the Sustainer of heaven's circling frame,
And Guide to good. Thine end of life will come,
V. 961 And thou wilt rest within the other home,
But first narrate again this tale of yore
Told by the rustic minstrel from his store.
Anon news reached the Khán: "Kámús is slain
Upon the field, and day is turned to gloom
And bitterness before the chiefs of Balkh,
Kashán, and Shakn."
All looked on one another,
And asked: "Who can this prowest warrior be?
What is his name? Who is he? Who can face him?"
Thus to Húmán the Lion spake, Pírán:—
"My soul hath had enough of strife to-day.
How shall our warriors desire to fight
When our brave Crocodile hath just been slain?
He was a peerless noble; not a horseman
Had form more elephantine, and the man
That could in battle bind him with the lasso
Might well in days of fight seize by the head
An elephant and dash it to the ground."

[1] Herodotus, iv. 18 and 106. BAG, Vol. i. p. 193.
[2] *Ibid.* i. 216 and iv. 26.

The troops in sore distress about Kámús
Came in a body weeping to the Khán,
To whom Pírán did reverence sadly, saying:—
"O thou exalted o'er yon azure dome!
Thou hast beheld and heard how we have fared
From first to last upon this battlefield.
Devise a remedy for our misfortune
Thyself without consulting any one.
Choose from our army's spies one that can bring
Hid things to light and find out who he is—
This lion-hearted one for whom our host
Hath not a match; then we will all face death,
And fight him on the field."
The Khán replied:—
"'Tis what concerneth me; I fain would know
The name of this pernicious paladin, V. 962
Who taketh Lions in his lasso's coils;
But seeing death may not be remedied,
And wishes, prayers, and vigour naught avail,
For to that end we all are mother-born,
And yield our necks thereto against our wills,
While none escapeth turning heaven's decree,
Not if he dash to earth an elephant,
Let not your hearts be sorrowful for him,
Who perished in the twisted lasso's coils,
For with my lasso I will bring to earth
The man that slew Kámús, and make Írán
Run river-like with blood to glut the heart
Of king Afrásiyáb."
He then assembled
Full many a noble from the army—swordsmen
And bravest of the brave—and said to them:—
"As for this warrior with his archery,
This lasso-flinging, hero-taking horseman,
'Tis needful that ye spy out where he is
Upon the left or right wing of their host;

Inquire withal about his name and land;
Then will we do his business out of hand."

§ 2

How Chingish fared with Rustam

A lusty cavalier—a faithful liege—
By name Chingish—a seeker of renown—
A man of valour and adventurous,
Stepped forth and volunteered. He thus addressed
The Khan: "Exalted! all the world would have
Thy love. Though this man be a lion I
Will make him lifeless when I take the field,
Will fight him single-handed and convert
The glory of Írán to infamy.
I will be foremost to avenge Kámús,
And thus restore his honour after death."
The Khán applauded him. He kissed the ground
Before his lord, who said: "Achieve this vengeance,
Bring me yon overweening head, and I
V. 963 Will give thee from my hoards so many gems
That thou shalt never need to toil again."
Chingish spurred forth swift as Ázargashasp,
Approached the Íránians, drew a poplar arrow,
And cried: "This is my field, the heads of nobles
Are in my clutch. If that bold lasso-flinger,
Who useth sometimes lasso, sometimes shaft,
And took Kámús, will come upon the field,
His station shall be void."
He roamed about,
And cried: "Where is that lion-warrior?"
Then Rustam with his mace bestirred himself,
And straightway mounted Rakhsh. "I am," he said,
"That chief-o'erthrowing, Lion-capturer,

I have mace, lasso, and artillery,
And now for thee, as for the brave Kámús
'Tis time to rub eyes in the dust."
Chingish
Rejoined: "What are thy name, thy race, and purpose
That I may know whose blood I shed amid
The dust of battle?"
Rustam answered: "Wretch!
Ne'er may the tree that taketh thee for fruit
Bloom in the garth. To thee my name and spear-point
Are death, thy mail and helm thy winding-sheet."
That insolent came wind-like, strung his bow,
Which seemed a raining cloud, and said to Rustam,
His mail-clad opposite: "Stay, valiant horseman!
Thou shalt have fight enough."
The other raised
His shield, perceiving that the shafts would pierce
His mail. Chingish marked well that elephant-form, V. 964
Tall as a straight-stemmed cypress in a garden,
Beheld that steed—a Hill beneath a Hill
And not aweary—thought: "To run away
Is better than to bring myself to harm,"
And spurred his heavy-laden charger on
In flight, intending to rejoin his troops;
But Rustam, that bold horseman, urged on Rakhsh
Like fire and followed up his noble foe.
As like a furious elephant he gained
Upon Chingish the plain was full of hubbub,
And both the armies saw amazedly
How Rustam caught the charger of Chingish
And held it by the tail until the rider
In terror threw himself upon the ground;
His helm fell off him and he begged for life,
But peerless Rustam stretched him on the dust,
Struck off his head, and thought of him no more.
The Íránian nobles praised their paladin,

Who, glittering spear in hand, rode to and fro
Between the Íránian army and the foe.

§ 3

How the Khán of Chín sent Húmán to Rustam

Much grieved the Khán and raged at that mishap;
He said thus to Húmán: "Now time and place
Are straitened to us. Go, for thou art shrewd,
And learn the name of yon great paladin."
Húmán replied: "No anvil I or ivory
In fight. Kámús the warrior had no peer
For valour and discretion, so despise not
The cavalier that lassoed him. I go
V. 965 To learn whom God will favour on this field."
As swift as wind he went inside his tent,
Took other helmet, flag, and horse, and changed
The fashion of his mail and shield, then went,
And, drawing near to Rustam, paused to scan
That hero's neck and limbs, and said: "Renowned one,
Brave lasso-flinger, warlike cavalier!
By God, I tremble for my monarch's throne
When I behold a foeman such as thou art.
In this great host I see no valiant noble
And chief like thee. One courting such a combat
Could make the dust fly from a lion's heart!
Tell me about thy country, race, and home,
Inform me of thy parentage and name.
I have not seen among the Íránian host
A man save thee who hath the heart to fight.
I love a warrior, and most of all
The man that hath the temper of a pard;
So now if thou wilt let me know thy name,
Land, stock, and home, thou wilt confer a favour,
For thou wilt ease my heart."

The paladin
Said: "Noble warrior of ardent soul!
Why tell not thy name, country, realm, and home?
Why hast thou come with this bland courtesy, V. 966
And so much talk? If thou desirest peace,
Not further loss in war, find him that shed
The blood of Siyáwush, and so involved us
In all the fire of feud. Find in thy host
Alike the guilty and the innocent;
Find too the men, the steeds caparisoned,
And goods which Siyáwush took from Írán;
Send all to us, and I will wish no longer
To fight the Turkmans: ye shall be my friends
In all, I will not speed revenge, seek strife,
Or lay the heads of nobles in the dust.
I will communicate with Kai Khusrau,
Will purge his heart and brain of grief and vengeance,
And send to him the culprits; he may pity them,
And pardon their offence. Now will I tell thee
Their names, and may their names and schemes both perish!
The head of the offence was Garsíwaz,
Who sought to trouble and afflict Írán;
Next any that thou knowest of Túr's seed
That made this Water brackish wantonly,
Such as Gurwí the son of Zira, born
Unjust and loveless; perish all his race!
They did the injury to Siyáwush,
Which was the key to all these bonds of bale;
Next those who wrecked their monarch's brain and heart,
And made blood flow like water, also those
Who had no quarrel with the Íránians,
And yet have taken part in this campaign,
The mighty men that are of Wísa's race,
Men double-faced and pied to every one,

V. 967 Such as Húmán, Lahhák, and Farshídward,
Kulbád and Nastíhan the lion-man.
If ye accomplish this that I demand,
And end our quest for vengeance, I will shut
The door of our revenge upon thy country;
Thou shalt not need to clothe thy breast in mail;
But if thou speakest in another sense
I will renew our quarrel by fresh wars,
And by the life and head of great Khusrau
Make reek the marches of Túrán. Shangul
Shall not survive nor yet the Khán of Chín,
Or warrior of the country of Túrán.
Thou hast essayed me on this battlefield;
My way and mode of fight is always this.
One of the nobles of Írán am I,
Wont to encounter Lions in the fray,
And many heads have I removed from bodies
Whose only winding-sheet was grimy dust.
I ne'er have spoken on this wise before,
My purpose first and last hath been revenge;
Now therefore hearken to me and embrace
These fair proposals."
At these words Húmán
Was sore afraid and trembled like a leaf,
For hearing Rustam talk in such a strain
He saw what vengeance would befall his kin,
And answered: "Lion-hearted warrior!
With strength and form and stature such as thine
Thy proper seat is on the Íránian throne.
At least thou art a mighty paladin
Or some redoubtable Íránian chief.
V. 968 Thou hast inquired about my race and name,
But not accorded what I asked of thee.
My name is Kúh. A warrior brave am I.
My sire is Búsipás—the lion-like.
I have accompanied this host from far,

And come a soldier to this scene of strife.
Now that thou hast my name and race aright
I too must ask for thine, which I require
That I may make thy wishes known to all.
So now if thou wilt let me know thy name[1]
I will return rejoicing to the camp.
What thou hast spoken on this battlefield
Will I detail in presence of the host,
And in the presence of Manshúr, the Khán
Of Chín, and Turkman warriors and chiefs."

But Rustam said to him: "Seek not my name:
Say what I seemed to thee. My heart is burning
With love toward Pírán, because the slaughter
Of Siyáwush hath pierced his liver too;
He is the gentlest man in all Túrán.
Speed him to me forthwith and we will see
What time may bring."

Húmán replied: "O great one!
Then thou art eager to behold Pírán!
What knowest thou of him or of Kulbád,
Púlád, or of Gurwí the son of Zira?"

"Why ask so many questions?" Rustam said.
"Try not to make a river run up-hill:
As for these mighty hosts, dost thou not see
That if they fight or not is left to thee?"

§ 4

How Pírán took Counsel with Húmán and the Khán

Húmán withdrew with all his favour changed,
And told Pírán: "O favourite of fortune! V. 969
Great ill hath come on us! This lion-heart
Is Rustam of Zábul, and we may now
Weep for our troops. He talked at large with me,

[1] Reading with C and P.

Recalling what we each had done amiss,
And I, my brother! was the first accused.
He spake much of revenge for Siyáwush,
Of past events, of waste and settlement,
Of what he purposed and of righteous dealing,
About Bahrám and those Gúdarzians,
And all that fell. His love is all for thee
Of whom he spake at large with kindliness.
He calleth now for thee of all this host;
I know not why. Go see him spear in hand,
Set like a hill upon another hill,
With mail and mace and leopard-skin cuirass,
Bestriding his great, furious Elephant.
Then wilt thou see that I have told no lies:
E'en fire receiveth brightness from his sword.
He will not budge without an interview;
It is for thy sake that he tarrieth thus.
Bespeak him fairly when thou seest him,
Draw not thy sword, and act not hastily."
Pírán replied: "Exalted one! I fear
My time hath come. If yonder warrior
Be Rustam, then this plain will be a scene
Of grief for us. Our fields already burn:
I know not what our evil star hath done."
He went with tearful eyes before the Khán,
Pierced through the liver, angry, seared at heart,
V. 970 And said to him: "O monarch! be not hasty,
Because the case is altered with us now.
Whenas Kámús the warrior's time had come
The thought occurred to me: 'This Iron Wall
Is Rustam, with his raw hide lasso-coils.'
Afrásiyáb may come in all his pomp,
But none will dream of seeing Rustam's back;
Dívs sicken fighting him. What is one man
Or one whole plain-full in opposing him?
He hath been long lord of Zábulistán,

And foster-sire erewhile to Siyáwush,
And warreth like a father in his anguish
To make the world strait to Afrásiyáb;
This elephantine one hath summoned me
Of all this countless host, I know not why;
But I will go and ascertain his will
Because my spirit is brought low with care."
The Khán said: "Go, say that which must be said
With courtesy. If he desireth peace
And wealth, why toil our armies on this plain?
Agree to give great gifts and then return;
'Tis better not to court so great a fight;
But, since he is arrayed in leopard-skin,
Good sooth! he may be bent upon a conflict;
Then we will battle likewise in full force,
And press him closely on the field of strife.
Put we our trust in God and war with Rustam
With all our strength; his body is not brass
And iron, but is blood and hair and flesh,
Nor shall we have to fight him in the sky:
Why burn thy heart with care and grief? Know this,
That, even if he feed on stone and iron,
Shafts and two-headed darts will pierce him. We
Outnumber them three hundred times. 'Tis ill V. 971
To be in dudgeon on this battlefield.
This Zábulí, this famous warrior,
Outvieth not an elephant in fight,
And I will show him with mine own such play
That he no more will meet me in the fray."

§ 5

How Pírán came to Rustam

Pírán departed full of pain and fear,
Heart-rent at Rustam's doings. He approached

The army of Írán and cried: "O chief,
And lover of the fray! I heard that thou
Hadst called for me of all this countless host
Of Turkmans, and have come forth from my lines
To thine to see what thou wouldst have of me."
When noble Rustam knew that from the Turkmans
A warrior approached he met Pírán
Before the host, an iron helm on head.
"What is thy name, O Turkman!" he demanded,
"What is thy will and purpose in this coming?"
The other said: "Pírán am I, the chief
Of yonder chieftains. Thou hast asked Húmán,
The son of Wísa, for me in kind words,
Which made my heart yearn toward thee, paladin!
Declare to me which of the chiefs thou art."
He answered: "I am Rustam of Zábul,
My sword is from Kábul, my clothing mail."
Pírán, on hearing noble Rustam's words,
Dismounted and did reverence. Rustam said:—
"I greet thee from the bright-souled Sun Khusrau,
V. 972 O paladin! and from his mother too,
The daughter of Afrásiyáb, who dreameth
Of thy love every night."
Pírán replied:—
"I greet thee also, elephantine chief!
In God's name and the host's. May He Who giveth
All good things bless thee, may thy signet be
A passport to the sky. Thanks be to God,
My Refuge, that I see thee here. Are Zál,
The son of Sám, Zawára, Farámarz,
Those men of prudent hearts and prosperous—
May this world never know the want of them—
Are they in health, good spirits, and estate?
Now will I speak unless thou take it ill
That subjects should complain of those in power.
I planted in the Garden once a Tree,

Whose leaves proved colocynth, whose fruit proved
blood,
And it hath caused me many grievous tears,
For, though 'twas once my treasure and my life,
It now hath brought me grief and yieldeth bane
Instead of antidote, for Siyáwush
Esteemed me as his sire and shield from harm,
While I gave him my daughter and a province,
That he might illustrate my race; but some
Have slain him and my daughter cruelly,
And haply thou wilt say it served me right.
Great are the care, the anguish, and the pains,
That I have suffered both from king and people,
And God shall be my witness in the world,
Although to call the Almighty as a witness
Is wrong, and though so long a time hath passed,
And I have heard much counsel from the wise,
That mourning hath not ceased within my house, V. 973
And that my soul is still aflame with grief,
That I pour out my blood instead of tears,
And constantly am in the leech's hands.
That act hath ruined me, heaven hath not turned
As I could wish; I, since I learned the fate
Of Siyáwush, have done naught, good or ill,
But been between two realms and two great kings V. 974
In anguish, misery, and impotence.
I risked my life for Farangís, whose father
Had sought to slay her, but I kept her hidden
In mine own house, providing for her there.
She in return would have my life, would have
Her foemen's heads from me! All grief am I,
O paladin! and both sides rail at me.
I have no way to flee Afrásiyáb,
I have no other resting-place or home;
I am concerned for treasure, lands, and herds,
And see not any pretext for departing;

I have my sons and many women-folk,
Such are the cares and ties of every one.
Whene'er Afrásiyáb commandeth war
He will not suffer me to close mine eyes;
Against my will I must lead forth the host,
I may not disobey. The occasion now
Is one for pity not for war with me.
Had I no other pain and grief at heart
About my kin save that Pílsam was slain. . . .[1]
But there are many other gallant youths,
Who have not had their fill of combating,
And seeing that I tremble for my life
I speak about my sons and property.
By God the Conqueror, O paladin!
Be not incensed against me, harbour not
A grudge against my kin, keep God in mind.
V. 975 Now by the illustrious soul of Siyáwush
I swear that death is better far for me
Than breastplate, sword, and helm, for if our troops
Engage thou wilt see mountains of the slain;
Yet those from Shakn, Kashán, Sakláb, and Hind—
The lands between the Indus and this march—
Are guiltless of the blood of Siyáwush,
Though brought as soldiers to this battlefield.
Peace bettereth war with me. Be not too hard.
Speak out thy mind; thou art more wise than I,
And mightier in war and prowess."

Rustam
Replied not as Pírán desired but said:—
"Since I and other warriors of the Sháh
Armed for the field I have seen naught but good
From thee—the least injurious of Turkmans.
Thou hast done righteously in all and sought
To lead Túrán aright. The leopard knoweth
That war and strife are evils, rocks and mountains

[1] See Vol. ii. p. 350.

Know that, but when the king of kings is bent
On vengeance we must pour the arrows in.
On two conditions there may be peace yet;
Consider if ye will consent to them:
One is—that thou shalt send to Kai Khusrau
In bonds all those that through the prince's death
Insensately have set this scene of strife,
Although not authors of the war, and those,
The guilty of the blood of that just head,
Although they may be not upon the field.
The other is—thou shalt prepare thyself,
And come with me to our victorious Sháh.
As to the goods which thou wilt leave behind,
And dost esteem so precious, thou shalt have
Ten for each one from him, so prate not thou
About the baggage of the Turkman host."
Pírán reflected: "To desert Túrán, V. 976
And go before that king were grave indeed!
Again by thus demanding those in fault
In wreak for Siyáwush he will bring low
Afrásiyáb's great men—his kith and kin—
The man with thrones and treasure, place and power.
How could I dare to speak of such a thing?
He asketh what is quite preposterous!
Húmán, Kulbád, and Farshídward—the men
That brought about the anguish of Gúdarz—
Are all involved, and this can never be:
No river in the world can run such water.
I must adopt mine own expedient,
Take mine own way."
He said: "O paladin!
Mayst thou be ever young and bright of mind.
I will depart and tell this to the chiefs—
Manshúr, Shangul, and to the Khán of Chín—
And send a cameleer to tell the king
Thy words, and rouse him from his slumbering."

§ 6

How the Túránians took Counsel for Battle with the Íránians

Pírán departed to the host like wind,
Assembled those that were of Wísa's race,
And told the secret, saying: "Our fall or rise
Hath come, for know ye that this Lion-heart
Is Rustam, who hath ta'en the field in grief
With chiefs and Lions from Zábulistán
And nobles from Kábulistán. With him
There are Gúdarz and Gív and Tús, and we
Must fight, though 'gainst our wills, and be disgraced.
Since Rustam is the avenger and the leader
No horsemen in the world will hold their own.
He seeketh of the Turkmans those in fault,
And troubleth not about the innocent.
Who to your knowledge is not guilty here,
And is not much affected by our king?
Behold our country will be desolate,
The warriors of Írán will work their will,
V. 977 And all be lost, the young, the old, the monarch,
The treasure, army, throne, and diadem.
I said to our unjust king: 'Be not thou
So fiery and stormful, else some day,
And with no warning, thou wilt be consumed,
Thy wit be burned and thy heart's eye sewn up.'
The imperious monarch brooked not mine advice,
Or that of the illustrious company,
But made away with noble Siyáwush
Without consulting with the brave and wise.
Thou wilt see nothing left of state or crown,
Throne, elephants of war, or diadem;
The Íránian king will be rejoiced thereat
While grief and pain will be our warriors' portion.
Woe for our gallant hearts and this great host,

Endowed with Grace, tall stature, crown, and state!
All will be spoiled henceforth before your eyes,
None will turn happy from the battlefield,
For they will tread us 'neath their horses' hoofs;
Our wakeful fortune's light will be bedimmed.
My heart is burning for Húmán, my soul
Is flaming for Rúín, for Rustam's heart
Is brimming with revenge for Siyáwush
For whom his eyebrows are fulfilled with frowns.
I will go sadly to the Khán and tell him
What this revenge hath cost me."
Swift as dust
He went with full heart and with lips all sighs,
And found the camp-enclosure full of clamour,
With bloody tulips set on saffron cheeks,
For many of the kindred of Kámús
Had come demanding vengeance. They exclaimed:—
"Afrásiyáb will dream no more of greatness!
Why did this king, who hath no man to fight
On days of battle, thus begin the feud?
We, to avenge Kámús, with tearful eyes
Will lead the army of Kashán to Chín,
And thence and from Barbar, from the Buzgúsh, V. 978
From the Sagsárs and from Mázandarán
Will we bring mace-armed troops to slaughter Rustam
That none may hear his voice. Afrásiyáb,
If fain for vengeance, must not rest or sleep."
Moreover from the kindred of Chingish
And Ashkabús a din like beating drums
Arose, while all in anguish for their kinsmen
Were raining tears of gall on saffron cheeks,
And saying midst their tears: "We will not rest
Or sleep henceforth till we have fired Sístán,
And given its people doleful nights and days,
Have set the head of Rustam of Zábul
Upon the stake in grief for our great dead,

And, having burned his body, strewn the ashes
Before his palace-gate."
Pírán was dazed,
His favour darkened at their lamentations,
And thus he said: "Afflicted, helpless men,
Possessed by pain and care and fed on grief!
Ye surely cannot know that your own time
Is almost o'er."
He sought the Khán and said:—
"This little war of ours is growing long.
A Crocodile, whose mail is leopard-skin,
Hath come up from the river to the fight,
For Rustam hath brought troops from every side,
And famous chiefs; our toils are thrown away,
And unjust deeds receive just punishment.
Afrásiyáb was so infatuate
That Siyáwush was murdered by his hand,
Urged to it by the insensate Garsíwaz.
V. 979 Now Siyáwush was great, a royal prince
Brought up by Rustam of Zábulistán,
Who fighting to avenge his fosterling
Will bring the heavens down. No leopard's claws
Or trunk of elephant, no lofty mountain
Or river Nile[1] will aught avail with him
When he shall take the field before his host.
He rideth on a horse that needeth not
A ship in seas of blood. We may not reckon
This conflict trifling; all have seen his power.
A fire hath fallen from azure heaven and caused
Our hearts to fume with fear. Convoke the sages,
The priests, the great, and find the remedy—
A champion competent to take the field:
We may perchance escape these ills and reach
Our homes albeit with diminished fortunes.

[1] "ni les flots de l'Indus" (Mohl).

Men should act fairly ever, not be first
To seek a quarrel."

Troubled at Pírán

The Khán invoked the Maker's name and said:—
"How shall we act encountered by such hosts?"
Then said Shangul: "To what end is this talk,
Exalted one? We sped o'er flood and waste
From every clime to help Afrásiyáb,
Receiving gifts and armlets; if we fight not
We came like lions and shall go like foxes.
We sprang like fearless lions, losing not
One day upon the march, why such alarm
Because one man from Sigz encountereth us?
Shame on such talk! Thou must take other order.
Grant that he is a furious Elephant, V. 980
And grappleth Lions on the battle-field,
Still, though he slew Kámús the warrior,
We must not hesitate, and since 'tis clear,
Because Pírán is sleepless with dismay,
That some one holdeth Rustam in respect,
I now extend my hand as succourer.
No Elephant is he or Lion's match,
Nor is his prowess as Pírán asserteth.
We must be firm herein, and not erase
All thoughts of vengeance on him from our hearts.
Draw we our maces at the dawn, advance
Across the plain, make air like clouds in spring,
And pour a rain of arrows on the foe;
Then through the dust of horse and crash of axes
None must know head from foot. Observe me well,
And, when I raise the war-cry, charge amain.
We are—we warriors and cavaliers—
Good sooth! above a hundred thousand strong,
And shall we, lifeless though not slain, thus vilely
Shrink from one man? When I confront the Sigzian

Send ye the dust-clouds skyward; let none 'scape;
A coward's heart is naught."
On hearing this,
Pírán, old as he was, grew young of heart,
And said: "Live happy, free from grief and care,"
While all the nobles and the Khán of Chín
Acclaimed the king of Hind.
Now when Pírán
Came to his tent the chiefs resorted thither—
V. 981 Húmán, Bármán, and Nastíhan, whose minds
Were poised 'twixt hope and fear. Húmán inquired:—
"What is thy purpose? Doth it furnish ground
For peace, or are the armies to engage?"
Pírán told what Shangul had said, and how
The troops agreed to battle on, whereat
Húmán was sore displeasured and, incensed
Against ill-starred Shangul, said to Pírán:—
"None can escape the sky and what it bringeth."
He met Kulbád and said: "Shangul is mad!
If Rustam be what I have seen, and heard
From chiefs, Shangul, Kundur, Manshúr, will not
Survive this battlefield, nor will the Khán.
Withdraw we for a while and reckon up
Our chance of gain or loss. Thou wilt behold
Of this unbounded host, whose massive maces
Might quell the world, the more part laid to earth
With blood-drenched helms and mail for winding-sheet."
Kulbád replied: "O wielder of the sword!
Keep if thou canst from evil presages,
And sadden not the hearts of thine own side;
The matter may be other than we think.
The better course for thee is not to fret
Or worry over ills not come as yet."

§ 7

How Rustam harangued his Troops

On his side Rustam called his mighty men—
Tús, Gív, Gúdarz, Ruhhám, and Faríburz, V. 982
Kharrád the warrior and Gustaham,
Gurgín the veteran, the cavalier,
And that illustrious man of war Bízhan.
"Ye men of wisdom!" said the peerless chief,
Addressing them at large in fitting words,
"Ye archimages wise and shrewd of heart!
The man whom God doth render fortunate
Is fit for crown and throne; he will possess
The world, prevail in war, and will not fear
The leopard, elephant, or crocodile.
Our strength is all from God, and to what end
Are we upon this darksome earth of ours?
To think no evil, but to choose the way
Of God and wisdom, since the world is no man's,
And 'tis not well to take much joy therein;
Our worth is based on right and hardihood
While knavery involveth harm and loss.
Pírán was heart-seared when he came to me
So hastily, he spake in many words
Of his good offices to Siyáwush,
Of his own travail and anxiety,
And how through his entreaties Farangís
Escaped the Dragon's breath; and yet withal
My heart foreboded that Pírán would be
Among the first to perish in this war,
His son and brother die before his eyes
With many of the noblest of his kin,
And that Khusrau would slay Afrásiyáb:
Such was my dream. Know that they all will perish
Beneath our feet, not one man will survive:

Howbeit I would not that this hand of mine
Should slay their general; he hath no craft
But honesty, and thinketh not of ill.
If then he shall accomplish what he said,
Be ancient wrongs forgotten; if he yield
The culprits and the goods, the strife is done,
V. 983 The war for me is over; in this world
To deal uprightly is the best of all things.
If from these chiefs with thrones and elephants—
An army like the blue sea—he dispatch
Both crowns and wealth, I shall not trouble further
About the Turkmans. They will all pay tribute
Not being able to contend with us,
And we will spare their lives because the All-giver
Hath taught us wisdom and right ways. The world
Is full of treasures, thrones, and crowns: a man
Were fortunate indeed to win them all!"
Gúdarz in hearing this stood up and said
To Rustam: "O thou chieftain good and just,
The host's support, the adornment of the throne!
The crown and throne and helm are bright through thee.
Resplendent wisdom is thy capital
And provand of thy soul. Peace is no doubt
A better thing than war, but mark this well—
The ox hath yet his hide. I will repeat
To thee a saying of the olden times:—
'The souls of evil men shun righteousness
E'en as the shoulders shun the burden's stress.'
Pírán now giveth pledges in his strait,
But some day he will struggle to evade them.
The Maker fashioned him a double-dealer,
So hearken not to him and 'scape his guile.
When first we set the battle in array
We held a parley and forwent the fight
Because an envoy came to say from him:—

'I am averse from strife and battlefield,
And, recking not of country and of tents,
Have girded up my loins to serve the Sháh.'
He heard from us much counsel and advice,
And said: 'Henceforth is war no mate of mine;
I will depart and compass this affair V. 984
Without delay, announcing to my kin
My course herein, for I have throne and treasure
And cattle, and for them I will provide.'
I said: 'Thy right course is to come at once;
Throne, wealth, and goods await thee in Írán;
But keep the matter secret that thy fault
May not be patent to Afrásiyáb.'
Pírán, when we had spoken, went his way,
And all that night companioned with the wind.
He sent Afrásiyáb a cameleer
To say: 'Array thy troops; a host hath come.'
Thou wouldst have said that we had held no parle,
Because it came to nothing, and Pírán
Upon the tenth day led his army forth
Toward the plain and filled the world with troops.
Just now he set, Oleader of the host!
Upon thy path another toy; just now,
On seeing thy lasso's coils, he feared for life.
Their whole reliance was upon Kámús,
And generals like Fartús and like Manshúr;
But since he hath beheld Kámús' fortune
Wrecked, and his slaughter in the lasso's coils,
Pírán now knocketh at the door of peace,
Not daring to remain upon the field,
And, since he knoweth that his fall is nigh,
Employeth colour, stratagem, and guile.
As for the criminals, the wealth, and goods,
'Which I,' he said, 'will gather and surrender,'
Thou wilt perceive that when the tymbals sound,
And Tús and Faríburz advance to war,

V. 985 He will in person lead the van and ever
Renew the combat. All his words are lies,
And Áhriman alone is his fit mate.
If thou art deaf to me mark what befell
My son Bahrám! Pírán thus held us back,
And set an ambush such that, when the day
Of battle came, he showed to us so great
A graveyard of Gúdarzians that I
Must weep blood all my life, and have for leech
An Indian sword."
Said Rustam: "Be thy words
And wisdom wedded. He is as thou sayest.
We and that old man differ, 'tis no secret;
But, in as much as he hath done us good,
I would not fight him to the bitter end.
Remember how he acted toward the Sháh,
And how he mourned the fate of Siyáwush.
If he should break his word and set on us
I have my lasso at my saddle-straps
To take fierce Elephants. But I will fancy
No ill at first; we may escape a conflict;
But, if he should be faithless, he shall find
The outcome pain and grief."
Gúdarz and Tús
Praised Rustam, saying: "Sol itself would fail
To cozen thee, and in thy presence sleights,
Deceptions, falsehoods, and Pírán's own words
Take on no lustre. May the earth ne'er lack
Our monarch's head and crown, and mayst thou hold
The chiefest place for ever."
Rustam said:—
"'Tis dark and now our brains are dazed with talk;
Quaff we till midnight, then safeguard our troops,
And we shall see what God hath purposed for us."
V. 986 He said moreover to the Íránians:—
"To-night as we are drinking I will take

Some happy omen and, when morrow cometh,
Will shoulder Sám the cavalier's own mace,
Wherewith I fought against Mázandarán,
Attack the Crocodile in his own lair,
And capture camp-enclosure, crown, tiara,
Mace, mighty elephant, and ivory throne:
These will I bring and give the Íránians,
If after all I gird my loins for war."
The noble lieges raised a shout and went
For rest and slumber each man to his tent.

§ 8

How the Íránians and Túránians set the Battle in Array

Whenas the sun displayed its shining crown
The moon appeared as 'twere a silver shield,
But terror-stricken at the rising din
Declined and hid her face. The tymbals sounded
Before the tent of Tús, the world grew ebon
With chargers' dust; it filled the air; the ground
Turned indigo, and Rustam donned his mail.
The army of Írán drew up in line,
The sons intent on fight, the sires on vengeance.
Gúdarz son of Kishwád was on the right
In armour, brandishing a mace of steel,
While Faríburz was stationed on the left,
And washed the vengeance from his chieftains' hearts.[1]
Tús son of Sháh Naudar was in the centre,
And all earth thronged with troops. Then peerless Rustam
Advanced to view the opposing chiefs; the Khán,
Whose elephants made earth like indigo,
Was in the centre, on the right Kundur— V. 987
A gallant horseman lion-like in battle—

[1] *I.e.* by giving them so much that they wanted no more.

And on the left the veteran Gahár:
The earth was wounded 'neath the horsemen's hoofs.
Pírán, upon his rounds before the host,
Approached Shangul, the lover of the fray,
And said to him: "O famous man of Hind!
Folk from Shírwán to Sind perform thy bidding.
Thou said'st to me: 'To-morrow with the dawn
Will I from all sides lead the host to fight;
Then will I challenge Rustam and bring down
To dust that head which reacheth to the clouds.'"
He answered: "I abide by what I said,
Thou shalt see from me neither more nor less.
Now will I go before this vanquisher
Of chiefs, and nail him through with arrow-points,
Avenge Kámús and press the Íránians."
With that he made three battles of his host,
He beat the drums and dust rose from the plain.
They marched, each battle, with huge elephants—
An army-front extending o'er two miles.
The heads of all the drivers were adorned
With gaudy colours; each man wore a crown
And earrings, with a gold torque round his neck,
And belt of gold about his loins. The beasts
Were draped with housings of brocade of Chín
Surmounted by a throne and seat of gold.
Then there arose the blast of clarions,
And all the elephants of war advanced;
Upon the right marched thirty thousand men—
Illustrious cavaliers armed with the spear—
Another thirty thousand on the left
With bows and shields of Chín. The elephants
Were in the centre with the Khán, a throng
That rolled earth's surface as they marched along.

§ 9

How Rustam reproached Pírán

Shangul went forth with Indian sword in hand V. 988
Between the opposing lines; a parasol
Of Indian make, compact of eagles' plumes,
O'ershadowed him. Around him was an escort
Which followed as he willed. On seeing this
Pírán rejoiced, feared not the fight with Rustam,
And thus addressed Húmán: "To-day will fate
Dispose the matter to our hearts' content
With this equipment and such cavaliers,
Each one so gallant, proud, and lion-like;
So go not thou thyself before the line,
Think not of fighting this day or the next:
Let thy post be behind the Khán of Chín,
Because thou need'st not fight, and if moreover
He of Zábul, he of the sable standard,
Beholdeth thee, our cause is lost. Be ours
To note the progress of events, and see
What sport our wakeful fortune will afford."
Pírán went thence toward the Íránian host
To where the elephantine hero stood;
Dismounted, did obeisance many times,
And said: "High heaven taketh Grace from thee.
Ne'er may thy days decline! Ne'er may thy face
Show grief! When I returned, O paladin!
I gave thy message both to old and young.
I talked to them of all thine excellence,
Though who on earth can praise thee worthily?
I spake moreover both of peace and war,
Employing every sort of plea. 'But how
Can we do this,' they said at last, 'and stay
Revenge as thou advisest? We can give
As much as he shall ask of gold and treasure, V. 989

But as for giving up the guilty folk
It may not be. Consider what it meaneth.
Whom save the kinsmen of Afrásiyáb
Know'st thou as guilty? Be not rash in promise,
For all the men that Rustam asketh of us
Are chiefs—great men with thrones and diadems!
How shall we or how can we give them up?
Demands like these would make a young man gray.
When such an army hath arrived from Chín,
Sakláb, Khatlán, and from our own Túrán,
How should Afrásiyáb desire a peace
When he hath brought such hosts o'er sea and land?'
I got no lack of blame in their reply,
And so I have returned to thee in haste.
Now of these troops an army like the sea
Is hurriedly preparing for the fight,
And know thee not but call thee 'him of Sigz.'[1]
The king of Hind is fain to fight with thee
With bow and arrow and with Indian sword,
But sure am I that in the end this host
Will weep because of elephantine Rustam."

When Rustam heard this he was very wroth,
And said thus to Pírán: "Thou luckless one!
Why hast thou so much guile and subterfuge?
Why wilt thou walk upon a precipice?
The king of earth hath spoken much to me
In public and in private of thy lies.
E'en now when I esteemed thee wise and prudent
Thou wast but one great lie from head to foot.
Thou wallowest recklessly in thine own blood
In evil case, but worse awaiteth thee.
Although a spot were Hell 'twere Paradise
Contrasted with the soil beneath thy feet.
'I prithee leave,' I said, 'this black, bad land,
And change it for a settled realm; such life,

[1] *Cf.* Vol. ii. p. 100, and *note*.

As this is wholly worthless, for thy head
Is in the Dragon's maw. Thou mayst behold V. 990
Our gracious, just, young, fair, and courteous Sháh.'
But eating snakes[1] and wearing leopard-skin
Are sweeter than both colour and brocade
In thine esteem. None will contest the point,
And thou wilt eat of that which thou hast sown."
Pírán replied: "O fortune's favourite,
Thou fruitful, flourishing, and goodly Tree!
Who knoweth of such things as well as thou?
And may the homage of the chiefs be thine.
My heart and spirit are at thy command,
My life for thine, I will advise to-night,
And will address the assembled host besides."
This being said, to join the troops he went
With guileful heart and head on vengeance bent.

§ 10

How the Battle was joined

Pírán departed and the opposing hosts
Stood like two glittering mountains on the earth,
While Rustam thus harangued the Íránians:—
"My loins are girt for battle, be it yours
To think but of revenge, and let each warrior
Frown, for no small strife fronteth us to-day,
But one that will appraise both wolf and sheep.
The reader of the stars hath said to me:—
'My heart is troubled by this coming fight;
'Twill be betwixt two mountains, troops in mass
Will bathe the world in blood, the veteran chiefs
Will gather, and the strife unman the world;
Then feud will cease to stalk, the steel mace grow
Like wax.' Have no misgivings, whosoe'er

[1] *I.e.* suffering trouble and hardship.

May come to fight with me, for I will bind
V. 991 His hands within the twisted lasso's coils
Although the starry heavens be his ally.
Let no one tremble at yon famous chiefs.
If my life endeth on the battlefield,
And doubtless I shall not die at a feast,
All that thou needest is enduring fame,
Thou canst not stay, why make so much ado?
Set not thy heart upon this Wayside Inn,
Trust not a Hostelry so perilous,
Where souls allied to wisdom reckon not
Their day as good or ill. E'en lords of crown
And treasure may not fix their hearts on this
Our Wayside Inn."
The troops replied: "Thy hests
Are higher than sky and moon, and our keen swords
Shall make our fame last till the Judgment Day."
The armies closed. "A black cloud," thou hadst said,
"Hath risen raining shafts and scimitars,
And all the world is like a sea of pitch."
The glorious visage of the sun grew dark
With eagles' plumes and arrow-heads of steel.
Thou wouldst have said: "Amid the cloud of dust
The lances' heads have smirched the stars with gore!"
What while the ox-head maces crashed around
Thou wouldst have said: "The sky is raining stones!"
And midst the flashing of the diamond swords:—
"A cloud hath risen and its rain is blood!"
The briars and dust were drenched with gore and brains,
The helms were smashed upon the wearers' heads.
V. 992 Said gray Gúdarz: "Since first I girt myself
To play the man I have seen no such strife,
Or heard of such among the haughty chiefs;
Such is the slaughter that one half alone
Of men is safe, the other is o'erthrown!"

§ 11

How Shangul fought with Rustam and fled

Shangul came forth before the host and shouted.
"I vanquish heroes and I love the fray,
And I will see," he said, "what battle-gear
Of manliness this man of Sigz possesseth."
The voice reached Rustam, who looked forth, beheld him,
And said: "Mine one petition to the Maker,
Both publicly and privily, hath been
That of this mighty host some alien
Might have the pluck to challenge me to fight.
I will not leave Shangul, the Khán of Chín,
Or any warrior of Túrán alive."
He came and shouted: "Base-born miscreant!
Zál named me Rustam: wherefore call'st thou me
'The man of Sigz?' Know that the man of Sigz
Will be thy death, thy mail and helm thy shroud."
This said, he grasped a life-destroying spear,
And urged his heavy mountain of a steed.
He charged like wind, loosed his heroic arm,
And thrusting with his spear unhorsed Shangul,
Dashed him down headlong, and rode over him, V. 993
Yet harmed him not. Then Rustam quickly drew
His scimitar, but from the hostile host
Came warriors with swords of tempered steel;
Men from Túrán, Sakláb, and Hind surrounded
The paladin as 'twere an onager,
And snatched Shangul from that fierce Elephant:
He 'scaped from Rustam, scathless 'neath his mail,
Fled with a care-worn visage to the Khán,
And said: "This is no man; he hath no equal
On earth; he is a furious Elephant
Upon a Mountain; we may fight in mass,

But let not any one attack the Dragon
In single combat, for he cannot 'scape."
"This morn thy views and words were other," said
The Khán, and bade the troops charge mountain-like
In full force to hem Rustam in and end
His life. That Lion drew his scimitar,
And brake the left wing of the host of Chín;
Each stroke strewed trunkless heads upon the plain.
No mountain could withstand him in the fight,
Or elephant his fury. Warriors
Beset him till they dimmed the sun above him,
While from the many spears, swords, shafts, and maces,
Employed against the lion-taking chief,
One would have thought that he was in a reed-bed,
And all the realm a winefat running blood.
V. 994 At every blow he sliced a hundred spears,
And as an angry lion roared and raged.
Behind him came the warriors of Írán
With vengeful hearts and eager for the fray.
As for the maces, mallets, spears, and swords,
Thou wouldst have said: "Hail falleth." Corpses, hands,
Heads, coronets, and helmets of the slain
Filled all the field, high heaven seemed earth with dust,
And many a neck and breast were cloven piecemeal.
The troops all cried: "The plain is like a mountain
With slain!" The hosts of men from Chín and Shakn,
From Hind, Sakláb, Harát, and from Pahlav[1]
Stretched o'er plain, height, and river, and they all
Were smitten by one man!
Then to Kulbád
Pírán turned, saying: "This battlefield hath lost
Its charms, for he is irresistible;

[1] *Cf.* p. 109.

There is no leader like him in the world.
No sage would credit that one cavalier
O'erthrew three hundred thousand warriors.
This feud hath brought ill on Afrásiyáb;
Where will he find repose and rest from Rustam?
Good sooth! we shall be blamed when he inquireth
Concerning this campaign, and then if he
Is wroth our heads will be in jeopardy."

§ 12

How Rustam fought with Súra

Said Rustam to the Íránians: "This fight V 995
Hath harmed us not. Now will I take from Chín
These elephants, this wealth, these splendid crowns,
And thrones, bestow them on Írán and make
The day a happy and a glorious one.
I want no helper from the Íránians,
God and the feet of Rakhsh are help enough.
I will not leave a man from Chín, Sakláb,
And Shakn to set his foot upon the ground,
For 'tis our day of victory; high heaven
Illumineth our star, but ill betideth
The men of evil words and evil deeds.
If God affordeth strength my glossy Rakhsh
Shall show his mettle, I will make this plain
A graveyard, and the fertile land a salt-marsh.
Resume ye now your posts, be diligent,
And swift as wind. Attend. When I advance
Sound gong and bell, and make the whole earth ebon
With dust of cavaliers and tymbal-din.
Ply ye your axes and your massive maces,
Like blacksmiths' hammers on a mass of steel,
And fear ye not the numbers of the foe,
But make the very water reek to heaven."

Cleave ye the ranks of Chín and of Sakláb;
Earth must not see the sky. Watch well my helm,
And, when I raise the war-cry, charge amain."
Thence like a raging elephant, and bearing
His ox-head mace and shouting as he went,
He sought the foemen's right, and first encountered
V. 996 Kundur. He routed that wing utterly,
And many a head and helmet disappeared.
A kinsman of Kámús, one Sáwa hight,
Proud and o'erweening, came to counter Rustam,
With Indian sword in hand. He wheeled about
In quest of vengeance for Kámús and cried:—
"O mighty Elephant! now shalt thou mark
A wave of Nile![1] I will avenge Kámús,
The hapless: nevermore shalt thou see battle."
When Sáwa's words reached Rustam he drew forth
His massive mace, raised it aloft, and smote
His foeman's head and helm. Thou wouldst have said:—
"That head hath never even seen its body!"
He flung down Sáwa, and rode over him
Till every trace was lost. The enemy
Were panic-struck, the banner of Kashán
Was overthrown; none durst withstand him more
Because the hoofs of Rakhsh their fruitage bore.

§ 13

How Rustam slew Gahár of Gahán

Thence Rustam sought the other wing, while all
The foe were in dismay, where stood Gahár
The warrior of Gahán, a lion-man
Who had a dusky banner. He was wroth

[1] "O éléphant furieux, tu vas voir le tumulte des flots de l'Indus" (Mohl).

On seeing Rustam's helm, roared lion-like,
And said to him: "I will avenge Túrán
And Chín upon this Sigzian on this field;
To fight him is my part among the chiefs:
A lion's heart and massive mace are mine."
He spurred forth to encounter mighty Rustam, V. 997
But turned like flower of fenugreek on seeing
The helm of Rustam close, and thought: "As well
Plunge in the river Nile as fight against
This furious Elephant! Thou saidst: 'The fight
Will profit thee,' but others said: 'Not so.'
Both courses are not well. To flee and save
One's head is better than to have it trampled
By showing prowess."
Then he fled toward
The centre in the sight of all the troops,
While like a tree upon a mountain-top
Rose Rustam's standard mid the host. He followed
Gahár like dust, earth reddened, air grew dark;
He speared and pierced the girdle of his foe,
Rent both the corslet and its clasps, then flung him
Down as the leafage falleth from a bough
Struck by a mighty blast. He overthrew
That dusky flag, and thou hadst said: "Gahár—
He of Gahán—ne'er lived." The Íránians marked
That deed, to right and left the dust of battle
Rose, they advanced the drums and glorious standard,
Illustrious Gúdarz and Tús came on,
The trumpets' blare hailed Rustam's victory.
"Send me a thousand noble cavaliers,"
He bade, "and I will take yon elephants,
That ivory throne, the gold, torques, pearls, and crown
From him of Chín and give them to Írán,
To the victorious monarch of the brave."
A thousand warriors of Írán advanced
In mail with ox-head maces. Rustam cried,

That they might gird them for revenge: "I swear
V. 998 By our Sháh's life and head, the sun and moon,
Írán's host, and the dust of Siyáwush,
That if one flee before the prince of Chín
He shall experience bonds, or pit and gibbet,
And have a paper cap set on his head."
The troops knew Rustam's lion-appetite,
Which longed to claw the haunches of the stag,
And made toward the Khán, men seared in heart,
Whose leader aimed at crowns. He led the charge,
Let fleet Rakhsh have the reins, and spurted blood
Up to the moon. The stars looked down upon
That battlefield whence such a dust-cloud rose
That none could see the ground. What with the shouts
Of cavaliers and thud of lances none
Discerned 'twixt rein and stirrup; thou hadst said:—
"The sun is veiled, earth tortured 'neath the horse-hoofs!"
The air grew black, black as an Ethiop's face;
They saw no way for slain; mails, helms, and saddles
Filled all the field, and heads farewelled their bodies.
The horsemen's dust went down the wind, the earth
Rang with the clash of steel, and many a chief
Exposed his head for glory. Rustam shouted,
And thou hadst said: "It is the raging sea!"
"These elephants, the bracelets, ivory throne,
Crowns, diadems, and torques will in Írán
Be worthy Kai Khusrau, the world's young king.
What business can ye have with crown and pomp,
Who, spite of all your might and toil and prowess,
Will only set the shackles on your hands,
And bring a twisted lasso round your loins?
Then will I send you to the king of earth:
I will not spare Manshúr or yet the Khán
Of Chín. I give you life and that is all;

Your crowns and signet-rings are for another;
Else with our horse-hoofs I, unless ye yield, V. 999
Will send dust moonward from this battlefield."

§ 14

How the Khán was taken Prisoner

The Khán let loose his tongue, reviling Rustam.
"Thou miscreant," he said, "in soul and body!
For quarter for Írán, its Sháh and people,
Thou must appeal to me. Thou Sigzian,
And vilest of mankind! wouldst seek to make
A common soldier of the king of Chín?"
They sent a very grievous rain of arrows
As when the winds of autumn blast a tree;
The air was clothed with eagles' plumes: no warrior
E'en dreameth of such strife! Gúdarz, beholding
That shower of steel, alarmed for Rustam's safety,
Said to Ruhhám: "O laggard! tarry not,
But with two hundred horsemen ply the reins,
And with your bows of Chách and poplar shafts
Guard in the battle peerless Rustam's back."
And then to Gív: "Lead on the host and yield not
Before our foes. To-day is not a time
For peace and pageant, leisure or repose.
Advance toward the right wing with the troops,
And find out where Pírán is with Húmán.
Mark how before the Khán the peerless Rustam
Is dashing heaven to earth! Ne'er may the eyes
Be blest that curse him on the day of battle."
Ruhhám raged like a leopard and rushed forth
To fight at Rustam's back, who said to him,
That Lion: "My Rakhsh, I fear, hath had enough;
When he is weary I will go afoot,
All blood and sweat. This is a host like ants

And locusts! Fight against the elephants
V. 1000 And drivers. We will take them to Khusrau—
A novel present from Shingán and Chín."
Then from his post he cried: "May Áhriman
Wed Turkistán and Chín! Ho! luckless ones,
Resourceless, wretched, fed on grief, and lost!
Have ye ne'er heard of Rustam? Or hath wisdom
Fled from your brains? He holdeth dragon-men
Of no account, and chooseth elephants
As opposites. Would ye still fight with me
Whose only gifts are mace and scimitar?"
He loosed his twisted lasso from its straps,
Flung the raw coil upon his saddle-bow,
And urged his charger on. A shout arose
To split a dragon's ear. Where'er he cast
The noose he cleared the ground of mighty men,
Yet wished he only to contend with Chín
With lasso on his arm and frowning brow.
Now every time that Rustam in the fight
Unhorsed a chieftain with the coiling noose,
The leader Tús sent cloudward from the field
The sound of trump and drum, while an Íránian
Made fast the prisoner's hands, and took him off
V. 1001 Toward the heights. Now when from elephant-back
The Khán saw earth rise like the Nile, and there,
Astride a lofty Hill, an Elephant
That grasped a lasso made of lion's hide,
And brought down vultures from the murky clouds,
While stars and moon looked on, he chose a chief,
Learned in the Íránian tongue, and said: "Approach
Yon lion-man and say: 'Fight not so fiercely.
These troops of Chín, of Shakn, Chaghán, and Wahr
Have in their hearts no interest in the feud,
Nor have the kings of Chín and of Khatlán:
Thou hast no quarrel with these aliens,
But with Afrásiyáb, who knoweth not

The fire from water, but hath raised the world,
And by this war brought evil on himself.
We all of us have greed and long for fame,
Yet peace still bettereth war."
With fluent tongue
And guileful heart the man drew near to Rustam,
And said: "O chieftain, lover of the fray! V. 1002
Since fight is over for thee now seek feast.
Thou surely harbourest not revenge at heart
For what hath passed against the Khán of Chín!
Withdraw as he withdraweth, for the strife
Is ended now. When by thy hand Kámús
Was slain, the heads of all our chiefs were turned."
But Rustam answered thus: "The elephants,
The crown, and ivory throne must all be mine.
Ye set your faces to lay waste Írán:
What need is there for talk and blandishments?
He knoweth that his host is in my hands,
And that I check the ardour of mine own.
I spare his own head, but his elephants,
Torque, crown, and throne of ivory are mine."
The messenger replied: "O lord of Rakhsh!
'Spare' not upon the waste the uncaught gazelle!
The plain is all men, elephants, and troops.
Who hath crown, wealth, and grandeur like the Khán?
Who knoweth too the outcome of the day,
And who will quit the field with victory?"
When Rustam heard he spurred on Rakhsh and cried:—
"I vanquish lions and apportion crowns,
Am strong, and have a lasso on mine arm.
Is this the day for jest, the time for counsel?
Whenas the Khán of Chín shall see my lasso,
When that fierce Lion shall behold mine armlet,
He will be taken and distaste e'en life."
He flung the lasso coiled and took the heads V. 1003

Of cavaliers, neared that white elephant,
And then the Khán of Chín, grown desperate,
Smote with the goad the creature's head and, roaring
Like thunder in the month of Farwardín,
Took and hurled forth at Rustam deft of hand
A double-headed battle-dart in hope
To worst him and to take his noble head:
But Rustam, scathless, flung his lasso high,
Dragged from his elephant the Khán of Chín
Noosed by the neck, and dashed him to the ground,
Where others bound his hands and drove him on
Toward the Shahd afoot without his crown,
His litter, throne, or elephant, and there
They made him over to the guards of Tús;
That chieftain sent the drum-roll to the sky.
This tricky Hostelry is ever so:
Whiles it exalteth, whiles it layeth low,
And thus it will be while the sky doth move—
Whiles strife and poison, and whiles sweets and love.
Thou raisest one to heaven on high, and one
Thou makest vile, afflicted, and fordone:
From pit to moon, so dost Thou one elate:
From moon to pit, such is another's fate!
One hath a throne, one is to fishes hurled
In wisdom not caprice, Lord of the world!
Thou art the height and depth thereof, I trow
Not what Thou art Thyself. Thyself art Thou.

§ 15

How the Host of the Túránians was defeated

V. 1004 Then peerless Rustam seized his massive mace,
The great and small were all alike to him;
The battlefield was such that ant and gnat
Had scarcely room to stir on plain and dale;

Blood ran in streams from wounded and from slain
Flung headlong down or headless. When the foe's
Bright fortune loured 'twas nearly night, there came
A blast with murk, light quitted sun and moon,
And then the foe, not knowing head from foot,
Took to the desert and the longsome road.
Pírán beheld that fight and fortune grown
So gloomy to Manshúr, Fartús, the Khán,
And Turkman chiefs: saw standards down, the wounded
Laid vilely in the dust, and thus he said
To Nastíhan the warrior and Kulbád :—
"We must lay by two-headed dart and sword."
Gív overthrew the sable flag, the foe
Dispersing by the roads and pathless tracts.
He routed all the right wing, made the dales
And plains like feathers of a francolin,
And sought upon the army's left and right
To find Pírán, but when they found him not
The warriors returned to vengeful Rustam.
The war-steeds were disabled with the work ;
They all were wounded and fordone with fight.
The troops went to the mountain well content
With Rustam and his escort at their head,
Their bodies injured but their hearts rejoicing V. 1005
About the battle, as is this world's use.
The helms and mail were smirched with blood and dust,
The horses' barbs were riven. Heads, feet, swords,
And stirrups were begored, the hills and dales
Were hidden by the slain, the troops so masked
That none could know another till they bathed.
They washed their bodies and forgot their pains
Because their foes were bound in heavy chains.

§ 16

How Rustam divided the Spoil

"Disarm," said Rustam to the Íránians.
"Before the All-conquering we need not mace,
Or belt or treasure. Stoop ye all your heads
To darksome dust, then crown them, for the chiefs
Are minished not by one for whom our hearts
Would now be mourning. When the tidings reached
The world's king he repeated them to me
Forthwith: 'The chieftain Tús hath gained the mountains,
Defeated by Pírán and by Húmán!'
The Sháh's words robbed me of my wits, my brain
Seethed for the fray, while for Gúdarz, Bahrám,
And for Rívníz my heart turned ebon-black.
I sped forth from Írán without delay
Intent upon the fight, but when I saw
The Khán, the men of name and warriors,
Especially Kámús, his Grace and stature,
Such shoulders and such limbs, such hands and mace,
Why then methought: 'My time is o'er!' For since
I girt me as a man I have not looked
In my long life on better men or arms
Assembled anywhere. I have invaded
V. 1006 Mázandarán, a land of dívs, where nights
Are dark and maces massive, yet my heart
Forwent its courage never and I said:—
'I tender neither heart nor life.' Howbeit
In this campaign my days were plunged in gloom,
My heart—the lustre of the world—was darkened!
If now we fall in sorrow in the dust
Before all-holy God it will be well,
For He hath given strength, success, and aid
From Saturn and the sun. Long be it so.

God grant that fear may never fall on us!
Let men too bear the Sháh the news forthwith,
Let him adorn his throne, set on his head
The royal cap, give great gifts to the poor,
And may their blessings be upon his soul.
Now put we off our mail and rest in peace.
No doubt both grief and longing pass away,
And fate is counting up our every breath,
But still 'tis good to add up cups of wine,
And not to stare at yon unloving sky:
Quaff we till midnight then, and let our talk
Be of the mighty men, with thanks to God,
The Conqueror, from whom are manhood, fortune,
And prowess; we should not possess our hearts
Too much in sorrow and laboriousness
In this our Wayside Inn."
The nobles blessed him,
And said: "May crown and signet lack thee never!
All honour to the stock, the native worth,
And mother that brought forth a son like thee.
A man of elephantine Rustam's strain
Is more exalted than the turning sky.
Thou knowest what thou hast achieved through love
For us. Let heaven rejoice because thou livest.
We were as good as slain, our days were done,
But now we live and light the world through thee."
Then having bade to fetch the elephants, V. 1007
Crown, ivory throne, and golden torques, he brought
Forth royal wine and goblets, and first gave:—
"The monarch of the world," and when he grew
Blythe in his cups they parted glad and gay.
When Luna rent the robe of night and set
Its turquoise throne in heaven the scouts dispersed
About the plains and hills, and when the rust
Of night's rest passed, when day's bright Falchion showed,

And earth grew jewel-like, the drum-roll rose
Before his tent, the chiefs arrived, and Rustam
Said: "We have found no traces of Pírán!
Return we to the field and send our troops
In quest of him."

Bízhan the lion-man
Advancing came upon a world of corpses,
Of goods, and treasure: all the plain was strewn
With wounded men flung down and bound; of others
Still living they saw none. Tents and enclosures
Filled all the earth, and tidings came to Rustam:—
"The foe hath fled the field."

Like lion wroth
He raged about the Íránians' sloth and slackness,
And said reviling them: "Hath no one wisdom
Paired with his brain? How when two mountains thus
Shut in our foes could they escape in mass
From us? Did not I say: 'Send forward scouts,
And make each gorge and dale like plain and waste?'[1]
V. 1008 Ye thought of ease and rest, the foe of toil
And march. Slack bodies bring forth care and travail,
But he who chooseth labour fruiteth treasure.
How can I say: 'I am at ease to-day'?
I tremble for Írán."

Then leopard-like
He raged at Tús and said: "Is this a bedroom?
Or battlefield? See to Húmán, Kulbád,
Pírán, Rúín, and to Púlád thyself
Henceforth with thine own host upon this plain:
We are not of one province, thou and I.
If ye have strength fight on your own account,
For how should ye have me, when I have gained
The victory and its results are spoiled?
See from what company the scouts were drawn,

[1] "Et de convertir en plains les vallées et les ravins *en les comblant avec des morts*" (Mohl).

And who is head man of the family,
And when thou findest any of those scouts
Let him be beaten on the feet and hands
With sticks, take what he hath, make fast his feet,
Set him upon an elephant and thus
Dispatch him to the Sháh for execution.
The ivory thrones, the jewels, and dínárs,
Brocade, crowns, treasure, coronets, and all
That they took from us, seach for and bring hither,
For there were many kings upon this plain:
The most illustrious of the world were here
From Chín and from Sakláb, from Hind and Wahr,
And all possessed of realms and treasuries.
First let us choose a present for the Sháh,
And then my portion of the spoils and thine."
Tús and his warriors went and gathered all
The golden girdles and the amber crowns,
The ivory thrones and the brocade of Rúm,
The arrows, the horse-armour, and the bows,
The iron maces and the Indian swords,
And raised a mountain 'twixt the other two: V. 1009
The troops stood round and gazed. Then had an archer,
A cavalier, broad-chested, strong, and valiant,
Shot a four-feathered arrow o'er the heap,
The carry had not reached from end to end!
When Rustam saw the spoil he stood amazed,
And oft invoking the Creator said:—
"Our changeful lifetime giveth feast and fight
By turns, transferring wealth from host to host.
It giveth now with curses, then with blessings;
One gathereth wealth for others to enjoy.
Káúús was minded, and the Khán as well,
To burn Írán. With these huge elephants,
These havings, troops, and stores, their joy was all
In them and in their multitudes of men,

And for a while God was not in their thoughts,
God who created heaven and earth and time,
Much manifest and much mysterious.
Their host is not, their goodly wealth is not,
Their aims and unjust doings are no more!
Now will I send the Sháh these chosen chiefs
From every realm on their huge elephants,
Together with these golden thrones and crowns,
And goods on lusty camels. I will send
Such goods as are most worthy to be sent,
V. 1010 And journey hence myself with all dispatch
To Gang, for heroes cannot brook delay.
To spare the guilty and the murderers
Is weakness; let us wash our hands in blood.
I will allow the bad no rest but bring
The heads of these idolaters to dust,
And show to all the way of Holy God."
Gúdarz replied: "O thou of goodly rede!
Mayst thou remain till place shall be no more."
Then matchless Rustam sought a messenger
To bear the first news to the imperious Sháh,
And chose out Faríburz son of Káús,
Commended by his kinship, and thus said:—
"Famed chief, of royal race, thyself a king,
Accomplished, understanding, nobly born,
Both glad thyself and making others glad!
Take up a task. Go, bear to our young Sháh
My letter, and convey with thee the captives,
The camels, and this wealth—all that there is—
Torques, treasure, bracelets, crowns, and diadems,
The mighty elephants and ivory thrones."
"O raging Lion," Faríburz replied,
"My loins are girded even now to ride."

§ 17

How Rustam wrote a Letter to Kai Khusrau

Then Rustam summoned an experienced scribe,
And wrote a kingly letter in fit terms
With ambergris for ink on painted silk;
The letter opened with the praise of God, V. 1011
Who is and who will be for evermore,
The Maker of the sun and moon and Saturn;
Of Grace and crown and might the Artist He;
Heaven, earth, and time are His; the soul and wisdom
Obey Him. May He bless the Sháh, and may
The age not have him in remembrance only.
I came between two mountains as thou badest:
The troops of three realms were assembled there.
More than a hundred thousand in good sooth
Opposed us, men who drew the scimitar—
Troops from Kashán and Shakn, from Chín and Hind—
A host which stretched from the Indus unto Chín—
While from Kashmír to the outskirts of Mount Shahd
We saw but litters, tents, and elephants.
I feared not for the empire of the Sháh,
But slew our foes; we fought for forty days;
Thou wouldst have said: 'The world is strait to them.'
They all were kings with treasures, crowns, and thrones.
Now 'twixt the mountains over dale and waste
One cannot pass along for blood and slain,
And in good sooth for forty leagues the soil
Is turned to clay with blood. To tell the whole
Were tedious. All the kings that I have bound,
Plucked with my lasso from their elephants,
Lo! I have sent the Sháh, with gifts and jewels
King-worthy, but war on myself; perchance
Gurwí may meet my sword. His head shall crown V. 1012
My spear in wreak for our Head—Siyáwush.

May every tongue be filled with praise of thee,
And turning heaven's summit be thine earth."
He gave the letter, when it had been sealed,
In charge to Faríburz, that royal prince,
With captive kings and elephants, and set
The spoils upon three thousand camels' backs.
So Faríburz son of Káús went forth
Rejoicing, and made speed to reach Khusrau.
The elephantine hero, with the chiefs
And warriors of the army, saw him off
With fond embraces when they said farewell,
While tears rained from the eyelids of the prince.
Then Rustam, when the dark night's tresses showed,
Departed on his way toward the host.
They sat with harp and wine and minstrelsy,
This reveller with harp and that with pipe,
Until they went their ways in full content,
Each to his rest.

Hued like a gold dínár
Sol burst the Veil of Lapis-lazuli,
Whereat the clarion's blast rose from the court
Before the chief's pavilion. Matchless Rustam,
All ready-girded, mounted his swift steed,
And bade the soldiers take supplies with them.
Their way was hard—the longsome desert route.
They marched to war, and matchless Rustam said
To Tús and Gív: "Ye gallant chiefs! this time
Will I fight strenuously and press the foe.
Who knoweth if this crafty man of Sind
Will bring a host from Hind, Sakláb, and Chín?
But I will so bemuse and daze his wits,
And make his body dust upon the tomb
Of Siyáwush, that Hind, Shingán, Sakláb,
And Chín shall bless him nevermore."

V. 1013 He beat
The drums, the dust ascending filled the air,

And earth was full of men,[1] while shouts rose cloudward
From those illustrious chieftains keen for fight.
They marched two stages from the battlefield
Because the ground was blackened with the slain.
The chieftain saw a wood and called a halt,
And, while his soldiers darkened plain and stream,
Indulged in song and wine till some were filled
With mirth and pleasure, and some lay bemused,
While envoys came from all the districts round,
From all the chiefs and men of name, to bring
Him presents, arms, and many an offering.

§ 18

How Kai Khusrau made Answer to Rustam's Letter

Heaven turned, some days elapsed, and then one went
And told the Íránian monarch: "Faríburz,
Son of Káús, approacheth."
Sháh and chiefs
Went out to welcome him with trumpets, tymbals,
And many troops. When Faríburz drew near,
And caught sight of the Sháh, he kissed the ground,
And offered many praises, saying thus:—
"O Sháh of goodly fortune! may high heaven
Be glad of heart through thee and may the world
Thrive through thy justice," then gave Rustam's letter. V. 1014
The king of kings perused it, marvelling
At what the chief reported of that fight,
Inspected prisoners, camels, elephants,
And wounded men, and, having ridden apart,
Put off his royal cap, got off his steed,
And, wallowing in the dust before his God,
Exclaimed: "O holy Ruler of the world!
The oppressor wrought on me oppressively,
And made me fatherless—all grief and anguish;

[1] "la terre était couverte de morts" (Mohl).

But Thou didst free me from my pains and woes,
And give me crown and realm. Both earth and time
Became my slaves, the world my treasury;
I offer thanks to Thee, not to the host,
But grant me one thing—spare me Rustam's life."
This done, he passed before the elephants,
And captives whom he sent to join the wretched
In ward, then bade to bear with all dispatch
The booty to the treasurer and make ready
A pleasant dwelling for the Khan of Chín.
He spent a day in writing his response
And set a new Tree in the garth of greatness.
He first praised God, the Author of his triumph,
"The Master of the sun and *turning sky,*
From Whom are war, *alliances, and love,*
Who hath set up the heaven and graced the earth
With night and day, Who giveth unto this
So dark a fortune, and to that the throne
That he deserveth. Grief and gladness come
From Holy God—the Source of courage, awe,
V. 1015 And reverence," then said: "O paladin!
Be ever pure in body, bright in soul.
All that thou spakest of have reached the court—
The prisoners, the elephants, the crowns,
Brocade of Chín, the thrones of ivory,
Arabian steeds, and torques, and diadems,
With camels in great plenty, tapestries,
And wearing-stuffs, and showers of offerings,
To grace our hocktides, feasts, and festivals.
What man could wish to meet thee in the fight
Unless he was already sick of life?
Now of thy toils among Túránian foes,
By night and day upon the field, I had
Continual news, yet opened not my lips,
But night and day before all-holy God
Presented broken-hearted my petitions.

He that hath Rustam for his paladin
May well continue young; heaven hath no servant V. 1016
Like thee, and may it tender still thy fortune."
The gracious letter being done, and sealed
By Kai Khusrau, he bade to be prepared
A robe of honour, belts, horse-furniture,
A hundred crisp-locked slaves with golden girdles,
A hundred noble horses with gold trappings,
A hundred camels laden with brocade
Of Chín, a hundred more with tapestries,
Two rings of shining rubies and a crown
Of state compact of gold and lustrous pearls,
A suit of royal raiment worked in gold,
With armlet, torque, and golden belt, and presents—
A treasure in themselves—for every chief.
He sent to Faríburz a blue steel sword,
A mace, a golden crown, and golden boots,
And bade him go to Rustam and say thus:—
"We must not pause to rest or eat or sleep
In fighting with Afrásiyáb. Perchance
Thy lasso yet may take that great king's head."
So far Faríburz resumed his journeying,
Such was the pleasure of the Íránian king.

§ 19

How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of the Case of his Army

Thereafter tidings reached Afrásiyáb:—
"A Flame hath issued from the river Shahd,[1]
And in the persons of Kámús, Manshúr,
And of the Khán, Túrán hath been o'erthrown.
An army came forth from Írán to war
Such as left heaven scarce room to turn. The conflict
Continued forty days—days dark as night

[1] So Mohl.

Because the horsemen's dust concealed the sun.
Our fortune slept, no cavalier of all
Our countless host remained still serviceable;
V. 1017 Our mighty men and famous paladins
Have all been bound in heavy bonds and flung
Disgraced upon the backs of elephants
Encircled by a host that reached for miles.
The Khán of Chín too and the mighty men
By thousands have been carried to Írán:
There was no room upon the battlefield
To pass along, so many were the slain!
Pírán, who hath with him a noble army,
Hath marched toward Khutan, but none of Chín,
Kashán, or Hind is left who hath not read
The inscription on the scimitar of Rustam.
Now all the marches for two miles and more
Are full of blood, the earth is void of chiefs
And elephants, while an Íránian host,
Led on by matchless Rustam bent on war,
Approacheth. If they meet us in the fight
Account the hills as plains, the plains as hills."
Heart-stricken and astound, Afrásiyáb
Called all his priests and nobles. "From Írán,"
He said, "a host hath met our chiefs in battle,
Our mighty army with its countless troops
And implements of war hath been o'erthrown,
While I am prostrate, thou mightst say, with grief
Both for Kámús and for the Khán of Chín.
Now that so many troops are slain or maimed,
The more part of the nobles bound in bonds,
What shall we do? What cure shall we apply?
We may not treat the matter with light hearts.
If Rustam is the chief he will not leave
A thorn or weed upon these fields and fells.
V. 1018 He was a reed-like stripling when I marched
On Rai, yet took me from my saddle so

That warriors wondered. Belt and button broke;
I tumbled from his grasp beneath his feet.[1]
Such was the prowess that I saw in him!
And I have heard reports of his exploits,
When single-handed with his massive mace,
Against the mighty of Mázandarán,
As well as of the havoc wrought by him
On our own chiefs in this last battlefield."
The nobles rose and said: "Although the famous
Of Chín and of Sakláb have fought Írán
Our realm is scathless and our host intact.
Why stimulate the foe by fearing Rustam?
We all must die, our loins are girt not loosed,
And Rustam, if he trample on our land,
Shall pay the penalty, for when we arm
For vengeance no Iránian will survive."
He heard, preferred those valiant with their tongues,
And called to him his chiefs, refrained from sleep,
Repose, and feast, unlocked his treasury
And gave out pay: his griefs inspired his soul.
Earth was so full of troops that one might say:—
"The starry sky hath come down to the fray."

§ 20

How Rustam fought with Káfúr the Man-eater

This coil of ill grew clear as Faríburz, V. 1019
Glad-hearted, with the monarch's robe of honour,
And with the crown with earrings,[2] came to Rustam,
Whereat that elephantine hero joyed.
The great men of the army met and praised
The paladin: "May earth be prosperous
Through Rustam, be the Sháh's life glad, and may
Írán still flourish, field and fell, through him."

[1] See Vol. i. p. 374, and Vol. ii. p. 14.
[2] The crown of state. See p. 241.

Thence Rustam led the army on its march,
Reached Sughd and spent two sennights there, engaged
In hunting onager and quaffing wine,
And in such pleasures fleeted time a while.
On marching one stage thence he saw a city
By name Bídád [1]—a hold inhabited
By folk whose only food was human flesh.
The lovely there were ever perishing,
While at the table of a king so loathly
The flesh of growing youths alone was served.
Those slaves that were the goodliest, and were
Unblemished in their faces and their forms,
V. 1020 Supplied the provand for the monarch's board:
Such was his food. The peerless Rustam called
Three thousand cavaliers all clad in mail
On barded steeds and sent them to that hold
With Gustaham and two more valiant chiefs;
Bízhan the son of Gív was one, Hajír [2]
The other—both redoutable in fight.
The king's name was Káfúr; he held the city
By patent. When he heard that from Írán
A host, led by a famed and warlike chief,
Approached, he armed as did his pard-like people,
Who were skilled lasso-flingers, cavaliers,
And Stones and Anvils in the fray. Káfúr
Encountered Gustaham; the armies closed;
'Twas such a fight as when a lion chargeth
Upon a deer; full many Íránians
Were slaughtered and keen fighters turned their heads.
When Gustaham saw this, and that the world
Was in that curst div's hand, he bade his troops
To shower shafts—the horseman's ambuscade.
Káfúr said to his chiefs: "No arrow-head
Will dent an anvil. Ply sword, mace, and lasso,
And take yon leaders' heads within the noose."

[1] *I.e.* "Unjust." [2] Reading with P.

Awhile they fought so that the stream flashed fire,
And many of the Iránians were slain; V. 1021
A sky of bale turned o'er them. Gustaham
Said to Bízhan in haste: "Ride hence. Tell Rustam:—
'Pause not, but come with ten score cavaliers.'"
Bízhan the son of Gív went off like wind,
And told the matter to the matchless one,
Whose stirrups felt his weight as with his men
He rode, who heeded neither hill nor dale.
He reached the field of battle, as it were
A torrent rushing from the gloomy hills,
And shouted to Káfúr: "Unskilful knave!
Now will I bring thy fighting to an end."
Káfúr came rushing with a furious charge
Against the royal and fruit-bearing Tree,
And hurled his sword, as though it were an arrow,
To strike the lion-taking chief, but Rustam
Received it on his shield and took no harm.
Káfúr next flung his lasso o'er the son
Of Zal, who ducked his head. Then Rustam raised
His war-cry like an angry elephant,
Whereat Káfúr stood still in blank amaze,
And Rustam smote his head-piece with the mace,
Which smashed together helmet, head, and neck:
His brains ran down his nostrils, and Káfúr
The warrior fell. Then Rustam, slaughtering still
Without distinction as to great or small,
Charged at the castle-gate, but those within
Made fast the portal, poured down showers of arrows,
And called to him: "O man of strength and sense,
Thou Elephant arrayed in leopard's hide!
What did thy father name thee at thy birth?
'The lasso-flinger,' or 'The sky of fight'?
Alas for all thy toil against this city!
Its name is 'Warstead' with the knowing ones.
When Túr the son of Farídún had left V. 1022

Írán he called men skilled in every way,
And by their aid began to build these walls
Of stones and timber, brick and reeds, thus built them
By toil and sorcery, expending toil
And draining treasury, and gallant men
Have striven much to send up dust therefrom,
But none hath mastered them or profited.
Here are munitions and abundant food,
With subterranean ways to bring in more.
Though thou mayst toil for years thou wilt get naught
But strife, for catapults reach not these walls,
Fenced by Túr's magic and the breath of priests."
Now Rustam when he heard grew full of thought,
His battle-loving heart was like a thicket,
Such fighting liked him not, he brought up troops
From every side, here was Gúdarz, there Tús
With trumpets, drums, and elephants behind:
The army from Zábul was on the third side,
Mail-clad and armed with falchions of Kábul.
The veteran Rustam took his bow in hand,
And all the fortress stood astound at him
As he picked off the head of every one
Who showed himself above the battlements:
The shaft-points whispered secrets to those brains—
An intercourse that made no harmony.
In order to dislodge the garrison
He undermined the walls, propped them with posts
V. 1023 Smeared with black naphtha and, when half way round,
Set them on fire. He brought Túr's ramparts down;
The troops advanced on all sides. Rustam bade:—
"On to the assault; ply bow and poplar shaft."
The brave defenders threw away their lives
With one accord to save their treasured wealth,
Their children and their country and their kin:
Far better for them had they ne'er been born!
The Íránian warriors advanced on foot,

And took their bows and arrows, and their shields,
Advanced supported by the javelin-men,
And led on by Bízhan and Gustaham.
The raging of the fire and shower of shafts
Left no resource but flight, and those that passed
The castle-walls fled weeping o'er the plain.
Then the besiegers barred the castle-gate
And set themselves to pillaging and slaughter.
What multitudes they slew! How many old
And young they carried captive from the city!
Much silver, gold, and other precious things,
With beasts and slaves—both boys and girls—the Íránians
Bore off with them, and marched back to the camp.
The matchless Rustam, having bathed and prayed,
Said to the Íránians: "God must have in store
Still better things than these; give praise to Him
For victory and benefits vouchsafed."

With one consent the great men laid their faces
Upon the ground and offered thanks to God,
Then lauded Rustam: "Thine inferior," V. 1024
They said, "might sit contented with his fame;
Thou with thine elephantine form, thy pluck,
And lion's claws hast never fight enough!"

The peerless Rustam said: "This strength and Grace
Are gifts from God; ye also have your shares,
And none can blame the Maker of the world."

He bade Gív, with ten thousand buckler-men,
On barded steeds to haste and stay the Turkmans
From massing on the marches of Khutan.
When night revealed its dusky curls, and when
The moon's back bent with trouble, Gív departed
With those brave cavaliers and spent three days
In raiding, then, what time the sun displayed
Its crown and mounted on its ivory throne,
Returned with many noble warriors captive,

With many fair-cheeked Idols of Taráz,
With noble horses, and all kinds of arms.
Then Rustam sent a portion to the Sháh,
And gave the rest as booty to the host.
Gúdarz, Tús, Gív and Gustaham, Ruhhám,
Shídúsh the valiant and Gív's son Bízhan
Thereafter rose and lauded him anew.
Thus spake Gúdarz: "Exalted one! thy love
Is needful to the world. We may not open
Our lips by night or day henceforward save
To praise thee. Live glad and bright-souled for ever,
Still old in wisdom and still young in fortune.
God gave thee purity of race; like thee
No one hath e'er been born of stainless mother.
May sire succeed to sire and son to son,
This native worth ne'er fail. Thou needest naught,
Art favoured by the stars, and chief of nobles.
V. 1025 Thy refuge be the Master of the world,
Be earth and time thy partisans. Whoever
Hath travelled o'er earth's surface and beheld
The world and peace and battle and revenge,
Hath nowhere seen a better host than this,
Nor ever heard from time-worn archimages
Of such kings, elephants, and ivory thrones,
Such men and steeds, such treasure and such crowns,
And yet the stars saw it discomfited!
We pondered but saw none to work our cure
Till, as we cried out in the Dragon's breath,
Thy bow delivered us. Crown of Írán,
The Stay of chieftains, and pre-eminent,
Art thou. We are thy lieges. God reward thee,
And ever keep the smiles upon thy face.
Repay we cannot, we can only praise."
Then peerless Rustam lauded them: "May earth,"
Said he, "be peopled always with the brave.
The nobles of Írán are my support—

My bright heart witnesseth to what I say—
My cheek is freshened by your goodly faces,
My spirit is made radiant by your love."
He added: "We will tarry here three days,
Rejoicing and illumining the world,
But march to battle with Afrásiyáb
Upon the fourth and set the streams afire."
In full assent arose the company, V. 1026
And called for wine and harp and minstrelsy.

§ 21

How Afrásiyáb had Tidings of the Coming of Rustam

Afrásiyáb had tidings: "Rustam cometh
To battle swiftly"—news that wrung his heart
While all his silken raiment turned to thorns.
He said: "Who can assay to combat Rustam?
Troops are enough, but where is a commander?
What man can go and challenge him to battle,
For havoc clingeth to his glittering sword?"
The host said: "Shun not fight with him so much,
For thou art one that in the dust of strife
Canst send the wave of carnage to the moon.
There is no stint of treasure, arms, and men;
Why let the quest of battle grieve thy heart?
Be not concerned because thou hast to fight
This cavalier; look at our gallant troops!
Grant him all iron and brave; he is but one.
Enough of him. Prepare the remedy
With thine own army, and bring down his head
From cloud to dust; that done, we need not fear
Sháh or Írán. Then Kai Khusrau, his throne,
The country of Irán and bough on tree
Will cease to flourish. Mark this noble host,
These youths war-worthy. We for land and child,

V. 1027 For wife and kindred, will give up our lives
Before we yield our country to the foe."
Now when Afrásiyáb had heard those words
He put that ancient battle from his thoughts,[1]
Both for his fatherland and his own sake
He took a fresh resolve and made reply:—
"I will bring forth the implements of war
Since matters press, permit not Kai Khusrau
To rest upon his throne, glad and rejoicing
In fortune, but by long contention bring
The head of Rustam of Zábul to dust.
I will not spare my grandson or his troops,
But lay this quarrel with the scimitar."
He gave commandment to array the host,
And march forth to new wars. The nobles blessed him,
And called the chiefs to vengeance. There was one,
A man of lion-heart by name Farghár,
Quick to discern the cage and shun the springe.
The king, who had observed and everywhere
Approved his feat of arms, put strangers forth,
And said to him: "O noble man! now seek
The Íránian host and spy on warlike Rustam.
Observe his horsemen's numbers and equipment,
And who of ours is acting as their guide.
Mark their war-elephants, their warriors,
And all about their host both good and bad."
Farghár departed to his work as spy
Upon the Íránians, while the ambitious king,
Absorbed in care, denied himself to strangers,
V. 1028 And summoned his son Shída for consult.
"O thou," he said, "who art endowed with wisdom!
When will thy troops be here to share thy cares?
Know that yon countless army, which hath come
With all those cavaliers to fight with us,

[1] The battle in which he had encountered Rustam. See p. 243. Mohl translates "oublia les anciennes guerres."

Is led by Rustam of the lion-heart,
Whose scimitar converteth dust to clay.
Kámús, Manshúr, the Khán of Chín, Gahár,
The glorious Fartús, Kundur, Shangul—
The king of Hind—an armament that stretched
Down to the river Indus from Kashmír—
Are slain or captive through the victory
Of lion-taking Rustam. Forty days,
With lulls at whiles, they fought but Rustam triumphed,
Dragged with his lasso from their elephants
Our warriors and bound them. Cavaliers
And nobles from all climes, the mighty leaders,
The arms and ivory throne, steeds, crowns, and camels
Dispatched he to Irán, and by that token
Is now invading us with his proud chiefs
And famous men. I shall not leave my throne,
Or much wealth here with fortune so inconstant.
But send my treasures, crowns, belts, golden torques,
And bucklers to the banks of the Almás:
This is no time for joyance, harp, and song.
I dread deft-handed Rustam, who is safe
E'en in the gullet of a crocodile;
He is not human on the day of battle,
He writheth not when hit nor crieth out
For pain, he feareth not spear, sword, and arrow,
Or maces raining from this ancient sky!
'He is of brass and iron,' thou wouldst say,
'And not of man's race but an Áhriman!'
So mighty are his arms on days of fight
That earth's back wearieth with the weight thereof!
He weareth chain-mail, breast-plate, tiger-skin, V. 1029
And helm; he roareth like a thunder-cloud!
Huge elephants sustain not his attack,
Or ships upon the azure sea[1] his weapons!
The Mountain under him is swift as wind,

[1] "Sur les flots de l'Indus" (Mohl).

And, thou wouldst say, 'begotten by the sky.'
Swift as gazelle and terrible as lion
It goeth gallantly at height and river,
And would, I dare affirm, fare like a ship
If put upon its mettle. Oft have I
Contended with its rider, but his breast-plate
Is made of leopard-skin, which foiled my weapon
Though I tried ax and arrow many a time;
But now by way of proof I will to war
Once more to see if fortune favoureth us,
And so if God affordeth us His aid,
And if high heaven revolveth as we would,
We will not leave Írán or Sháh: perchance
It may be mine to terminate this feud,
While should the might of Rustam's hand prevail
I will betake me o'er the sea of Chín
Betimes and leave these marches of Túrán
To him."

Then Shída answered: "Prudent king!
Live happily while crown and throne endure.
Thou hast Grace, wisdom, lofty mien, high birth,
And fortune, heart, and manhood, thou dost need
No monitor, yet heed this turn of fate:
Men like Pírán, Húmán, and Farshídward,
Kulbád and Nastíhan have had their armour
Destroyed, and their hearts shattered, in the fight:
Thou wouldst have said: 'Their grief hath broken them.'
Launch not thy vessel while these war-winds blow,
Since thou art ware that this great host hath come.
V. 1030 Thou art the warrior-king experienced
And tried in war; now by thy life and head,
By sun and moon, by throne and cap, I swear
This matter of Kámús and of the Khán
Hath filled my heart with pain, my head with vengeance.

Our business is to lead the host to Gang,
Not contemplating battle but to call
An army up from Chín and from Máchín,
And after that o'erthrow the enemy."
When he had spoken he withdrew to rest,
Haste in his head and vengeance in his heart.
The dark night oped its melancholy eyes,
The moon had grown round-shoùldered with distress,
And all the world resembled sable musk
What time Farghár came from the Íránian host.
He reached the presence of Afrásiyáb
By night—the time for quiet and repose—
And thus reported: 'From this lofty court
I went to Rustam, binder of the Dív.
I saw a camp-enclosure green and vast
With cavaliers resembling ravening wolves.
A standard stood erect charged with a dragon:
Thou wouldst have said: 'It is alive!' There stood
Within the tent a huge, fierce Elephant,
Whose girded waist was like a tiger's loins.
Before him was a steed, a piebald bay;
Thou wouldest say: 'It never taketh rest.'
The bridle hung down from the saddle-bow,
A coiled hide-lasso from the saddle-straps.
The chiefs were such as Tús, Gúdarz, and Gív,
And Faríburz, Gurgín, and brave Shídúsh.
Guráza is the scout with Gustaham
Accompanied by Gív and by Bízhan."
The king grieved at the tidings of Farghár.
Then came one to Afrásiyáb to say:—
"Pírán the chieftain hath arrived like dust V. 1031
With great men and with warriors of the fight."
The king told what Farghár had said and asked:—
"Who is a match for Rustam in the fray?"
Pírán said: "What resource have we in war
Except the quest of glory on the field?

So let us struggle for our fatherland,
Our children, and our kin."

Afrásiyáb
Thereat grew instant to engage and bade
Pírán march forth 'gainst battle-loving Rustam.
They left the presence and went forth to war
Upon the plain, shouts rose, the tymbals sounded,
The troops' dust turned the world to ebony.
So mighty was the host that thou hadst said:—
"The whole world will be hidden by the dust!"
The tymbal-players sent their din on high
As elephant on elephant filed by.

§ 22

Afrásiyáb's Letter to Púládwand

Afrásiyáb set forward from his palace,
And hasted bent on vengeance to the waste.
He gave all needful orders to Pírán,
And then withdrawing cleared his tent of strangers.
They set a scribe before him. "Write," said he,
"A letter unto Púládwand and make
The matter known. First praise All-holy God,
Who stablisheth and overthroweth us—
The Lord of Saturn and the turning sky,
The Lord of Venus and the shining sun.
V. 1032 Give praise next to that binder of the strong—
The fortunate chieftain Púládwand, declare
What we have suffered from this famous fighter,
And these renowned and all-accomplished chiefs,
From Tús, Gúdarz, and other warriors.
Then tell him all about my grandson's case—
The master of Írán, the mighty Sháh—
Whom erst I cherished like dear life itself
That no ill blast might reach him. Then proceed:-
'Now, if high heaven taketh side with us,

Let Púládwand come hither. Many troops
Brought from the marches of Sakláb and Chín
Have been o'erthrown and writhe, much field and fell
Been harried by the warriors of Írán.
Their host is like a moving hill, their chiefs
Are such as Rustam who is in command,
Gúdarz the warrior and Gív and Tús:
They raise the din of tymbals to the clouds.
When Rustam, who alone hath vexed our land,
Shall have been slain by thee no host will come
Against it. Be thou our deliverer.
If by thy hand his term shall reach its end
The face of earth will surely be at rest.
Then from my populous kingdom will I take
But one half of my treasures as my share;
The other half, and half my crown, are thine,
Since both the fight and toil are thine to-day.'"
They sealed the letter with the royal seal,
And Shída, as the moon arose in Cancer,
Girt up himself in presence of his father
To go grief-laden on the embassage.
He came to Púládwand as swift as fire V. 1033
Through apprehension of calamity,
Saluted him, delivering the letter
And telling Rustam's deeds. Now Púládwand,
A king whose aspirations reached high heaven,
Lived in the mountain-parts of Chín and had
No peer in all the land. He lacked not troops
And men of war; he was a Crocodile;
His troops were pards. He called his governors
And priests, and held discourse with them at large,
Told what the letter said and, being a prince
Both youthful and imperious, commanded
To bear the drums and camp-enclosure forth
Upon the plain. He gathered troops and dívs.
The battle-cry went up. He led the way,

Equipped with shield, with quiver, and with lasso,
And followed by his standard. He descended
The mountains, crossed the water, and drew near
Afrásiyáb, at whose gate tymbals sounded,
And all went forth to welcome Púládwand.
The veteran monarch first embraced the chief,
Then spake much of the past, told whence arose
The Turkmans' trouble and the remedy.
While going to the palace they considered
V. 1034 New stratagems. Afrásiyáb discussed
The waiting and the forward policies,
Told of the strife and outcry that had come
Upon him through the death of Siyáwush,
Told of the Khán, Manshúr, and brave Kámús,
Recalling what had passed, and said: "My pain
Is all through one who weareth leopard-skin.
Mine arms are impotent on him and on
That hide, that helmet, and that shield of Chín.
Plains hast thou trodden and a longsome road:
Now fashion us a remedy for this."
The mind of Púládwand grew full of thought
How this knot should be loosed. He made reply:—
"We must not hurry in so great a war.
This is the self-same Rustam that laid waste
And took Mázandarán with his huge mace,
Who rent the White Dív's side, the liverstead
Of Bíd, and of Púlád son of Ghundí.
I have not prowess to contend with him,
Or power enough to frustrate his attack;
Still let my body and my soul await
Thy will, may wisdom ever be thy guide.
Do thou incite the host against his host,
Our numbers may bewilder him, and I
Will plan a stratagem, for otherwise
We have not strength to break his breast and neck."
Afrásiyáb grew blythe of mind and brought

Bright wine and harp and lyre, When Púládwand
Was in his cups he roared out to the king:—
"Dark to Jamshíd, Zahhák, and Farídún
Made I their provand, slumber, and repose!
The Brahman hath been frighted at my voice,
And this my noble host, and I will hew
To pieces with my trenchant sword amain
This Zábulí upon the battle-plain!"

§ 23

How Púládwand fought with Gív and Tús

As soon as Sol displayed its shining flag, V. 1035
And night's deep violet silk grew safflower-hued,
Drums sounded from the portal of the king,
The troops' shouts reached the clouds, and Púládwand
Of lusty form with lasso on his arm
Led on the troops.
When both the hosts were ranked
The air turned violet-dim, the earth was darkened.
Then matchless Rustam donned his tiger-skin,
And, mounted on his huge, fierce Elephant,[1]
Raged and assailed the right wing of the foe,
O'erthrowing many a Turkman warrior.
This Púládwand descried and, having loosed
His twisted lasso from the saddle-straps,
Encountered Tús like some mad elephant,
With lasso on his arm and mace in hand;
He seized Tús by the girdle, easily
Dismounted him, and dashed him to the ground.
Gív, when he looked upon the fight and saw
The head of Tús son of Naudar o'erthrown,
Urged on Shabdíz, devoting soul and body
To fight, and mailed, armed with an ox-head mace,
Strove like a savage lion with the dív,

[1] Rakhsh.

Who flung his lasso round his foeman's head.
Ruhhám was with Bízhan; they both observed
The mace, the prowess, and dexterity
Of Púládwand, and went to bind his hands
With lassos, but that wary warrior
Urged on his steed and raised his battle-cry.
Those two brave warriors of noble birth,
Those haughty Lions casting such long shadows,
He flung to earth, and trampled on in scorn,
In sight of all the horsemen on the plain,
V. 1036 And reaching Káwa's standard clave the staff
Asunder with his sword. The Íránians wailed,
No warrior stood his ground upon the field.
When Faríburz, Gúdarz, and the other chiefs
Beheld the traces of that warrior-dív
They said to Rustam, that avenging one:—
"There is not left upon this battlefield
A single man of name still in the saddle,
Or horseman of the warriors of this host,
Whom Púládwand hath brought not to the ground
With arrow or with lasso, mace or sword!
The field of battle is a field of woe,
And 'tis for Rustam to deliver us."
Anon arose a cry of pain and grief
From both the wings and centre; then Gúdarz,
The man of eld, supposing that Bízhan,
The lion-taking chieftain, and Ruhhám,
His offspring both, had perished in the fight,
Cried in his anguish to the righteous Judge:—
"I had so many sons and grandsons once
That I extolled my head above the sun,
But they are slain before me in the wars,
So greatly have my day and fortune changed!
Slain in their youth while I live on hoar-headed!"
He doffed his casque, he laid his girdle by,
And then began to wail right bitterly.

§ 24

How Rustam fought with Púládwand

Now Rustam when he heard was sorely grieved,
He shook as 'twere a bough upon a tree,
And drawing near to Púládwand, and seeing
His mountain-height grieved for those gallant four V. 1037
Like onagers contending with a lion,
Saw one host sorely stricken and the other
Unbroken, and he thought: "Our day hath darkened,
Our nobles' heads are dazed! Good sooth! the strife
Hath turned against us and our fortune sleepeth!"
Then gripping with his legs he urged on Rakhsh,
And raging challenged Púládwand to fight,
Exclaiming: "O thou ill-conditioned dív!
Thou shalt behold a change of fortune now."
The voice of Rustam reached those warriors,
And he, perceiving them dismounted, said:—
"O Thou Almighty Ruler of the world!
Thou art above the unseen and the seen.
Far rather would I lose mine eyes in battle
Than look upon this miserable day,
Whereon such cries have risen from Írán,
Such from Húmán, Pírán, and yon fierce dív!
Gív and Ruhhám and Tús are all unhorsed,
And e'en Bízhan who used to mock at lions!
The chargers of the great are pierced with arrows,
The riders fight afoot as best they may."
Then closing with the dív he threw his lasso,
But Púládwand, brave horseman though he was,
Ducked in alarm, he had had fight enough;
But when the cast had failed and he was safe
He said to Rustam: "O thou gallant one,
Thou veteran Lion and illustrious,
Who scarest mighty elephants! ere long

Thou shalt behold the billows of the deep.
V. 1038 Consider now the fire of mine attack,
My lasso, courage, might, and enterprise.
Thou shalt behold no traces of thy Sháh,
His nobles, or his mighty men henceforth,
Or of thy land, unless in dream, for I
Will give thine army to Afrásiyáb."
"How much more shirking, blustering, and guile?"
Said Rustam. "Let no warrior play the shrew
Or he will give his head up to the winds
Assuredly. Though thou be brave and proud
Thou art not Sám nor yet stiff-necked Garshásp."
Then Púládwand recalled a saw of old:—
"They who unjustly seek to cause a fight
Return with livers pierced and faces white;
If friend or foe harm thee 'tis well thou still
Do thy devoir alike to good and ill."
He thought: "This is that Rustam who o'ercame
By night with his huge mace Mázandarán,"
And then he said: "O man approved in war!
Why stand we here so long to no result?"
Two mighty Elephants, two warlike Lions,
Were they; they wheeled, the dust rose from the waste,
And elephantine Rustam with his mace
Struck his foe's head: all present heard the crash.
Such darkness filled the eyes of Púládwand
That he relaxed his hold upon his bridle,
And, swerving to the right hand in his pain,
Exclaimed: "An ill day this!"
Now matchless Rustam—
Looked for the brains of Púládwand to pour
From both his ears but, since he kept his seat,
Invoked the Maker of the world and said:—
"O Thou exalted over fortune's wheel,
The Lord, the All-seeing, and the Nourisher!
If I am fighting in an unjust cause

My spirit doteth not upon this world;
But if the wrong is with Afrásiyáb V. 1039
Deprive me not of strength and skill in arms.
It is not meet that thou shouldst loose my soul
From bondage by the hand of Púládwand,
For if I am to perish by his prowess
No warrior will remain throughout Írán,
No husbandman and no artificer,
No dust, no country, and no field or fell."
He said to Púládwand: "What harm hast thou
Got from the whirling mace? Thy hands relax
Thy sable reins. Down, dív! and beg thy life."
He said: "Thy mace hath harmed me not."
They closed,
And Púládwand employed his sword of steel
With many a feint and many an artifice,
But failed to pierce through Rustam's tiger-skin,
Which filled the liver of the dív with blood.
That fierce one raged at fate because his sword
Availed not on his foeman; he was troubled
At Rustam's neck and shoulders, and again
Spake to him: "Doff this tiger's legacy,
This armour, with that sable helm of thine,
And put on others. I will do the like,
And come with speed."
But Rustam said: "Not so.
That is no channel for a warrior's stream.
I will not change my gear, do thou keep thine."
Then both the warriors wheeled till Púládwand,
Whose massive mace fell but without effect V. 1040
On Rustam's tiger-skin and coat of steel,
Said: "Wrestling is the test 'twixt man and man.
Take we each other by the leathern belt,
That we may know which one the will of fate
Dismisseth worsted from the battlefield."
Then Rustam said: "O ill-conditioned dív!

Thou canst not stand a warrior's blow, but like
A fox employest craft. What profit is it
To have thy head ensnared? Hast wile or spell
In wrestling that will free that neck of thine
From mine encircling arms?"
They made a pact
That none should interfere from either side,
Then, lighting from their chargers, both the foes
Took time wherein to breathe them and repose.

§ 25

The Wrestling of Rustam and Púládwand

These two exalted warriors bent on fight
Prepared themselves to wrestle, and agreed:—
"No one on either side shall intervene."
The space between the hosts was half a league.
The stars surveyed that fight as Púládwand
And matchless Rustam—those grim Lions—closed,
Who felt each other, then each warrior
Seized his opponent by the leathern belt.
V. 1041 When Shída looked on Rustam's chest and neck
He drew a deep, cold sigh and thus bespake
His sire Afrásiyáb: "This mighty man,
Whom thou call'st Rustam, binder of the Dív,
Will by his strength and prowess lay the head
Of our brave warrior-dív upon the dust,
And thou wilt see our soldiers take to flight,
So strive not vainly with the turning sky."
The sire replied: "My brain is fraught with care
On that account, go and observe the prowess
Of Púládwand in wrestling. Speak to him
In Turkman and advise him. He may get
The elephantine Rustam off his feet.
Tell Púládwand: 'When thou hast got him down
Let thine appeal be to the scimitar.'"

But Shída said: "This is not what the king
Agreed to in the presence of the host.
If thou art rash and breakest covenant
Thy warfare will not issue in success.
Befoul not this clear stream, else he that loveth
Fault-finding will discover cause for blame."
Afrásiyáb began to chide, becoming
In his fierce wrath distrustful of his son,
And said to him: "If Púládwand the dív
Shall be o'erthrown by this antagonist
None will remain alive upon the field;
Thou hast a valiant tongue, no prowess else."
He plied his reins and came forth lion-like
Upon the ground, observed the strife and shouts
Like thunder, then he said to Púládwand:—
"If thou, exalted Lion! gett'st him down
In wrestling rip him open with thy dagger;
We need not boasting but accomplishment."
Gív marked the king's wild words and eagerness,
Then urging on his charger came in haste, V. 1042
Because the enemy had broken troth,
And said to Rustam: "O thou warrior!
What orders givest thou thy servants? Speak!
Observe Afrásiyáb, his eagerness,
And wild words! He hath come forth to inflame
The heart of thine antagonist and prompt him
To use his dagger in a wrestling-bout!"
But Rustam said: "A man of war am I,
And, when engaged in wrestling, bide my time.
What do ye fear? Why are your hearts thus rent?
E'en now will I bring down from heaven above
The head and neck of Púládwand to dust;
But if I have not strength of hand therefor
What need thus wantonly to break my heart?
Although this witless warlock doth transgress

The covenant of God, why should ye fear
The breach? He poureth dust on his own head."
Then, like a lion, reaching out he clutched
The chest and neck of that fierce Crocodile,
And, straining hard, uprooted Púládwand,
As though he were a plane-tree, from his place,
Raised him aloft, dashed him upon the ground,
And uttered praises to Almighty God.
A shout rose from the army of Irán;
The drummers marched out with the kettle-drums;
The blast of clarion, the clang of gong
And Indian bell ascended to the clouds.
Now Rustam thus imagined: "Púládwand
Hath not a sound joint in his body left,
His bones are broken and his cheeks become
The colour of the bloom of fenugreek,"
V. 1043 So flung his leg across the gallant Rakhsh,
And left the Dragon's body as it lay;
But, when the lion-clutching hero reached
His army, Púládwand glanced arrow-like,
And fled with all speed to Afrásiyáb
With full heart and with tears upon his face.
When Rustam saw that Púládwand still lived,
And troops were everywhere upon the plain,
His heart grew straitened, he led on the host,
Called unto him the veteran Gúdarz,
And ordered: "Let them send a shower of arrows,
And make the air as 'twere a cloud in spring."
Bízhan was on one wing, Gív on the other
With veteran Ruhhám and brave Gurgín.
Thou wouldst have said: "They have enkindled fire,
And with their falchions set the world ablaze!"
Then Púládwand said to his troops: "With throne,
Renown, and treasure lost, why throw away
Our lives or think at all of further strife?"

And, with his very life-cord snapped in twain
By Rustam, marched his army from the plain.

§ 26

How Afrásiyáb fled from Rustam

Pírán spake thus unto Afrásiyáb:—
"The surface of the world is like a sea!
Did not I say: 'We cannot tarry here
Secure from Rustam of the deadly hand?'
By murdering the youth beloved by him
Thou hast transfixed our hearts with arrow-points.
How wilt thou fare? None of thine own remaineth, V. 1044
And Púládwand the dív hath marched away.
The horsemen of Írán on barded chargers
Exceed in sooth a hundred thousand men;
The lion-catching Rustam is their leader,
And air is full of arrows, earth of blood.
From sea and plain, from mountain and from waste,
Our warriors assembled; when men failed
We tried the dívs. Great were the strife and shouts,
But now, since Rustam came, no place is left
For thee; the only prudent course is flight.
Since thou art here the treasure of the earth
Thou shouldst withdraw to further Chín. Leave here
Thy troops thus ranged for battle and betake thee,
Thou and thy kindred, seaward."
The king saw
That fight was hopeless, took the advice, and fled.
They left his flag but he himself departed,
And went in haste toward Máchín and Chín.
The armies came together face to face,
The earth grew like a darksome cloud, anon
The peerless Rustam shouted to his host:—
"Take not your bows and arrows or your spears,

But battle with the mace and scimitar,
And show a prowess worthy of your standing.
Is it the time for pards to shun the fray
When they perceive the quarry in the lair?"
The soldiers left their spears upon the mount,
And, shouting, made the dales and plains of fight
Impassable with corpses. Half the living
Asked quarter, and the others fled pell-mell:
There was no shepherd and the flock was scattered;
The plain was filled with handless, neckless trunks.
Then Rustam spake and said: "Enough are slain.
These changes are the lot of all, at whiles
Producing bane, at whiles the antidote.
Put off your arms and do more good henceforth.
V. 1045 Why set your hearts upon this Wayside Inn,
Which now is joyful and then sorrowful,
Which now assaileth us like Áhriman,
And then is like a bride all scent and colour?
Choose calm, untroubled lives, for who can say
That cursing is a better thing than blessing?"
He chose gold, silver, raiment yet unworn,
Youths, horses, swords, and casques to send the Sháh,
Took for himself crowns, musk, and ambergris,
And lavished on the troops the residue.
He fain had found the monarch of Túrán,
Path and no path they sought him everywhere.
Folk gave no trace of him by land or sea;
No tidings reached them of Afrásiyáb.
The Íránians set themselves to desolate
His banquet-houses and his palaces,
And Rustam fired his settlements beside;
That conflagration blazed up far and wide.

§ 27

How Rustam returned to the Court of the Sháh

Before they left Túrán they loaded up
Crowns, thrones, and precious armour; they had captured
So many camels and such herds of horses
That none could murmur at the lack of beasts.
There rose a shouting and a blare of trumpets,
They brought the camel-bells and brazen gongs,
And entered on their march toward Írán,
A host thus decked with colour and perfume.
As soon as news of Rustam reached the Sháh V. 1040
A shout came from the city and the court,
And cloudward from Írán rose tymbal-din
Proclaiming that the lord of mace and mail
Had come. One common joy was in the world
Among all classes and degrees of men.
The Sháh's heart grew like Paradise above,
He offered praises to Almighty God,
Bade bring the elephants, and journeyed forth.
The world was decked according to the custom,
Wine, harp, and minstrelsy were in request,
The necks of all the elephants that went
Were drenched with saffron, musk, and wine. The drivers
Wore coronets upon their heads, and earrings
Depended from their ears. Men poured down saffron
And drachms, and sifted ambergris on musk.
When matchless Rustam saw the exalted crown,
While all around was echoing applause,
He lighted from his steed and did obeisance.
Khusrau inquired about the tedious march,
Embracing Rustam long and heartily,
And, calling many a blessing down on him,
Bade him remount and, as they fared together

Hand within hand, said thus: "Why hast thou stayed
So long and burnt us through our love of thee?"
"Apart from thee," thus Rustam made reply,
"Our hearts have not enjoyed a moment's pleasure."
V. 1047 They reached at length the palace of the Sháh,
The far-famed court; there on the golden throne
Sat Kai Khusrau with noble Rustam, Tús,
Gív, Faríburz, Gúdarz, Farhád, Gurgín,
And brave Ruhhám. The Sháh spake of the war,
The field, and fighting of the Turkman host.
Gúdarz replied: "O sire! the tale is long!
Our first needs are the flagon, wine, and rest,
And afterward thou mayest question us."
They spread the tables and the Sháh said smiling:—
"Good sooth! thou hast been famished by the march."[1]
He set wine on the board, called minstrelsy,
And then inquired of all that had occurred,
About Afrásiyáb and Púládwand,
The twisted lasso and the wrestling-bout,
About the Khán, Kámús, and Ashkabús,
And that vast army with its elephants
And drums. Gúdarz addressed him thus: "O Sháh!
No mother will bring forth a cavalier
Like Rustam. Though a dív or lion cometh
Or dragon, none escapeth his long clutch.
A thousand blessings be upon the king,
Above all on this famous paladin."
The words so pleased Khusrau that thou hadst said:—
"He raised his head to Saturn." He rejoined:—
"World-conquering paladin, alert and shrewd!
The man with wisdom for his monitor
Is circumspect in time's vicissitudes.
Be evil's eye far from this paladin,
And may his life be one long festival."

[1] "Il paraît que la route t'a altéré" (Mohl).

They spent a week with wine in hand. The crown, V. 1048
The throne, and company rejoiced in Rustam,
While some to melody of pipe and strings
Sang in heroic strains his combatings.

§ 28

How Rustam went back to Sistán

The peerless Rustam tarried with the Sháh
One month in revelry. At length he said:—
"O full of virtues, wearer of the crown!
The monarch of the world is wise and good,
But yet I long to see the face of Zál."
The great Sháh then unlocked his treasury-door,
And of the precious things there stored away
Such gifts as jewels, crowns, and finger-rings,
Brocade and raiment from Barbar, and slaves,
With earrings and with crowns, a hundred steeds
And camels, saddled or for porterage,
With golden trays of aloes and of musk,
Two golden slippers, and a mace to match
Inlaid with jewels that a king might wear,
Gifts that became a man of such renown,
The Sháh sent matchless Rustam, and went out
Two stages with him on the journey home;
And Rustam when the king was wearying
Of that long road gat down and homaged him,
Bade him farewell, then left Írán behind,
And hastened onward to Zábulistán.
The world became obedient to the Sháh,
And settled in accordance to his will.
This tale too have I ended and 'tis long—
This battle with Kámús—and from my song
No jot hath fallen. Had but one word been
Left out it would have caused my soul chagrin.

I joyed o'er Púládwand who added not
His steel chains to the chains that we have got.[1]
Now hear the battle with Akwán and know
How famous Rustam fared against that foe.

[1] "Púládwand," with the change of one letter, would mean "a steel chain."

PART IV

THE STORY OF THE FIGHT OF RUSTAM WITH THE DÍV AKWÁN

ARGUMENT

The poet half apologises for introducing this story into the Sháhnáma, but pleads that we live in a world of wonders. The tale runs thus: Complaints are brought to Kai Khusrau of the ravages made among the herds by a certain onager which the Sháh perceives to be the dív Akwán. Accordingly he sends Rustam to the rescue, who is, however, taken at a disadvantage by the dív, and only saves his life by his ready wit. He then falls in with Afrásiyáb and his meiny, and defeats them single-handed. Afterward he again encounters Akwán, slays him, and returns home in triumph.

NOTE

This story is a variation on the theme "the devil is an ass." Firdausí probably introduced it into the Sháhnáma to explain the references in Part V. Afrásiyáb uses, "the boulder of the dív Akwán," to cover the entrance of the pit in which Bízhan is imprisoned. Rustam, when he comes to deliver Bízhan, is represented as lifting the stone single-handed and flinging it far away.[1]

In Zoroastrian theology Urmuzd was supposed to be surrounded by impersonations of his own divine qualities, who were known as the Ameshaspentas, "the immortal well-doers." They were six in number, and among them was one named Vohu Manau, *i.e.* Good Thought. Corresponding to these on Áhriman's side were six impersonations of his evil qualities, one of which was Akem Manau, *i.e.* Bad Thought. These good and evil impersonations were opposed to one another in pairs. Vohu Manau, for instance, was antagonised by Akem Manau. It has been suggested by

[1] See pp. 309, 345.

Professor Nöldeke that Akwán is a mistake of Firdausí or of his authorities for Akúmán, and that the dív Akwán is really none other than Akem Manau in disguise.[1] Similarly Aaishma daéva (dív), the demon of wrath, appears to be the Asmodeus of the Book of Tobit.

§ 1

The Prelude

V. 1049 Be adoration as thy duty, sage!
To God the Lord of soul and wisdom raised,
Yet let this question thy bright mind engage:—
Can any praise Him as He should be praised?
All knowledge that we have is feebleness;
For such poor weaklings who can tears repress?
Philosopher! in vain thou biddest me
In many words to make thy path mine own,
The best word witnesseth God's unity,
Albeit, said or not said, God is One.
What things soever pass before thine eyes
Accord to this conviction of thy mind,
Walk then the beaten track if thou art wise
Or else discussion will no limit find.
Born, soul and body, in a single breath
Of mighty moment is thyself to thee,
Yet here thou hast but brief reprieve from death,
And in another home thy rest will be.
Think first of the Creator then and base
Thy worship on the thought well understood
That He who keepeth turning heaven in place
Is He that is thy Guide to every good.
The world is full of wonders to thy view,
And none hath means to judge them here below:
Thy soul is wonderful, thy body too,
So let thy first task be thyself to know,
And next the sky which turneth over thee

[1] NIN, p. 10, *note*.

In all its daily mutability.
The rustic minstrel's tale of days of old
Thou mayest not be willing to receive,
For men of wisdom who shall hear it told,
And weigh it learnedly, will disbelieve;
Yet, if thou wilt the inner meaning scan,
Thou wilt accept it and from carping cease,
So hear the story of the ancient man V. 1050
Though it may be his words will fail to please.

§ 2

How Khusrau summoned Rustam to fight the Dív Akwán

Thus saith the storying minstrel: Kai Khusrau
One morn adorned his Rose-bed like the spring.
Such chieftains as Gúdarz, Tús, Gustaham,
Barzín son of Garshásp, sprung from Jamshíd,
With Gív and with Ruhhám the veteran,
Gurgín and sage Kharrád sat with the Sháh,
And drained the goblet to the king of kings
Right merrily. One hour of day had passed
When there arrived a herdsman from the plain,
Who came before Khusrau, first kissed the ground,
And then addressed that Sháh of glorious race:—
"An onager hath come amongst the herds,
And seemeth like a dív escaped from bond!
Thou wouldest say: 'It is a savage lion!'
He breaketh our steeds' necks; he is in colour
As 'twere the sun itself; thou wouldest say:—
'The sky hath washed him in a bath of gold.'
Drawn from his neck and reaching to his tail
There is a line as black as musk. If thou
Wouldst judge by his round haunches and his feet
Thou wouldest say: 'He is a noble steed.'"
Khusrau, aware that 'twas no onager,

For onagers surpass not steeds in strength,
And having heard that people near the stream,
Where this man used to turn the herds to graze,
Made much complaint about Akwán the dív,
Said to the hind: "This is no onager,
And I have knowledge of it. Go thy way."
He then addressed the chiefs: "Ye paladins,
V. 1051 With Grace and state! we need one lion-fierce
Among yourselves to go on this emprise."
He scanned the warriors but found none to please him,
For only Rustam son of Zál could help
In such a cause, and so Khusrau prepared
A letter couched in just and loving terms,
And gave it to Gurgín son of Mílád,
To whom he said: "Bear to the son of Zál
My letter, go like smoke both night and day,
And slumber not within Zábulistán.
Greet Rustam much and lovingly from me,
Say to him: 'Live while heaven itself shall last,'
And add when he hath read the letter through:—
'My Grace is all from thee, aspiring chief!
Show us thy face, arise, and come. When thou
Hast read the letter stay not in Zábul.'"
Gurgín departed like a rushing wind,
Or onager in terror for its life,
And gave the letter when he reached the chieftain,
Who heard, obeyed, and went to court in state,
There kissed the ground before the throne and blessed
The imperial fortunes, saying thus: "O Sháh!
Thou calledst me, and here am I girt up
To do thy will. Be might and goodness thine."
Khusrau, on seeing Rustam, welcomed him,
Gave him a seat upon the royal throne,
And afterward spake thus: "O paladin!
Mayst thou live ever glad and bright of soul.

This day is blessèd since I look on thee:
My fortunes all depend on thy shrewd mind.
A work is toward, O elephantine one! V. 1052
For which I summoned thee of all the mighty,
So that, if thou distaste not my command,
Thou mayest gird thee to win crown and treasure.
A hind hath said: 'An onager hath come
Among the herds.'"
The Sháh told o'er the tale,
And added: "Now, O matchless one, make ready!
And undertake this further enterprise.
Go, and in dealing with it have a care,
For it may be malicious Áhriman."
"Through thy good fortune," Rustam made reply,
"Now whether it be lion, dív, or dragon,
The servant of thy throne is not afraid;
It shall not 'scape my scimitar's sharp blade."

§ 3

How Rustam went in Quest of the Dív

He went forth like a lion to the chase,
A lasso on his arm and under him
A Dragon, went to where that hind was tending
His cattle and that dív was roaming loose.[1]
Three days he searched the champaign mid the steeds,
And on the fourth perceived a Thing careering,
And rushing by him like the north wind's blast.
It was a glossy beast of golden hue,
But with fell mischief 'neath its hide. Then Rustam
Spurred fleet-foot Rakhsh but thought as he drew near:—
"I need not cast but noose it with my lasso;
There is no call to spoil it with the sword;
I will convey it living to the Sháh."

[1] Reading with P.

So Rustam flung his royal lasso forth,
Intent to take the creature by the head.
The lusty onager perceived the noose,
V. 1053 And vanished instantly. Then Rustam knew:—
"This is no onager; I must proceed
By craft not force. It is Akwán himself,
And I must smite him with a whiff of steel.
The sages told me that this is his haunt,
But his appearance as an onager
Is strange! The scimitar must now avail
To make blood overflow that yellow gold."
Just then the onager appeared again;
Again the chieftain urged his swift career,
Strung up his bow and from his wind-like steed
Let fly an arrow like Ázargashasp,
But even as he drew his royal bow
The onager was gone the second time.
Then Rustam rode about the open plain
A day and night in want of sustenance,
And nodding in the saddle, till he found
A fountain like rose-water. Lighting there
He watered Rakhsh and sank to sleep fordone,
But first ungirthed his steed, took off the saddle
To use its poplar pummel as his pillow,
And spread beside the spring his saddle-cloth
For sleep while Rakhsh to pasturage sped forth.

§ 4

How the Dív Akwán flung Rustam into the Sea

When from afar Akwán saw Rustam sleeping
He came as swift as wind, delved round about
The place where Rustam lay, and raised it skyward.
When Rustam woke from sleep he woke to sorrow,
And his wise head was filled with consternation.

He thought: "So this foul dív hath laid for me V. 1054
A snare like this! Woe for my strength and courage,
My neck, and blows with mace and scimitar!
This matter will make desolate the world,
Achieving all Afrásiyáb's desire,
While Tús, Gúdarz, Khusrau, the throne and crown,
The elephants and drums, will be no more.
Through me the world will suffer, since Akwán
Hath spoiled my marketing. Who will take vengeance
On this curst dív? No one will match him now."

Then said Akwán to Rustam in his plight:—
"Now, elephantine chieftain! take thy choice
To fall upon the mountains or the waves;
So whither shall I fling thee far from men?"

The elephantine hero communed thus:—
"In every case naught bettereth artifice.
He will do contrary to what I say;
He will not recognise an oath or keep
A pact. If I say, 'Throw me in the sea,'
Then will this evil-natured Áhriman
Fling me upon the mountains, dash me there
To pieces, and destroy me. I must use
Some scheme to make him fling me into water,"
Then said: "A sage of Chín hath spoken well:—
'Whoe'er is drowned his soul will never see V. 1055
Surúsh in Paradise, his lot will be
To tarry in his place in misery,
And not to find a welcome to the sky.'
Let me not therefore fall upon the ocean
To make the fishes' maws my winding-sheet,
But drop me on the mountains that the lions
And tigers may behold a brave man's hands.'

Akwán at this roared like the sea, and answered:—
"Now will I fling thee to the place wherein
Thou wilt be lost for ever to both worlds."
And, acting contrary to Rustam's words,

Dropped him upon the sea. As Rustam fell
He drew his sword, and when the crocodiles
Approached they turned aside from fighting him.
He struck out with his feet and his left hand
While with his right he fought his way along,
Not resting for a moment from his toils,
But acting as a warrior in all.
If valour could avert the fatal day
Time had not taken Rustam's stance away,
But know that circling time is ever thus—
At whiles all sweet, at whiles all venomous.
He struggled bravely, reached the shore, beheld
The desert, and gave praises to the Maker,
Who had delivered thus His slave from ill.
He rested, took his armour off, and laid
His tiger-skin cuirass beside the stream.
Whenas his lasso and his armour dried
That savage Lion donned his coat of mail,
And went back to the stream where he had slept
When that malignant dív had raged at him:
V. 1056 But glossy Rakhsh was nowhere in the mead,
And Rustam, wroth and raging at his luck,
Went plodding doggedly with reins and saddle
In Rakhsh's track till in his quest he came
Upon a meadow-land of streams and shaws
Well stocked with francolins and cooing doves.
The herdsman of Afrásiyáb who kept
The steeds lay fast asleep within a coppice,
While Rakhsh was prancing madly like a dív
Among the herd and neighing. Rustam cast
His royal lasso, caught Rakhsh by the head,
Then rubbed the dust away and saddled him,
With thanks to God, the Giver of all good,
Put on the bridle, mounted, took in hand
His trenchant scimitar, and drove the herd
Therewith, still calling on the name of God.

The herdsman, at the tumult, raised his head,
Still half asleep, and called the horsemen with him
To mount upon their lofty-crested steeds.
They took each man his lasso and his bow
To learn what foe dared come upon the pasture,
And to approach so many cavaliers.
These went together hotly in pursuit
To strip the warlike Lion of his hide,
But Rustam, when he saw them rushing on,
Drew quickly from his waist his vengeful sword,
Roared like a lion, and proclaimed: "My name
Is Rustam son of Zál the son of Sám."
He slew the more part with his scimitar,
Which when the herdsman saw he showed his back,
And fled away with Rustam following,
His bow upon his arm slung by its string.

§ 5

How Afrásiyáb came to inspect his Steeds, and how Rustam slew the Dív Akwán.

It happened strangely that Afrásiyáb V. 1057
Had sped forth like a blast to view his steeds,
And brought with him wine, harps, and warriors
To merrymake upon the watered plain
Where every year the herdsman loosed the herds.
The monarch on arriving saw them not.
Then suddenly rose clamour, horse on horse
Passed, and Afrásiyáb saw far away
The dust of Rakhsh, and other noble chargers.
The ancient herdsman rushed up frantically
In evil plight and wounded by an arrow,
Then in amazement told Afrásiyáb:—
"Though single-handed, Rustam hath borne off
Our horse-herds, killed no few of us, and gone!"

The Turkmans clamoured: "He is all alone,
And we must arm, for this is past a jest.
Have we become so wretched, weak, and frail
That one can shed our blood? The very herds
Will shame thereat! We cannot let it pass."
The monarch with four elephants and troops
Went in pursuit of Rustam who, when they
Had overtaken him, took from his arm
His bow and charged against them furiously.
He rained upon them, as the clouds rain hail,
Shafts from his bow and strokes from his steel sword.
He dropped his arrows and his scimitar,
When sixty gallant chiefs had been o'erthrown,
V. 1058 And taking up his mace slew forty more.
Afrásiyáb in dudgeon showed his back
While Rustam took the four white elephants.
The warriors of Túrán were in despair,
For Rustam came behind them with his mace,
And, like a cloud in spring, for two leagues onward
Rained blows like hail and beat in helms and casques.
He turned back, driving off the elephants
And herds, and took the baggage-train withal,
Yet when he went back to the spring at leisure
His valiant heart was ready still for fight!
The dív Akwán again encountered him,
And said: "Art thou not surfeited with strife?
Thou hast escaped the ocean and the claws
Of crocodiles, and come back to the waste
To battle. Now shalt thou behold thy fate,
For never shalt thou seek to fight henceforth."
The peerless Rustam, hearing what the dív
Said, roared out like a lion of the fray,
Released his twisted lasso from its straps,
Flung it, and caught the dív about the waist;
Then Rustam, turning in his saddle, raised
His mace as 'twere the hammer of a smith,

And smote the dív like some mad elephant
Upon his head and smashed it, brains and neck;
The hero lighted, drew his blue steel sword
And cut the dív's head off, then offered up
Thanksgivings to Almighty God through Whom
He had achieved the victory that day.
Know thou that every one that is the thrall
Of ill, and offereth not to God his praise,
And whosoever doth transgress the ways
Of manhood, is a dív, not man at all.
The wisdom that rejecteth what I tell
May miss the goodly inner sense as well:
If then a paladin be full of might—
A man of lusty limbs and lofty height—
Let him, and not Akwán, thy hero be,
And let thy tongue tell tales of chivalry.
What sayest thou, O man exceeding old, V. 1059
Experienced much in this world's heat and cold?
Who knoweth what vicissitudes will here
Betide us often in time's long career,
Time which by virtue of its length alone
Will bear away all that we call our own?
Who knoweth what yon turning vault's decree
Assigneth him of war or revelry?

§ 6

How Rustam went back to the Land of Írán

When Rustam had cut off the vile dív's head
He mounted on his elephantine steed,
Collected all the herds in front of him,
With all the baggage that the Turkmans left,
And went off with the elephants and goods,
Illustrating the world. When to the Sháh
Came tidings: "Rustam hath returned in triumph!
He girt himself to noose that onager,

But he hath taken dív and elephant,
The elephant by land, the crocodile
By sea: the lions, dívs, and warriors
That counter him escape not from his sword!"
Khusrau prepared to go and welcome Rustam;
The warriors put their casques upon their heads,
And took the standard of the king of kings
With clarions, bells, and mighty elephants.
When Rustam saw the exalted *monarch's flag*
Advancing on the way to welcome *him*
He lighted from his steed and kissed the ground
Midst shouting troops and din of trump and drum.
V. 1060 The chieftains of the army went afoot
To him; the king of kings urged on his steed.
That chief of chiefs, the crown-bestowing prince,
Bade Rustam mount, and thus they reached the palace
With open hearts and mutual good-will.
Then Rustam portioned to the Íránians
The horse-herds, keeping Rakhsh as his own mount,
And sent the elephants to join the Sháh's,
Since Lions do not fare with elephants.
For one week there was feasting in the hall,
Wine, harp, and minstrelsy were in request,
While Rustam o'er the wine discoursed at large,
And told the Sháh the story of Akwán:—
"I never saw so fine an onager,
Such neck and limbs, and such magnificence!
But when my scimitar had cleft his hide
No friend or foe had pitied him. His head
Was like an elephant's, his hair was long,
His mouth was full of tusks like some wild boar's,
His eyes were white, his lips were black, his form
Was ill to see. No camel is so large
And strong. The waste became a sea with blood,
Which spurted, when I had beheaded him,
Up to the welkin and came down like rain!"

Then Kai Khusrau amazed put by his cup,
And gave God thanks for such a paladin,
Since none had seen such wonders—that a man
Such as was Rustam should exist at all
In all his manliness and mien and stature.
He said: "Unless the Lord had given me
A share both in His justice and His love
I never should have had a liege like this V. 1061
With whom to hunt down dívs and elephants."
Thus spent they two weeks joyfully; their talk
Was all of wine and banquet. On the third
The matchless Rustam purposed to go home
Victorious and glad. "I yearn for Zál,
The son of Sám," he said, "and such desire
May not be blinked, but I will go apace,
And come back to the court. We must prepare
Fresh vengeance, for revenge for Siyáwush
Is not thus easily to be forgone
By taking steeds and herds."
The world's great king
Unlocked the portal of his treasury,
Brought forth the precious jewels hoarded there,
And filled a cup with treasure. Of king's raiment
Five changes made throughout of cloth of gold,
With golden-girdled slave-boys brought from Rúm,
And likewise handmaids decked with golden torques,
With tapestries and thrones of ivory,
Embroideries, dínárs, and turquoise crowns,
All these the Sháh sent Rustam, saying: "Take
This gift with thee, but stay with us to-day,
And afterward make ready to depart."
They spent the day together quaffing wine,
But Rustam was resolved to go at dawn.
The Sháh went two days with him and embraced him
At parting. Rustam cottoned to the road,
Khusrau returned. Well ordered 'neath his signet

The world became as he would have it be.
The ancient sky revolveth ever so,
At whiles like arrow and at whiles like bow.

The matter of Akwán with what befell
'Twixt him and Rustam endeth. Now I tell
V. 1062 The conflicts of Bízhan, and thou shalt hear
Of strivings that will ask of thee a tear.

PART V

THE STORY OF BÍZHAN AND MANÍZHA

ARGUMENT

The poet describes how the tale was first told to him to while away the depression caused by a sleepless night, and then narrates as follows: Kai Khusrau at a feast receives a petition for succour from the people of Irmán, whose country is being ravaged by wild boars, and sends Bízhan and Gurgín to clear the country of them. Bízhan, through the machinations of Gurgín, who envies him, falls in love with Afrásiyáb's daughter Manízha, who carries off Bízhan to Túrán and hides him in her palace. He is discovered and imprisoned in a pit with Manízha as his attendant. In the meantime Gurgín has returned to Irán, where his lame story rouses suspicion. Kai Khusrau, by means of the divining-cup, ascertains the situation of Bízhan and despatches Rustam to deliver him. This Rustam achieves, Gurgín is pardoned by Bízhan, Afrásiyáb is defeated, and all ends happily.

NOTE

For the historical basis of this story, see p. 11.

The tale of Bízhan and Manízha is the second of the great love-stories of the Sháhnáma, that of Zál and Rúdába in Vol. I. being the first,[1] and that of Gushtásp in Rúm, which will be given in Vol. IV., being the third. Mohl probably is right in considering the present story to be one of Firdausí's early works. "Le caractère de fraicheur qui se remarque dans ce récit s'accorde bien avec la supposition que cet épisode est une œuvre de la jeunesse de Firdousi; et la versification porte quelques traces de manque d'experience, telles que l'emploi fréquent de l'*élif* final ajouté à cause de la rime ou du mètre. Cet expédient est reçu dans la poésie persane; mais Firdousi n'en fait nulle part autant d'usage qu'au commencement de l'histoire de Bijen et de Menijeh."[2]

[1] p. 256, *seq.*

[2] P. Vol. iii., Préface.

The point as to the terminal alif perhaps may be exemplified sufficiently for the English reader by the following stanza:—

"Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
And merrily hent the stile-a:
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a."[1]

As in the English so in the Persian an "a" is added arbitrarily to help out the metre, but the analogy is not exact.

In addition to Mohl's reasons given above we may adduce the bold Zoroastrian allusions—the outcome perhaps of a youthful enthusiasm.[2] The loss of Bízhan too is regarded as the first serious trouble of the Gúdarzian family,[3] though it would not be prudent to lay much stress upon that in the absence of other indications.

§ 1. In Mohl's opinion the friend referred to both here and in the Prelude to the Sháhnáma (§ 10) was Muhammad Lashkarí.[4] Firdausí, however, has left the sex indeterminate.

Hárút was an angel who, with his mate Márút, was suspended by the feet in a well at Babylon for practising magic arts.

§ 2. Such an appeal would be characteristic of the Armenians (Irmánians) who, broken by adversity, ceased long ago to be a self-reliant people.

§§ 10 and 23. For the dív Akwán see Part IV.

§ 12. According to Zoroastrian belief divine beings, men, the lower animals, plants, waters, sun and moon, &c., all had their immortal principle, known as their fravashí. These fravashís were worshipped especially at the beginning of the Zoroastrian year, and the month Farwardín obtained its name from the practice. At this season the spirits of deceased ancestors were supposed to revisit the houses of their descendants, and such fravashís, like the manes of the Romans, were objects of peculiar veneration.

§ 17. The divine beings whose blessings are invoked by Rustam on Kai Khusrau are members of a class formerly known as Yazatas (gods) and now as Izads. Some of them, among other functions, presided over the Zoroastrian Calendar, and gave their names to the days of the month and to the months of the year.[5] They may be regarded as celestial satraps among whom the divine qualities and the good creation of Urmuzd have been parcelled out. Bahman presides over Good Thought, Ardí-bihisht over Perfect Rectitude, Shahrír over Perfect Rule,

[1] *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 3.
[2] See pp. 317, 327.
[3] *Id.* pp. 320, 323, 330.
[4] P. Vol. iii., Préface.
[5] See Vol. i. p. 88.

Sapandármad over Bountiful Devotion, Murdád over Immortality, and Khurdád over Health. The above are all Ameshapentas.[1] Bahrám presides over Victory, Tír over Mercury, Dai over Business, Ázar over Fire, Ábán over Waters, while Farwardín represents the Fravashís.[2]

§ 1

The Prelude

The night was like jet dipped in pitch, there lent V. 1063
No planet lustre to the firmament,
The moon, appearing in her new array
In readiness to take her throneward way,
Much brightness lost by sojourning below;
Her waist was shrunk, her heart was full of woe,
Her crown was well-nigh lapis-lazuli:
Through rust and dust she journeyed through the sky.
Night's retinue had spread out everywhere
A carpet black as raven's plumes, the air
Was like rust-eaten steel; thou wouldst have cried:—
"Its face is smirched with pitch!" On every side,
Like some black serpent with its jaws stretched wide,
Was very Áhriman, each sigh of whom
Was like a negro making charcoal fume.
The garden and the stream's lip seemed to be
Like billows surging on a pitchy sea
O'er which the circling heaven paused wonderingly.
The sun had lost its power; thou wouldst have said:—
"Earth sleepeth with a pitch-like robe o'erspread."
The world's heart trembled at itself; no sounds
Were heard but watchmen ringing on their rounds;
The birds refrained from song, the beasts were still,
The world's lips closed alike for good or ill,
And height and depth were lost. Amid the woes V. 1064
Of that long vigil strait at heart I rose.
I had one in the house, a loving wight,

[1] See p. 271. [2] See above.

To whom I called and bade to bring a light.
Descending to the garden presently
My darling Idol came and said to me:—
"What need for light? Will sleep not visit thee?"
I said: "Mine Idol! I am not at one
With slumber. Bring a candle like the sun,
Set it in front of me, then spread the board,
Take up the harp, and let the wine be poured."
My darling Idol fetched me lamps a-shine,
Fetched quinces, oranges, pomegranates, wine,
And one bright goblet fit for king of kings,
Then plied at whiles the wine, at whiles the strings.
"Hárút performed enchantment," thou hadst said,
My heart grew victor over drearihead,
And it seemed day with me in dark night's stead.
Hear what my loving comrade said to me
What time the goblet had joined company.
Thus said to me that sun-faced Moon of mine:—
"May heaven have joyance of that life of thine.
Quaff thou thy wine while from this volume's store
I will read out to thee a tale of yore.
Or ever part thereof shall reach thine ear
Thou wilt admire the process of the Sphere.
The theme is love, spell, war, and stratagem,
All worthy that a sage should list to them."
"O Moon-face!" said I to that Cypress-stem,
"Recite, recite," who answered: "That will I,
And thou shalt weave it into poetry."
I said: "Begin, my fair-faced Moon! to read,
And make me love thee more. I may be freed
From my distemperature, and sleep betide
V. 1065 In musings, darling mate! by thee supplied.
Then will I turn the story, every whit,
To verse exactly as thou tellest it,
And, telling, offer praise to God above,
O my discreet companion and my love!"

That darling Idol read the tale to me
Out of the book of ancient legendry,
So now give ear the while that I rehearse,
And exercise thy judgment on my verse.

§ 2

How the Irmánians appealed to Khusrau

When Kai Khusrau went forth to take revenge,
And sought to change the order of the world,
The throne and state departed from Túrán,
But his throne topped the sun because he leagued
Heaven and Írán together, and lavished love
Upon the noble race, the age renewed
Its youth and bathed his face in loyalty;
And though the prudent maketh not his couch
A torrent-bed though dry, yet for a while
The more part of the world acknowledged him
That sought to be avenged for Siyáwush.
One day he sat carousing in his joy,
And drinking to the warriors of the host.
His throne was ornate with brocade, a crown
Of gems was on his head, and in his hand
A jewelled cup of wine. Thus, all enraptured,
He listened to the harp. The nobles present
Were Faríburz the son of Kai Káús,
And Gustaham, Gúdarz son of Kishwád, V. 1066
Gurgín son of Mílád, Farhád, and Gív,
Shápúr the brave, Tús, shatterer of hosts—
Head of the scions of Naudar—Kharrád,
And bold Bízhan. These loyal paladins
Had royal wine in hand. Inside the goblets
The wine was like carnelian of Yaman,
And in the midst were handfuls of dog-roses.
Before Khusrau stood slaves with fairy-faces,

Whose musk-black ringlets fell on skins of jasmine.
The banquet-hall was decked, and in the presence
Girt for attendance stood the chamberlain.
Approaching him discreetly from the curtain
An usher said: "Irmánians wait without—
Chiefs of the march between this and Túrán:
They fain would have an audience of the Sháh,
For they have travelled far to seek redress."
The prudent chamberlain approached the throne,
Announced his tidings, sought the royal pleasure,
And introduced the envoys in due form.
They came before the presence of the Sháh
With tears and cries for aid; their arms were folded,
Their faces swept the ground; as they drew nigh
They said: "O Sháh triumphant! live for ever,
For thou art worthy of unending life.
We come for succour from a distant land,
Khán-i-Irmán, between this and Túrán,
And bring this message: 'Ever live, O Sháh!
In every clime the succourer from the evil,
O'er all seven climes the king, and in each state
The help against the bad. Túrán and we
Confine, which is a source of bale to us,
While toward Írán there was a forest-tract—
Our present cause of trouble. What a wealth
V. 1067 Of cultivated lands was ours therein,
And fruit trees, our chief means of sustenance!
Now do us right, O monarch of Írán!
Because wild boars in numbers numberless,
With tusks like elephants', and big as hills,
Have seized on all those woods and meads, and put
The country of Irmán in consternation.
What mighty ruin have they brought on us
Both in our cattle and our growing crops!
The boars delight in rending with their tusks
The cultivated trees whereof we speak.

Hard stones will not withstand such tusks, and fortune
May be hath utterly abandoned us!"
Now when the Sháh had heard the suppliants' words
He was much grieved and, pitying them, addressed
The exalted warriors: "Who among my chiefs
And mighty men is eager for renown?
Let such depart to yon boar-wasted forest,
And, all intent on fame and combating,
Behead them with his sword. I will not grudge him
My gems and other treasures."
At his bidding
The treasurer laid upon the daïs a salver
Of gold whereon they showered mingled gems;
They brought ten steeds, whose brand-mark was "Káús,"
With golden bridles, trapped them with brocade
Of Rúm, and called the nobles from the throng.
"O men of name and worship!" said earth's king,
"What man will make my toil his own and then
My treasure his?"
None answered him a word
Except the son of Gív of glorious race—
Bízhan—who stood forth midst the warriors,
And called God's blessing down upon the Sháh:—
"Ne'er may thy palace see another master, V. 1068
And be thy bidding done throughout the world.
I will adventure on this enterprise
At thy command: I only live for thee."
Gív, who was standing by, marked with displeasure
His son's words, called down blessings on the Sháh.
Then took Bízhan to task: "What boyishness
Is this, and this conceit of thine own might?
A youth may have both wit and native worth,
But he must train to win accomplishment;
He must exhaust all kinds of good and ill,
Must taste of every salt and bitter. Go not

By paths that thou hast never trodden or brag
Before the Sháh so recklessly."
Bízhan,
Shrewd, though impulsive, and of sleepless fortune,
Replied in anger: "My victorious sire!
Impute not weakness to me in thy thoughts,
But bear with what I tell thee: I am young
In enterprise but I am old in counsel,
And I, Bízhan, who am the son of Gív,
The army-shatterer, will behead the boars."
The Sháh rejoiced thereat, invoked God's blessing,
Bade him depart, and said: "Thou man of worship!
Thou art a buckler ever 'gainst all ill.
The lord that hath such lieges as thou art
Would be a fool to fear a foe."
He then
Said to Gurgín son of Mílád: "Bízhan
Is ignorant of the road toward Irmán,
So bear him company with mule and steed
To show the way and be his help in need."

§ 3

How Bízhan went to fight the wild Boars

Bízhan made ready for his setting forth,
Girt him, and set a casque upon his head.
V. 1069 He took with him Gurgín son of Mílád
To help in battle and in time of need,
And left the court with cheetahs and with hawks
To hunt withal upon his longsome journey.
Like foaming lion he fared and took the heads
From onager and antelope; the plain
Was thick with wild sheep torn; their hearts and breasts
Felt the warm impress of the cheetah's claws.

His lasso ringed the necks of onagers,
He seemed like Tahmúras who bound the Dív,
While overhead the pheasants clutched by falcons
Dyed jasmine-leaves with blood. Thus sped the twain,
And thought the road a garden, till they reached
The forest that had caused the Sháh's concern.
Now when Bízhan cast eyes thereon the blood
Boiled in him with excitement, while the boars
Roamed freely, knowing not: "Bízhan hath mounted."
On drawing near the forest to attack
He spake thus to Gurgín son of Mílád:—
"Go thou inside or stand aside, and when
I go to shoot the boars seek yonder pool.
Then, when a tumult riseth from the wood, V. 1070
Take up thy mace, be ware, and with one blow
Behead each boar escaping."
But Gurgín,
The warrior, answered: "Such was not the compact
With our young Sháh. Thou hadst the jewels, silver,
And gold, and didst adventure for this field:
Ask but mine aidance then to show the way."
Bízhan heard with amaze, his outlook darkened,
But lion-like he went inside the forest,
Undaunted strung his bow, roared mightily
As 'twere a cloud in spring, and brought the leaves
Down like a shower of rain, then sword in hand
Like some mad elephant he chased the boars
While they rushed at him, tusking up the earth.
Then came one boar, a very Áhriman,
Whose tushes cut through trees like files through stone,
And rent his hauberk while the reek of fight
Rose o'er the mead. Bízhan's sword smote the boar
And clave its elephantine form. The beasts
So fierce before grew fox-like; all were stained
With blood from sword-cuts; they had had enough

Of combating. Bízhan cut off their heads,
And tied them to his charger's saddle-straps,
That he might lay the tusks before the Sháh;
And furthermore, in order to display
His courage to the Íránian chiefs, he flung
Some headless trunks, like mountains, on a wain,
And buffalos were wearied with the strain.

§ 4

How Gurgín beguiled Bízhan

V. 1071 Malevolent Gurgín, the insensate one,
Apart drew near the forest sullenly,
And all the wood gloomed in his eyes albeit
He praised Bízhan and made a show of joy.
That matter grieved his heart, he feared disgrace,
And Áhriman seduced him. He was fain
To do Bízhan a mischief; 'twas his wish,
And so ordained. He thought not of the Maker,
But he that diggeth pitfalls in the way
Hath reason to walk warily himself.
Gurgín for his own profit and renown
Spread out his nets upon the young man's path,
And said: "O paladin, thou Heart of combat,
And Soul of wisdom! many an enterprise
Like this thou wilt achieve through thy high fortune
And God's support. Now I must tell thee somewhat,
For I have been here often in past time
With Rustam and with Gív and Gustaham,
With Gazhdaham and Tús son of Naudar.
How many a feat of prowess done by us
Hath heaven witnessed on this spacious plain—
V. 1072 Feats that have raised our reputations high,
And rendered us the dearer to Khusrau!
There is a pleasure-ground not far away,

And only two days' journey from Túrán,
Where thou wilt see a plain all red and yellow—
One to rejoice a hero's heart, all woods
And pleasances and rivulets, a spot
Fit for a paladin, with painted silk
For soil, and airs musk-laden: thou wouldst say:—
'Perchance it is rose-water in the streams.'
The jasmine-branches bend beneath their burden;
The roses, which the pheasants love to haunt,
Are there the idols, and their worshippers
The bulbuls singing in the cypress-boughs.
Now from this present for a little while
Yon river's marge will be like Paradise,
And on the plain and uplands thou wilt see
In merry parties fay-faced damsels sitting.
Manízha, daughter of Afrásiyáb,
Will make that garden radiant as the sun,
And with a hundred handmaids—perfect pictures,
All daughters of the Turkmans, modest maids,
As tall as cypress-trees, with musky hair,
And cheeks like roses, dreamy eyes, and wine
That savoureth rose-water on their lips—
Will set up her pavilion on yon meadows.
Thou wilt behold the plain bedecked throughout
With riches like an idol-house in Chín.
Now if we go toward that pleasure-ground,
And hurry o'er the journey in one day,
We may bear off some of those fay-faced damsels,
And win the approbation of Khusrau."

In this wise spake Gurgín. Bízhan was young,
And all the paladin was stirred in him.
He was a youth and followed youthful fashion,
Some whiles pursuing fame and some whiles passion.

§ 5

How Bízhan went to see Manízha, Daughter of Afrásiyáb

They set off on the tedious journey, one
Led by desire, the other by revenge.
Bízhan, the refuge of the host, alighted
Between two forests after one day's march.
He and Gurgín enjoyed two days with hawk
And cheetah in those meadows of Irmán.
On hearing that that marriageable maid
Had come, and decked the whole waste like the eye
Of chanticleer, Gurgín informed Bízhan,
And told him of the minstrelsy and feasting,
Whereat "Now will I," thus Bízhan responded,
"Go forward and examine from a distance
The scene and manner of the Turkmans' revels;
Then with my polished spear-head lifted skyward
Will I turn rein. We shall advise the better,
As feeling more assured, when we have seen."
He bade the treasurer: "Bring the crown that used,
Worn by my sire, to light the banquet-hall,
Because our way is banquet-ward. Bring likewise
The earrings and the torque that Kai Khusrau
Bestowed on me, and Gív's bejewelled armlet."
He donned a glittering tunic made in Rúm,
And stuck an eagle's feather in his crown.
They put the saddle on his steed Shabrang
While he bade bring the girdle and the signet
That marked the paladin, and having mounted
Went to the spot in haste.
He reached the forest,
His heart preoccupied with its desires,
He drew anigh that Fair's pavilion,
Desire contending in his heart the while,
And went beneath a lofty cypress-tree

For shelter from the sun. The plain, with all
Its sounds of harp and song gave, thou hadst said,
His soul a welcome. When the fair one saw
The visage of the chieftain from her tent—
The cheeks as 'twere Canopus of Yaman,
Or jasmine blossoming mid violets—
While on his head he wore the crown that marked
A chief of paladins, and all his breast
Blazed with brocade of Rúm, the maiden yearned
For love of him, who came in quest of love,
And sent her nurse as envoy, saying thus:—
"Go 'neath the boughs of yonder lofty cypress,
And find out who he is—yon moonlike one.
Can it be Siyáwush returned to life,
Or else a fairy? Question him and say:—
'How hast thou come and who hath brought thee hither?
Art thou of fairy-birth or Siyáwush
That thou dost fill our hearts with love for thee,
For thou hast lit a raging fire of love,
Unless the Resurrection be upon us,
Because for years have I been holding revel
Upon these meads each spring, and we have seen
None in this pleasance: but I now see thee,
O noble Cypress! and it is enough.'
Say to him: 'Whether thou art man or fairy
Come to our festival. I have not looked
On aught resembling thee, O moon-faced one! V. 1075
Inform us of thy name and whence thou comest.'"
The nurse, when she had come and done obeisance,
Gave him Manízha's message, and his cheeks
Bloomed like the rose. He saw his wish achieved,
And answered thus: "I am not Siyáwush,
Or fairy-born, sweet-spoken messenger!
But from Írán—the country of the free.
Bízhan am I, the son of Gív, and came

All keenly thence to battle with wild boars.
I took their heads and threw them by the way
To bear their tushes to the Sháh; but hearing
About this pleasance did not hurry back
To Gív, son of Gúdarz, if so good fortune
Might show me though but in a dream the face
Of her—the daughter of Afrásiyáb;
And now I see that all the plain is decked
With treasures like an idol-house in Chín.
If thou wilt show me kindness I will give thee
A crown of gold with earrings and a girdle,
And thou shalt lead me to yon lady fair,
And bring her heart to love me."
She returned,
And bore the secret to Manízha's ear:—
"His countenance and mien are such and such,
In such and such wise hath the Maker made him.
Manízha sent an answer back forthwith:—
"What seemed a fancy is within thy grasp,
V. 1076 For now come to me with thy noble gait,
And shed a light on this dark soul of mine.
Mine eyes will brighten at the sight of thee,
Vale, plain, and tents will turn to rosaries."
With neither heart nor ear for aught beside
Her words he followed and she acted guide.[1]

How Bízhan went to the Tent of Manízha

No room was left for further parleying.
Forth from beneath the shadow of the cypress
Bízhan proceeded hastily afoot
Toward Manízha's tent and entered it,

[1] "La réponse de Menijeh fit du cœur et de l'oreille de Bijen un palais" (Mohl).

In favour like a stately cypress-tree,
Girt with a golden girdle round his loins.
Manízha came and clasped him to her breast,
Unloosed the royal girdle from his waist,
Asked of his journey, equipage, and business,
And said: "Who came with thee to fight the boars?
Why trouble with a mace, O comely one,
Who hast a shape like this, such mien and bearing?"
They bathed his feet in musk and pure rose-water,
Then hasted to set meat, they spread the board
With various viands in profuse abundance,
And held high revelry with wine and harp,
Excluding every stranger from the tent.
The handmaids standing in attendance there
Played on the lyre and lute. The ground resembled
The colours of a peacock with brocade
All dappled with dínárs like leopards' backs,
While all the tent-enclosure was adorned
With musk and jewels, ambergris and gold.
Old wine in crystal cups gave to Bízhan
New strength, but, when three days and nights had passed
In pleasure, sleep and drink prevailed at last.

§ 7

How Manízha carried off Bízhan to her Palace

Manízha, when her time for going home V. 1077
Arrived, still longed to gaze upon Bízhan,
And, since his face was gloomy, called her handmaids,
And bade them mingle with a grateful draught
A drug that maketh senseless. This they gave him,
And he, bemused already, swallowed it;
His head sank down and he was lost to sense.
She made a litter to transport the sleeper,

A couch for him on one side, on the other
An easy seat for her. She sprinkled camphor
Upon his couch, and with rose-water drenched
The sandal-wood.
On coming near the city
She veiled the sleeper in a woman's wrapper,
And, entering the palace privily
By night, preserved her secret. She prepared
A chamber and, impatient for Bízhan
To wake, poured in his ear a rousing potion
To bring his senses back. He woke and found
That jasmine-bosomed beauty in his arms,
His head and hers both resting on a pillow,
And in the palace of Afrásiyáb!
Distracted with himself he turned for refuge
To God from Áhriman and thus exclaimed:—
"As for myself there will be no escaping,
O God Almighty! hence. But oh! that Thou
Wouldst execute my vengeance on Gurgín,
And hear the pains and malisons that I
Invoke on him! He led me into this,
Reciting over me a thousand spells."
Manízha said to him: "Be of good cheer,
And treat all save the present as mere wind.
V. 1078 Adventures of all kinds occur to men,
And feast and fight by turn."
They banqueted;
Before them was the gibbet or espousal:
They called the rose-cheeked damsels from their bowers,
And decked them in brocade of Chín; forthwith
These girls with fairy faces took the harp,
And fleeted day and night in merriment.
Anon the chamberlain got wind thereof,
And, since one acting on an idle rumour
Will shake the fruit down from the tree of bale,
He took upon him to investigate,

Inquiring who the man was, from what country,
And what he sought in coming to Túrán,
So learned the truth and, fearing for his life,
Went, as the only way to save himself,
Before Afrásiyáb and said to him:—
"Thy daughter hath a lover from Írán!"
The monarch called on God, and thou hadst said:—
"He trembled like the willow in a blast."
Then from the lashes of his eyes he wiped
The tears of blood and raged, and spake this saw:—
"One with a daughter in his house to guard
May have a crown indeed but is ill-starred."
He was confounded at Manízha's deed,
Called to him princely Kurákhán and said:—
"Advise me in the matter of this wanton."
Then Kurákhán: "Examine with more care:
"If so it be there is no more to say,
But hearing is not seeing."
Instantly
The monarch looked at Garsíwaz and said:—
"What we have borne and still bear from Írán!
And why doth fortune link in one ill chain V. 1079
Íránian troubles and an evil child?
Go take with thee some prudent cavaliers,
Keep watch upon the palace—roof and gates—
Look well, and any man whom thou shalt see
Therein secure with bonds and drag to me."

§ 8

How Garsíwaz brought Bízhan before Afrásiyáb

As Garsíwaz approached the gate the sound
Of feast and revelry was heard within,
The music of the rebeck and the harp
Rose from the palace of Afrásiyáb.

The cavaliers seized on the roof and gates,
And occupied the outlets everywhere.
When Garsíwaz found that the palace-portal
Was fastened, and heard revels going on,
He broke down all obstructions, rushed within,
And sought the chamber where the stranger was.
Now when he reached the door and saw Bízhan
His blood boiled up with rage, for in that chamber
There were three hundred handmaids busied all
With harp and wine and singing, and among them,
With red wine at his lips and making merry,
Bízhan! Then Garsíwaz cried out in anguish:—
"O reckless and abandoned profligate!
Now art thou in the savage Lion's clutch.
How wilt thou 'scape with life?"
Bízhan writhed, thinking:—
"How can I fight unarmed, without Shabrang,
Or aught to ride? Luck, sure, hath gone to-day!
Where now is Gív son of Gúdarz, that I
Must throw away my life? I see no helper,
But God."
He always carried in his boot
V. 1080 A blue-steel dagger; this he drew and holding
The door exclaimed: "Bízhan am I and sprung
From that high chief of paladins and nobles,
Kishwád. None e'er shall break my skin unless
His body is aweary of its head,
And though 'twere Doomsday none should see my back."
He cried to Garsíwaz: "Ill fortune thus
Hath dealt with me. Thou knowest my forefathers,
My monarch, and my rank among the chiefs;
If ye will fight I am prepared to bathe
My hands in blood in battle, and behead
Full many a Turkman chief; if thou wilt bear me
Before the king I will explain. Do thou

Ask him to spare my life, and make all end
In happiness."
Then Garsíwaz, perceiving
The resolution, the dexterity,
And readiness to fight shown by Bízhan,
Confirmed a covenant with him by oaths,
And courteously advised him, thus obtaining
The dagger from him by that covenant,
And making him a prisoner by smooth words;
Then bound him cheetah-like from head to foot.
With fortune gone will prowess aught avail?
Thus is it with yon hump-backed sky above,
Thou'lt feel its harshness when it looketh love.
They carried him with sallow cheeks and eyes
Fulfilled with tears before Afrásiyáb.
The hero, when he came with pinioned arms
And bare of head before the sovereign,
Did reverence and said: "Vouchsafe, O king!
To seek the truth. I came not to this court V. 1081
By any wish of mine; none is to blame.
I left Irán to fight against wild boars,
And chanced on this Túránian festival.
I sent my kindred and my retinue
To seek a falcon that had gone astray,
And went to sleep beneath a cypress-tree,
So that its shade might shield me from the sun.
A fairy came. She spread her wings and took me,
Still sleeping, in her arms. She left my charger,
And bore me where the escort of thy daughter
With troops of cavaliers and many litters
Passed by upon the plain. Then there appeared
Hemmed in by horse a Turkman parasol,
And brand-new litter canopied with silk;
Within a lovely Idol slept; her crown
Was lying on her pillow. Suddenly
The fairy called on Áhriman, and, rushing

Like wind among the horsemen, set me down
Inside the litter, and recited charms
Above the charmer there, that I might sleep
Until I reached the palace of the king;
So I was not to blame, nor hath Manízha
Been smirched by what hath passed. Assuredly
That fay had marred my fortune by her spells."
Afrásiyáb replied: "Thine evil day
Hath come apace. Departing from Írán
Thou soughtest fight and fame with mace and lasso;
Now with hands bound thou tellest women's dreams;
Like one bemused, and triest lies upon me
To save thy life."
V. 1082 Bízhan replied: "O king!
Hear what I say to thee and be advised.
Boars with their tusks and lions with their claws
Are alway fit for fighting; so are heroes
That have their scimitars and bows and arrows;
But how when one is naked with bound hands,
The other in a panoply of steel?
How can a lion pounce without sharp claws
However fierce? If now the king would see
My prowess shown to all, let him provide
A horse and massive mace for me, and make
Choice of a thousand chieftains from the Turkmans;
Then hold me not a man if I leave one
Alive of all the thousand on the field."
The king regarded him with angry looks
At this, then turned to Garsíwaz, and said:—
"Dost thou not see that this fell Áhriman
Is meditating further ills for me,
And not contented with the evil done
Would fight as well? Take him bound hand and foot,
Just as he is, and rid the world of him.
Command to set a gibbet in the road
Before the gate, there hang the wretch alive,

And never speak of him to me again,
So that no native of Írán may dare
Henceforth to cast an eye upon Túrán."
They dragged him, stricken to the heart with anguish,
His eyes a-stream, forth from Afrásiyáb,
And, when Bízhan the wretched reached the door,
His feet stuck in the mire made by his tears.
He said: "If God Almighty hath decreed
That I must die in miserable plight
I do not fear the dying or the gibbet;
My smart is for the warriors of Írán,
And royal fathers' blame when I am dead. V. 1083
Alas! mine adversaries will exult,
Their lust will all be satisfied upon me.
Alas! the king of kings! the looks of Gív!
Alas! thus to be parted from the brave!
Go, breezes! to the country of Írán,
And bear my message to the well-loved Sháh.
Tell him: 'Bízhan is in an evil case:
His body is beneath the Lion's claws.'
Say from me to Gúdarz son of Kishwád:—
'My glory hath departed through Gurgín:
He cast me into evil so that now
I see not any one to succour me.'
And to Gurgín: 'What greeting shall I have
From thee, false warrior! beyond the grave?'"

§ 9

How Pírán begged Bízhan's Life from Afrásiyáb

Howbeit God had mercy on his youth,
And foiled the king's intent, for as they dug
A hole wherein to plant the gallows-tree,
Pírán, for so it chanced, was seen approaching.
Now when he reached the place and saw the road

All occupied by Turkmans under arms,
And that a lofty gibbet had been reared,
Wherefrom a twisted lasso dangled down,
He asked the people: "Wherefore is this gibbet?
Who hath incurred the anger of the king?"
Then Garsíwaz made answer: "For Bízhan
The Íránian, the monarch's enemy."
Pírán urged on his charger and, when near
Bízhan, beheld him stricken to the heart
And naked, with his two hands bound behind him
Firm as a rock, his mouth parched, his cheeks wan.
Pírán inquired of him: "How camest thou hither?
Thou camest from Irán no doubt for blood."
Bízhan related all that he had suffered
From his false friend. Pírán had pity on him,
And weeping bade them leave Bízhan awhile
V. 1084 Unhung; he said: "Detain him here that I
May have an audience with the sovereign,
And show him what will be the happiest course."
He galloped palace-ward, approached the king
In humble attitude with folded arms,
And walking quickly to the throne called down
With fervour blessings on Afrásiyáb.
When, like an honest guide and minister,
He stood before the throne, the king knew well
That he was standing there to ask a boon,
And smiling said to him: "What wouldst thou?
Speak.
None is more honoured with me than thyself.
If thy petition is for gold or jewels,
For realm or army, I will not withhold
My treasures. Why hast thou bestowed these pains!"
Pírán, the loyal, heard and kissed the ground,
Leaped up and said: "Sit on the throne for ever,
And may good fortune haunt no other place.
The monarchs of the earth proclaim thy praises,

The bright sun blesseth thee. Through thy good fortune
I need not horses, followers, or power.
I ask not for myself, none of thy subjects
Hath need to ask; my fortune is thy rule,
My stay thy glorious chiefs. Concerned am I
Lest any suffer through my reticence,
And my good name be lost. Have I not often V. 1085
Advised the king erewhile? But since my words
Availed not I have held my peace of late.
'Slay not the son of Kai Káús,' I said,
'"Twill make thee enemies of Tús and Rustam,
And Siyáwush who is of Kaian race
Hath girt his loins to serve thee loyally;
Peace will be broken and the Íránians
Will trample on us with their elephants.'
Yet didst thou out of simple wantonness
Slay Siyáwush, and mingle bane with sweets.
It may be that thou hast forgotten Gív,
And Rustam the brave chief of paladins.
Hast thou not seen what ills the Íránians
Have wrought upon the country of Túrán
By trampling with their beasts the greater part,
And turning fortune's stream to bitterness?
As yet Zál's sword-point is not worn away
Inside its sheath, for Rustam scattereth heads
Therewith, and spurteth blood upon the sun.
Wilt thou seek war in peace, and wantonly
Sniff at the bloom of bane? If thou shalt shed
Bízhan's blood in this matter from Túrán
There will go up a dust-cloud of revenge.
Thou art a wise king; we are only lieges;
Ope thy heart's eye, consider how the Sháh
Requited thee for former injuries.
In sooth thou art provoking fresh demands,
And bringing into fruit the tree of bale.

We cannot bear, O mighty sovereign,
And master of the world! another war.
V. 1086 Thou knowest Gív, none better! and brave Rustam,
That savage Crocodile, and him who will
Come forth to fight us for his grandson's sake,
Gúdarz, son of Kishwád, whose hand is steel!"
As he threw water on the raging fire
Afrásiyáb replied: "Dost thou not know
What he hath done, and brought disgrace upon us
Both here and in Írán? Dost thou not see
How mine abandoned daughter hath heaped shame
Upon my hoary head, and made the names
Of all my women-folk the common talk?
For this disgrace all lands and mine own troops
Will ever make my court their laughing-stock;
If he shall live all men will wag their tongues
At me, I shall be wretched and despised,
And ever from mine eyes shed tears of gall."
Pírán did reverence ofttimes and replied:—
"O monarch of good fortune and just speech!
'Tis as the king hath said. His only object
Is his good name. But let my lord consider
The prudent counsel that I offer him.
Let us confine Bízhan with heavy chains,
Such that he would prefer death on the gibbet;
'Twill be a warning to the Íránians,
Who will not strive to injure us hereafter,
For no one readeth on the muster-roll
The names of captives in thy prison-house."
The monarch acted as Pírán advised,
Perceiving that his heart and tongue agreed.
Good ministers with their good counsellings
Illume the Grace divine and throne of kings.

§ 10

How Afrásiyáb put Bízhan in Ward

Afrásiyáb commanded Garsíwaz:—
"Prepare a gloomy pit and weighty bonds,
Secure with chains Bízhan's hands to a yoke
Bridge-like, as Rúmans do, from head to foot
Chain him and make all sure with heavy rivets; V. 1087
Then throw him in the pit head first—no more
Of sun and moon for him! Take elephants,
And fetch the boulder of the dív Akwán,
Which God raised from the ocean-depth and cast
Upon a wood in Chín. Thus will I be
Avenged upon Bízhan. Convey this stone,
Which covereth the dungeon of Arzhang,
Upon high-crested elephants, and cover
Bízhan's, then leave him to go mad with anguish.
Take horsemen, sack the palace of that wanton—
Manízha, who hath shamed her quality—
Deprive her of her fortune, crown, and state,
And say to her: 'Thou wretched and accursed,
Who art unworthy of the throne and crown!
Thou hast abased my head among the kings,
And cast my diadem upon the dust.'
Then drag her naked to the pit and say:—
'Behold him whom thou sawest on the throne
Here in this pit! Thou art his Spring, console him,
And wait upon him in his gloomy cell.'"
So Garsíwaz departed from the presence.
They carried out the monarch's evil purpose;
They haled the son of Gív back from the gallows,
And bore him to the pit's mouth in his bonds,
There fettered him from head to foot in iron,
His waist with Rúman chains, his hands with gyves,
While smiths with steel and hammers made secure

The massive rivetings, and then they flung him
Head-foremost down the pit and set the stone
Upon it. Garsíwaz thence led his troop
To where the daughter of Afrásiyáb
V. 1088 Dwelt, gave up all her treasury to spoil,
And made a fresh disposal of the wealth.
Manízha was reduced to naked feet,
Bare head, and single wrap. He hustled her
Forth to the pit. Her eyes wept tears of blood;
Her cheeks were like the spring.
"Behold," he said,
"Thy house and home! Henceforth thou art to be
This prisoner's drudge!"
He turned back, and Manízha,
The spouse of woe, roamed wailing o'er the plain.
Now when a day and night had passed she came
With lamentations to the pit, and made
A passage large enough to pass one hand.
Thereafter when the sun rose o'er the hills
She used to gather food at every door
By day-long wanderings and pass it through
The crevice to Bízhan, and weep. Thus she
Lived for a while in abject misery.

§ 11

How Gurgín returned to Írán and lied about Bízhan

When one week passed, and still Bízhan returned not,
Gurgín began to search on every side
In haste and bathed his face in tears of blood.
Repenting of his ill intents he sought
The place wherein Bízhan had gone astray,
V. 1089 Went all about the forest but saw no one,
And heard not e'en a twitter from the birds.
He sought too in the mead, and all at once

Spied in the distance on the river-bank,
With bridle broken and with saddle dragging,
With hanging lip and in an angry mood,
His comrade's steed, and knew: "Bízhan is sped!
He will not live to come back to Írán.
By gibbet or by prison or by bonds
Ill hath befallen him from Afrásiyáb."
Repentant and perplexed he flung his lasso,[1]
And turning led Bízhan's steed from the meadow
Back to his tent where he abode one day,
Then, sleepless and unresting, sought Írán.
The Sháh, on hearing that Gurgín had come
Without Bízhan, would fain have been the first
To question him, so told not Gív, yet Gív
Heard of his brave son's loss, rushed to the street,
Pierced to the heart with anguish and with cheeks
All tears, and cried: "Bízhan returneth not!
I wis not why he stayeth in Irmán."
Then, vengeful as a crocodile at heart,
He gave command to put the poplar saddle
Upon Kishwád's own bay, which he was wont
To hold reserved against the day of need,
And, having mounted, parted like a blast
To meet Gurgín and ask him where Bízhan V. 1090
Was, and about the case. "Good sooth!" he thought,
"Gurgín hath done him mischief secretly.
I will behead Gurgín or see my son."
Gurgín on catching sight of Gív dismounted,
Ran up to him and, wallowing in the dust
With head uncovered and torn cheeks, exclaimed:—
"O thou that art the chosen of the host,
Chief of Írán and captain of the Sháh!
Why hast thou come to meet me on my way?
Why hast thou come thus weeping tears of blood?
I shall not wish to live if aught more wretched

[1] "Il laissa tomber son lacet" (Mohl)

Shall now betide me. All ashamed am I
To look thee in the face; I too am pouring
The hot blood from mine eyes, but be not troubled
About his life. No harm hath come to him
As I will prove to thee."

Gív, when he saw
His son's horse and Gurgín, all dust and dazed
Like one bemused, thus leading it, and when
He heard those words, fell from his steed and swooned.
His head was hidden by the dust. He rent
The raiment that he wore as paladin,
Plucked out his hair, and with a cry of anguish
Poured dust upon his head.

"O Thou," he said,
"Who art the Almighty Master of the sky,
And hast endowed my heart with sense and love!
I hold it good, now that my son is lost,
That thou shouldst snap my cord of life and take
My spirit to the mansions of the blest:
Thou knowest best the anguish of my heart.
I had no son but him to soothe my griefs
Or aid me; now ill hap hath severed us,
And I am left thus in the Dragon's maw!"

He asked Gurgín again: "How went it all?
V. 1091 Hath fate filled up his place or did he will
To quit thy sight? What ill befell him? Speak!
Who flung at him the meshes of the sky?
What dív encountered him upon the mead?
Who murdered him and ruined everything?
How didst thou find this charger riderless?
Where didst thou quit Bízhan?"

Gurgín replied:—

"Compose thyself and listen. In respect
To fighting with the wild boars in the wood,
Know, O thou paladin! and understand,
And be for aye the lustre of the throne,

We went to fight the boars and reached Irmán.
We saw a wood converted to a waste,
With trees cut down and trampled pasturage.
It was a haunt of boars, the people melted
Because of them! We raised our spears in fight,
And made a mighty shouting in the wood;
Wild boars came charging like so many mountains,
Not one by one but everywhere in herds.
We battled like two lions, and day failed
Before our hearts were satiate of strife.
We threw their elephantine carcases
In heaps and prized their teeth out. Thence we set
Our faces toward Irán and merrily
Went after game. An onager was started,
And none will see a goodlier sight. Its coat
Was like Gulgún's, the charger of Gúdarz;
Its face was like Farhád's grey Shabáhang,
With limbs like the Símurgh's, and hoofs like steel.
'Twas like Bízhan's Shabrang in head and ear
And tail, its neck was lion-like, its speed
Like wind. Thou wouldst have said: 'Its sire is Rakhsh.'
Like some tall elephant it charged Bízhan, V. 1092
Who flung his lasso o'er its head. To fling
Was one with to be borne away! Off rushed
The onager! Bízhan sped after it,
And through the beast's pace and the horseman's dust
A reek arose, the earth heaved like the sea,
The lassoer and onager both vanished.
My steed was weary, so I ran o'er hill
And plain, but found no traces of Bízhan,
Except this steed whose saddle dragged behind.
My heart burned at his plight: 'How will he fare
In his contention with the onager?'
I tarried long upon the pasture, searching

On all sides for him, and have come back hopeless,
For that fierce onager was the White Dív!"
Shrewd Gív, on hearing, deemed: "Bízhan is sped!"
He marked Gurgín's confused account, those eyes
That could not look him in the face, those cheeks
Grown wan with terror of the Sháh, that body
A-tremble, and that conscience-stricken heart,
And ascertaining that his son was lost,
And that the whole account was fraudulent,
Was moved by Áhriman to lay Gurgín
Dead on the road in vengeance for Bízhan,
The well-beloved, although disgrace might follow.
Albeit on reflection he perceived
That this would leave the matter dark, and said:—
"What shall I gain by slaying him save pleasing
Malignant Áhriman? How will it aid
Bízhan to slay Gurgín? We must employ
Another means; revenge is no great task;
He is no wall to stop my lance's point;
V. 1093 So let us tarry till his guilt is clear
Before the Sháh."
He cried out at Gurgín:—
"Thou wicked and injurious Áhriman!
Thou hast deprived me of my Sun and Moon—
The choicest of the horsemen and my Sháh—
And set me searching all the world for aid.
Where through thy practice, guile, and lies shall I
Henceforward find contentment, rest, and sleep?
I will not suffer thee to go at large
Until I have an audience with the Sháh;
Then with my poniard will I wreak on thee
Revenge for him who was mine Eye to me."

§ 12

How Gív brought Gurgín before Khusrau

With bloodshot eyes and vengeance in his heart
Gív went before the Sháh, blessed him, and said:—
"For ever fleet the world in joy, O king!
Thou blesséd, well-starred monarch! seest thou not
What hath befallen me? I had one son—
A youth who was my care both night and day.
I wept for fear of danger to him, burned
For fear of losing him; and now, O Sháh!
Gurgín hath come back with an idle tongue,
With guilty soul, and evil news of him—
My stainless and illustrious minister.
Gurgín hath brought a steed in disarray,
But not another token of Bízhan!
If now my lord will carefully consider
My case, and see me righted in the matter,
He will do justice for me on Gurgín—
The man that put this dust upon my head."
The Sháh was troubled at Gív's grief, assumed
The crown in anger, sat upon the throne
With pallid cheeks in sorrow for Bízhan,
And said to Gív: "What is Gurgín's account? V. 1094
Where saith he that he left his upright comrade?"
Gív told the tale about his gallant son
As given by Gurgín. Then said Khusrau:—
"Brood not nor fret; Bízhan is safe; be easy
And hopeful touching that lost son of thine,
For I but now heard from the archimages—
The men of wisdom shrewd of heart and famous—
That I shall lead the Íránian cavaliers
Against Túrán anon to seek revenge
For Siyáwush, and with mine elephants

Destroy that land. Bízhan will take the field
And fight like Áhriman. Depart in peace;
Good sooth, I greatly long for him myself."
So Gív withdrew in tears, pale and distraught.
Gurgín, on coming to the palace-gate,
Found it deserted; all the paladins
Had gone with Gív lamenting for Bízhan.
Gurgín, his wicked soul fulfilled with shame,
Went in to audience. Having reached Khusrau
He kissed the ground and offered reverence,
Then laid the boars' tusks hard as diamonds
Before the throne and did obeisance, saying:—
"May Kai Khusrau be all victorious,
His life like New Year's Day, and may the heads
Of all thy foes be severed by the shears,
E'en as the heads of these wild boars."
The Sháh
Gazed on the tusks and asked: "How went the journey?
Where did Bízhan part company? What evil
Hath Áhriman wrought on him?"
V. 1095 When Khusrau
Spake thus Gurgín stood all confused with tongue
That idly blabbed and guilty soul. His cheeks
Were pale, he shook in terror of the Sháh,
And babbled much and incoherently
Of forest, onager, and pasturage.
Now, when his words accorded not, Khusrau,
Perceiving him malicious and confused,
Was wroth and drave him out, upbraiding him,
And saying: "Hast thou heard not Zál's old saw:—
'To meet the offspring of Gúdarz in strife
Would put a period to a lion's life?'
But for the shame, and that thou wouldest make
An evil ending in the sight of God,
I would bid Áhriman pluck off thy head,

As 'twere a bird's."
Then said he to a smith:—
"Forge heavy shackles with the rivets strong."
He had Gurgín's feet fettered presently,
Because the knave is schooled by bonds, and said
To Gív: "Compose thyself. Do thou be instant
In seeking for him everywhere, and I
Will send out many cavaliers well armed
In all directions to obtain some news
About him, and be prompt and vigilant;
But, if I hear not soon, still keep thy wits
And wait for Farwardín, until the sun—
The object of our worship—groweth bright.
When roses glad the garden, breezes strew
The petals o'er thy head, when earth is donning
Its robe of green, and zephyrs sigh o'er roses,
Then shall my pious prayers rise to Urmuzd—
Prayers that our God commandeth. Then will I
Call for the cup that mirroreth the world,
And stand before God's presence. In that cup
I shall behold the seven climes of earth, V. 1096
Both field and fell and all the provinces,
Will offer reverence to mine ancestors,
My chosen, gracious lords, and thou shalt know
Where thy son is. The cup will show me all."
Gív was rejoiced, ceased from solicitude,
And smiling did obeisance, saying thus:—
"May time and earth ne'er be deprived of thee!
May heaven above attend thy will, and may
No ill befall thee from the evil eye."
When Gív had gone the Sháh sent cavaliers
To search in every quarter for Bízhan;
In all Írán and all Túrán they sought
For traces of him, but discovered naught.

§ 13

How Kai Khusrau saw Bízhan in the Cup that showed the World

When jocund New Year's Day arrived Gív yearned
For consultation with that glorious cup,
And came, bent double on his son's account
But hopeful, to Khusrau who, seeing him
With shrunken cheeks and sorely stricken heart,
Went and arrayed himself in Rúman garb
To seek God's presence. Then before the Maker
He cried and ofttimes blessed the Shining One,[1]
Imploring of the Succourer succour, strength,
And justice on pernicious Áhriman,
V. 1097 And, thence returning to his throne, assumed
The Kaian crown, took up the cup, and gazed.
He saw the seven climes reflected there,
And every act and presage of high heaven,
Their fashion, cast, and scope, made manifest.
From Aries to Pisces he beheld
All mirrored in it—Saturn, Jupiter,
Mars, Leo, Sol and Luna, Mercury,
And Venus. In that cup the wizard-king
Was wont to see futurity. He scanned
The seven climes for traces of Bízhan,
And, when he reached the Kargasárs, beheld him
By God's decree fast fettered in the pit,
And praying in his misery for death,
With one, the daughter of a royal race,
Attending him. The Sháh, with smiles that lighted
The daïs, turned his face to Gív and said:—
"Bízhan is yet alive; be of good cheer;
Thou wilt not mind, I wot, his being chained
And prisoned since his life is whole in him,

[1] "Il invoqua longtemps ses grâces sur *la coupe* brillante" (Mohl).

For he is now a prisoner in Túrán,
Attended by a maid of noble birth.
Yet filled am I with sorrow for his plight,
He hath such travail, hardship, and affliction;
And both of them are weeping like a cloud
When it is springtide, such a life is theirs!
He hath no hope of seeing kith or kin,
But pineth trembling like a willow-bough,
Blood in his eyes and anguish in his heart.
He calleth on his kinsmen and he weepeth
As 'twere a cloud in spring; his life is such
That he desireth death! Who will come forward
To rescue him, who rise with girded loins?
Who is there that will brave the Dragon's breath, V. 1098
Who from this durance liberate Bízhan?
None save deft Rustam—he who from the deep
Will drag the crocodile. Gird up thy girdle,
Haste to Nímrúz, and rest not night or day.
Bear him my letter and breathe naught hereof.
Him will I summon to me, let him know
The case, and soon, O Gív! abate thy woe."

§ 14

How Khusrau wrote a Letter to Rustam

A scribe was called, the Sháh instructed him
To write to Rustam as from lord to liege:—
"O paladin by birth and worshipful,
Exalted o'er the warriors of the world!
Thou dost remind me of thine ancestors,
And art for ever girdled for the fray.
Thou Heart of monarchs and thou Prop of kings,
With loins girt up to succour every one!
Pards yield them to thy manhood, crocodiles
Howl in the deep for fear of thee. Thou cleansedst

The world of the Mázandarán dívs,
And torest off the heads of evil men.
How many a crownéd head hast thou dethroned,
And severed from the daïs! Many a foe
Is dead through thee, and many a land laid waste.
Chief paladin and refuge of the host!
Thine influence is mighty with the Sháhs;
Thou hast o'erthrown all sorcerers with thy mace,
And by thy bearing lit the crown of kings.
As for Afrásiyáb and for the Khán,
Thy name is writ in full upon their signets.
'Twould break the heart of any to undo
Knots tied by thee while thou undoest all,
And art a blessed heaven to the Kaians.
V. 1099 God, who hath given thee elephantine might,
Breast, arm, and hand, and glorious birth, bestowed them
For succouring those that cry, and lifting them
From their dark pit. An instance for thine aid,
And to a worthy kinsman, hath occurred,
Such as no scion of Gúdarz before
Experienced from dív-faced Túránians.
Gúdarz and Gív both place their trust in thee,
Who art a hero now in every land;
Thou know'st what place they have in mine esteem,
Thou know'st their courage, speech, and prudent counsel;
Regard not then this thing as burdensome,
And ask whatever men and means thou wilt,
Because this family ne'er grieved till now:
The world hath heard of few more glorious.
Gív had not any son excepting this,
Who was at once a son and succourer.
Gív's influence with me is very great;
He hath been both my grandsire's friend and mine;
I always find him where I look for him,

And he hath stood by me in weal and woe.
When thou hast read my letter tarry not, V. 1100
But rise and come to me with Gív forthwith,
That we may take advice that shall result
In all points gloriously. I will provide
Men, treasure, and all requisites. I swear
By thine exalted name and glorious footsteps
That thou shalt work thy will upon Túrán.
Take order for the road: Bízhan will be
Delivered haply from captivity."

§ 15

How Gív bore the Letter of Kai Khusrau to Rustam

Gív took the letter when the Sháh had sealed it,
Did reverence and, departing to his house,
Prepared to take his journey to Sístán.
He mounted all the horsemen of his kin,
And, having first commended him to God,
Departed through the desert to the Hírmund,
As one that rideth post, or like the game
That he put up, performing two days' journey
In one. With wounded hearts and eager steps
The party faced the deserts and the heights.

Now when the watchman saw Gív from the look-out
He passed the word on to Zábulistán:—
"A cavalier with mounted troops hath reached
The Hírmund; a standard fluttereth behind him;
A falchion of Kábul is in his hand."

Zál heard the watchman's shout and bade his steed
Be bridled, then pricked forth to meet the comers,
Who haply might prove foes, but when he saw
Gív's withered face he was astound and hasted,
Supposing: "Something hath befallen the Sháh
Since Gív hath been sent hither from Írán!"

When near at hand the paladin and escort
Drew up across the road and greeted Zál,
V. 1101 Who asked about the Íránians and the Sháh,
The chieftains and Túránians. Gív then gave
To Zál the greetings of the great—the Sháh's
And high-born warriors'—and told his anguish
For his lost son: "Thou seest me wan, mine insteps
All dappled leopard-like with tears of blood!"
Then asked where Rustam was, and Zál replied:—
"He will return from hunting onager
At sunset."
"I will go," Gív said, "and see him;
I have a letter for him from Khusrau."
"Go not," Zál answered, "he will come anon,
So till he cometh tarry in the house,
And pass one day with us in happiness."
Reflecting on the case they reached Zál's palace,
And even as Gív entered Rustam came.
Gív went to meet him and, on drawing nigh,
Dismounted from his horse and did obeisance.
His heart was yearning and he wept. When Rustam
Saw Gív heart-stricken and in tears he thought:—
"Írán then and the Sháh—our age's Moon—
Have perished!"
Lighting and embracing Gív
He asked about the wearer of the crown—
Khusrau—about Gúdarz, Tús, Gustaham,
And all the warriors both great and small—
Shápúr, Ruhhám, Bízhan, Farhád, Gurgín,
And every one. At mention of Bízhan
Gív uttered an involuntary cry,
V. 1102 And said to Rustam: "O thou worshipful,
The choicest of the princes of the earth!
Joy hath returned to me at sight of thee,
And through thy kindly greetings and thy words.
All those whom thou hast named are well and send

Thee salutation, peace, and messages,
Except Bízhan, O champion of the mighty!
Who is reported fettered in a dungeon.
Now seest thou not what stroke of evil fortune
Hath fallen full upon my hoary head?
I had but one son in the world, and he
Was both a son and upright minister,
And I have lost him! None e'er saw our race
In such affliction! Ever since have I
Been in the saddle, as thou seest me,
And speeding like the bright sun, night and day,
Just like the mad, to find some trace of him!
The Sháh hath in his world-reflecting cup. . . .
He stood before the Maker, much imploring
And praising on the royal feast—the Urmuzd
Of Farwardín—then left the Fane of Fire,
Went to his throne, girt up his loins, assumed
The crown, and set the shining cup before him.
He searched therein past measure for Bízhan,
And indicated him as in Túrán,
In heavy fetters and disastrous plight,
And, having thus revealed him by the cup,
Sent me to thee in haste. I come in hope,
Although my cheeks are pale and dim mine eyes,
Because I look to thee alone for aid,
Who girdest up thy loins to succour all."
Gív spake, the lashes of his eyes were charged V. 1103
With tears of gall, and from his heart he heaved
A chilling sigh. When he had given the letter
To Rustam he narrated what Gurgín
Had done, then bitterly bewailed Bízhan,
And poured down tears of blood upon his breast;
For he and Rustam had been long akin,
That chieftain's daughter was the wife of Gív,
While Rustam had Gív's sister for his spouse,
And gallant Farámarz by that brave dame.

Bízhan withal, that hero eminent
In every company, had for his mother
The daughter of the elephantine Rustam,
Who said to Gív: "Be not concerned hereat,
Because I will not take from Rakhsh the saddle
Till I have clasped Bízhan's hand in mine own,
And have demolished all his bonds and prison.
By God's strength, since the Sháh requireth it,
Will I release him from that darksome pit."

§ 16

How Rustam made a Feast for Gív

Thence they departed to the hall of Rustam,
Discussing as they went what course to take.
When Rustam had perused the monarch's letter
He was o'erwhelmed at what Khusrau had said,
And all the praises that the worldlord Sháh
Gave to his famous captain of the host.
Then Rustam said to Gív: "I will dispatch,
And ready me to go as he commandeth.
I know how thou hast laboured, thine achievements,
And thy concernment in all enterprise.
How mighty is thine influence with me,
Who hast wooed war on every battlefield,
Alike in the revenge for Siyáwush,
And in the war against Mázandarán!
Thou hast borne travail too in coming hither,
And faring by a route so arduous.
I joy exceedingly to look upon thee
Although I am concerned about Bízhan.
V. 1104 I cannot bear to see thee in such grief,
And fortune-stricken. As the Sháh commandeth
In this his letter I will take the road,
And also out of my concern for thee

Will undertake the matter of Bízhan,
Will do my best and, if All-holy God
Shall leave my body and my soul together,
I will not grudge Bízhan life, troops, and treasure.
I gird me in God's strength and by the fortune
Of our victorious worldlord. I will rescue
Bízhan from bondage and from darksome pit,
And will re-seat him on the famous daïs.
Abide with me three days in joy, quaff wine,
Be free from care, for no division parteth
My house from thine, and thou and I are one
In treasure, soul, and body."
At his words
Gív sprang up, kissed his hands and head and feet,
Applauded him, and said: "O man of name,
Endowed with strength and manhood, worth and fortune!
Mayst thou have ever thus the heart and strength
Of elephants and archimages' prudence.
Thou dost partake all excellence, and so
Hast cleansed my heart from rust."
When Rustam saw
Gív's heart content, and felt himself assured
That all would turn out well, he told his steward:—
"Set out the board and call the chiefs and sages."
Then Farámarz, Zawára, Zál, and Gív
Sat at the banquet of the valiant chief.
Cup-bearers and musicians with their harps V. 1105
Came to the hall of jewelled tracery;
The handles of the goblets blushed with wine,
The harps descanted and the cups went round.
Carousing thus in Rustam's palace Gív
Abode three days and made no haste to leave.

§ 17

How Rustam came to Khusrau

The fourth day they prepared to go, 'twas time;
So Rustam bade to pack the loads and make
All ready for the journey to Írán,
While at his gate his noble horsemen gathered,
Dight for the road. He came forth, mounted Rakhsh,
Girt up his loins, put on a Rúman vest,
And hung his grandsire's mace beside the saddle,
Intent on feats of arms and strategy.
Rakhsh struck the sky above him, but the head
Of crown-bestowing Rustam topped the sun.
They took their loads up, leaving Farámarz
Within Zábul, and Rustam, Gív, and troops—
Picked Zábulís, a hundred thousand strong—
Set forth upon the march toward Írán:
All hurried on with vengeance in their hearts.
When Rustam reached Írán, and when the throne
Of Kai Khusrau was coming into sight,
V. 1106 A sweet breeze wafted to him in its love
And gaiety the welcome of the sky.
Then Gív drew near to Rustam saying thus:—
"'Tis fit that I go first and tell the Sháh
That matchless Rakhsh hath measured all the road."
Said Rustam: "Go rejoicing, say to him:—
'Be quit of thy distress.'"
When Gív approached
The royal presence with much praise and homage
The Sháh demanded: "Where was Rustam left?
How have ye sped?"
Gív answered: "Sháh renowned!
Thy fortune bringeth all things to success.
He disobeyed thee not, I found his heart
Devoted to thee. When I gave thy letter

He pressed it to his face and eyes, and hitched
His reins to mine as should a faithful liege.
I have pushed on that I might tell the Sháh
That matchless Rustam is upon the road."
"But," said Khusrau, "where is that Prop of chiefs,
That Seed of loyalty? We needs must honour
One both so good and faithful."
Gív replied:—
"Two stages back; I came on first to tell thee."
Then Kai Khusrau gave orders to the sages,
The royal princes, and the mighty men,
To go forth with the host to welcome Rustam,
Who came obedient to the Sháh's command.
They told Gúdarz son of Kishwád, Farhád,
And Tús—chief of the offspring of Naudar.
The more part of the warriors and nobles,
Mace-bearers and foe-slayers, then arose
And dight themselves to go and meet the guest, V. 1107
According to the usance of Káús.
The world was azure-dim with horsemen's dust,
The standards fluttered, and the chargers neighed.
When they drew near to Rustam they dismounted
And did obeisance. That chief paladin,
Alighting, greeted all the veterans,
And asked about the Sháh and how things went
Beneath resplendent sun and shining moon;
Then swiftly as the bright Ázargashasp
The warriors and Rustam all remounted.
He came before that Sháh, who loved his lieges,
With measured tread and offered reverence,
For 'twas his duty to revere and love,
Then raised his head, gave praise, and said: "Be thou
Associate with the throne throughout thy years,
Urmuzd himself be present in this court,
Bahman be guardian of thy throne and crown,

May good Ardíbihisht, Bahrám, and Tír
Watch over thee, and may Shahrír endow thee
With triumph, fame, Grace, majesty, and prowess.
Be thine own sentinel Sapandármad,
May wisdom be the life of thy bright soul;
May Dai and Farwardín bless thee, the door
Of ill be barred, and may Ázar make night
As bright as day to thee, thyself rejoice,
Thy crown illume the world, and may Ábán
Make all thine undertakings glorious;
Be turning heaven before thee as a slave,
And may Murdád protect thy flocks and herds
Be ever glad in person and in fortune,
V. 1108 May ancestor and issue smile on thee,
And may Khurdád spread joy o'er field and fell."
When Rustam standing there had offered praise
The king of kings accorded him a seat
Upon the throne, and said: "Thou art well come;
Far be the hand of evil from thy life.
Thou art the paladin of this world's Kaians,
Who readest others but art read of none,
The Kaians' choice, the backbone of the host,
The warden of Írán, the army's refuge.
Thou hast rejoiced me by the sight of thee,
Who art so vigilant and worshipful!
Zawára, Farámarz, and Zál—are they
Hale, happy, and content?"
And Rustam answered,
Descending from the throne and kissing it:—
"O Sháh most honoured and of sleepless fortune!
Thereby all three are well and happy: blest
Indeed is he whom thou rememberest."

§ 18

How Kai Khusrau held Feast with the Paladins

The chamberlain threw wide the garden-gate,
And made all ready for a royal revel.
He gave command to set the golden crown
And throne beneath a bower that scattered roses,
And laid down court-brocade o'er all the pleasance,
Which shone as 'twere a lamp. They had a tree
Set up above the Sháh's throne to enshadow
It and the crown. The stem thereof was silver;
The branches were of gold and jewelry,
The jewels manifold and clustering,
The leaves of emeralds and carnelians,
And fruit hung down, like earrings, from the boughs.
The fruits were golden oranges and quinces
All hollow and all perforate like reeds,
And charged with musk worked up with wine that when
The Sháh set any one upon the throne
The breeze might shower musk on him; such showers
Descended on the Sháh what time he came,
And took his seat upon the throne of gold.
All the cup-bearers wearing coronets V. 1109
Of jewels, gold brocade, and robes of Chín,
With torques and earrings, stood before the throne,
All clad in gold. All hearts were full of mirth.
The wine was in their hands, their cheeks were flushed,
Though no one was bemused, like cercis-bloom,
Or like brocade of Chín. The aloe-wood
Burned and the harps descanted. Then the Sháh
Gave orders to the chamberlain on duty,
And said: "Call Tús, Gúdarz, and all the chiefs."
He ordered Rustam to approach the throne,
And sit with him beneath the tree. He said:—

"Thou happy bond 'twixt fortune and ourselves!
Thou art a shield betwixt Írán and ill
For aye with outstretched wings like the Símurgh,
And oft hast toiled for country and for king.
Thou knowest how the offspring of Gúdarz
In peace and war, in profit and in loss,
Stand in my presence with their loins girt up,
And always are my guides to what is good,
While, more than all, Gív shielded me from harm.
Such grief ne'er came before upon this house
(What greater sorrow than to lose a son?)
And wert thou not to undertake the task
I see none other helper in the world.
Now remedy this matter of Bízhan's,
Who hath been ill-entreated by Túrán,
And take of steeds and armour, men and treasure,
Whate'er is needed. Think it not a toil."
When Rustam heard he kissed the ground, sprang up,
And blessed the Sháh: "O thou fair-famed," he said,
"Who like the sun art potent everywhere!
V. 1110 Be greed and wrath and need afar from thee,
And may thy foe's heart burn and agonize.
Thou art Sháh, lord, and chief above all kings,
And monarchs are the dust upon thy feet.
The throne, the bright sun, and the shining moon
Have never looked on such another Sháh.
Thou hast discerned between the good and bad,
And bound the Dragon with thy charms and chains.
My mother gave me birth to toil for thee;
Thine own part is enjoyment and repose.
I am obedient to the Sháh's commands,
And go where thou shalt bid. By royal Grace,
And by my massive mace, I plucked the heart
Out of the dívs erst in Mázandarán;
E'en so for Gív sake, though the sky should rain
Fire on my head, I will not heed and, though

The spear-points reach the lashes of mine eyes,
I will not turn rein from Khusrau's behest,
But by thy Grace will compass this achievement,
And ask for neither chief nor warriors."
When Rustam had thus said, Gúdarz and Gív
With Faríburz, Farhád, the brave Shápúr,
And other chiefs, invoked on him God's blessing.
They took the cup and, pledging Zál and Rustam,
Became bemused with wine. Thus revelling
The Sháh oped festively the door of spring.

§ 19

How Rustam made Petition for Gurgín to the Sháh

Gurgín heard bruit of Rustam and, aware
That thus a key to loose his grief had come,
Dispatched this message: "Man of fortune, Grace,
And fame, thou Tree of greatness, loyalty,
And treasure, Gate of noble men and Bond
Of bale! if words of mine afflict thee not
I will address thee touching what I did.
Mark the behaviour of this hump-backed sky V. 1111
In quenching wantonly the light within me,
And pointing out to me the path of darkness!
'Twas written thus, and what hath been hath been.
I will lie down in fire before the Sháh
If I may find forgiveness; all is over
With my hoar head if my good name be lost;
So, if thou wilt plead for me, I will go,
Swift as a mountain-sheep, along with thee,
And wallow in the dust before Bízhan
If I may win mine unstained honour back."
When Rustam heard he heaved a deep, cold sigh;
The anguish shown and message sent perturbed him;
He grieved at that request so fondly urged,

And bade the envoy: "Go, return, and say:—
'Insensate wretch! hast heard not what the leopard
Said by the deep stream to the crocodile:—
'"If passion gain the upper hand of wit,
Then nobody will 'scape the clutch of it"?
The sage that quelleth passion hath a record
As of a noble Lion; thine hath been
An ancient fox's, yet thou didst o'erlook
The snare! I should not grant thy frantic wish
That I should bring thy name before Khusrau,
Yet, since I see thee in such straits and all
Confounded, I will ask him to forgive thee,
And lighten thy dark moon. Then, if Bízhan
By God the Ruler of the world's command
Escape, thou wilt be freed and save thy life
From Gív's revenge. Should heaven will otherwise
Deem life and person as unworth thy love.
First will I go forth on my quest and vengeful
In God's strength at the bidding of the Sháh,
V. 1112 But if I fail that man of prowess Gív
Will then take wreak on thee for his brave son.'"
Thus passed a night and day, and Rustam spake
Naught to the Sháh, but when upon the morrow
The sun displayed its crown and took its seat
Upon its silver-sheening ivory throne,
Came Rustam flying unto Kai Khusrau
To ask a boon of that victorious Sháh
While speaking of Gurgín, his fallen fortune,
And wretched plight. The Sháh said: "Chieftain mine!
Thou wouldst then break my bonds and break with me,
Because I swore by throne, crown, Mars, and Venus,
And sun and moon: 'Gurgín shall see but ill
From me unless Bízhan be freed from bondage.'
Excepting this ask of me what thou wilt
Of swords and signet-rings, of thrones and crowns."

He answered: "Virtuous and famous prince!
If he intended harm he suffereth,
And is prepared to offer up his life;
But if the Sháh will not forgive him first
He will be outcast from the Faith and honour.
Whoever turneth from the way of wisdom
Will writhe for his ill-doing at the last.
Vouchsafe to call to mind Gurgín's exploits,
How he hath taken part in every fight,
And been a champion with thine ancestors;
If for my sake the Sháh will pardon him
His fortunes may be somewhat brightened yet."
The Sháh, that Rustam might not plead in vain,
Released Gurgín from gloomy pit and chain.

§ 20

How Rustam equipped his Escort

The Sháh asked Rustam: "When wilt thou depart
For this campaign? Demand whate'er thou wilt—
Troops, treasure, and companions for the journey.
Malevolent Afrásiyáb, I fear me, V. 1113
Will not long spare Bízhan. The king is headstrong,
And the injurious Dív, who taught him magic,
Anon will turn his heart aside and prompt him
To slay our swordsman."
Rustam thus replied:—
"I will achieve this enterprise by stealth,
For only craft will loosen such a coil.
We must not give occasion for alarm,
But set off in the guise of merchantmen,
And tarry for a while within Túrán.
This is a case for drawing in the rein,
And not a time for maces, swords, and spear-points.
I shall require much silver, gold, and gems;

We start in hope but we shall stay in fear.
I shall need garments too and carpetings
For giving presents and as merchandise."
On hearing Rustam's words Khusrau commanded
His treasurer to bring him whatsoever
His minister directed from the hoards
Laid up of yore. The royal treasurer
Undid the purses and bestrewed the throne
With jewels and dínárs. Came matchless Rustam,
Inspected all, and chose whate'er was needed.
He took ten camel-burdens of dínárs,
Five score of other ware; he next commanded
The chamberlain: "Choose out a thousand horse.
Some of the proud and noble lion-men
Must also gird themselves—Gurgín and Zanga,
The son of Sháwarán, next Gustaham,
The Falchion of the brave, and fourth Guráza,
The sentinel of warriors, throne, and crown,
V. 1114 To lead the host, Ruhhám, Farhád, two men
Of valour, and Ashkash that lion-hero.
These seven warriors must make them ready
To overlook the escort and the goods."
These, every one in his allotted part,
Vied in their preparations for the start.

§ 21

How Rustam went to the City of Khutan to Pírán

Then Rustam bade those chieftains, those mace-wielders,
Those dealers out of death, to gird themselves
At dawn what time the officer on duty
Came to the gate. At daybreak, when the cock crew,
They bound the drums upon the elephants,
While Rustam came forth like a lofty cypress,

Mace in his hand and lasso on his saddle.
He left the royal portal with his troops,
And called down blessings on the land. The chiefs
Went first, the soldiers followed, and all took
Their lives in hand, their guides were spears and arrows,
And every hand had been imbrued in blood.
When Rustam reached the marches of Túrán
He picked out all the chiefs, then bade the troops:—
"Abide here cheerfully, move not unless
All-holy God deprive me of my life,
Be dight for battle and prepared for bloodshed."
Thus in those marches of Írán he left them,
And went, he and the chiefs, towards Túrán.
He doffed his mail and donned a merchant's dress, V. 1115
The warriors undid their silver girdles,
And he arrayed them all in woollen robes.
They fared toward Túrán—a caravan
All scent and colour. There were eight fine steeds,
One Rakhsh, the others were the warriors' mounts,
Ten camels bearing bales of jewelry,
And five score bearing soldiers' uniforms.
The waste rang like the horn of Tahmúras
With bells and shouting. Rustam journeyed on
Until he reached the city of Pírán,
For there was one in those Túránian marches
Belonging to that chief, but he himself
Was at the chase; his palace was unguarded.
Now when he came back from the hunting-field
The matchless Rustam saw him on the road,
And having covered over with brocade
A golden goblet filled with precious stones
Gave it and therewithal two splendid steeds,
With saddles made of gold adorned with jewels,
To the attendants, and preceding them
Strode to Pírán's throne swiftly, did obeisance,

And said: "O prince whose fortune and whose prowess
Are famous in Írán and in Túrán!
Thy Grace and crown are peerless, for thou art
King's minister and glory of the throne."
Pírán, so God ordained it, knew not Rustam,
But questioned him and said: "Whence art thou? Speak!
What man art thou and wherefore hast thou come?"
He said: "I am thy subject. God assigned me
A cistern in thy city. I have measured
A long and grievous journey from Írán
V. 1116 To traffic in Túrán. I sell and buy,
And deal in every sort of merchandise.
My soul hath good assurance of thy love,
Such was the power of hope within my heart!
If now the paladin will take me 'neath
His wing I will buy cattle and sell jewels.
Through thy just dealing none will do me hurt,
The cloud-rack of thy love rain gems upon me."
Then Rustam offered him before the lords
The cup of royal gems, and splendid Arabs
With coats too sleek to hold the wind-borne dust.
This wealth with many a blessing Rustam gave,
And fairly clinched the matter. When Pírán
Beheld the jewels in the brilliant cup
He praised and welcomed Rustam, seating him
Upon the turquoise throne, and said: "Depart
Content and enter with all confidence,
For I will lodge thee near me; be at ease
About thy goods, thou hast no foeman here.
Go fetch thy wares, seek buyers on all sides,
Make my son's house thy home, and be to me
As 'twere a kinsman."
Rustam answered thus:—
"I will abide here with my caravan,
O paladin! What goods I have are thine,

And 'twill be well with me be where I may,
But in that I have jewels of all kinds,
And must not lose one, by thy conquering fortune
We will remain outside in great content."
Pírán replied: "Go then and choose thy place,
And I will station guards for thy defence."
So Rustam chose a house, appointed it,
And filled the warehouse with his goods and packs.
News spread: "A caravan out of Írán
Hath visited the noble paladin,"
And buyers everywhere pricked up their ears V. 1117
When tidings reached them of those jewel-merchants.
Those that would buy brocade or stuffs or gems
Departed toward the court-gate of Pírán,
And when the sun arose the world to grace
The warehouse had become a market-place.

§ 22

How Manízha came before Rustam

Manízha heard and hurried to the city;
Bare-headed, weeping bitterly, she came—
That daughter of Afrásiyáb—to Rustam,
And, wiping from her lashes with her sleeve
The tears of blood, blessed, greeted him, and said:—
"Enjoy'st thou life and wealth? God grant that thou
Mayst ne'er have reason to repent thy toils.
May heaven perform thy will, the evil eye
Not harm thee, and since thou hast heart of hope
May this thy travail not result in loss.
May wisdom ever be thy monitor,
And may Írán be blessed and fortunate.
What know'st thou of the warriors of the Sháh,
Of Gív, Gúdarz, and the Íránian host?
Have tidings of Bízhan not reached Írán?

Will not his supplications aught avail,
That such a youth—a scion of Gúdarz—
May be released from irons? His feet are galled
With fetters and his hands with blacksmiths' rivets!
He hath been dragged in chains, made fast in bonds!
Poor wretch! his clothes are soaked in his own blood!
I get no rest myself for I must beg.
His lamentations fill mine eyes with tears."
V. 1118 Then Rustam in alarm roared out at her,
And drave her forth. "Be off!" he cried. "I know not
Khusrau or this young chief. I have no tidings
About Gúdarz and Gív, and thou hast chattered
My wits away."
Manízha looked at Rustam,
Wept bitterly, and showered tears of blood
Upon her bosom in her wretchedness.
She said to him: "O chieftain full of wisdom!
Such heartless words as these become thee not.
Drive me not from thee if thou wilt not talk,
For I am stricken to the heart with anguish.
Is it indeed the custom of Írán
To tell the poor no news?"
He answered thus:—
"What ailed thee, woman, then? Did Áhriman
Give thee a foretaste of the Day of Doom?
Thou didst prevent my trafficking, and therefore
I rated thee; but do not take to heart
My hastiness, my thoughts were on my trade.
Besides I have no home within the land
Of Kai Khusrau, I know naught of Gúdarz
And Gív, and ne'er have travelled in those marches."
He bade to give the mendicant such food
As was at hand, then questioned her at large:—
"Why is't that fortune is so dark with thee?
Why ask about the Sháh's throne and Írán?
Why look upon the road that leadeth thither?"

She said to him: "Why ask about my case,
My travail, and my trouble? From the mouth
Of yonder pit have I with aching heart
Made haste to thee, O noble man! to ask
The latest news of Gív and of Gúdarz,
The warriors, and thou didst shout at me
As fighters shout! Fear'st not the Judge of all?
The daughter of Afrásiyáb am I—
Manízha. Never had the sun beheld
My form unveiled, but now with eyes all blood,
And heart all pain, with sallow cheeks I roam
From door to door and gather barley bread, V. 1119
So hath God willed! Can fortune be more wretched?
Oh! that Almighty God would end it for me,
Because resourceless and in yon deep pit
Bízhan beholdeth neither night nor day,
Nor sun nor moon, but yoked and riveted
In heavy bonds is praying God for death.
Hence are my griefs redoubled, hence these tears.
Thou mayst, if thou art journeying to Írán,
Hear of Gúdarz son of Kishwád, or see
About the court-gate Gív or gallant Rustam;
Then say: 'Bízhan is in a pit and, save
Thou comest quickly, all is over with him.
If thou wouldst look upon him tarry not,
For iron is below him, stone above.'"

Thus Rustam answered her: "O fair of face!
Why rain these tears of love? Why not invite
Thy nobles' intercession with thy sire?
He may be pitiful, his blood may stir,
His liver burn; but for my fear of him
I would have furnished thee with countless things."

Then said he to the cooks: "Bring forth for her
Of every kind of victual that she needeth."

He bade them fetch a bird hot from the spit,

And, as he wrapped it in soft bread,[1] slipped in,
As with a fairy's touch, his signet-ring,
And said: "Convey this to yon pit. A guide
Art thou to those who have no help beside."

§ 23

How Bízhan heard of the Coming of Rustam

V. 1120 Manízha came back to the pit's mouth, running,
The food wrapped in a cloth clasped to her breast,
And gave all to Bízhan. He saw amazed,
Called to the sun-faced damsel from the pit,
And said: "Where didst thou get the food, my love!
That thou hast speeded thus? How much of toil
And hardship hath befallen thee, and all
On mine account, my love and succourer!"
Manízha answered: "From a caravan.
A merchantman—a man possessed of wealth—
Came hither from Írán in search of gain,
With merchandise of all kinds great and small—
A holy man of Grace and understanding,
Who bringeth many jewels of all sorts.
He is a man of might and open heart,
And hath put up a booth before his house;
He gave to me the cloth just as it is:
'Pray for me to the Maker,' were his words.
'Go to the dungeon to the man in bonds,
And take from time to time what he may need.'"
Bízhan with hope amid his fears unrolled
The good bread, in perplexity began
To eat, observed the ring, and read the name,
Then burst out laughing in his joy and wonder.
It was a turquoise ring with "Rustam" graven

[1] Bread in Persia usually is made up into flexible loaves about one foot wide, two or three feet long, and half an inch thick.

Fine as a hair thereon. Bízhan beholding
The fruit upon the tree of faithfulness,
And wotting that the key to loose his sorrow
Had come, laughed out and that right royally,
So that the sound was heard outside the pit.
Manízha marvelled when she heard him laugh
From that dark dungeon fettered as he was,
And said: "The mad will laugh at their own acts!"
She paused in sheer amazement, then she said:—
"O destined to high fortune! why this laughter? V. 1121
Why laugh, for thou discern'st not night from day?
What is the mystery? Reveal it! Tell me!
Doth better fortune show thee countenance?"
Bízhan replied to her: "I am in hope
That fortune will undo this grievous coil.
Now if with me thou wilt not break thy faith,
And make a covenant with me by oath,
I will reveal the matter every whit,
For 'though for fear of harm one go about
To sew up women's lips the words will out.'"
Manízha hearing this wept bitterly:—
"What hath malicious fortune brought," she said,
"Upon me? Woe is me! My day is done,
My heart is stricken, and mine eyes o'erflow!
I gave Bízhan my heart and home and wealth,
And now he treateth me with such distrust!
My father and my kin abandoned me,
I run about unveiled before the folk,
I gave withal my treasures up to spoil,
My crown, dínárs, and jewels, every whit.
I did hope in Bízhan but hope no more.
My world is darkened and mine eyes are dim,
For he concealeth secrets thus from me,
But Thou dost know me better, O my God!"
Bízhan replied: "'Tis true. Thou hast lost all
For me, and I," he added, "needs must tell thee,

O my beloved mate and prudent comrade!
'Tis fit thou counsel me in all, my brain
Is void through suffering, so know that he—
The jewel-merchant, he whose cook provided
The dainty meal for thee—came to Túrán
On mine account, for else he had no need
Of gems. The Maker pitied me, and I
Perchance shall see earth's broad expanse. This man
Will free me from these longsome griefs and thee
From plodding to and fro in heat and anguish.
Do thou draw near and say to him in private:—
'O thou the paladin of this world's Kaians,
V. 1122 Affectionate of heart and good at need!
Inform me if thou art the lord of Rakhsh?'"
Manízha left the forest like the wind,
And gave the message. Rustam hearing her,
Who from afar had come to him for help,
Knew that Bízhan had made the secret known
To that slim Cypress with the rosy cheeks.
He pitied her and said: "My Fair! may God
Ne'er take away from thee Bízhan's devotion.
What toils must thou have borne these many days
That thou hast grown so woe-begone with care!
Tell him: 'Yea! God who heareth cries for help
Hath given unto thee the lord of Rakhsh,
Who from Zábul Íránward, from Írán
Túránward, trod the weary way for thee.'
When thou hast said this keep the matter secret,
And give good ear at night to any sound.
Collect dry fuel from the wood to-day
And, when night cometh, set the pile ablaze
To guide me to the opening of the pit."[1]
Manízha, joyful at the words and freed
From trouble, hastened to the mountain-top,
Where in the pit her lover was confined,

[1] Line inserted from P.

And said: "I have repeated all thy message
To that illustrious, glorious one whose steps
Are blessed. He answered: 'I indeed am he,
Whose name and sign are asked for by Bízhan.
O thou who goest with a heart so seared,
And washest both thy cheeks with tears of blood!
Say: "We are dappled like a pard with galls
On hands and girdlestead on thine account,
And now that we have certain news of thee
Thou shalt behold our deadly falchion's point,
Now will I rend the earth beneath my grasp,
And fling that seated boulder to the sky."'
He said to me: 'As soon as heaven is dark,
And night freed from the clutches of the sun,
Set thou a fire, as 'twere a mount, ablaze,
And make it bright as day about the pit,
To guide me on the road.'" V. 1123

Bízhan rejoiced,
Although a prisoner still, and, looking up
To Him, the Almighty Maker of the world,
Said: "O compassionate and holy Judge!
Thou art my Helper out of every ill.
Pierce with Thy shaft my foeman's heart and soul.
Now do me right on him that did the wrong:
Thou knowest all my sorrows, pain, and grief.
Perchance I may regain my native land,
And leave behind me this malignant star!
And thou, my toil-worn mate, thou who hast made
Life, body, heart, and goods a sacrifice
For me, and in thy toil on my behalf
Hast counted every trouble as a joy,
Hast given up the crown and throne and girdle,
Thy parents and thy kindred and thy treasure!
If I do but escape this Dragon's clutch,
While I am still within the time of youth,

I, like the devotees who worship God,
Will run toward thee with mine arms outstretched,
And, like a servitor before a king,
Gird up my loins to make thee fair return.
Bear yet this toil, thy guerdon shall be great
In goods and treasure."
Bird-like to the boughs
She flew for wood, with arms full watched the sun,
And thought: "Oh! when will night rise o'er the hills?"
When Sol had vanished and dark night had led
Its army o'er the mountain-tops what time
The world, its features hidden, taketh rest,
Manízha went and set a-blaze a fire,
That scorched the eye of pitch-black night, and listened
To hear the clanging of the kettledrum
Which told that Rakhsh the brazen-hoofed had come.

§ 24

How Rustam took Bízhan out of the Pit

V. 1124 Then Rustam buckled on his Rúman mail,
With prayers for succour and support to Him,
Who is the Lord of sun and moon, and said:—
"Oh! may the eyes of evil men be blinded,
And may I have the strength to save Bízhan."
At his command the warriors girt themselves
With girdles of revenge, put on their steeds
The poplar saddles, and prepared for combat;
Then matchless Rustam led them toward the fire.
When he approached the boulder of Akwán,
Approached that pit of sorrow, smart, and anguish,
"Dismount," he told the seven warriors,
"And strive to clear the pit's mouth of the stone."
They strove in vain and sorely galled their hands.

Now while their sweat ran, for the stone stood still,
The lion-chief alighted, hitched his skirt
Of mail beneath his belt and, asking strength
From God its source, grasped, raised, and hurled the boulder
Back to the forest of the land of Chín:
Earth shook thereat. Then asked he of Bízhan
With lamentable cries: "How camest thou
To such a luckless plight? Thy portion here
Was wont to be all sweetness; why hast thou
Received then from the world a cup of poison?"
Bízhan replied: "How fared the paladin
Upon the way? Thy greeting reached mine ear,
And this world's poison was made sweet to me.
Such as thou seest is my dwelling-place, V. 1125
Mine earth is iron and my heaven stone,
While through exceeding anguish, hardship, sorrow,
And toil I have renounced this Wayside Inn."
Said Rustam: "God had pity on thy life,
And now, O man wise and magnanimous!
There is one thing that I desire of thee:
Grant pardon to Gurgín son of Mílád
For my sake, putting from thee hate and malice.'
He answered: "O my friend! how shouldst thou know
What conflicts have been mine? And know'st thou not,
O noble lion-man! that which Gurgín
Hath done to me? If I behold him ever
My vengeance shall bring Doomsday down on him."
"If thou show'st malice and wilt not attend
To what I say," said Rustam, "I will leave thee
Bound in the pit, and mount, and hie me home."
When Rustam's answer reached the captive's ear
A wail went up from that strait prison-house
As he replied: "The wretchedest am I
Of warriors, of my kindred, and my people!

I must put up to-day too with the wrong—
The great wrong—which Gurgín hath done to me!
Yea I will do so and will be content;
My heart shall rest from taking vengeance on him."
Then Rustam let his lasso down the pit,
And drew up thus Bízhan with fettered feet,
With naked body, with long hair and nails,
And wasted by affliction, pain, and want,
His form blood-boltered, and his visage wan
By reason of those bonds and rusty fetters.
Now Rustam cried aloud when he beheld
Bízhan with body hidden by the iron,
And putting forth his hands he snapped the chains
And bonds, and freed Bízhan from ring and fetter.
They went toward Rustam's house; on one side of him
Bízhan rode, on the other side Manízha.
V. 1126 The youthful pair sat in their sorry plight,
And told their story to the paladin.
Then Rustam bade them bathe the young man's head,
And clothed him in new robes. When afterward
Gurgín approached and, prone upon the dust,
Sought to excuse his evil deeds, and writhed
For words so ill-advised, Bízhan condoned
The matter. Then they loaded up the camels,
And put the saddles on the steeds, while Rustam
Assumed his favourite mail and mounted Rakhsh.
The warriors drew forth their scimitars
And massive maces, sent the baggage on,
And dight themselves for strife. Ashkash the shrewd—
The army's Ear—went with the baggage-train.
Then matchless Rustam bade Bízhan: "Away,
And journey with Manízha and Ashkash,
For in my vengeance on Afrásiyáb
To-night I shall not eat, repose, or sleep.
Now will I do such exploits at his gate
That on the morn his troops shall laugh at him.

Thou hast endured enough with bonds and pit,
And shouldst not share the fight."
Bízhan said: "Nay,
I lead since ye for me renew the fray."

§ 25

How Rustam attacked the Palace of Afrásiyáb by Night

The baggage thus consigned to shrewd Ashkash, V. 1127
The seven warriors set forth with Rustam.
With bridles on their saddle-bows they drew
The sword of vengeance. While all slept within
He reached the court-gate of Afrásiyáb,
And, breaking with his hands both bolt and bar,
Fierce as a lion flung himself inside.
In every quarter sounds of tumult rose,
Swords glittered, arrows rained, the chieftains' heads
Were all struck off, their hands were filled with dust,
Their mouths with blood, while Rustam in the porch
Cried: "May sweet sleep distaste thee! For thy bed
Thou hadst a throne, Bízhan had but a pit.
Didst see an iron wall between us? I
Am Rustam of Zábul, the son of Zál,
And 'tis no season this for sleep and couching.
I have burst through thy prison, door and bar,
Where that huge boulder stood on guard for thee.
Bízhan is free both head and foot from bonds:
Let no one thus maltreat a son-in-law!
Of fighting and revenge for Siyáwush,
And dust from Rakhsh's feet upon the plain,
Thou hadst enough yet fain wouldst slay Bízhan!
I know thy wicked heart and drowsy head."
Bízhan too cried: "Dense and malignant Turkman!
Bethink thee of yon throne, thy glorious seat,
And me withal that stood in chains before thee.

I challenged combat leopard-like, but thou
Didst bind my hands together firm as rock.
Now see me free upon the plain—a man
Whom savage lions will not seek to fight."
V. 1128 Afrásiyáb exclaimed: "Hath sleep enfettered
My warriors? Cut off these men's retreat,
All ye who seek a signet or a crown!"
On all sides was the sound of hurried steps,
The bloodshed made a river at the gate,
And when a soldier of Túrán appeared
His place was void forthwith, The Íránians
Came seeking vengeance, but Afrásiyáb
Escaped by flight. The lord of Rakhsh rode in
Upon the carpets of brocade. The warriors
Took the fair slaves who caught them by the hand
Took too the noble steeds with poplar saddles,
Whose flaps of pard-skin were beset with gems,
Then left the royal palace, packed the baggage,
And stayed not in Túrán but hastened on
To save the booty and avoid mishap.
So spent was Rustam that he scarce endured
His helmet, while the horses and their riders
Had no pulse left. He sent to bid the host:—
"Unsheathe your vengeful scimitars; no doubt
The earth will be bedimmed by horses' hoofs,
Because Afrásiyáb will gather him
A mighty host whose spears will veil the sun."
They marched along, those warlike cavaliers,
All ready for the fray, with sharpened lances
And reins well gathered in. A scout ascended
The look-out and from far surveyed the route
Whereby the Turkman cavaliers would come.
Manízha then was sitting in her tent;
Before her were her handmaids and her guide,
V. 1129 And matchless Rustam spoke to her this saw:—
"If musk be poured away the scent will stay."

Such is the fashion of this Wayside Inn,
Whiles sweets and smiles, whiles travail and chagrin!

§ 26

How Afrásiyáb went to fight with Rustam

When Sol rose o'er the hills the Turkman horsemen
Prepared to march. The city was astir,
And, thou hadst said, a deafening clamour rose.
Before the court-gate of Afrásiyáb
The troops formed rank, the great men loosed their loins,
And bowed their heads in dust before the king,
Exclaiming: "Things with us have passed all bounds!
What must be done? This business of Bízhan
Will be a lasting stigma, the Íránians
Will call us men no more, but women armed."
Thereat Afrásiyáb raged like a pard,
And bade them fight for shame. He bade Pírán
To bind the tymbals on, and thus he said:—
"This flouting from Írán is over-much!"
The brass blared at the court-gate of the king,
The troops were all in motion in Túrán,
The warriors ranked themselves before the palace,
Arose the din of trump and Indian bell,
And to the frontier from Túrán a host
Marched that left earth no surface save the sea.
Now when the Íránian watchman from the look-out
Saw earth heave ocean-like he came to Rustam, V. 1130
And said: "Make ready, for the world is black
With dust of horsemen!"
Rustam made reply:—
"We fear not, we will strew it on their hands."
He left Manízha with the baggage, donned
His battle-mail, went to a height, observed

The foe, and roared out like a savage lion.
That gallant horseman spake a proverb, saying:—
"What doth a fox weigh in a lion's claws?"
Then to his valiant warriors he shouted:—
"The wage of war confronteth us to-day.
Where are the swords and iron-piercing darts?
Where are the ox-head maces and the spears?
Now is the season to display your prowess,
And rank yourselves upon the battlefield."
Anon arose a sound of clarions,
While matchless Rustam mounted Rakhsh and led
His army plainward from the heights what time
The foe was seen approaching.[1] Both the hosts
Deployed upon that broad expanse and formed
Two camps empanoplied. Then Rustam chose
His battle-ground, whereat the world grew black
With horse-raised dust. Ashkash and Gustaham
Were on the right with many cavaliers,
Upon the left were Zanga and Ruhhám.
All rose superior to that conflict. Rustam,
The warriors' warden and the host's support,
Was at the centre with Bízhan the son
Of Gív. Behind the host was Mount Bístún,
In front a citadel of scimitars.
Afrásiyáb, when he beheld that host,
With Rustam who was seen commanding it,
In dudgeon donned his armour for the battle,
And bade his troops to halt. He drew them up
In due array against the foe. The earth
Was hidden and the air like indigo.
The left wing he intrusted to Pírán,
While brave Húmán departed to the right;
The centre he consigned to Garsíwaz
And Shída; he himself o'erlooked the whole.

[1] "aussitôt que l'armée *ennemie* eut paru dans le défilé *de la montagne opposée*" (Mohl).

The matchless Rustam went about the host,
And seemed a sable mountain in his mail.
He cried: "Thou luckless Turkman, thou disgrace V. 1131
To province, crown, and throne! thou hast no heart
To fight like cavaliers, yet shamest not
Before thy warriors, but assailest us,
And coverest the earth with men and steeds,
Though when the armies grapple I shall see
Thy back toward the fight. Hast thou not heard
Those sayings of old times which Zál repeateth:—
'No lion is affrighted at a plain
Of onagers; stars ape the sun in vain;
The lusty mountain-sheep if it shall hear
A wolf's claws named will shiver, heart and ear;
No fox is daring, try he e'er so much,
No onagers the lion's claws will touch'?
Be never king as light of wit as thou,
Or he will give his kingdom to the winds.
Upon this plain thou shalt not get away
Alive and scathless from my hands to-day."

§ 27

How Afrásiyáb was defeated by the Íránians

As soon as that grim Turkman heard the words
He shook, drew one quick breath, then cried in fury:—
"O warriors of Túrán! are we engaged
In banquet, feast, or battle on this field?
Ye must endure hard toil in this emprise,
For I will give you treasure in return."
They shouted when they heard the monarch's words;
The sun so gloomed with dust that thou hadst said:—
"Earth is submerged!" Upon the elephants
The drums were beaten, horns and trumpets blown.
The warriors with their breastplates formed a wall V. 1132

Of iron on the battlefield. The plain
Shook and the hills re-echoed with the shouts
Raised by the cavaliers upon both sides;
The trenchant swords flashed mid the clouds of dust;
Thou wouldst have said: "The Day of Doom hath come!"
Steel sparths descended like a storm of hail
Upon the coats of mail, the helms, and casques,
While at the gleam of Rustam's dragon-flag
The bright sun's face grew azure-dim; he veiled
The air with arrows, "Smearing," thou hadst said,
"The sun with pitch." Where'er he urged on Rakhsh
He trampled on the heads of cavaliers.
Grasped in his hand he bore an ox-head mace,
And seemed a dromedary broken loose.
He came forth from the centre like a wolf,
And scattered all the foemen's vast array.
Then horsemen's heads were shed as leaves are shed
Before the blast, and fortune left the Turkmans.
Swift as the wind Ashkash upon the right
Sought to engage the swordsman Garsíwaz,
Gúrgín, Farhád, and brave Ruhhám o'erthrew
The left wing of the monarch of Túrán,
While in the centre dexterous Bízhan
Esteemed the battlefield a banquet-hall.
Blood flowed in streams, the Turkman monarch's standard
V. 1133 Sank, he beheld his fortunes all averse,
The warriors of Túrán all slain, so flung
His Indian scimitar away and, mounting
A fresh steed, fled attended by his nobles
Toward Túrán, balked of revenge, and followed
By lion-taking Rustam, who rained mace
And arrow on the enemy, and blasted
For two leagues, thou hadst said, like dragon grim
The warriors. A thousand cavaliers

Were captured. Rustam then returned to camp
In order that he might divide the spoil,
And, when the elephants were loaded, he
Marched back to Kai Khusrau victoriously.

§ 28

How Rustam returned to Kai Khusrau

When tidings reached the gallant Sháh: "The Lion
Hath come back from the Wood victorious;
Bízhan is free from prison and from bonds,
And from the clutches of his dragon-foe;
The army of Túrán is overthrown,
The foe's whole purpose foiled," he went rejoicing,
And fell upon his face. before the Maker.
Whenas Gúdarz and Gív received the news
They hasted to the conquering Sháh. A shout
Went up, troops mustered, and the tymbal-players
Set forth, the trumpet sounded at the gate,
The soldiers shouted. All the riding-ground
Was black with chargers' hoofs, the kettledrums
Roared through the city, horsemen proudly pranced.
And mighty elephants tusked up the earth.
Before the army went the drums and horns,
Gúdarz and Tús came after with the standard.
Upon one side were pards and lions chained,
Upon the other were brave cavaliers.
In such wise the victorious Sháh commanded V. 1134
The troops to go to meet their paladin.
They set forth on their journey troop on troop;
The earth was mountain-like with warriors.
When they distinguished Rustam from the rest,
Gúdarz and Gív alighted, as did all
The other mighty men and Rustam also,
To whom both young and old did reverence.

Gúdarz and Gív saluted him and said:—
"O thou illustrious and valiant chief!
May God be thy protection now and ever,
May sun and moon both circle to thy wish.
Of thee the lion learneth to be bold,
Of thee may heaven weary nevermore!
Thou hast made all our kindred slaves to thee
Through whom we have recovered our lost son.
Thou hast delivered us from pain and grief,
And made us all thy servants in Írán."
The chiefs remounted and approached in pomp
The palace of the monarch of the world,
And, when that chief—the refuge of the host—
Drew near the city of the king of kings,
The Sháh himself,—the warden of the troops
And crown of chiefs—went out to welcome him.
When Rustam by the pomp knew that the Sháh
Had come, he lighted and did homage, grieved
That Kai Khusrau had come so far. The world-lord
Took Rustam in a close embrace and said:—
"Thou Stay of chieftains and thou Soul of honour!
As glorious as the sun are all thy gests,
And thine achievements broadcast through the world.
Then quickly taking by the hand Bízhan,
Who was abashed before his Sháh and sire,[1]
V. 1135 The matchless Rustam brought, presented him,
Rose to his feet, and made the bent back straight.
Thereafter he delivered to the Sháh
A thousand captives from Túrán in bonds.
The monarch blessed him lovingly and said:—
"May heaven ever favour thy desires,
May thy hand flourish, may thy heart rejoice,
And thy pure body 'scape all hurt from foes.
How blest is Zál, who will bequeath the world
A Memory like thee! Blest is Zábul,

[1] Reading with P.

Whose milk hath nourished such undaunted heroes.
Blest is Írán, blest are its warriors,
Possessing such a paladin as thee;
Yet is my fortune higher than them all
In having such a servant of my throne.
Thou art Írán's crown and the chieftains' stay,
And lacking thee I care not for the world."

Then said the monarch of the world to Gív:—
"The Almighty's purposes toward thee are good,
Who hath restored to thee by Rustam's hand
Thy son, thy well belovéd, and in triumph."

Gív blessed the Sháh and said: "Live and rejoice
As long as time shall be, may thy head flourish
Through Rustam ever, and may he possess
The heart of glorious Zál with happiness."

§ 29

How Kai Khusrau made a Feast

Khusrau commanded: "Let the board be spread,
And call the chiefest nobles to the feast."

Now when the guests had risen from the table
They had the place set for a drinking-bout.
Fair slaves illumed the hall, with cup-bearers V. 1136
And earringed harpers harping on their harps;
Their heads were crowned with massive coronets
Of gold with patterns traced thereon in gems.
All cheeks were ruddy as brocade of Rúm,
And fairy fingers made the harps resound.
There were gold chargers full of purest musk,
And in the front a laver of rose-water.
The Sháh, resplendent with imperial Grace,
Shone like a full moon o'er a straight-stemmed cypress.
The paladins, the lieges of Khusrau,
All left the palace, well bemused.

Next morning
Came Rustam to the court, with open heart

And girded loins, for leave to hie him home.
He took much prudent counsel with the Sháh,
Who gave commandment, and a change of raiment
Bejewelled, with a tunic and a crown,
A vase of royal gems, a hundred steeds
All saddled and a hundred laden camels,
A hundred fair-faced handmaids ready girt,
A hundred slaves adorned with torques of gold,
Were brought before the master of the world,
Who gave them all to Rustam of Zábul.
That hero kissed the ground and then stood upright.
He set upon his head that royal crown,
He bound that royal girdle round his loins,
Did homage to the Sháh, then left the presence,
And made his preparations for Sístán.
Next to the nobles that had been with Rustam
In toil and fight, in happiness and sorrow,
The Sháh gave gifts, to each in his degree:
They left the palace of Khusrau, rejoicing.
The Sháh, when he had finished with the chiefs,
And sat at leisure on his throne, commanded
Bízhan to come, and spake of all his troubles,
While for his part Bízhan informed the Sháh
At large of that strait dungeon, of his conflicts,
And what had happened in those evil days.
The Sháh forgave him and much pitied too
The pains and sorrows of the luckless damsel,
v. 1137 Called for a hundred garments of brocade
Of Rúm, gem-patterned on a ground of gold,
A crown, ten purses also of dínárs,
Girl-slaves and carpets and all kinds of wealth,
And said thus to Bízhan: "These precious things
Bear to the lady of the mournful soul,
Use her not hardly, speak no chilling word,
Consider all that thou hast brought on her.
Go through this world rejoicing by her side,

And take thou heed of time's vicissitudes,
How it will raise one to the heights of heaven,
And bear him all unharmed by care and anguish,
Then how that heaven will fling him to the dust,
Where all is fear, anxiety, and dread!
The man whom fortune cherished on its breast
It casteth wantonly to depths of need,
And raiseth thence another to the throne,
And setteth on his head a jewelled crown!
The world is not ashamed of such ill doings,
For it respecteth no one; and, although
For ever dominating good and bad,
Ensueth not the peace of any one."
  Such is the manner of our earthly lot!
It leadeth us alike to good and ill,
And noble hearts may live untroubled still
  So long as poverty oppresseth not.

The story of Gúdarz I next unfold
And of Pírán; that of Bízhan is told
As I have heard it in the tales of old.

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[1] *Cf.* Vol. ii. 418 *note.*

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