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ART. XXXIII.—*Account of the Atesh Kedah¹, a Biographical Work on the Persian Poets, by Hajji Lutf Ali Beg, of Ispahan, by N. BLAND, Esq., M.R.A.S.*

(Read June 24, 1843.)

در طوف حرم دیدم دی مغیبهء میگفت
ابن خانہ باین خوبی آتشکده بایستی

THE history of the Persian poets is the history of the Persian nation; it is the biography of their greatest men, whose lives, whose actions, whose feelings, and whose tastes, are all, in a greater or less degree, associated with poetry and influenced by poetic impulse. This influence was exercised over the highest potentates by the most subordinate of their subjects. Their graver historians supply countless anecdotes of men exalted to rank and power, and enjoying the unlimited favour of their Sovereign by this sole merit. Lives have been sacrificed, or spared—cities have been annihilated, or ransomed—empires subverted, or restored—by the influence of poetry alone. Armies, levied to avenge the insult of an epigram, have been disbanded at its palinodia; the prison has opened its gates to the ingenious author of an impromptu; stanzas have saved a suppliant's life, and a well-turned compliment in verse more than once soothed a breast in which dwelt all the undisciplined passions of Eastern despotism. Even history itself is indebted to this taste, and if not written in verse, its pages are enriched with metrical fragments and quotations, while the earliest annals of the Persian empire are preserved in the poetic legends of the Shah Nameh.

To the biography of their poets, and the critical examination of their works, many learned Persian writers have devoted their labours; in most cases the biographer has been himself a poet, and, from this association of study and inclination, has been the better qualified for his task, both in doing justice to the subjects of his memoirs, and in making a skilful selection of extracts as specimens of their talent. Thus Jámi, who, in his Baháristán, has devoted a chapter to literary

آتشکده تصنیف لطفعلی ابن آقا خان متخلص باذکر¹

history, was himself a poet, if not the first, at least among the first, in each style of composition. Sám Mírzá, author of the *Tuhfahí Sámí*, and Dowlatshah of Samarcand, also possessed poetic talent, though, perhaps, not of a high order. The learned Amír Ali Shír, who wrote the biographical work *Majális al Nafáís*, has left numerous and admired poems in the Persian and Turkí languages. Of all such compositions, that of Dowlatshah has been considered to hold the first place, and, up to the present time, has usually been quoted as the best, and often as the sole authority to be consulted, so that the title "*Tazkirat al Shuara*," has been emphatically, and almost exclusively applied to that, which bears his name. It is, however, far inferior to the *Atesh Kedah*, both in the number and extent of its memoirs, and in the bulk of its contents. The *Baharistan* comprises only thirty-eight of the earlier, or more admired poets. Dowlatshah gives one hundred and forty¹ memoirs, terminating with those of his contemporaries. Dowlatshah's work was finished A.H. 892 = A.D. 1487. Sám Mírzá, son of Shah Ismail, completed the list by the addition of the more modern writers. Hajji Lutf Ali Beg, the author of the present work, with which he was still engaged in the year 1179 = 1765, includes in it the period of two centuries, which occurred between the age of the *Tuhfahí Sámí* and his own time, and presents us with the memoirs of *eight hundred and forty-two* poets, ancient and modern; many of them otherwise new to biography, and whose merits would have remained unknown to posterity, but for his labours of compilation and the advantages he so eminently possessed as their historian.

The earliest mention of the subject occurs in Von Hammer's *History of the Persian Poets*², published in 1818, in which, after enumerating the principal sources from which he had derived his materials, he names the *Atesh Kedah*, as existing in a collection of manuscripts brought from the East by M. Rousseau³, French Consul

¹ Exclusive of the ten *Arabic* poets contained in the *Mucaddamah* of his work.

² *Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens, &c.*, von Joseph Von Hammer: Wien, 1818. Vorrede, p. vii.

³ It was thus announced in the second part of M. Rousseau's catalogue of his collection, p. 14:—"(*Kitab*) Talif Hadji Lotfali Beg: *Pyrée poétique*, ou *Histoire abrégée des poètes anciens et modernes de l'Yran, du Touran, et de l'Inde*, depuis l'époque où ils ont commencé à fleurir dans ces trois empires jusqu'au règne de Kérim Khan (1770 de notre ère), avec une notice succincte, et des extraits de leurs plus belles productions; par Hadji-Lotfali-Beg, surnommé Azir, ouvrage dans le goût de celui de Devlet-Chah, mais beaucoup plus étendu, et dirigé suivant la division géographique des provinces et villes où ces poètes ont vu le jour, &c."

in Syria, and of which he regrets his inability to obtain a perusal for the completion of his history, and directs the attention of Orientalists to it in their future researches. In 1835 a small parcel of Persian books, offered for sale by a party returned from India, was found to contain a very elegant little manuscript, which proved to be a copy of the desired work. A second, larger copy of great beauty, was obtained from the collection made by the accomplished editor of the Shah Nameh, Major Turner Macan¹. The possession of these two enabled me to contemplate the publication of the book, either in the original, or in translation, and the announcement obtained for me further information. In the rich and extensive Persian library at the East India House, Professor Falconer had already made use of a fine manuscript of the Atesh Kedah, presented by Lieut.-Col. William Kirkpatrick², of which the learned Professor afterwards found another derived from a different source³. The unrivalled collection of Oriental manuscripts of a Right Honourable Vice-President of this Society contains also two valuable copies; and the existence of one in the library of the British Museum was communicated to me by Mr. Cureton. In the meantime the manuscript, originally offered to public notice by M. Rousseau, had passed into the possession of the Russian Government, by whom it was purchased in 1818⁴.

Thus, almost from non-existence, multiplied copies arose, all in good preservation, and mostly perfect and correct; each possessing some peculiar advantage, which makes it desirable for collation. A similar circumstance had occurred in the almost simultaneous discovery⁵ of portions of Rashid-al-Din's great history, before supposed to be lost; and it will not surprise any Oriental student, who was in the habit of frequenting our public libraries in former years, how copies of such valuable works should so long have existed inaccessible to the inquirer, as they were unknown to those who had the care of them.

¹ The work is alluded to in Major Macan's Introductory Remarks, as the "*Atush Kudda*" of "*Lootif Ali Khan*."

² Presented 30th May, 1804; brought from Persia in 1801.

³ Bibl. Leyden.—Presented to Dr. Leyden by Lieut.-Colonel Malcolm, in 1806, at Calcutta.

⁴ It was from this copy that M. Charmoy, at that time Professor at the Oriental Institute at St. Petersburg, made the extracts of the lives of Nizami, and some of his contemporaries, inserted, in translation, in his edition of the "*Expédition d'Alexandre le Grand contre les Russes*," from the Iskender Nameh of that poet. The text of the memoirs extracted was to appear in the second volume, which, it is much to be regretted, has not yet been published.

⁵ Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. vi., art. 2.

There are, therefore, eight copies of the Atesh Kedah now before the public, of which seven are in England, being, I should suppose, nearly all which are now to be met with, and the manuscript of St. Petersburg seems to be the only one existing on the continent. The means of consulting the work being, however, still somewhat circumscribed, a few particulars¹ of its object and contents may not be deemed uninteresting, together with a sketch of the author's life, and his qualifications as a biographer, a critic, and a poet.

Lutf Ali's work differs very materially in arrangement, as well as in extent, from all others on the same subject. Instead of the chronological order followed by Jami in the Baharistan, and Dowlatshah in his Tazkirah, or the classification of rank and profession adopted by Sâm Mírzá, our author has arranged his book in geographical sections, the poets being placed in alphabetical order, under the names of their native town, or the place of their abode. The arrangement is very fully explained in the preface. On the whole, this plan, though liable to some objection, may be considered preferable. It admits many topographical notices, which, though concise, are useful, and which may even serve to supply deficiencies in works more strictly scientific. It is also not without its peculiar interest, as affording a comparative view of the riches of Persian literature; a kind of statistic of poetic talent, which, by a glance at its contents, enables us to form a tolerably good estimation of the resources of each province, district, and town, throughout the wide empire where Persian belles lettres were cultivated, and of the proportion in which each contributed to the great bazar of literature.

The title of the book itself is, in one respect, remarkable. The *Atesh Kedah*, (Fire Temple, or Temple of the Magi,) seems certainly a strange name for the composition of a Mahometan. The author, in his preface, ingeniously argues for the aptness of the title, but gives no reason for adopting one alike repugnant to the prejudices of a Shíah or a Sunni. Allusions to the sacred fire of the Ghebers, and the Magian worship, are freely admitted in Persian poetry, and in the Diwan of Hafiz, in particular, are abundant to excess; though in his verses, as in those of most of the so-named Sufis, such allusions, even if not allegorical, very little impair the credit of their

¹ Since arranging these sheets, I have been favoured with a sight of the "Farnasse Oriental," a dictionary of Eastern poets, published within the last two years at Algiers, from the papers of the late Baron Rousseau, before alluded to. Though frequent reference is made in it to the Atesh Kedah, and notice taken of some of the poets mentioned in this memoir, I have not found it necessary to make any material alteration in the arrangement I had proposed to myself.

orthodoxy, which is, at the best, far from being above suspicion of reproach.

It is to be regretted, that in this, as in other similar compositions, the biographical part bears a very small proportion to the anthology, the memoir of each poet being generally restricted to the praise of his various acquirements, and containing few more particulars of his history, than the place of his birth, or residence, and, perhaps, the time of his death; to which is sometimes added the name of his teacher in spiritual, or secular lore, and the profession, or pursuit of the poet: these, with the pilgrimage, and the desultory movements of the student in pursuit of knowledge, the Derwish visiting the sacred shrines, or the courtier flying from the resentment of a capricious and offended patron, form the whole particulars of their private life; and it is to this characteristic monotony of Eastern manners we must attribute the meagre and unsatisfactory nature of such details as their biographers afford us.

The MSS. of the Atesh Kedah vary in bulk from 240 to 300 folia, a full page usually containing in the proportion of one hundred lines of verse written in four columns; from this a tolerably good idea may be formed of its contents. The preface occupies four pages, in which the author indulges in all the luxuriance of that fanciful style of composition, which is so congenial to Persian taste, and is so diligently cultivated by their most admired writers. The *Berââti Istihlâl* (براعت استهلال) a favourite figure of their rhetoric, is here strictly followed, and the title of the work preserved in countless metaphors drawn from the element to which it is devoted, and reproduced in every variety of allusion, which Mahometan literature and mythology afford. The commencement, as the exordium of a pious Mussulman, recites the praises of the Deity, glorified successively with a selection from the "*Excellent Names*," and illustrated by appropriate instances of His greatness, wisdom, and mercy. Thus, in the Creation, His glory shone forth in the ray of light, which ennobled *Adam*, while His vengeance drove away *Eblis*, the proud angel, who boasted his *fiery* origin². Thus, the accepted³ sacrifice of *Abel*, and the rejected offering of *Cain*, are cited as examples of power and graciousness, exhibited through the same element, harmless or consuming. By His mercy, the fire of his

¹ اسما الحسنی The excellent or beautiful names—the attributes of the Divine Being.

² خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ Cor. xxxviii. 77.

³ Cor. v.

idoltrous persecutors became "cold and a preservation unto Abraham"; the flame of His hell received the rebellious *Nemrud*³, and the fire of His wrath destroyed the accursed *Pharaon*³. Fire, under the same All-powerful direction, became the guide of *Moses*⁴ in the burning bush of Towa.

The element fire is next examined, as the type of love; a metaphorical connection, which has been conceded to it by the poets of all nations; but here it is the indication of Divine love, prevailing over universal nature, animated and inanimate. The attachment of the moth to the taper—of the bulbul to the rose, furnish poetical illustrations of this favourite theme;—the tulip blackened at the core with the fire of love;—the anemone, whose cheeks are glowing with admiration of Divine beauty. It pervades the seasons: the spring-cloud is but smoke from the stove of the Creator's laboratory; the breeze of the north, at His command, quenches the burning anguish of the rose, while the autumn rain descends as oil upon the lamp of the tulip: the cypress towers with its spiry top towards heaven, like the ascending smoke of lovers' sighs; the turtle-dove (*Cumri*) sits in ashes from the consuming fire of its passion.

From the praise of Divine excellence, which has been declared, in the beginning, to be "the splendour of the Fire-temple of the heart, and the flame of the firebrand of the tongue; the glowing of the furnace of the body, and the sparkling of the embers of the soul," the author proceeds to the exaltation of the Prophet, which must invariably occupy the second place in an orthodox Mahometan preface. Him, he declares, in a similar style of allusive imagery, to be "the taper of the assembly of creation"—the "lamp-lighter of the banqueting-hall of existence; in comparison with the world-illuminating sun of whose essence, the universality of existing beings are but an unenduring atom, and in competition with the boundless sea of whose excellence, the totality of created things are no more than a worthless drop." The greatness and glory of the Prophet are set forth in illustrations similar to the preceding, exemplified in the honours of the *Máráj*, and the judgment on *Abu Leheb* condemned to "flaming fire⁵." Next follows the praise of *Ali*, the Prophet's cousin, by which the biographer takes the earliest opportunity of

¹ Cor. xxi. 69.² Cor. xxi.³ Cor. xl.⁴ Cor. xx. 12.

These exemplify the first four of the forty Fires of Arab imagery enumerated by *Es-Saalebi*, and in the *Keshkul*. See *Cestreich*, *Central-Organ für Lit.* July, 1842.

⁵ سَيَصَلِّي نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ Cor. cxi. v. 3.

establishing the orthodoxy of his creed, and glorifying the patron of that sect, which was peculiarly favoured by the Safavean dynasty, and from whom he derived his name, Lutf Ali, *the grace of Ali*. After this he conducts the reader through a tedious, but learned dissertation, in which are discussed the excellence of the gift of speech, and the respective merits of prose, and verse, and in which he combats the Coranic censure on the poets, "whom those who err, follow," and vindicates his fraternity from similar aspersions conveyed in Arabic proverbs and traditions; and finally enters on the subject of his work, and his reasons for undertaking it; saying that, "from the age of early youth when the gardener of love had nourished the tender shoot of his existence in the garden of fidelity, and given it culture by the moistening rain; when, by degrees, moving from his mother's lap to his father's arms, he was from thence confided to the care of a preceptor, by whose affectionate zeal his eye derived light from a book, and his hand made acquaintance with the pen;" yet, withal, love and poetry were so natural to his disposition, that "the only letter of the book he read, was affection, and the only character his pen traced, was friendship: his tongue chaunted but the song of love and beauty; and his ear hearkened only to the tale of sincerity and affection. Constantly treading this rosy path, and the bulbul of his soul occupied continually in warbling these lays; no fancy engaged his mind, save that of poesy, sweet fruit of the garden of love; no thought, but verse, the ray of affection's lamp." With these inclinations, the destiny of young Lutf Ali was fixed, and habit and education made him a poet, and the friend of poets. His time was now spent entirely in perusing the writings of the earlier authors, and in frequenting the society of those who were his contemporaries. These pursuits and studies he was, however, unable to gratify, as fully as his heart desired; many works of the ancient poets were difficult to procure, and his intercourse with the modern writers was subject to frequent interruptions and disappointments; so that he became dissatisfied with the enjoyment he already possessed, from the desire to obtain more. His remedy was obvious: to make a collection of the lives and sayings of poets, both contemporary and those of former times, so that, "should his heart at any time desire to read the writings of the earlier authors, the sight of this thornless rose-bed, rivalling with its fragrant herbs of diction the parterres of the garden of paradise, might gratify the soul by its scent; and whenever his mind should be disposed to seek the society of his contemporaries, the view of this sorrowless treasure might with the splendour of its jewels of

eloquence, rejoice the ear of the soul, in emulation of the Wádí Aymen."

When the number of the author's years had extended from thirty to forty, he had "collected lapfulls of the tulips and roses of Casidahs', and filled his skirts with the basil and hyacinths of Ghazals', and had stored his treasury with the rubies and yacuts of Mesnawis', and the silks and brocades of Rubá'ís'; or, in other words, he had attentively read, and carefully selected from, the best Diwans, which he had an opportunity of consulting, and when they were not accessible, had made use of various Tazkirahs; and, in like manner, for those of his contemporaries, either from his own inspection, or from the dictation of persons of taste; and whenever he found in history any mention of the poet's place of birth or residence, he noted it down, with a short geographical description, arranging its natives or inhabitants alphabetically, without regard to order of chronology, or precedence of rank or merit, with the extracts from their works, according to their final letter. This book he named the *Atesh Kedah*, or *Fire Temple*, because he thereby devoted to the fire of envy all preceding Tazkirahs whatever; and he furnished the whole with a Fihrist, or table of contents, for facility of reference."

While he was engaged in its arrangement, a young poetaster of his acquaintance, "unripe in judgment as he was immature in years," proposed that some of his own compositions also should be inserted, to embellish the anthology of this work, which sacrifice to vanity Lutf Ali directly refused, telling him that this was "truly a Fire Temple, in whose furnace *thorns* would be consumed, but *roses* turn to delicious attar, to rejoice the senses."

The author then gives an account of the divisions of his book, which, in conformity with Eastern practice, bear an allusion to its title, under the names of *Censers*, *Flames*, *Firebrands*, *Flashes*, &c.², and which, from the difficulty of finding corresponding terms in translation, make the arrangement appear somewhat unlogical. Such fanciful technicalities seem to originate from the acknowledged rule of employing for the terms of prosody, *Doors*, *Wings*, *Tent-ropes*, and other parts of an Arab habitation. This taste, exaggerated by the imaginative genius of the Persians, has suggested a thousand con-

¹ رباعي — مثنوي — غزل — قصيدة¹; the four principal kinds of composition in verse — *Elegy*, *Ode*, *Heroic* or *Didactic Poem*, and *Tetrastich*.

&c. — شعاع — پرتو — شرارة — شعله — اُخكر — فروغ — بجمرة

ceits in the arrangement and division of their books. Thus, our author's predecessor, Jami, has divided his Baharistan (or Abode of Spring) into *Rawzahs* (gardens); and the great Persian Dictionary, the Heft Kulzum, or Seven Seas, derives the names of its subordinate sections and chapters from various terms of navigation, or of marine geography. Thus, also, in compliance with Eastern taste, Dr. Dorn, in the chapters of his elegant version of a part of Sadi's Gulistan¹, has substituted *Lustgang* (garden-walk) for the less appropriate *Báb* (door) of the original; and an interesting little miscellany of translation, published by Von Hammer, was named Rosenöl (Rose-oil), and the volumes numbered as 1st and 2nd *Flasket*.

The following is the author's own division:—"This biography consists of two *Majmarahs*: the first *Majmarah* is in commemoration of the lives and poems of the eloquent men of earlier times; it is composed of a *Shálah*, in relation of the biography and poetry of kings and princes of every nation, and of amirs of exalted rank, of the Túrki and other tribes, without special reference to any particular country; and three *Akhgars*, in relation of the poets of Irán, Túrán, and Hindustán; and one *Furógh*, on the biography of the virtuous ladies of all countries. And the second *Majmarah*, which is in description of the lives and conceptions of contemporaneous poets, is composed of two *Pertaws*; the first *Pertaw* comprises the thoughts of my friends and contemporaries; and the second, which is the conclusion of the book, I have completed by a few of my own raw conceptions, in the hope that from the warm breath of (the favour and indulgence of) my friends, they may attain maturity. Success is from God alone!" He then recapitulates these divisions rather more at length, and gives a sort of index of the districts and towns and authors' names.

This arrangement gives the whole empire of Persian poetry under the three grand divisions of Iran, Turan, and Hindustan, preceded by an account of the poets of foreign origin. The geographical heads are further subdivided into provinces, and again into districts and cities. These four *books* (to use a more simple nomenclature) comprise all the authors previous to Lutf Ali's own time; his contemporaries form a second grand division of the work, and the account of his own poems and life is contained in a third part.

The first book is interesting, more from the historical fame of the authors it names, than for the excellence of their compositions.

¹ Drey Lustgänge aus Saadi's Rosenhain.—Hamburg, 1827.

It is pleasing to observe how many of the kings, princes, and pashas, who figure in the pages of Eastern history, as conquerors, warriors, and governors, make their appearance here in the more attractive character of poets, humbly awaiting that criticism of their poetical compositions, which history affords us of their actions, and to the censure of both of which their power and rank made them inaccessible during the period of their life and rule.

Of these "royal and noble authors," the first is the son of the conqueror Mahmúd of Ghazni, famous and infamous, as the patron of Firdúsi, and the object of his celebrated satire. That monarch does not seem to have himself practised the art of which he was, somewhat ostentatiously, the protector; and of his son, whose Kuniyat was Abú Muhammad, here quoted as Ibn Mahmúd Ghaznawi, four lines only are given, a tetrastich, feelingly, but rather punningly, lamenting his mistress, who was drowned.

This chapter contains some striking names: the Emperors Humáyún and Akbar; Shah Shujà and his brother Abú Yezíd of the Muzaffar dynasty; of the Safides, Shah Ismail and his sons, and Shah Abbás; Jeláluddín Meleksháh, and Tóghrul, the last of the Seljúks.

These princes, however distinguished by historical interest, do not appear entitled to much poetic merit. Of Jeláluddín Akber and Jeláluddín Melekshah the biographer gives only a few lines, as specimens. Those of the Seljúkí prince form a quatrain, in the amatory style, of trifling import. His imperial namesake offers only a bacchanalian, or rather anti-bacchanalian, stanza, in which the august poet deploras his last night's visit to the tavern as the cause of headache, in a strain of drunken repentance quite independent of Sufí interpretation.

Of the two first and greatest monarchs of the Safavean dynasty, Shah Ismail and Shah Tahmasp, our author is bound to make honourable mention, and, accordingly, Shah Ismail, under the name Khatáyi (خطایي), is commemorated with all the veneration accorded by the modern Persians to the founder of a glorious dynasty, and the descendant of the sainted Músá¹; the particulars of which holy lineage are recited in this biography, without differing from the same genealogy as given in other authors. His successor, Shah Tahmasp, a glorious name in the annals of modern Persia, contributes to the anthology a few lines of humorous description of cities

¹ Músá Kázim, the seventh Imám,

and their inhabitants, in which the royal satirist pronounces Isfahan to be a Paradise, but declares a dog of Kashan to be superior to the nobles of Cum, though the people of Kashan are inferior to a dog themselves. His brothers, Elcas, and Behram Mírzá, are praised for their talent; the latter, as well as his son, Sultán Ibrahím Mírzá (جايي), put to death by order of Ismail II., is commemorated for his skill in penmanship, in which Ibrahím was the "Pearl of his age," and was also unrivalled in criticism and composition. The Prince Sam Mírzá, the second of Ismail's four sons, is introduced here under his poetical name of Sámí (سامي), employed by him in the title of his work *Tuhfahí Sámí*¹, already mentioned.

Abbás the Great, and Abbás the Second, son of Shah Safí, furnish but one distich each. The memoir of the Great Abbas is chiefly historical, though he is stated to have indulged occasionally in poetical composition. Under the name of Adili (عادلي) appears the worthless Ismail, the second of the name, who is here extolled for the glory of his reign, the loftiness of his mind, and the purity of his poetic taste, of which the short specimen given is a very insufficient proof.

Sultan Husáin Mirza Báicara, under the name Husáiní (حسيني) his son Badíázzeman Mirza, and his grandson Muhammad Múmin Mirza, are noticed in memoirs not much differing from those quoted² by De Sacy from Sám Mirza's work. Shah Shujá', Muzaffar, in the fragment given of his composition, offers a specimen of poetical bravado, quite equal to the boasting of the Homeric heroes. Ibn Yemín (Amír Mahmúd) justifies the praises his biographer bestows on him by a few ingenious and pleasing specimens. Abdallah Khan and Obáidallah Khan, both chiefs of the Usbeks, a tribe so formidable by their incursions into the Persian empire, contribute also, though insignificantly, to the list of warlike chiefs, who occasionally composed in verse.

Of Amír Ali Shír, the poet, the patron and friend of poets, the critic and poetical biographer, our author speaks in terms of high admiration and esteem, and echoes the encomiums bestowed on him by Dowlatshah, under the name of Fenayi (فنايي)³ the Persian *Takhallus* of the great Vizir, who, in his Turkish poetry, assumed

¹ M. de Sacy, *Notices et Extr.*, translates "Présent Sublime;" سامي having no doubt also an allusion to the author's name.

² *Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits, &c.*, tom. iv. pp. 278, 279.

³ In Von Hammer's work *Fani* (فاني?) is given as Mir Ali Shir's Persian poetic name.

that of Neváyi (نَوای), by which he is better known. The present work being devoted exclusively to Persian writers, the biographer has confined himself to a short extract in that language. The practice of employing a double Takhallus seems to have been usual with those poets who composed in two languages. In the history of Hindustani literature¹, Nizámu'l Mulk is stated to have written under two poetic names, and M. de Tassy thinks it probable he used that of Asof (آسف) in his Hindustani compositions; Nizám (نظام) occurring throughout the Ghazals of his Persian Diwan. Sometimes also a different Takhallus seems to have been adopted at different periods of life, as a change of circumstances or a novel turn of mind influenced the spirit of composition; or at the pleasure of their prince, or patron; or of their shaikh, or teacher, who seems frequently to have performed the part of a poetical sponsor. Instances of both occur in these memoirs. Thus, Khácáni (Hacáiki) was named after Minúchehr, Khácán of Shirwan; and in the chapter now under notice, Tahmásp Culi Beg first called himself Áhdi (عهدی), but later in life assumed the name of Arshi (عرشی) as more suitable to the lofty aspiring of his genius, and the spiritual direction he obeyed in more mature age.

The other memoirs in this chapter are chiefly of Beks, Khans, and petty princes of the Shámlú, Afshár, Turkmán, and other tribes, whose history is only interesting as being connected with that of more important personages, and their compositions in general, neither of great length, nor of sufficient merit to entitle them to a higher place as poets than as potentates. Of these, however, Masáúf and Anís³ wrote Mesnavis; Selím⁴, a Mesnavi and a Diwan; Suháílí⁵, a Persian and a Turkish Diwan, and a Mesnavi of Láílí and

¹ Histoire de la Littérature Hindoui et Hindoustani, par M. Garcin de Tassy. Tome i., article *Nizam*.

² From عرش, the Throne of God.

³ Anís (انسی); name, Yol Culi Beg (یولقلی بیگ), of the Shámlú tribe, was at Herát in the service of Ali Culi Khan, after whose death he went to Hindustan, in the service of the Khán Khánán; was a companion of Shikibi (شکبیبی) of Isfahan, whose life is given among the memoirs of the author's contemporaries.

⁴ Selím (سلیم), Muhammad Culi, Shámlú, lived in Tehrán and Cazwín.

⁵ Amir Nizámuddín Ahmed, a noble of the Jaghatay tribe, was called Suhaili (سهیلی), a name given to him by Shaikh Azfi (آذری); died 907. It was to him that Husain Wáiz dedicated his Persian version of the Kalilah Dimnah.

Mejnún. Sálím¹ was author of one of the numerous poems on the story of Yúsuf and Zulaikha; and Itábi² ventured to emulate Nizami in the composition of a Khamsah. Sádiki (صادقي) assisted biography by a Tazkirah, in Turkish, of his contemporaries.

Of these Lutf Ali speaks mostly in favourable terms, particularly of Anísí, from whose Mahmúd and Ayáz he gives rather a long extract; and of Máyli (ميلي), to whose poetry he professes to be much attached (مايل) and from whose compositions he has made the largest selection in this chapter, viz., 160 lines from his Casidahs and Ghazals. He describes him as handsome, virtuous, and accomplished, acquainted with love, and skilled in the poetic art; his name Mirza Culi, of Turkman family, and residing at Meshhed al Rizawi.

Helali (هلالي), of Jaghatay family, was born in Asterábád, and studied there; from thence he went to Herat, where he was the "admired of all admirers," for his personal and mental accomplishments, and his society much courted. He wrote two Mesnavis, the Shah and Derwish, and Láílí and Mejnún; also a poem called Safát al Aáshikín (صفات العاشقين). At last "he drank the draught of martyrdom by order of Abdallah Khan Uzbek, for the crime of heresy (گناه تشيع following the Shiah tenets), in the year 939." His fragments of Ghazals, Casidahs, and some quatrains, quoted here, furnish about 124 lines.

A well-known name, Cábús ben Weshmgír, Prince of Dílem, appears to furnish an illustration worthy of remark, as the poet cited in the Ferhengi Shûuri as Mír Abú'l Mááni, in such numerous quotations, as to have merited a particular notice by Baron Hammer-Purgstall, who collected the "disjecti membra poëtæ," under the title of "Abulmaani's Juwelenschnüre³." The doubts respecting the real author of those witty and talented fragments are, I think, fully cleared by the short memoir attached to his name in this chapter, in which the Amír Cábús is identified with Shemsuddín Abu'l Mááni⁴, and the short and only specimen given of his Persian

¹ Sálím (ساليم) Mahmúd Beg, Turkman, dwelt at Tabriz.

² Itábi (عتابي), of the Tekelu tribe, inhabited Rey (ري), and went afterwards to Hindustan.

³ Juwelenschnüre Abul-Maani's, durch Joseph von Hammer. Wien, 1822.

⁴ Not Shems ul Mááli, nor Abu'l Mááli. All the MSS, which have the diacritical points perfect, have معاني.

poetry agrees, both in taste and subject, with many of the verses scattered over the pages of the Ferhengi Shuuri.

The list closes with the name of Sultan Yâcúb, successor of Hasan Padishah Turkman, of whom the author says, that from what he had read in history he seems to have been the greatest prince that nation ever had.

There are eighty-three memoirs in this section, and the verses quoted amount to about one thousand.

In the second book, the author enters on his first grand geographical division, Irán, of which the provinces of Azarbaijan and Shirwan offer the names of fifty-three poets, thirty-nine belonging to the city of Tabríz, the native place of Maulána Shemsuddín, of whose poetry no specimens are given here, the mystical Diwan which bears his name being well known, as Lutf Ali states, to have been composed in his honour, by his disciple, the Mawlawi Jeláluddín Rúmi. Of Tabriz were also Sááíb (صائب) Mírzá Muhammad Ali, author of a diwan of one hundred thousand Bayts; Shah Cásim Anwár the Sayyid, and mystic poet; Muhammad Âssár (عصا) whose poem Mihr and Mushteri the biographer much admires; Hakím Catrán (قطران) ben Mansúr, according to Dowlatshah a native of Termed, but by Lutf Ali, on the authority of Muhammad Awfí, and other writers, assigned to Tabriz; and Shaikh Muhammad Shebisteri, from whose spiritual poem, Gulshani Ráz¹, some extracts are inserted, Khacáni², and his contemporaries, Feleki², and Zúlfacár², were of Shirwán. The specimens given of the poets of these provinces are not very numerous, except those of Khacani, the great panegyric poet, from whose verses one thousand four hundred lines are selected. There is also an extract of one hundred and forty lines from the Jámi Jem, and the lyric compositions of Awhadi of Marághah.

Khorásán, the second chapter of this book, offers the splendid names of Anweri, Jámi, and Senáyí, each standing, respectively, among the highest in the elegiac, romantic, and didactic styles. Anweri, from Abiwerd, a district of Kháwarán, commences the chapter with a biographical notice of rather more length than is devoted to most of these lives, followed by an extract of above one thousand of his verses; and the extracts from the authors of the Heft Awrang and Hadícah are of proportionate length. Of Hátifi,

¹ The Gulshani Ráz has been published by Baron Hammer-Purgstall. "Mahmud Schebisteri's Rosenflor des Geheimnisses," 1838.

² These lives are given by M. Charmoy; "Expédition d'Alexandre," &c.

Jami's nephew, a native also of Jám, some quotations are given from his poem of the Heft Manzar¹, and from his Sháhinhsháh Námeb.

Under his native town of Tús, appears Firdúsi, the first, if not the only epic poet of Persia, and Asadi, his preceptor. Fifteen poets do honour to Kermán, among whom the principal merit seems to be given to Maulána Wahshi (وحشي) by others called of Yezd, because he lived there. Three mesnawis of his composition are named, Khuld Barrein², Názir u Manzúr³, and Ferhad u Shirin; of which the two last were written in the measure of Nizami's Khusru and Shirín; the first in that of the Makhzan al Asrar of the same poet; the first two are not spoken of in very flattering terms, but his poem on the loves of Shirin, if it had been completed, the biographer thinks would have been excellent. He also wrote a Diwan, from which, as well as from his two best mesnawis and his قيمت نامه about nine hundred lines of extracts are given.

Níshápúr presents the names of Abú Tálib Faríduddín, called Áttár, and of Omar Ben Kháyám; of the moralist, and of the free-thinker. Also of Nazíri (نظيري) "an incomparable poet"; some, however, have assigned Nazíri to Jawín, as his place of birth.

Herát contains few names worthy of record, though twenty poets appear as natives there. Hakím Azraki, the author also of the Alfiah Shalfiah, composed a diwan of ten thousand bayts; and Muzaffar was styled by Dowlatshah a second Khacani, to which praise Lutf Ali considers him but little entitled, and differs also from Mejdúddín Hemger in his comparison of Imámi, another poet of Herát, with his contemporary, the great Sádi of Shíráz.

The extracts of all the authors quoted in this chapter amount to above 7000 lines, and the number of poets named are one hundred and seventy.

The provinces of Tabaristán, Gílán, and Mázenderán, which form the subject of the next chapter, present a list of poets not very remarkable for their fame, nor are their extracts numerous; from these, however, must be excepted Masáúd Sáad Selmán, who is distinguished by a selection of five hundred lines from his works, composing at least half the quotations.

The fourth chapter is divided into the provinces of Arabian and Persian Irac. The former furnishes only five poets, with but a very

ناظر و منظور³ خلد برين³ هفت منظر¹
نظيري شاعر بي نظير¹

few lines of quotation, not sufficient to establish them as authors of merit. "Precedence is given to Irac Árab in this chapter, from pious respect to Ali and the Imams, whose holy shrines it contains."

The extensive province of Irac Ájam, comprehending the cities of Isfahán, Rey, Cazwín, Cum, Káshán, contributes very largely to the memoirs and anthology. Isfahan, Lutf Ali's native city, commences, and the biographer does honour to his birth-place, by citing seventy-seven poets, its inhabitants. Of these, he particularly distinguishes Jemáluddín Abdu'Razzác, and Kemáluddín Ismáíl, his son; their compositions hold a very high place among those who wrote in the elegiac and panegyric styles. Rafiúddín, their contemporary and rival, was born at Lobnán near Isfahan, and was constantly engaged in poetical strife with them. Another contemporary was Sharfuddín Fazl Allah Seferdeh, Poet King, author of the *Atbác al Zehb*, or *Scales of Gold* (اطباق الذهب) in imitation of the *Atwác al Zehb*¹, of Zamakshari. Núri, of Isfahan, a poet not much known otherwise, seems to have been held in some estimation, in proof of which, a few extracts are given from his *Diwan*; and Mír Sabrí (صبري) who had before called himself Fáris (فارس) was, in his time, considered by the people of Irac as a second Sháhí²; Lutf Ali even gives him the preference over that poet, from the remains which he had seen of his *Diwan*. Mír Sabrí lived in the time of Shah Tahmasp.

Two remarkable memoirs are those of Násir Khusrú, and Zamíri, both of Isfahan. Násir Khusrú Álawí³, is well known in the history of the earlier Persian poets. Lutf Ali gives Násir's sketch of his own life, which forms a most interesting, and highly curious piece of autobiography, but is far too long to be quoted entire in this sketch, and suffers much by abridgement. It commences with an account of his education, from childhood till his accomplishment of those deeper studies, which obtained for him an extensive reputation as a philosopher, but which compromised the credit of his orthodoxy, and afforded his enemies the opportunity of attacking

¹ اطباق الذهب "Samachschari's Goldene Halsbänder," by Joseph Von Hammer, Wien, 1835.

² Acá Malek B. Jemáluddín of Sebzawár, called Amír Sháhí.

³ He was seventh in descent from Músá, the seventh Imam. ناصر بن

خسرو بن حارث بن عیسی بن حسن بن محمد بن علی بن موسی
الرضا

him and his disciples, as opposed to the true religion of Islam. The details of these persecutions, and the consequent wanderings of Násir, and of his brother, Abu Sâid Khusrú, extend through six folio pages of memoir, terminating with the death of Násir, at the extraordinary age of a hundred and forty years, up to which time, and to within some hours of his death, the narrative was continued by himself. He concluded by bequeathing his numerous works, by name, to his different friends, and dictating to his brother exact instructions for his interment, which was performed in the cave he had for many years inhabited in a certain district of Badakhshán, where he had devoted himself to prayer and contemplation, in retirement from the cares of the world, and the dreaded persecution of his enemies. The conclusion of the memoir was written by his brother, Abú Sâid, giving a minute account of the last moments of the dying philosopher, whose repeated professions of belief in the Mahometan faith may, perhaps, redeem him from the charge of infidelity, which, in the opinion of many persons, is attached to his memory. Some of the circumstances recorded in this memoir are so extraordinary, especially the use he declares himself to have made of talismans, by which spirits were rendered subservient to his will, and the appearance of the two supernatural agents, who assisted Abu Sâid in the labours of his brother's interment, that Lutf Ali declares his inability to explain many parts of the Tazkirah he quotes; but from as much of it as he could understand, and from the testimony of other authors, he allows Násir the merit of deep learning and extensive acquirements. Of his poetical talent he could only give a specimen from indirect sources, not having seen his Diwan; and had selected about one hundred and thirty lines, chiefly from his Casidahs, which appear to have been, for the most part, employed in enigmatic description, or devoted to the praise of the Unity of the Godhead.

Zamírí (Kemáluddín Husain) flourished in the reign of Shah Tahmasp Safawi. "His salty poetry was a plaster to the wounded breasts of lovers, and his sweet couplets shed repose on the souls of the holy." "On account of his skill in geomancy he assumed the poetical name of Zamírí" (ضميرى the intelligent, or contemplative). "Night and day, in public and in private, he was continually occupied in reading and composing." "Neither in Isfahan nor elsewhere had any poet been author of so many works," though, as Lutf Ali shrewdly remarks, "the Maulána would have done better if he had considered the quality, rather than the quantity, of his compositions." The catalogue of those enumerated in this memoir presents

a formidable array, sufficient to entitle Zamírí to rank, for fertility of genius and the variety of his productions, with Abdurrahmán Jámi and Faríduddín Áttár. Besides numerous Diwans, he was author of six Mesnawis¹; Náz u Niyáz; Behar u Khazán (Spring and Autumn); Hasanat al Akhiár; poems on the loves of Wámic and Ázrá, and of Laila and Mejnun; and an Iskender Nameh. His Diwans of Ghazals were thus arranged: those not intended as imitations,—of which seven² were completed; and those which were in imitation of, or to correspond with, the Diwans of other poets. Of these last, six were composed after the following distinguished writers of Ghazals³: Kh'ájah Háfiz, and Bábá Fighání, both of Shiraz; Jámi; Lisání of Shiraz; Sháhí of Sebzawar; Benáyí of Herat; Mír Sálahi of Meshhed; Asáfi of Herat; Bábá Shahídí of Cum; Mír Humáyún of Isfrain; Mír Ashraf Jehan of Cazwín; Kemal, of Khójend; and Amír Khusru and Hasan, of Dehli. Besides the above, four Diwans were arranged in imitation of Saadi's Taybát, Bedáyâ, Khawátim, and Ghazaliátí Cadímah⁴. Of this voluminous writer an extract of only sixty-six lines is given, which were all Lutf Ali had an opportunity of seeing.

The other towns of the province of Persian Irac furnish copious

وامق و عذرا—حسنة الاخيار—بهار و خزان—ناز و نياز¹
اسكندر نامه—

صورت حال—صفينة اقبال—قدس خيال—
عذر مقال—صيقل ملال—عشق بيزوال—كنز الاقوال²

³ These Diwans were thus named, respectively, in the orders of the authors enumerated:—

عيون الزلال	سحر حلال	نخسته نال	منتهاى كمال
آيينهء جمال	فراغ بال	لوامع خيال	معشوق لا يوزال
معراج الآمال	درد مثال	بدائيت وصال	حسن مال
انيس اللبال	سحاب جلال		

I have not translated these titles, which, with those preceding them, seem selected chiefly with regard to sound and rhyme, and many of them evidently in allusion to the Diwan, or author, imitated.

⁴ غزليات قدومه—خواتيم—بدايح—طيبات
نهایة السحر—بدایة الشعر—صنایح—طاهرات styled

materials for biography. Rey, with twenty-two poets, presents the names of Umídí¹, a native of Tehrán, but resident here, whose Casidahs are much admired; and of Pendár², whose Diwan had not been seen by Lutf Ali, but who is mentioned in terms of high praise, and is stated to have composed in Persian and Arabic and in the dialect of Dílem.

Cazwín and Cum have each a numerous list. Of the forty-two poets of the former town, Lutf Ali particularly praises Sharaf³, a writer not much known from other biographies, but considered to be superior to any of his fellow-citizens. Baba Shahídi, a "renowned poet" in the service of Sultan Yâcúb, was of Cum. After Yâcúb's death, he went to Khorasan, where he enjoyed the friendship of Abdurrahmán Jámí, and the favour of Sultan Husain Mirza Baicara. Among the memoirs of the poets of Cum is that of Shaikh Nizámí, already mentioned, as being quoted⁴ by Professor Charmoy.

Cum has thirty-five poets. Kashan presents forty-two poets, though, from the slight notice of their works, our author does not appear to have allowed them much merit. However, Muhteshem (محتشم) and Kelím seem, in his opinion, to deserve to be more largely quoted, and he accordingly gives above five hundred lines from Muhteshem. In Mesnawi and Ruba'i he did not satisfy Lutf Ali's critical taste; but his skill in the Casidah and Ghazal is much praised. A beautiful elegy of his on the death of the martyr Husain is mentioned. Kelím is here assigned to Kashan, his birth-place, though by many authors he is stated to have been a native of Hamadán. Extracts are given from his Ghazals; in the other styles of poetry he was not so successful. A Shahinshah Nameh of his composition is mentioned, but only four verses quoted from it.

To the talent of Baba Afzal, (افضل) another of its poets, and to

¹ مولانا اميدي His name was Arjásp (ارجاسپ)

² كمال الدين پندار رازي

³ ميرزا شرف جهان His family had been much honoured in the time of Oljaítú Sultán; the Mirza himself lived under Shah Tahmásp Safawi; in his style of writing he imitated Zamíri (already mentioned), and his Diwan was composed of 2000 bayts.

⁴ See note, page 347. The other lives translated, besides those in pages 358, 367, were of Nizámí Arúzi of Samarcand, Mujíruddín of Báileán, and Abú'l Álá of Ganjah—nine in all.

his friendship with Násiruddin Muhammad Túsí, the city of Kashan was indebted for favour and protection, when Hulagu Khan and the Moghuls were laying waste Iran and its dependencies. Násiruddin wrote verses in praise of his friend, the poet, of which a couplet is preserved in his memoir.

Asíruddin Awmání, Uriyán, (عربیان) and Heláki, are much praised among the poets of Hamadán, especially Asíruddin, though his Diwan was not extant in Lutf Ali's time. His life, and that of Uriyan, appear to be well known. Heláki was more modern, and lived in the time of Behram Mirza Safawi.

* The short memoir of Kh'ájah Rashiduddin, inserted in this place, may be worth notice, from the great interest attached to his historic work; as a poet he exhibits only one single tetrastich. He is thus mentioned:—

خواجه رشید الدین محمد وزیر است با همت و عالی مقدار
 و پیر است پر تدبیر و کم آزار صلاح اندیش صاحب اخلاق
 و در نیک رأی مشهور آفاق تصانیف از او بسیار از آن جمله جامع
 رشیدی که در انتظام انساب قبایل ترك تا زمان او در تواریخ
 فارسی کتابی بآن تنقیح نوشته نشده و عمارات عالیه از وی مانده
 آخر الامر بوزارت رسیده مدتی وزارت ارغون خان و سلطان
 محمد جدا بنده کرده و وزارت با امارت جمع کرده و آخر الامر
 با فساد خواجه علی شاه وی و پسرش شهید شدند و بسعادت
 شهادت رسیدند گویند اعضای ایشان را باقالیم سبعة فرستاده اند

Sávah (ساوه) gave birth to Selmán, hence called Sávaji, to distinguish him from Masáúd Selmán, already mentioned. He is described as one of the first poets of his time, and a saying of Álá-uddowlah Semnání is quoted, that, "Like the pomegranates of Semnán, and the poetry of Selmán, were none to be found."

Of Yezd there are eighteen poets. The only one remarkable is Sayyid Jelál Ázad (عضد); he and his father successively held the office of Vizir to the Muzaffar Sultans.

Írac Ajam, with its large and populous cities, thus furnishes two hundred and eighty-two poets to this collection of memoirs; and

from their writings the compiler has selected between four and five thousand verses.

Fars, the fifth chapter of the Book of Iran, has fifty-seven poets, of which, from a list of distinguished names presented by Shiraz, those of Ahli, Háfiz, and Sâdi, are conspicuous. Of the two latter, whose writings have been more before the European public than those of most other poets of Persia, little that is new is to be gained from their biographies here, although given at considerable length; the author has shown due respect to their genius by the admiration he has expressed, and by the copious extracts he has made of their compositions: of Sâdi especially, of whom near sixteen hundred verses are quoted, being the longest¹ extract in the whole anthology of this work; and of Háfiz, from his Ghazals, about three hundred lines.

The few quotations of Persian verses used by Lutf Ali in his narrative, are almost exclusively from these two poets²; Háfiz is cited more than once in the preface; and, in another part, Sadi's Bostan is quoted in illustration of the distress of Isfahan during its siege by the Afghan army.

Not contented with the abundant extracts he has inserted in his Florilège, from all parts of Sadi's Diwan, and numerous short apologues from the Bostan, Lutf Ali has made a large selection also of the poetical fragments of the Gulistan, which popular work he considers a "compendium of wisdom;" and contrary to the rule naturally prescribed in the arrangement of a poetical miscellany, he has further gratified his admiration of his favourite writer, by the insertion of a short Kelimah, in prose³. He dignifies Sadi by the appellation of "one of the four columns of eloquence and learning," in which he associates him with Firdusi, Nizami, and Anweri, and declares it to be his opinion, that "from the earliest commencement

¹ Next to Sadi, the longest extracts are from Khacáni, Anweri, Kemal of Isfahan, Wahshi, and Hakím Senáyí, 1000 to 1200 lines each; of the contemporary poets, those from Sabáhi and Hátif, of about the same length.

² There are also occasional quotations of a verse or two from Anweri, Senáyí, Nizami, &c.

³ It may be curious to observe which passage of the whole work had so struck its reader as to make the temptation to quote it irresistible.—از حكوي پرسيدند—

که نيكبخت کيست و بدبخت چيست گفت که نيكبخت آنست که خورد و کشت و بدبخت آنست که مرد وهشت
It is from the 1st Apophthegm of the 8th chapter.

of Persian poetic literature, no individual has appeared, who is entitled to rank with these four." Hafiz is quoted also in the short notice of Shiraz, which precedes the memoirs of her gifted sons; and Lutf Ali mentions having "frequently been honoured" by pilgrimages to the Kh'ajah's tomb.

The account Lutf Ali gives of Shiraz, and its lively inhabitants, runs thus: "Shiráz, the Seat of Learning, is situated in the third climate; its longitude from the meridian of the Fortunate Isles is 88°, and its latitude 39° 36' from the Equator. It was founded in the year 74 of the Hijrah, by Muhammad Ibn Yúsus Sacfi, (ثقفى) the brother of Hajjáj, under the ascendance of Virgo, and in the time of Áhaduddowlah Dílemí its population had increased to such a degree that a new building had to be constructed for the soldiers outside of the city; this was called Súc al Amír. Samsámuddowlah, son of Adhaduddowlah, built a fortification, and Ámru Leis Suffár founded a mosque, the Jámí Átíc, (the Old Metropolitan Mosque). The water of this place is supplied by canals (قنوات), of which the best is that of Ruknuddín Hasan Boyah. Its praises are chaunted by Kh'ajah Háfiz:

"Fair Shiraz, with its pure stream of Ruknábád, and its soft-breathing zephyrs!"

"O censure not that blessed spot, that beauteous mole on the cheek of the universe!"

"The climate is temperate; neither extremely hot nor cold. Its inhabitants, whether gentle or simple, children or aged sires, are fond of pleasure and social enjoyment, passing the whole of their days in taverns and coffee-houses. The unceasing ravages of time, and misfortune, by which Shiraz, in common with all the other cities of Iran, has been afflicted, are now repaired under the auspices of the present sovereign," (Kerím Khan Zend,) "by whose order the city has been surrounded by a wall and deep ditch, its streets paved, and many fine edifices been constructed. Shiraz was always celebrated as the residence of saints and holy men, and its soil is the burial-place of the honoured descendants of Imams; such as Ahmed and Muhammad, the sons of Músá Kázim; and the place of repose of illustrious Shaikhs; as, Shaikh Abdallah Khaffif, and Shaikh Rozbehan [Shattáh, and Shaikh Sádi, and Kh'ajah Shemsuddín, called Háfiz, and others."

Ahli, distinguished from his namesake, Ahli Khorásání, of Tarshíz, as Shirází, is mentioned in terms of high praise, justifying the reputation in which his poems have always been held in Persia.

The other towns, Aberkoh, Behbehán, Dárábjird, Shúster, and Kázhún, offer nothing remarkable in the few memoirs attached to their names. More than three thousand lines of poetry are given of the inhabitants of the favoured region of Fars.

Tárán, which forms the subject of the next Book, is distinguished as the native country of some of the greatest of the Persian authors. Foremost among them, in the first subdivision, Balkh, appears the great Mawlawi, Jeláluddín Rúmí. His memoir is rather a long one, and there are extracts from various parts of his Diwan. Ânsari, one of the earliest, and, according to Lutf Ali, one of the best of the poets, does honour to this great city, the birth-place, also, of Shaikh Abú Alí Síná, known to Europeans as Avicenna, the physician and philosopher, but who is here introduced to us as a Persian poet, with a few lines in praise of wine; and of Mauláná Rashíduddín Watwát, the author of the work on poetics, called Hadáyiç al Sihr (حدایف السحر), whose biography is already well known, and whose poetry is here rather largely quoted. Of Ansari are inserted some extracts of great value, from the scarcity of that poet's works: Also of Minúchehr, surnamed Shast Keleh, (شست كله), Ansari's contemporary, both being of the time of the Sabaktaginidæ.

Among the poets of the same district appears Amír Khónd, the author of the voluminous and valuable history, the Rawzat al Safá, from which, probably, the distich here given is only a quotation.

The province of Kharzim (Chapter 2nd) supplies only five poets, of which Zahíruddín is alone distinguished, and from his poetry four hundred and fifty lines are extracted. Zahíruddín Faryábi's life is among those translated by M. Charmoy.

Mawaralnahr (Chapter 3rd) furnishes some of the oldest and most celebrated names in Persian literature. Among them Ustád Abú'l Hasan Rúdeki, "the first who unlocked the treasury of Persian poetry," Shaikh Abu'l Abbás, and Âmíc, contemporaries of Rúdeki, and all three of Bokhara. Above four hundred verses are quoted from Maulána Âmíc Bokhárí, who is here styled "a sweet and eloquent writer," and whose works are extremely rare. The quotations from Rúdeki and Ísmat Allah, of Bokhara, are not so numerous. Júherí Zerger¹ was also of that town.

The poets of Badakhshán, Termed, Khóvend, and Akhsiket, are noticed. Of Termed was Adíb Sábir, by Anweri preferred to Rashiduddín Watwát. Lutf Ali praises him highly, and quotes

¹ One of M. Charmoy's Lives.

largely from his poems. Asíruddín, called Akhsíkétí, from Akhsíkét in Ferghánah, belongs also to this division of Turan. From Samarcand, we have Dakíki, "an ancient and esteemed poet," Hakím Súzení, and Amír Muízzi, who was Poet-king at the court of Sultan Mûzzuddín Sanjar. An extract of six hundred lines accompanies this last memoir.

The whole of the poetry quoted in these three chapters amounts to about two thousand seven hundred verses, from fifty-four poets; of whom by far the greater number were of Bokhára and Samarcand.

The writers of older date have now been noticed to the extent of the Persian dominions. In the 3rd Book, devoted to Hind, the author confines himself exclusively to the memoirs of those who composed in the Persian language. He has divided this vast region, of which, however, the number of poets given is but small, into the Dekan, Dehli, and Kashmír.

He describes India as "a country of great extent, containing innumerable cities and districts; of excessive heat; its manners and customs mostly differing from those of Iran and Turan; producing many strange fruits; and, generally, from its great distance, very imperfectly known to the inhabitants of Persia."

There is a short geographic and historic sketch of the Dekan, under which head are named only two poets, Saffri, of Jawnpúr, (صغیري جونپوري), and Shaikh Faizi, (قبضي), son of Shaikh Mubárik, known as Dekani, though the author of the Heft Aclím states him to have resided at Agrah. Faizi composed a Diwan, which Lutf Ali had seen, and from which he gives an extract.

Dehli is extolled for the excellence of its air and water, the freshness of its gardens, and its charming situation, above all the cities of Hindustan. It supplies this biography with seven poets, of which by far the most distinguished are the well-known Amír Khusrú Dehlevi, and his friend Amír Hasan, here called Kh'ájah Hasan.

Amír Khusru was of Kesh in Turkestan, from whence his father, Amír Mahmúd, fled to India in the time of Jengiz Khán's invasion, and, coming to Dehli, engaged in the service of Sultan Muhammad Taghlic Shah, by whom he was much favoured. He fell a martyr in the sacred wars (against the Hindoos), and was succeeded in his dignities by his son. Amír Khusru having perfected himself in all bodily and mental accomplishments, "the odour of the wine of sanctity having penetrated the brain of his soul," he withdrew him-

self from worldly pursuits, and devoted himself to the service of the Shaikh Nizám al Avlíá, who was much attached to him. Lutf Ali states it to be a well-known fact, that Shaikh Sâdi visited Dehli for the express purpose of meeting Amír Khusru, between whom¹ and himself a very sincere attachment was formed. The poetical works of Amír Khusru are here said to amount, including his Khamsah of Mesnawis, and Diwan of Casidahs, and Ghazals, to the enormous number of *four hundred thousand* bayts and upwards; of which near one hundred thousand had been inspected by the laborious compiler of this biography. Amír Khusru died in 725, and was interred in the same burial-ground with Shaikh Shakar-Ganj, Nizam al Avlia's preceptor.

Kh'ajah Hasan is very briefly mentioned, as a pupil also of Nizam al Avlia, with whom, as well as with Amír Khusru, he was united by the most affectionate ties of friendship.

The life of Shaikh Farídu'din Shakar-Ganj is also given. Faríd, "the Pearl of Saints, and unique among the pious men of Hindustan," obtained the imperishable *treasure*² of holiness, and sweetened the palate of his soul with the *sugar*³ of Divine aspirations." As a sufficient proof of his merit, it is mentioned that Nizam al Avlia, the greatest of the Sufis of India, was his pupil. One Matlá and a Quatrain are given of the compositions of the Shaikh Shakar Ganj.

Another celebrated Sufi and Saint was Mûínuddin Chishti³, a follower of Sultan Shamsuddin and Sultan Shihábuddin Ghúri. His burial-place was Ajmír.

The other poets of Dehli quoted are, Mír Jedáyi (جدایي) whose title was Chákir Khan, and whose skill in painting obtained for him from the Emperor Akbar the surname of Nádír al Mulk; he was engaged in a poetical controversy with Ghazáli of Meshhed; Jemáli, a pupil of his uncle Behá-uddín, of Lakhnau; and Nisháni (Ali Ahmed) a Derwish, and distinguished man. Ali (Násir Áli,) contemporary with Aurang Zib, was of Serhind.

Of Kábul, the biographer only finds one poet worthy of mention, Kh'ajah Zádéh, an excellent and accomplished youth, the beauty of whose mind was only equalled by the loveliness of his person. "Kábul is a country of antiquity, situated in the fourth climate; it

¹ See "Saadi, Auteur des premières Poésies Hindoustani."—Journal Asiatique, 1843.

² A play on the poet's name شڪر گنج—*Shakar*, sugar, and *Ganj*, treasure.

³ For the lives of these two Shaikhs, as well as that of Nizám al Avlia, see M. de Tassy's "Mémoire sur la Religion Musulmane dans l'Inde."

was formerly the frontier district between Iran and Hindustan, and was for many years subject to the Sultans of Hind; it is now forty years since it passed into the dominion of Nadir Shah, and after him, of Ahmed Shah. It is an extensive and wondrous region, celebrated for the purity of its air and the salubrity of its water, and producing many excellent fruits.”

A poet of Pánipat, Cádiri, is cited merely by name, and one only of Láhór, Sirájuddín, for whose history reference is made to the notice of him in the *Heft Aclím*. Of Láhór it is said, that “though a hot climate, snow and ice fall there in the spring season.”

A short account is then given of Kashmír, to whose genial climate and loveliness of situation Lutf Ali pays the usual tribute of praise bestowed by Eastern geographers on that favoured region, which the “luxuriance of its gardens and groves, and the abundance of its rivulets and flowers, make to resemble the delicious meadows of Paradise.” It is described as situated in the fourth climate; its inhabitants to have received Islamism in the time of Sultan Sikandar, and to have a commerce of shawls, for the weaving of which they are famous, and of saffron, a production of the country. Four poets are cited, natives of Kashmir; of these the only name with which we are much acquainted, is that of Ghani (غني), author of a *Diwan*. The others are Binish (بينش), who lived at Jehánábád, in the time of Aurang Zíb; Kemgói (كمگوي); and Mazhari (مظھري), an agreeable person, who was surnamed Buti Khandán (بت خندان) Smiling Idol? in India, and who made frequent journeys between that country and Persia.

The whole of the lines quoted in selection from the poets of Hind, exclusive of a large extract from Amir Khusru, amount only to a few more than a hundred. Those of Khusru are from the Ghazals and other parts of his *Diwan*, and from his *Mesnawis* of Láílí Mejnún, Khusrú Shírín, the Sikander Nameh, and his poem of Khizr Khán; altogether comprising 254 lines¹.

Having completed the catalogue of the poets of earlier date according to his geographical distribution, the names of some ladies are added, who distinguished themselves in literature and especially in poetry. The appearance of ladies, as authors, in a country where female talents are supposed to be underrated, and the seclusion of

¹ I have been rather more minute in the analysis of these three chapters, from the interest which attaches to the poets of India in reference to M. Garcin de Tassy's *History of Hindi and Hindustani Literature*, of which learned and important work the second volume, now in preparation, is anxiously desired by the friends of Oriental Literature,

to be of Níshápúr ; her powers of mind were unequalled among her sex ; and her talents procured her honour and respect at the court of Sultan Sanjar. It was known that she composed much poetry ; but by length of time, and chiefly by the destruction of Herat, during the invasion of Obaidullah Khan Uzbek, it was no longer extant in Lutf Ali's time. He has been able, however, to give seventy-six lines of this accomplished lady's composition, forming tetrastichs ; one of which was gracefully improvised by Mihsiti in description of the snow which was then falling, when desired by the Sultan to describe the weather.

Núr Jehán Bégam, the favourite Empress of Jehángír, concludes the list of poetesses of Persia, and Persian India. Her name only is given, and a distich addressed by her to Jehangír in deprecation of his anger, which seems to have produced the effect desired, by calming that Emperor's resentment.

"The amber-scented pen having, by divine permission, performed its promised task of depicting the lives and sayings of the eloquent poets of former times," their annalist proceeds to the literary chronicles of his own age. He commences by lamenting the melancholy series of events which had brought poetry and its professors into disrepute, and had interrupted the cultivation of learning, and gives an affecting and eloquent description of the miseries entailed on his country by the civil convulsions of the last fifty years, during which period "the regions of Iran, once the type of the bowers of Paradise, and the envy of the inhabitants of the world," had been devastated "by the burning flame of the oppressor, and the tyranny and wickedness of stranger and of citizen ; by the bursting of the thunder-cloud of calamity, and the out-pouring of the deluge of crime ; her wealth plundered—her daughters massacred, or sold to bondage—and the denizens of the once-smiling gardens of that beauteous region exiled and wandering in a foreign clime."

"Barred was the door of learning in that realm ;
 Its portals closed against the pilgrim's step.
 Each day teemed fruitful with calamity.
 On either side stood battle's grim array,
 And rose the dust-cloud of tumultuous strife.
 Each Venus-face was captive in the rude
 And ruthless grasp of some infuriate Mars ;
 Each Peri, prisoner to some scowling Dive.
 The heart was drunken with the sickening blood-draught,
 Quaffed from the bowl of murder and of death,
 No music met the ear,
 Save from the caverns of the minstrel's lute,
 The low sad sound of wail and lamentation."

“Neither was opportunity of worship and prayer for the apart-kneeling Záhíd (hermit), nor of blandishment and dalliance for the heart-stealing Sháhíd (charmer); for peril of his life, the soul-enchained lover dared not court the society of his beloved one, and the beautiful object of his passion, from distracted fortune, desired not the sight of her afflicted victim.

“At length the smoke of the sighs of the unfortunate, ascending to heaven, quenched the fire of the oppressor’s wrong, and the arrow of the distressed one’s prayer reached the target of success.” “That is, it seemed good to the all-healing Physician, the Creator of the universe and its inhabitants, to raise from the orchard of time the tree of a reign of Rústem strength, and of dignity like Cosroës; and to nourish, in the rose-garden of the world, the young plant of power, vigorous as Jemshíd, that by the gripe of justice the thorns and thistles of oppression should be rooted up, and by the hand of benevolence the noxious weeds of avarice should be eradicated from the world.”—“A prince, the veil of the tent of whose power scares from this desert world the ominous kites and ravens of disaster; a potentate, the breeze of whose flapping banner causes the roses and lilies of justice and equity to blossom on the brambles of iniquity and oppression; a merciful ruler, whose innate clemency and virtue shine conspicuous in his name¹, as in his nature; a hero, the tongue of the flame of whose wrath is speechful with the verse, ‘*Deliver us from the torment of fire*’; the lightning of his sword dazzling the face of the sun, and the point of his lance piercing the ear of Mars; in whose reign of justice wolves have undertaken the employ of the shepherd, and in the period of whose powerful rule thieves have performed the duties of the watch; at the report of whose generosity the name of Mân has become an empty sound, and in comparison with the glory of whose valour the deeds of Zál are but an idle tale; Darius in wisdom; in majesty, Sekander; exalting the standard of Jemshíd, and displaying the vest of Rústem; the lion of the forest of bravery; the champion of the arena of success; the favoured, fortunate, and incomparable monarch, Abú’l Nasr Sultán Kerím Zend,—God glorify him with victory, and dismay his opposers!”

These are but a few² of the extravagant epithets of adoration

¹ Alluding to the name of Kerim (كريم) clement, benevolent).

² وَقَنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ Cor. ii. 197. Edition of Flügel.

³ Some of these metaphorical expressions are almost too absurd to be translated, and without explanation, would be hardly intelligible to the general reader; as, where the panegyrist declares the Kemend (hunting-noose) of Kerim’s justice

bestowed on the amiable and illustrious Kerím, in grateful acknowledgment of the benefits bestowed on Persia by his wise and benevolent reign, and the blessings of peace obtained by him for that distracted empire, which, after the ravages of Affghan invasion, the horrors of war, siege, and famine, the vigorous but bloody rule of Nadir Shah, and the equally destructive contests of ephemeral princes, and their lawless troops, at length reposed in a tranquillity which Lutf Ali celebrates in language far exceeding in hyperbole the classic descriptions of the golden age. "Now is each wilderness become a verdant lawn, and every thorn-bush blossoms like a jasmine-branch¹; the mourner has obtained the blessing of comfort; the desert has put on the garb of populousness. In the pasture-ground of his justice the finch and hawk fly together; in the meadow of his graciousness the wolf is the partner of the lamb²; the palate of the antelope-kid is sweetened by the lion's milk³, and the claw of the pigeon-chick is dyed in the blood of the falcon; the stone of the shepherd, by his mercy, has broken the fang of the wild beast; and the huntsman, through his clemency, has fractured the eagle's pinion.

Encouraged by this favourable tranquillity, and profiting by the leisure it affords, Lutf Ali turned his thoughts to the patriotic task of commemorating the modern poets, his countrymen and contemporaries. Zealous for their fame, he anxiously vindicates them from any disparaging comparison with the ancients, and points out the great difference which existed in the respective situations of the two classes of poets; the ancients "nurtured in the cradle of prosperity and peace, and obtaining every want and wish beneath the shadow of the protection of the monarchs of the age," their patrons, "the hand of whose benevolence effaced from the mirror of their heart every particle of the dust of affliction;" the moderns, exposed curtails the length of the enchaining ringlets of the charmers; and that, "from the lustre of the water (آبرو) of his sword, the (curved) scimitar of their eyebrow (اُرو) is as if hidden in a black sheath." And again, "The comb of the sword of his (just) revenge, from the blood of the iniquitous, becomes the face-adorners (or tyre-woman) of the bride of justice." "The shoe-nails of the war-horse of his glory have spread the dust of traitors (who have been trampled under its hoof), as Surmeh (collyrium), on the eyes of the brides of justice."

¹ Isaiah xxv. 1. "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

² "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together." Isaiah xi. 6; versified by Pope,—

"The lamb with wolves shall graze the verdant mead," &c.

³ A complicated play on words; از شیر سبزان شیرین

to all the vicissitudes of fortune, and the calamities which daily oppressed the inhabitants of Iran, especially the learned and studious, and by which "the bulbul of their speech became dumb, and the parrot of their genius wingless."

The whole of this introduction occupies some considerable space in the MS., and in rhetorical complexity of Persian fine-writing, more than equals the preface, already analyzed. Still more fully to render justice to the merits of his contemporaries, Lutf Ali has thought fit to give a detailed account of the circumstances which influenced their fortunes and confined their genius. These details extend through twelve pages of the text, affording a connected and interesting narrative of the affairs of Persia, from the commencement of its invasion by Mahmud and the Afghans to the re-establishment of order and tranquillity by the final successes of Kerím Khán Zend. Its contents are, however, so purely historical, that it may very properly be passed over¹ in this sketch of literary biography. Such parts of it as immediately relate to Lutf Ali, and his personal history, will be more appropriately quoted in the notice of his Life, which commences the last chapter of the Atesh Kedah.

The memoirs of the contemporaneous poets are placed (as those of the princes and nobles in the first book) in alphabetical order, their number not being sufficient to admit of a more classified arrangement. This is by far the most interesting portion of the whole work. Seventy-one poets,—many of them almost entirely unknown to us by name, and few of whose works, or even parts of them, if extant, are now accessible to our researches,—are here commemorated by Lutf Ali, with all the advantages derived from a knowledge of their history by personal acquaintance, and of their writings from immediate inspection. Many of these poets were Lutf Ali's intimate friends, with whom he was in habits of constant and cordial intercourse; and although it may be suspected that they were indebted to these circumstances for their existence in the pages of this biography, there are many, whose merits alone might entitle them to a place in the annals of Persian literature; and as his praise does not seem bestowed without discrimination, it gives them a better title to merit when conferred. Thus, although Maulana Muhammad Múmin Dáái² is cited as "a compendium of perfection, and virtue, and

¹ It may perhaps appear in a separate form.

² Dáái (داعی) was of a Sayyid family of Cum, and lived some time at Isfahan, where Lutf Ali "tasted the honeycomb of his society;" from thence Dáái returned to his native place, finally retired as a Derwish, and died at the age of ninety, A.H. 1166.

learning," and his verse declared to be pearls, and his prose compared to jewels; though Muwahhid¹ is styled the "phœnix of his age," and Shikfī² is said to contain in his heart a "treasury of the jewels of divine mystery," yet many are praised but slightly for poetic talent, and are rather eulogized for skill in other accomplishments, or for their social disposition, and agreeable manners.

Few of these modern poets distinguished themselves by compositions of any length. Sâdic³ wrote a Mesnawi, of which the title is not recorded; and Nâmi⁴ composed poems on the well-known subjects of the loves of Shîrîn, and of Laïla and Mejnûn; from the latter of these Mesnawis a short extract is given. Wâlih⁵, whose poetical compositions did not much please his biographer, compiled a Tazkirah. Umîd⁶ and Nashah⁷ were authors of Diwans, which were completed during their lives. Of some others, the poetical works were collected by their friend Lutf Ali,—as those of Mîrzâ

¹ Maulâna Shafiâ Muwahhid (شَفِيعًا مَوْحِدًا) whose ancestors came from Talcân to Isfahan, studied under Maulâna Husain; after more than seventy years of piety and devotion, "the falcon of his soul took its flight for the rose-garden of Paradise." He was much attached to Lutf Ali.

² Maulâna Muhammad Ali Shikfī (شَكِيفِ) was murdered in his own house at Shiraz, in the time of the Afghan invasion, 1135.

³ Âcâ Muhammad Sâdic (صَادِق); his family were Sayyids of Tafrash. He came in his youth to Isfahan, and studied under Maulâna Muhammad Sâdic Ardestâni, who was the "Edrîs of his time." After his master's death, and the termination of the Safide dynasty, Âcâ Muhammad retired to his native place, and died in the reign of Nadir Shah. He was a great friend of Lutf Ali Beg. His chief taste in poetry was for Mesnawi, but he wrote also Ghazals and Tetrastichs.

⁴ Nâmi (نَامِي) Mirza Muhammad Sâdic. His ancestors were Sayyids, and came a hundred and fifty years before from Fars to Isfahan.

⁵ Wâlih (وَالِد) wrote much poetry, and was author of a Diwan. His name was Ali Culî Khan: he went in his youth to India, where he died.

⁶ Umîd (اُمِيد) Âcâ Riza (رِضَا). He went in the time of Sultan Husain to India, where the emperor gave him the surname of Ghizilbâsh Khan. He died there. Lutf Ali had often met him, and describes him as an agreeable companion, a sweet singer, and a scientific musician.

⁷ Nashah (نَشَاه) Mirza 'Abdu 'Razzâc, descended from Jehânsâh Turkmán, was of Tabriz, but studied at Isfahan; was skilled in science, particularly mathematics. He died at Tabriz, 1158. His Diwan consisted of 2000 bayts.

He mentions another Nashah, a contemporary, Mîrzâ Zâin al Âbidîn, who died 1153, at Shiraz; a pleasant companion, a good poet, and skilled in penmanship.

Tabíb¹, and Mushtác²; in the arrangement of the latter he was assisted by Sahbá³ and Hátif⁴, and has been able to quote largely from it for his selections. He also performed the melancholy duty of composing a Táríkh, or poetical chronogram of the death of many of his friends. One of these was on Derwish Abdu 'l Mujíd⁵ of Tálcán; another on Mirza Tayib⁶. Of Tarikhs; he relates an anecdote of one of his contemporaries, Tayri⁷, whose melancholy disposition induced him to compose his own Tarikh, or epitaph, every year, in anticipation of death, omitting only the year in which he died.

Of all these modern authors, the most remarkable is Hátif of Isfahan, whom his friend compares to Aasha and Jerír, to Anwari

¹ Tabíb (طبيب) Mirza 'Abdu 'l Bákí; his grandfather, Mirza Selmán, came to Isfahan in the reign of Shah Abbas; and his father, Mirza Muhammad Rahím, was Hakím Báshí to Shah Sultan Husain Safawi. The poet also followed the profession of a physician, in which capacity he was for some time attached to Nadir Shah. He died 1172.

² Mushtác (مشتاق) Mír Sayyid Ali, of the Husaini family at Isfahan, was an intimate friend of Lutf Ali, who also studied under him.

³ Sahbá (صهبا) Ácá Muhammad Takí (تقی). His father was Mulla Yadullah (ید الله), and his grandfather came from Damáwand to Cum, where the poet was born, and where he lived thirty years; since which he had been, the last twenty years, a resident of Isfahan, and died 1191.

⁴ Ahmed Hátif (هاتف) was a Sayyid of the Husaini branch at Isfahan; an excellent critic, and unequalled as a poet, both in Arabic and Persian. The specimens given comprehend all the varieties of the Diwan,—Casidahs, Ghazals, Tetrastichs, and Terjiá-band. The most elegant of the Casidahs is addressed to Lutf Ali himself, under his poetical name of Azar, and by the beauty of its composition, and the tenderness of its sentiments, fully justifies the praises bestowed on him by his friend in his biography.

⁵ "A delightful and facetious companion," between whom and Lutf Ali the greatest intimacy and affection existed. "In the bloom of youth," he assumed the Derwish garb, and came to Isfahan, where he died also, at an early age, 1185. He wrote pleasing poetry, and was well skilled in the art. As a Khúsh-nawís, he obtained such excellence, that "the splendour of Shafiah writing was broken by his Shikastah."

⁶ میرزا طبیب His poetic name was Tufán (طوفان). "He was a native of Hezár Jerib, a district of Mazenderan, but removed latterly to Isfahan, and died there." His vein seems to have been satire, as "the people of his day were afraid of the sword of his tongue."

⁷ Táyri (طیري). This youth's name was Muhammad Rabía (ربیع) and he was a goldwire-drawer in Isfahan. His melancholy disposition at length completely mastering him, he threw himself into a well, "where the Yúsuf of his soul reposed in the well of eternity," 1159. His poems were no longer extant in Lutf Ali's time

and Zahir. Specimens from Hatif's Diwan have been published in the "Mines de l'Orient," and above 900 of his verses are also given here. A still more copious quotation is made from Sabahi¹, to whose compositions Lutf Ali declares himself to have been as much attached as he was bound by friendship to his person. From Ááshic², Rafic³, and Mushtác (already mentioned), large extracts are also given. The whole of the Anthology from the works of contemporary authors amounts to 4400 verses, of which nearly three-fourths are selected from those of the above-named five favoured poets.

The last, in alphabetic arrangement, is Hijri (هجري) of Isfahan, whose name was Mírzá Abú'l Cásim, son of Acá Sádíc of Tafrash (صادق تفرشي). He came early in life to Isfahan, and died also young in the district of Resht.

The greater number of the modern poets were driven, by the troubles of that disturbed period, to Hindustan, and shared the usual fate of the learned of their time, embracing the garb of Fakirs and Dervishes, and ending their lives in exile, or by martyrdom. Amongst these, we meet with the name of Muhammad Ali Hazín, whose interesting memoirs are already before the public in the original text, and able translation, published by Mr. Balfour⁴, and whose autobiography presents a similar outline to that of most of the lives epitomized in this latter part of the Atesh Kedah. Lutf Ali states himself not to have been personally acquainted with Hazín, but mentions him as an accomplished man, author of a Diwan (from which a very short quotation is made), and reports his death to have taken place at Benares; which, with the other few particulars of the memoir, agrees with the accounts of him we have already received.

¹ Sabáhi (صباحي), "a youth of angelic nature in a human shape;"—"a companion of soul-cherishing and heart-expanding society;" Suleyman by name, and Selím (سلیم mild) in disposition; was a native of a village in the government of Kashan, and in early youth visited Mecca; he attached himself to science, especially poetry. Lutf Ali was his intimate friend, and chose his Takhallus for him.

² Aca Muhammad of Isfahan, named Ááshic (عاشق a lover,) supported his claim to that appellation both by his poetry and his habits. He devoted himself chiefly to Ghazals and Tetrastichs, but wrote also some Casidahs, many of which, in an amatory style, are beautiful. Ááshic died 1181; and Sabáhi wrote a Rubá'i containing a Tarikh of his death.

³ Mulla Husain Rafic (رفيع) a good poet, and critic; his family was of Isfahan.

⁴ "The Life of Sheikh Mohammed Ali Hazin, written by himself," &c. Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund, 1830 and 1831.

Such are the results of Lutf Ali's labours in recording the poetic annals of his country, and it must be allowed that he has very faithfully performed the self-imposed task. The researches of his predecessors have been incorporated with his own, and the whole furnishes a comprehensive, if not methodical, history of Persian literature, from the earliest dawn of its poetry to its sunset in his own age. Although the author does not follow the usual practice of Oriental historians, by enumerating in his preface the principal works he had consulted, he has evidently applied to many others than those more specially biographical. Of the few authorities cited by name, the most frequent reference is to the valuable geographical work, the *Heft Aclím* of Ahmed Rází; for general history he refers to the *Rawzat al Safá*; for that of the Safídes, and the dynasties succeeding them, he quotes the *Álam Aráf Ábbásí* of Iskender Beg, Mirza Mehdi's life of Nadir Shah, and an account of the Zend family by Mirza Sádí¹. He more than once mentions the *Jámí Rashídí*, of whose author he has given a memoir; and appeals also to the authority of Muhammad Áwfi, and of Ali Culi Lesgi's *Tazki-rah*². It will be seen, from the numerous instances in which he differs from Dowlatshah's opinion, both on points of criticism and facts of biography, that the author of the *Atesh Kedah* is no servile copyist, nor passive disciple of other writers; he has weighed conflicting testimonies, and examined their evidence. In poetical criticism he displays a highly discriminating judgment, and is very far from being led away by general opinion in favour of a popular writer, if he has offended against the proprieties of style, the harmonies of versification, or that purity of sentiment, which though often so grossly violated, even by the professed moral poets of Persia, seems to have its standard among their more refined critics. Where verses of an offensive description have been admitted in this anthology, of which there are certainly some flagrant examples, the difficulty of obtaining other more desirable specimens for its completion, is, perhaps, a plausible excuse for their insertion, contrary to the critic's own condemnation of the perverted taste, which, at one time, made such licentious compositions popular. Of the real beauties of poetry, according to the criterion of Oriental taste, Lutf Ali had a lively perception, and wherever his admiration

¹ Mirza Muhammad Sádíq Músawi, the poet Námí of Isfahan, p. 376, note. The "*Tuarikh Zundeáh* of Meerza Saudack," is quoted in Malcolm's *History of Persia*, vol. ii.

² See Wálíh, p. 376.

was excited, he has expressed it in the enthusiastic language of a true lover of the art.

The limited materials of Eastern biography allow but little elegance in the brief narrative of a life, yet the memoirs in the Atesh Kedah, even the shortest of them, are embellished with graceful imagery and variety of expression, while the general preface, and the introduction to the contemporaneous biography, abound in the beauties of the Ibáratí rangín (عبارت رنگین), or flowery style, displayed by the best Persian writers, even on historical and scientific subjects. The Tajnís alloghát (Anglicè, *pun*), is exhibited in innumerable instances; no opportunity has been neglected of playing on the names of the poets, for which the Takhallus, usually possessing an abstract meaning, affords great facility¹. A few specimens of these fancies have been exhibited in this sketch, untranslated, by which alone their structure can be preserved. However much the severity of modern European criticism condemns this false taste, it must be remembered, that it was constantly practised by our earlier poets², between whose writings and those of the Persians, it constitutes one of many points of resemblance in style, taste, and arrangement.

For the life of Hajji Lutf Ali Beg, few materials are to be obtained beyond the brief, but comprehensive sketch of autobiography, which commences the last division of the Atesh Kedah; some additions may be made from the historical introduction already mentioned, where Lutf Ali's name occasionally appears in connection with the political circumstances it relates. In that narrative, and in many other passages of the work, he describes himself to be of a family of the Bíkídili tribe. "Be it known that this pilgrim in the paths of single-heartedness (سالك مسالك يكدلي) is of the praiseworthy race of Bíkídili (از دوده ستوده بیکدلي)." His account of his tribe may be thus abstracted. "The reason of their being so named, is this: Their descent is from Bíkídilí Khán, the third of the four sons of Oldúz Khán, who was the third of Oghúz Khán's six sons. Oghúz Khán was a descendant of Turk

¹ In the preface to the Hesht Khuld, a miscellany of Persian poetry, the names of about four hundred poets are ingeniously introduced, so as to make also a connected sense.

² Cowley, Shakespeare, &c. Even the Augustan age of Rome was not exempt:

"Quis fuit horrendos primum qui protulit enses?
Quam verè ferus et ferreus ille fuit!"—OVID.

ben Yáfeth ben Núh, (on whom be peace!) and, on account of his natural talent, became distinguished among the sovereigns of the age by justice and equity of rule, and for glory and magnificence, was designated as the Jemshid of the Túrks. From him are descended all the Sultans and Khans (magnificent as Jem, virtuous as Ferídún) of the Túrki tribes; as it is recorded by Kh'ájah Rashídduddín, of Hámadán, the physician, who by command of Sultán Muhammad Oljáitú wrote a book in description of the genealogy of the Túrks, which is called the Jámî Rashídî, and in which the particulars of the origin and descent of the Awmacs is made known, and their distinctions.

“My ancestors remained constantly in Turkestán, in the exercise of power and command over their tribe and its followers, until in the reign of Sultan Mahmud Ghaznewi, or in the time of the irruption of Chengíz Khán, the Bíkдилís came with a number of other Túrki tribes to Irán, where some of them remained, and took up their abode, while others, in the service of my ancestors, went on directly to Shám, and there settled; till, in the reign of Tímúr, Amír Jehángír, while engaged in the conquest of that region, recognised them as his countrymen, and out of favour and regard to them led them back to Irán on their way to their original dwelling-place in Turkestán. On arriving at Ardebíl, and being in the service of Sultán Âlí Síáh-Pósh Safawi, the chiefs of the tribe, by his intercession, obtained permission to leave the camp of Tímúr, and settle in the government of that prince.

“When the sun of the prosperity of the Safawíah dynasty arose from the horizon of glory and empire, they were constantly employed in exalted situations in the service of that family, during the whole period of their rule, from the commencement of the reign of Sháh Ismâíl Safawi to that of Sháh Tahmásp, being 250 years. Now, as many of the tribe as returned from Shám, are called Shámlú (Syrian) Bíkдилí, and such as remained in Irán, and did not go to Shám, are styled, simply, Bíkдилí¹.” This exposition of the name and descent of his tribe, leads Lutf Ali to the notice of his birth and birth-place, but these and other particulars appear again in a more connected form, in the “Khátimah” devoted to his life. It runs thus:

“Let it not remain unknown to my hearers, that this humble person was born in the seat of government, Isfahán, at a few minutes past one o'clock in the morning of Shambah, the 20th day

¹ Perhaps correctly, *Begdálí*, v. “Dynasty of the Kajars,” p. 2.

of Rabíá'ssání, under the horoscope of Pisces, in the year 1134, and about the time of the invasion of Mahmud Ghiljái, the Afghan, by which event my whole family was forced to fly to Cum (God protect it!') Having passed the first fourteen years of my life in that abode of the faithful, at the commencement of the reign of Nádir, my late father of blessed memory being honoured with the government of the district of Lár, and the shores of the Persian Sea, I repaired to Shiráz, the seat of learning. After two years, when the bird of my father's soul had made its nest in the groves of Paradise, I went, in attendance on my late uncle, Hajjî Mahmúd, by the way of Irác Ârab and Shám, with the intention of pilgrimage to the Holy House of God at Mecca. After obtaining the favour of saluting the Court of his Highness the Seal of the Prophets, and the other Imáms, (on whom be blessing and peace!) I was honoured by the Tawwáf (or procession round the Holy House), and after the performance of the duties of pilgrimage, on my return I visited the angel-guarded threshold of the tomb of Alí Ibn Abí Tálib, and of Husáin ben Âlí (on both of whom be blessing and peace!) and the resting-place of the Kázimín and the Âskerín (on whom be peace!) and repaired to Irác Âjam and Fars. At the end of a year, having a desire to visit the eighth Imam (Ali Riza), the guardian of our faith, I went thither (to Meshhed Ali, or Tús), in company with my brothers, and an assemblage of devout friends, and was favoured by the accomplishment of my wish. About that time the army of Nádir, on his return from the conquest of Hindústán and Turkestán, passing through that holy territory on its way to invade the Jebbál Legzíah, I chanced to take my way from Mazenderán, that type of Paradise, to Azarbáiján and from thence to Irác, where I visited Isfahán, the abode of my forefathers. After the assassination of Nádir, I was some time attached to the service of Âli Shah, and Ibrahím Sháh, and Suláimán Sháh, and Sháh Ismáíl, and by the revolutions of fortune saw what I saw, and suffered what I suffered; and in obedience to the saying, 'Misfortune is best in partnership', I associated myself with a company of Believers, (God guard us, and all the faithful from the vicissitudes of fortune!) and assuming the garb of spiritual poverty, I

¹ Or, "May it be preserved from the buffets of fortune!" عن التلاطم
rhyming with قم. As in other places, صييت عن الحدثنان &c.

² الدليية اذا عمت طابت

waited on a number of the most distinguished of the learned and pious, and of the greatest poets and wits of the day, profiting, to the best of my ability, by the advantages of their society. Having a natural inclination and talent for poetry, in the principal rules of which I had been instructed by that paragon of the age, Mír Sayyid Álí Mushtác¹, I had composed to the extent of about seven thousand distichs, which were lost in the sacking and destruction of Isfahán, &c." The conclusion is in repetition of his promise to submit to the public some of his own "crude conceptions," for which he deprecates the severity of criticism, and implores the generous indulgence of his friends.

Various passages in the work confirm and illustrate the particulars contained in the above sketch. The year of his birth, in addition to the united testimony of all the MSS., is distinctly indicated by the collateral date of the Afghan invasion. His father's name is given as Ácá Khán² in the earlier part of the historic narrative, to which I have so often alluded, where he appears as Governor of Shirwan, and afterwards appointed by Nadir Shah to the government of Lár and Bender Ábbási, to which he went from Cum, accompanied by young Lutf Ali, his son; and it was from the neighbourhood of Bender Ábbási that the "bird of his soul strutted to Paradise." The same narrative introduces the names of many of Lutf Ali's near relations; as that of his uncle, Weli Muhammad Khan, whose memoir appears among those of the contemporary poets under the name of Mesrúr³, his Takhallus; and of his two maternal uncles (خالو), Riza Culi Khan Bikdili, and Muhammad Culi Khan Bikdili, who was grand vizir to Sultan Husain, and was put to death by Ashraf, the Afghan; also of two cousins (بنی اعمام), Abdalghaffár Sultán and Muhammad Zemán Khan. Both these last are mentioned, also, in the memoir of the

¹ His life is given among the poets; see p. 377, note 2.

² He also calls himself in the preface, "Lutf Ali Ibn Acá Khán."

³ "مسرور" Weli Muhammad Khan, uncle to the Author; khan of the Bikdili tribe. In the reign of Shah Tahmasp II., Safawi, he was sent on an embassy to the Emperor of Rúm, and had the government of Kirmán and Azar-báiján. About the time that Nádir Sháh deposed Shah Tahmásp from sovereignty, Weli Muhammad was murdered in the government of Lár by some villains, who, that same year, themselves were made to travel the road of perdition. His Excellency had studied in Isfahán, and was particularly attached to poetry, in the science of which he was well skilled; but the style of the best ancient poets being forgotten in his time, few verses of any merit emanated from his pen."

poet Nedím¹, who is stated to have been in their service. Muhammad Zeman Khan is there described as Sipáh Sálár under that government. Mehdi Culi Khán Bíkdili was a cousin by the mother's side. Mustafa Culi Khán Bíkdili, an uncle's son (بیسر عم^ت) is stated to have been sent on an embassy to the Ottoman Porte, a mission which had also been executed by Weli Muhammad Khan and by Riza Culi Khan. Ahmed Khán Abdállu appears as a *خالو زاده* another maternal cousin. Finally, Lutf Ali commemorates in terms of great affection and regard his younger brother, Ishac Beg, in a memoir under the name of Úzrfá. Another of his relations, Jáfer Beg², enjoys the honour of poetic distinction among the vizirs and nobles in the first book. Hajji Mahmúd (called in some MSS. Mahmúd Beg), whom Lutf Ali accompanied in his pilgrimage, was another uncle (a brother of Lutf Ali's father).

Of his own personal share in the events of those stirring times, Lutf Ali does not give us many particulars. At the time that Ibrahim Shah came to Irac (as related in the narrative), he had the appointment of Daróghahí Defter Kháneh, but the incidents which befel him, cannot, with convenience, be abstracted from the other circumstances in connection with them. He followed the fortunes of the royal house of Sefi to the last, and his attachment is shown in the expressions of respect and almost adoration, with which the name of each monarch of the race is introduced throughout his work. The same feeling seems to have influenced him in the service of that remarkable man, Tahmasp Culi Khan, afterwards Nadir Shah, who, as well as his ultimate successor, Kerim, the *Vakeel*, courted the attachment of the followers of the Sefi family, under the semblance of protectors of the royal rights in the

¹ ندیم "Mirza Zeki. His family was of Meshhed Rizawi, but he lived in Isfahan. In the reign of Shah Sultan Husain Safawi, he had the honour of serving my uncle, Muhammad Zeman Khan Bikhili, Sipah Salar of Khorasan, and my maternal uncle, the grand vizir, Weli Muhammad Khan." Mirza Zeki was afterwards in attendance on Nadir, and finally retired from service, and died 1143.

² عذري "His noble name was Ishac Beg (اسحق). He was my younger brother; a modest and discreet youth, of a tender heart, and of a cheerful and amiable disposition. In the year 1185, the Bulbul of his soul nestled in the tree of Paradise."

³ جعفر بيگ "A noble of the Bikhili tribe, brother of Muhammad Múmin Khan, grand vizir, and maternal grandfather of the Author."

persons of Shah Tahmasp and Abbas III., and Ismail; the pageants exhibited by them to quiet the scruples of the legitimists.

In recording the events of the latter part of Nadir's reign, Lutf Ali indulges in just indignation at the atrocities by which it was disgraced, and pays his tribute of regret to the memory of the unfortunate Riza Culi. Thus, "tyrant king," "furious monarch," and "wrathful prince," are the epithets he couples with the name of Nadir, designating as a second Chenghiz and Zohak, the conqueror whose earlier glories he eulogizes as those of a Timur and Iskender.

The amiable character of Lutf Ali in private life has a pleasing illustration in the memoirs of his friends, with whom the literary and social friendship he enjoyed formed a delicious contrast of calm to the storms of political contest which had surrounded him in youth and manhood. His friendship for these brother poets gives tenderness and feeling to the various memoirs in which he affectionately records their intellectual and social qualities, and meets its dear reward in the corresponding terms of sympathy and esteem which grace their poetic compositions. Sabáhi, a poet especially distinguished as his friend, devotes a Casidah to the praise of his accomplished Azar (Lutf Ali); a similar effusion, from the pen of Hátif, combines all the graceful tenderness of the Ovidian epistle, with the glowing imagery of the Persian ode. A most attached friend of his is also commemorated as Mirza Muhammad Nasír (نصیر). "He was son of the Mesáh of the age, and the Jálínús (Galen) of his time,—the late Mirza Abdallah Tabíb (the physician), who was unequalled for personal and mental accomplishments. Nasír, his son, was absolute master of all the branches of physical, metaphysical, and mathematical science, in which the fame of his excellence was only forgotten in the admiration of his estimable character. He was engaged in the practice of medicine, in which he was, of a truth, a second Khizr and Mesáh. Independent of his professional skill, his patients derived the greatest benefit from his society and friendship; and this nameless person¹ also enjoyed a great share in his affection. His mind was stored with the beauties of Arabic and Persian poetry; and he also composed verses himself². He bid farewell to this perishable world in the early part of the year 1191."

¹ (كزنام) One of the numerous expressions of mock humility employed by Persians, to avoid the egotism of the pronoun.

² I have somewhat abridged the pompous periphrases of Lutf Ali's commenda-

I have attempted an English version of a short Casidah by Lutf Ali, but have not succeeded in preserving the graceful Anacreontic turn of the original. It is entitled "Description of Isfahan, and Praise of Mirza Nasir Tabib."

از اصفهان بوی جان آید هشی

From Isfahan the zephyr blows
 Dear home of childhood's happier hours,
 This morn I met the breeze of dawn;
 "Perchance," I said, "this herald boy
 "O bear'st thou greetings from my friends,
 "And lives there still whose breast with
 fond
 Smiling, he said, "Of none I know,
 "Save that, to greet thine anxious love,
 "A blessing from Nasir I bear

The fragrance of the musky rose.
 Where once my lowly dwelling rose.
 Lightly towards Kashán it goes.
 Some tidings of my country knows.
 Who far away in peace repose?
 Remembrance of this lone one
 glows?"
 Of all thy friends—of all thy foes,—
 To soothe thee in thy cares and woes,
 For Azar, wheresoe'er he goes."

Lutf Ali's historic sketch of his native city may be interesting. "Isfahan, according to the best accounts, is situated in the third and fourth climate¹. It was founded by Tahmúras the Píshdádian, and Jemshíd, and Iskender. Kai Cobád, the first of the Kaianian kings, made it his seat of government, and added some fine buildings. It was originally composed of four villages, Báb el Desht, Júbáreh, Báb el Casr, and Gerán². By degrees it became of such great extent that it was styled 'Isfahan, the half of the world.' The temperature of the air is perfection. Its water is that of the Zendeh Rúd, which flows from the mountains of Shamákhiah, and passes through the city. The climate of Isfahan is remarkably salubrious, so that they say a dead body, if buried, will be preserved in the soil thirty years without decay; and whatever grain is sown in it is never lost. Besides pomegranates and grapes, all kinds of fruit in great abundance, and of excellent quality, are produced in that happy district. It is recorded in the annals of Isfahan, that

tions on his friend; that style having been already sufficiently exemplified in the other lives.

A specimen of Nasir's poetry is given in Waring's "Tour to Sheeraz," in which he is called "Mirza Mihr Nusr" (in another place "Nuseer"). Mr. Waring states him to have been physician to Kerim Khan. In the same work (p. 152) is mentioned the "Atush Kudu, a very late production on biography."

¹ I have not given the lat. and long.; the cyphers are omitted in many copies, and even when inserted, are, like the dates of years, little to be depended on.

² The four original villages are differently named in Hamdallah Mestúfi's description, and others.

this city, in compliance with the prayer of Ibrahím Khalíl, is always blest with thirty saints, in memory of its thirty inhabitants, who, in the fulfilment of the apostate Nemrúd's order, stood by the engine¹, and who, regardless of that tyrant's violence, declared their belief in the true God, in confirmation of the faith of Abraham. The inhabitants of Isfahan were renowned of old for bravery; Káwah, the blacksmith, is a well-known proof of this assertion. In fine, without incurring the slightest suspicion of partiality, one may fairly call it the most excellent of cities. Isfahan has frequently suffered total destruction, and been as often restored. Towards the end of the rule of the Safides, its population had increased to such an extent, that 12,000 families of workmen were employed on the buildings of the city alone, exclusive of those in the villages and dependencies. It is now forty-seven years, &c."

I regret that I am unable to specify the exact date of the composition of the Atesh Kedah. Its author has not recorded the time of its completion, either in figures or chronogram. In the section relating to the poets of Hindustan, he says of Delhi, "And at this time, which is the year 1179 of the Hijrah, from what has befallen the Tátárs by the invasion of Nádir Sháh Afshár, and Ahmed Khán Afghán, it is in the last extremity of ruin and desolation." It was on this authority I stated him (p. 346) to have been still engaged with the work in A.D. 1765. Subsequent examination assigns a later period to the continuance of his labours, and it is reasonable to suppose that the various parts of the Atesh Kedah were arranged at different moments of leisure, or, at least, that a considerable interval occurred between the composition of that portion devoted to the earlier poets and its completion by the addition of those more recent. This latter part was evidently arranged by him in the favourable opportunity afforded by the re-establishment of social order, and during the literary repose he enjoyed in his residence at Shiraz, where Kerim Khan fixed the seat of government at the latter end of his reign. The precise year, however, is difficult to ascertain. So much difference of opinion exists as to the dates of many of the events of the more modern Persian history, that even a calculation founded on the facts Lutf Ali records will not obtain a thoroughly satisfactory result. In speaking of the desolation of the last fifty years, he evidently dates from the Afghan invasion; the same reference fixes the time at which he was composing the section relating

¹ (منجنيق) the balista, by which Abraham was launched into the fiery furnace. See Tabari, &c.

to Irac, where he writes, "It is now forty-seven years since Isfahan has been waste and depopulated." The very latest historical events recorded are the submission and repentance of Kerim's brother, Zeki Khan, the execution of Nazar Ali Khan Taki, and the merited punishment of the atrocious parricide, the Amir Muhenna; this last took place "in this year," viz., that in which the narrative was written. The conclusion returns thanks for the blessing of that government, by whose means the inhabitants of Persia had "reposed in the cradle of security and prosperity for the last eight years."

From the contemporary memoirs we are able to glean dates, which bring down still further the period of their arrangement. A Casidah, by Sabahi, in praise of Kerim Khan, celebrates the completion of the fosse, or **خندق** of Kashan, and gives the date (Tarikh) 1180 = A.D. 1766. The poet **Âáshic** died in 1181, according to all the MSS. confirmed by a Tarikh composed by Sabáhi. The deaths of Nasíb and Hájb are recorded, 1183; the latter, in some MSS. is written 1185, an extent confirmed to the work by Abdu'l Mujíd and Mushrib, both of whose deaths are referred to this later date. The death of **Úzri** (Ishac Beg) is assigned to the same year, in the versification of Sabáhi; the Tarikh of the Derwish **Ábdu'l Mujíd** was arranged by Lutf Ali himself. A Casidah of the author gives a Tarikh **Súri** of the year 1186, as its date of composition; the deaths of Tufan in 1190, and of Sahba and Nasír, in 1191, are recorded in **Tarikh Mánawi**¹, the first by Lutf Ali and the other two by Sabahi. But the latest date of all, and the last link in this little chain of chronology, is furnished by the memoir of Faríbi, the Tarikh on whose death was composed impromptu by Lutf Ali, comprised in the following line², which, by the numerical value of its letters according to the **Abjadíah**, distinctly indicates the date 1193,

¹ For **Tárikh Mánawi**, and **Tárikh Súri**, see the Dictionary of the "Seven Seas," in which the Chronogram in all its varieties forms the subject of the 46th Anchor of the 2nd Vessel of the 4th Sea, or Volume. The volume has been ably and laboriously analyzed by the distinguished Orientalist and poet, (I might almost say Oriental poet,) Friedrich Rückert, in the *Jahrbücher der Literatur*.

² **شد بحدت الماوي حبيب الله** "Habib Allah has departed to heaven," (properly, "to the fourth heaven.") The letters of this verse gives the numbers $300 + 4 + 2 + 3 + 50 + 400 + 1 + 30 + 40 + 1 + 6 + 10 + 40 + 10 + 200 + 7 + 1 + 8 + 2 + 10 + 2 + 1 + 30 + 30 + 5 = 1193$. †

Habib Allah ("the friend of God") was Faríbi's name. He was son of Mirza Rajab Ali of Teheran, but was himself born at Isfahan, where he passed his life, and died there. For the amusement of those who may be fond of these trifles, (which are not without their value as a sort of *stereotype* date,) I subjoin the other

confirmed by a separate notation of figures very accurately given in all the copies. Here is, therefore, positive internal evidence of Lutf Ali being still employed on the work in 1779 of our era, nine years later than the date usually ascribed to it. How much longer he lived, is hardly to be determined, in the absence of contemporaneous authorities of more modern date; the place and manner of his death are equally unknown to me; whether he long survived his patron and protector, Kerim Khan¹, and enjoyed the almost patriarchal age, of which numerous instances² occur among the Persian poets, or whether he fell a victim to party strife at the renewal of the civil war, which seemed the inheritance of the successors of the first

Tarikh's quoted as being of Lutf Ali's own arrangement, with one by him, of earlier date, on the death of Khádím. They also serve as specimens of his skill in a branch of the art which seems to have been a favourite literary diversion of himself and his companions.

Epitaph on Derwish Abdu'l Mujíd, by Lutf Ali:—

زد رقم خامه آذر زبې تار بخش
شده ابوان جنان منزل درویش بچید

Thus Azar in a date records his love,
"Mujíd, the Derwish, rests in heaven above."

On Niyázi, by the same:—

چون شمار سال تار بخش زاذر خواستم
زد رقم مونس بود با احمد اجد در بهشت

A date I asked from Azar; he replied,
"In heaven our Ahmed sits by Ahmed's side."

The first Ahmed is the poet; the second, the Prophet.

On Túfán:—

طوفان در دریای نجف شد ز صفا

On Khádím (d. 1155):—

گفت خادم بچنت آمد باز

In this epitaph, and Niyázi's, the words underlined are alone employed in forming the date. Bááb Cásim Khádím was a poet of Isfahan, where he was for some time Khádím Báshí of the great Ábbási Mosque. He was nephew of a poet named Mír Neját (نجات). Khádím himself was much skilled in chronograms; another poet well versed in that art was Fidáyí (Hájji Muhammad of Kerman).

¹ 1779 was the year of Kerim Khan's death.

² Sádi, Attar, &c. Some of Lutf Ali's own time also lived to a great age; Dáái to more than ninety years, Hájat and Muwahhid about the same.

Zend monarch, I am unable to learn from any source to which I have had access. Possibly the information may be obtained from some of the more recent travellers in Persia, and I shall feel grateful for any communication on a subject which is now of much interest to me¹.

The memoir of the author's life is followed by a selection from his poems, in which he very liberally fulfils his promise, and has certainly shown a partiality for his own compositions, not quite in accordance with the professions of humility displayed in his allusions to them. The extracts from his Diwan show great versatility of talent, embracing all the various branches of Casidah, Ghazal, and Tetrastich. To these selections, amounting to above two thousand lines, he has prefixed an entire poem on the well-known story of Joseph and Zulaikha, in which, unawed by the great names of Jami and Firdusi, to whose genius it owes its earliest poetic illustration, and undismayed by the ill success of Názim of Herat, whose poem on the subject he has pronounced "not fit to be read²," he enrols himself among the numerous versifiers of this favourite romance. As it may be curious to observe what new interest can

¹ The following note, though it chiefly recapitulates the observations of the last pages, is valuable as the communication of the late Claudius James Rich, Esq., preserved in his handwriting in the fly leaf of the Atesh Kedah, in the library of the British Museum. "The author of this work is Lutf Ali Beg Isfahani, of the tribe of Begdali Shamlu, which was brought from Damascus, and established at

Isfahaun, by Timour. The Tekhellus ^{خلص} or poetical name of the author, is Azar; he was high in the employment of the government under Nadir Shah, and had seen the last of the Sefiviyahs, in whose service all his ancestors had distinguished themselves as vizirs and ministers. When Kerim Khan came to the throne, he was advanced in years, and quite retired from the world; it was then that he finished this work, which had occupied him for thirty years, and he dedicated it to Kerim Khan; he had taken great pains in the selection and verification of his materials, not crudely copying from the authors of Tezkerehs. The Atesh Gada is in the highest estimation, but, like most of the productions of modern Persian literature, is extremely scarce.

"The above account of Hajee Lutf Ali Beg was communicated to me by Mirza Reza, (Persian Secretary to the Pasha,) a very old man, who was in his youth a scholar of Hajee Lutf Ali's

"Bagdad, January 10th, 1819."

"C. J. R*."

* MS. Mus. Brit. 7671. Biblioth. Rich. It is not described in the "Catalogus Collectionis Richianæ," inserted in the "Mines de l'Orient," vols. iii. and iv.

² The life of Maulána Názim Herawí is found in its proper place among the poets of Khorasan, Book II. ch. 2.

be given to a theme already apparently exhausted, and to compare its treatment by the earliest, and almost the last of the Persian poets, I propose at a future opportunity¹ to examine Lutf Ali's Mesnawi, which exists here to the extent of 2600 lines, swelling the extracts from his own works to 4800 in all. His Casidahs are chiefly panegyric, commencing with the praises of Ali, and are afterwards addressed to Kerim Khan, and other princes, or ministers; Abul Fat'h Khan, Kerim Khan's son; Ahmed Mirza, Sultan of Khorasan; Mirza Abdalwahháb, the Governor of Isfahan; Mirza Jáfar, the vizir, and Weli Muhammad Beg, the poet's uncles; and his friends, Hajji Sulaiman Sabáhi, and Mirza Muhammad Nasír.

The Takhallus he has adopted is *Azar* (آذر), by which, also, he is addressed in all the poetical epistles of his contemporaries. The name of Azar, Abraham's father, according to the Mahometan legends, a worshipper and maker of idols, though included in the list of names forbidden to be employed by a believer, may not be an inappropriate style for the high-priest of the Idol-temple² of Persian song. Possibly the meaning of the word itself (آذر fire), may have influenced the poet of the Fire-temple³ in his choice, as bearing an allusion to Azarbaijan, the cradle of the Magian worship,

¹ Availing myself of an accurate text of Firdusi's scarce poem, shortly to be edited by W. H. Morley, Esq.

² One of the numerous Tazkirahs on Persian poets, quotes a work on the same subject, called the "Butkháneh u Máikháneh" (Idol-temple and Wine-tavern), in the choice of which title its author seems to have been directed by a similar taste to that of Lutf Ali. I have not been able to meet with the work.

³ This may not be an unfit place to justify the spelling of the word Atesh Kedah throughout this notice, where, in quotation, it appears under such a variety of forms, resulting from the almost irreconcilable diversity of systems founded on the unequal powers of different alphabets. The Dictionary of the King of Oude establishes the orthography thus, "*Atashkadah*," with Fat'hah on the first syllable, and Alif of prolongation; with Fat'hah on the Ta, and with Shin quiescent, and Fat'hah on the Kaf, and Dal, and with round Ha. I have expressed two of the Fat'hahs by *e*, as following a soft consonant. Richardson's Persian Dictionary has "*Atish Gadah*." The word is well translated (by Von Hammer), as "Feuertempel," "Feuerheerde." For Fire-temples, see Hyde, "*Historia Religionis veterum Persarum, &c.*" Numerous remains of these places of Magian worship, still existing in Persia, are mentioned in Sir Wm. Ouseley's Travels, particularly an Ateshgáh, or Ateshkedah, near Isfahan itself. Of

آذر it may be observed, that the same dictionary vocalizes the ز or ذ with Fat'hah, but remarks, that in the Ferhengi Jehangíri that syllable has Zammah. I have followed the usual spelling, though probably not the most correct.

or, rather, as the angel of fire presiding over the ninth Persian month. Shaikh Azarí (آذري) offers a similar instance in the element of which his Takhallus is composed, and an anecdote in the Ferhengi Jehângirí, quoted from the Majális al Úshshác, represents him to have formed it from the name of the month in which he was born.

It would now be desirable to give a specimen of Lutf Ali's poetry, from the abundant choice he has submitted to us, but I am inclined rather to postpone the critical examination of his genius, than to do him the injustice of testing it by the very hasty process, which the present opportunity would permit.

In concluding a survey of the Atesh Kedah, it is doubtful to which of two merits it chiefly owes its value; to the extensive range of its chronology, or to the variety and luxuriance of its poetic extracts¹. It is difficult, if not hopeless, to do justice to the respective claims of above eight hundred poets, in a sketch of this limited extent, or even to touch upon the most salient points of their biography; my chief object has been to call the attention of Orientalists to a work, hitherto only known by name, or by a very partial reference, and to establish the claim of the Atesh Kedah to a distinguished rank in modern literature, as the most important native work, which we possess, on the poetical history of the most poetic of all the Eastern nations.

¹ The total number of verses in the whole compilation, amount to above *thirty thousand*; more than equal to a quarter of a Shah Nameh!

Note.—Some apology may be necessary for the appearance of the Oriental words in this sketch, of which many, even in transcription, have lost their uniformity; I have not been very exact in spelling such names as are familiar to the general reader, or easily recognised by Orientalists; where accuracy was of importance, I have given the Arabic type.—N. B.