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THE

HISTORY

OF

THE ASSASSINS.

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THE ASSASSINS.

DERIVED FROM ORIENTAL SOURCES,

BY THE CHEVALIER JOSEPH VON HAMMER,

AUTHOR OF

THE HISTORY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY

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&c. &c. &c.

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TO

The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain,

WITH THE

PROFOUNDEST RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR THEIR IMPORTANT SERVICES

IN CHERISHING AND PROMOTING THE CULTIVATION OF

ORIENTAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE,

THE PRESENT WORK IS DEDICATED

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

OSWALD CHARLES WOOD.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE Translator has been induced to present "The History of the Assassins" to the British Public as much on account of the interest of the subject itself, as by a desire to introduce to them a portion, certainly but a small one, of the works of an author so highly gifted, and of such established reputation, as M. Von Hammer. Nor will the present volume be deemed supererogatory, if it be considered that, notwithstanding the attention which, of late years, has been in this country so meritoriously devoted to the study of Oriental history and philology, still, but few and meagre accounts have been afforded of the extraordinary association forming the subject of the ensuing pages, and even those scattered through large and voluminous works. The Translator deems it unnecessary to apologize for the notes which he has appended, believing that their curiosity will plead his excuse.

It may be proper to remark, that the Translator has thought it advisable to adapt the orthography of the proper names to the pronunciation of English readers: in this, he has been for the most part guided by Sir William Jones's Persian Grammar, and the very excellent Turkish one of his late accomplished and lamented friend, Arthur Lumley Davids; he has only, therefore, to state, that the vowels are to be pronounced broad and open, as in Italian, and the consonants as in English; by this means, the uncouth appearance of the names, occasioned by endeavouring to represent the vowels by English diphthongs, is avoided.

BROMPTON,

June, 1835.

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ERRATA.

Page	3	line 12	from the bottom, for	*emerging*	read *converging.*
. .	4	. . 17	for	*sacred*	*serried.*
. .	5	. . 20	. . . . .	*though*	*being.*
. .	7	. . 26	. . . . .	*a hundred* . . .	*three hundred.*
. .	15	. . 22	. . . . .	*Sheristani* . .	*Sheheristani.*
. .	24	. . 6	from the bottom, .	ditto	ditto.
. .	26	. . 15	for	*they called* . .	*they were called.*
. .	30	. . 11	from the bottom, for	*Esoteries* . . .	*Esoterics.*
. .	47	. . 6	for	*Ben Merdas* .	*Beni Merdas.*
. .	51	. . 7	from the bottom, for	*runs*	*rises.*
. .	61	. . 12	for	*remuneration* .	*renunciation.*
. .	64	. . 9	. . . . .	*Shah durye* . .	*Shah durr.*
. .	66	. . 3	dele comma after *pursuit* and insert *of.*		
. .	95	. . 20	for	*Khowareim* . .	*Khowaresm.*
. .	97	. . 11	after *west* insert *that of.*		
. .	—	. . 21	for	*Rakuye*	*Kakuye.*
. .	101	. . 8	. . . . .	*Endeddin* . . .	*Esededdin.*
. .	118	. . 14	from the bottom, after *common* insert *name.*		
. .	119	. . 12	for	*kasha*	*kaaba.*
. .	131	. . 6	from the bottom, for	*and*	*or.*
. .	145	. . 1	for	*property*	*properties.*
. .	147	. . 12	from the bottom, for	*lie*	*lies.*
. .	148	. . 2	for	*Korad*	*Kobad.*
. .	—	. . 18	. . . . .	*Reyumers* . . .	*Keyumers.*
. .	170	. . 8	from the bottom, for	*basiraki*	*basikaki.*

HISTORY

OF

THE ASSASSINS.

BOOK I.

Introduction—Mohammed, founder of Islamism—Exhibition of its doctrines and of its different sects, from one of which (the Ismailites) the Assassins sprung.

Although the affairs of kingdoms and of nations, like the revolutions of day and night, are generally repeated in countless and continued successions, we, nevertheless, in our survey of the destinies of the human race, encounter single great and important events, which, fertilizing like springs, or devastating like volcanoes, interrupt the uniform wilderness of history. The more flowery the strand,—the more desolating the lava,—the rarer and more worthy objects do they become to the curiosity of travellers, and the narratives of their guides. The incredible, which has never been witnessed, but is nevertheless true, affords the richest materials for historical composition, providing the sources be authentic and accessible. Of all events, the account of which, since history has been written, has descended to us, one of the most singular and wonderful is the establishment of the dominion of the Assassins—that *imperium in imperio*, which, by blind subjection, shook despotism to its foundations; that union of impostors and dupes which, under the mask of a

more austere creed and severer morals, undermined all religion and morality; that order of murderers, beneath whose daggers the lords of nations fell; all powerful, because, for the space of three centuries, they were universally dreaded, until the den of ruffians fell with the khaliphate, to whom, as the centre of spiritual and temporal power, it had at the outset sworn destruction, and by whose ruins it was itself overwhelmed. The history of this empire of conspirators is solitary, and without parallel; compared to it, all earlier and later secret combinations and predatory states are crude attempts or unsuccessful imitations.

Notwithstanding the wide space, to the extremest east and west, over which the name of Assassins (of whose origin more hereafter) has spread, and that in all the European languages it has obtained and preserved the same meaning as the word *murderer*, little has hitherto been made known, in consecutive order, or satisfactory representation, of their achievements and fortunes, of their religious or civil codes. What the Byzantines, the Crusaders, and Marco Polo related of them, was long considered a groundless legend, and an oriental fiction. The narrations of the latter have not been less doubted and oppugned, than the traditions of Herodotus concerning the countries and nations of antiquity. The more, however, the east is opened by the study of languages and by travel, the greater confirmation do these venerable records of history and geography receive; and the veracity of the father of modern travel, like that of the father of ancient history, only shines with the greater lustre.

Philological and historical, chronological and topographical researches, instituted by Falconet and Silvestre de Sacy, Quatremère, and Rousseau; outlines of European and oriental history, like those of Déguignes and Herbelot; the very recent history of the Crusades, by Wilken, compiled from the most ancient documents of the narrating Crusaders, and cotemporary Arabians; smooth the path of the historian of the Assassins; which name, neither Withof nor Mariti

deserve; the former, on account of his gossipping partiality, and the latter, by reason of his meagreness and obscurity. Even after Abulfeda's Arabic, and Mirkhond's Persian historical work, of which A. Jourdain has given a valuable extract on the dynasty of the Ismailites, other oriental sources, almost unknown, claim the attention of the historian. Among the Arabic are—Macrisi's large Egyptian Topography, and Ibn Khaledun's Political Prolegomena: Hadji Khalfa's invaluable Geography and Chronological Tables; the Khaliph's Bed of Roses, by Nasmisade; The Two Collectors of Histories and Narrations, by Mohammed the Secretary, and Mohammed Elaufi; The Explanation and Selection of Histories, by Hessarfenn and Mohammed Effendi, among the Turkish: and among the Persian, The Universal History of Lari; The Gallery of Pictures of Ghaffari, a master-piece of historical art and style; The History of Wassaf, the Conqueror of the World, by Jovaini; The Biographies of the Poets, by Devletshah; The History of Thaberistan and Masenderan, by Sahireddin; and, lastly, The Counsels for Kings, by Jelali of Kain, are the principal.

He, who possesses the advantage of drawing from these oriental sources, which, for the most part, remain concealed from the western world, will be astonished at the richness of the treasures still to be brought to light. There lie open before him—the sovereignty of the great monarchies emerging into one point; the power of single dynasties, shooting out into a thousand rays; the fabulous chronologies of the most ancient, and the exact annals of the most modern empires; the period of ignorance anterior to the prophet, and the days of knowledge that succeeded; the wonders of the Persians; the feats of the Arabs; the universally ravaging and desolating spirit of the Mongols; and the political wisdom of the Ottomans. Amidst such an abundance, the miner's strength appears too small, and his life too short, to enable him to avail himself of all: and moreover, the very excess of riches renders selection difficult. Which vein is he first to

open, and from which mass is he first to extract the ore for the manufacture of historic art? Nowhere in the labyrinthine treasury of the east will he find a perfect work, but only rich materials for the construction of his edifice. His choice is determined by accident or predilection. What is new and important always finds a sale; and the market is never glutted with building materials, at a time when architecture flourishes.

An Arabian proverb says, "The building stone is not left lying in the road." If it be indifferent to the historical investigator, who is eager for knowledge, and to whom sources are accessible, with what and to what end he begins his labour, it is by no means so with the conscientious historian, who only works with pleasure where all known sources are at his command, and when accuracy may, for the future, spare him the charge of incompleteness. In this point of view, the sacred ranks of oriental histories are thinned at once. Where, either in the west or the east, is the library, which contains the works so necessary to the complete treatment of the most important oriental epochs,—works which, as yet, are known only by their names, and not by their contents? Who, for example, could precisely and circumstantially describe the history of the Khalifat, the dominion of the families Ben Ommia and Abbas, and their capitals, so long as he had not read the History of Bagdad, by Ibn Khatib, and that of Damascus, by Ibn Assaker,—the former in sixty, the latter in eighty volumes? Who could write the History of Egypt, if he has not at hand, besides Macrisi, the numerous works which he consulted?

Still greater difficulties beset the writer of Persian history, whether it be of the fabulous times of mythology, or of the middle period, where the stream of the Persian monarchy, till then restrained in one bed, flows into the numerous branches of cotemporary dynasties; or of the most modern, where it has long been lost in the desert of wild anarchy. More than one generation must pass, ere the literary treasures

of the east will be completed in the libraries of the west, either by the patronage of princes, or the industry of travellers; or become more accessible, by a more extended knowledge of languages, and by translations; and ere thus, the venerable witnesses of antiquity will be assembled, all of which it is the first duty of the historian carefully to examine. An exception to this want of accumulated authorities, which has hitherto been so sensibly felt in Europe, and which checks the writer of oriental history in the midst of his career, is exhibited by that of the Ottomans. Its original sources, the eldest of which scarcely boast an antiquity of five hundred years, might (although not without considerable expenditure both of money and trouble) even now, be all procured, and moreover, might be completed and corrected from the contemporary histories of the Byzantines and modern Europeans.

A history is, however, the work of years; and the severity of the task demands strength, prepared by previous exercise. In addition to the immense importance of the subject, we were induced to impose upon ourselves the present work in preference to others, by the consideration, that though in the possession of all the before-mentioned original authorities, touching the History of the Assassins (besides which none are known in the east), we might deem the examination of historical witnesses concerning this important epoch, almost as closed. Their depositions are certainly sparing and meagre; but the barrenness of the subject in splendid descriptions of battles, expeditions, commercial enterprise, and monuments, is compensated by the deeply engrossing interest of the history of governments and religions. The Assassins are but a branch of the Ismailites; and these latter, not the Arabs generally as descendants of Ishmael, the son of Hagar, but a sect existing in the bosom of Islamism, and so called from the Imam Ismail, the son of Jafer. In order, therefore, to understand their doctrinal system, and the origin of their power, it is necessary to treat, at some length, of Islamism itself, its founder, and its sects.

In the seventh century of the Christian era, when Nushirvan, the Just, adorned, with his princely virtues, the imperial throne of Persia, and the tyrant Phocas stained with his crimes that of Byzantium;—in the same year, in which Persia's host, for the first time, fled before the Arabian troops of the insurgent viceroy of Hira, and Abraha, the Christian king of Abyssinia, the Lord of the Elephants, who had hastened from Africa, in order to destroy the sacred house of the Kaaba, was driven back by that scourge of heaven, the small-pox, which commencing there, has since raged over the whole of the old continent—(birds of celestial vengeance, says the Koran, stoned his army with pebbles, that they fell); in this year, so important to Arabia, that from it began a new era—that of the year of the Elephants,—in the same night, when the foundations of the palace of Chosroes at Medain, which had baffled the attacks of time, or the builders of Bagdad, were overturned by an earthquake; when, by the operation of the same agent, lakes were dried up, and the sacred fire of Persia was extinguished by the ruins of its temple,—Mohammed first saw the light of the world, the third part of which was so soon to submit to his faith. His biography has been written in many volumes, by the historians of those nations who believe in him. From thence Maracci,[1] Gagnier,[2] and Sale,[3] have derived the accounts which they have given to Europe. The first is embued with the fanatical zeal of his church, the second is the most fundamental and complete, the third the most unprejudiced. Voltaire,[4] Gibbon,[5] and Müller,[6] have painted the legislator, conqueror and prophet;

(1) Maracci Prodromus Alcorani Patavii, 1698.

(2) Gagnier Vita Mohammedis ex Abulfeda Oxonii, 1723.

(3) Sale's Koran, London, 1734.

(4) Essai sur les Moeurs et l'Esprit des Nations, par Voltaire, tom. 2, chap. 6.

(5) The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Gibbon, chap. 50.

(6) Vier und Zwanzig Bücher Allgemeine Geschichten, durch Johannes von Müller, 12 buch, 2 kap.

after them, it is difficult to add anything concerning him. Hence, in this case, we shall be brief, and shall only state what is necessary, and what has remained untouched by those three great historians, or that portion of his tenets which stands in the nearest connexion with those of the Ismailites, and by which, in the sequel, they were undermined.

Mohammed, the son of Abdallah, and grandson of Abdolmotaleb, was descended from a family of the highest rank among the Arabians, that of Koreish, in whose custody were the keys of the sacred house of the Kaaba. He felt himself called to lead back his countrymen, who were sunk in idolatry, to the knowledge of the only true God, and, as prophet and legislator, to complete the great work of purifying natural religion from the dross of superstition; a task which so many had previously, at different times, attempted. Arabia was divided among the religions of the Christians, the Jews, and the Sabæans. To combine these three into one, by the union of that which flowed from principles common to all, for the attainment of political liberty and greatness, was the aim of his life, which had been so long spent in meditation, and only late in years was roused to active exertion. From his infancy, his mother, Emina, who was a Jewess, and in early youth, during a journey in Syria, the christian monk, Sergius, imbued him with the religious tenets of Moses and Jesus, and exhibited, in the full light of its infamy, the idolatrous worship of the Kaaba, where a hundred idols demanded the adoration of the people.

The Jews were expecting the Messiah as the Saviour of Israel, the Christians looked for the advent of the Paraclete, as their comforter and mediator, when, in his fortieth year (an age which, in the east, has always been considered as that of a prophet), Mohammed felt within him the voice of divine inspiration, enjoining him to read in the name of the Lord,[1] the commands of heaven, and by their

(1) Ikra-bi-ismi reblike, *read in the name of the Lord.* The commencement of the first published Sura, the 90th in the present arrangement.

promulgation, to prove himself to his people, the prophet and apostle of God. Nature had formed him a poet and an enthusiastic orator, by endowing him with an astounding power of language, a penetrating ardour of imagination, a dignity of demeanour, commanding the profoundest reverence, and a captivating suavity of manners. Valour, magnanimity, and eloquence, qualities prized by every nation, and by none more than the wild son of the desert, were the three great magnets which drew to him the hearts of his people, who had long been wont to do homage to the heroic and munificent, and more especially to the great poets, whose noble productions were hung in the Kaaba, written in golden letters, and as the immediate gifts of heaven, deemed worthy of divine adoration.

Of all Arabic poetry, the Koran is the master-piece; in it the lightning of sublimity gleams through the dreary obscurity of long prosy traditions and ordinances, and the energetic language rolls like the thunder of heaven, reverberating from rock to rock, in the echo of the rhyme; or pours on like the roaring of the wave, in the constant return of similar sounding words. It stands the glorious pyramid of Arabic poetry; no poet of this people, either before or since, has approached its excellence. Lebid, one of the seven great bards, whose works were called *al-moallakat*, the suspended, because they hung on the walls of the Kaaba for public admiration, tore his own down, as unworthy of the honour, the moment he had read the sublime exordium of the second sura of the Koran. Hassan, the satirist, who lampooned the prophet, on which verses of the Koran descended from heaven, was forced, at the conquest of Mecca, to confess the irresistible power of his word and his sword; and Kaab, the son of Soheir, paid him spontaneous homage, in a hymn of praise, for which the prophet gave him his mantle, which is still preserved among the precious articles of the Turkish treasury; and is annually, during the month Ramadan, worshipped and touched, in the most solemn manner, by the

Sultan, accompanied by his court and the great officers of state. Mohammed's lofty destiny, in changing from poet to prophet, has induced many later Arabian poets and beaux esprits to attempt the like; the consequences of which have either been nugatory, or fraught with their own destruction. Moseleima, a cotemporary of Mohammed, and, like him, the poet of nature, nevertheless, soon became dangerous to him, as the unattainable divinity of the Koran had not yet received the sanction of ages. Ibn Mokaffaa, the elegant translator of the Fables of Bidpai, who shut himself up for whole weeks, to produce a single verse which might bear a comparison with the lofty passage of the Koran, on the deluge,—"Earth, swallow thy waters! Heaven, withhold thy cataracts!"—earned by his fruitless labours nothing but the reputation of a free-thinker; and Motenebbi, whose name signifies the "prophecying," gained, indeed, the glory of a great poet, but never that of a prophet. Thus, for twelve centuries, the Koran has maintained, undisturbed, the character of an inimitable and uncreated celestial Scripture, as the eternal Word of God.

The word of the prophet is the Soonna, that is, the collection of his orations and oral commands, which, no less than in the written Koran, by vivid fancy, energy of will, power of language, and knowledge of mankind, manifest the genius of the great poet and legislator. The former has never been estimated in the view we have just taken of it: the latter will be considered in the sequel.

The creed of Islam (*i. e.* the most implicit resignation to the will of God) is,—There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet. His whole doctrine consists of only five articles of faith, and as many duties of external worship. The dogmas are—belief in God, his angels, his prophets, the day of judgment, and predestination. The religious rites are—ablution, prayer, fasting, alms, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. Creed and worship formed a sort of Mosaic of portions of Christianity, Judaism, and Sabæanism: there are no

miracles but those of the creation and of the word, that is, the verses of the Koran. Mohammed's journey to heaven, contained in it, is merely a vision in the style of Ezekiel, of whose throne bearers, the Alborak (the prophet's celestial steed with a human face) is in imitation. The doctrine of the last day, the judgment of the dead, the balance in which the souls are to be weighed, the bridge of trial, and the seven hells and eight paradises, are derived from Persian and Egyptian sources. The highest rewards of heaven are—pleasures of sensual enjoyment, shady lawns, with rills bubbling amidst flowers, gilded kiosks and vases, soft couches and rich goblets, silver fountains and handsome youths. Sparkling sherbet and generous wine from the springs, Kewsser and Selsebil, for the pious, who, during their lives, have abstained from intoxicating potations. Black-eyed damsels, ever young, for the righteous; and, in particular, for him who has earned the eternal palm of martyrdom in the holy war against the enemies of the faith. His is the everlasting reward, for "Paradise is beneath the shadow of the sword," which the faithful are to wield against the infidel, till he conforms to Islamism, or subjects himself to tribute. Even against intestine enemies of the faith, or of the realm, the execution of justice is lawful, and homicide is better than rebellion. The Koran contains much relating to the laws of marriage and inheritance, and the rights and duties of women, to whom Mohammed was the first to ensure a civil political existence, which before him they seem scarcely to have enjoyed among the Arabians. There is nothing concerning the succession to the administration of affairs, and with regard to claims to property in land and sovereignty, thus much only:—"The rule is of God, he giveth it to, and taketh it from whomsoever he will. The earth is God's, he devises it to whomsoever he will." By these general formulæ of the celestial decrees, a fair field was opened to despots and usurpers: Mohammed's idea was, that sovereignty was the right of the strongest, and he once expressly declared that Omar, who was distinguished by the

great energy of his character, possessed the qualities of a prophet and khalif. Tradition has, however, handed down to us no similar expression in favour of the amiable Ali, his son-in-law. Moreover, it had not escaped him, that in the constant progress of history there is nothing immutable; that no human institution can be endued with perpetual duration, and that the spirit of one generation seldom survives that which succeeds it. It was in this sense that he said, prophetically,—"The khalifate will last only thirty years after my death."

It is probable, that had Mohammed destined the succession (or as the Arabs call it, the khalifate) to his nearest relations, he would have expressly named his son-in-law, Ali, as khalif. As, however, he enjoined nothing on this point during his life, —for some eulogiums passed on Ali, adduced by the latter's party, are vague and doubtful,—he seems to have committed the appointment of the most worthy to the selection of the Moslimin. The first whom they elected emir and imam, was the first convert to Islamism, Ebubekr Essidik (the True), and after his short reign, Omar Alfaruk (the Decisive), to whom they did homage with oath and striking of hands. Omar's severity, equally inflexible to himself and others, and the remarkable force of his character, first impressed on Islamism and the khalifat, the stamp of fanaticism and despotism, which was foreign to its first institution. The spirit of conquest, indeed, was already manifested by Mohammed's first enterprises against the Christians in Syria, against the Jews in Chaibar, and the idolators of Mecca. Ebubekr followed his footsteps with his victories in Yemen and Syria; but Omar first erected the triumphal arch of Islamism and the khalifate, by the capture of Damascus and Jerusalem, by the overthrow of the ancient Persian throne, and the sapping of that of Byzantium, from which he tore two of its strongest foundation-stones, Syria and Egypt. It was at this epoch, that the blind zeal of the khalif and his generals ruined the treasures of Greek and Persian wisdom, the

accumulation of ages. It was then that the Alexandrian library fed the stoves of the baths, and the books of Medain swelled the flood of the Tigris.[1] Omar prohibited, under the severest penalties, the use of gold and silk; and the sea, as being the great medium of the intercourse of nations by commerce and exchange of ideas, he interdicted to the Moslimin. Thus, by the vigour of his spiritual and temporal administration, did he hold his conquests, and preserve the doctrines of Islamism; zealously watching lest their integrity should be endangered by foreign influence, or the manners of the victors corrupted by the luxury of the vanquished. It was not unjustly that he dreaded the effect which the superiority in civilization and institutions of the Greeks and Persians, might exert on the Arabs: Mohammed, indeed, had alréady warned his story-loving people against the traditions and fabulous legends of the latter.

The reins of dominion, which Omar had held in so tight a grasp, escaped from the hands of his successor, Osman. He was the first khalif, who fell beneath the dagger of conspiracy and rebellion; and Ali, Mohammed's son-in-law, mounted the throne, which was stained with the blood of his predecessor, and which soon after was dyed with his own. Many refused to acknowledge or swear fealty to him, as Prince of the Faithful; they were called Motasali, that is, the *Separatists*,[2] and formed one of the first and largest sects of Islamism: at their head was Moawia, of the family of Ommia, whose father, Ebusofian, had been one of the most powerful opponents of the prophet. He suspended the blood-stained clothes of Osman on the pulpit of the great mosque of Damascus, to inflame Syria with vengeance against Ali. But the ambition of Moawia was less effectual in securing his destruction than the hatred of Aishe, which even during the life-time of Mohammed, and Ebubekr, her father, she had

(1) This fact is not related by Aboulfaraj alone, but also by Macrisi and Ibn Khaledun, and after them by Hadji Khalfa.

(2) Abulfeda, Annales Moslemici, I. 282.

vowed against him. When in the sixth year of the hegira, during the prophet's expedition against the tribe of Mostalek, Aishe the Chaste, having wandered from the line of march with Sofwan, the son of Moattal, had given rise to certain calumnies: Ali was one of the many, who, by their doubts and conjectures, rendered the title of Chaste so problematical, that it was necessary to have a Sura descend from heaven, to hush report, and rescue the honour of Aishe and the prophet. Henceforward, by the authority of the sacred scripture of Islamism, she passed for a model of immaculate purity. Eighty calumniators fell immediately beneath the sword of justice; but Ali was destined, at a later period, to atone for his incautious scepticism, with his throne and his life. Aishe led her two generals, Talha and Sobeir, against him, and by her presence, inflamed them to the combat in which they perished. A part of his troops refused to fight, and declared aloud for the opponents. They were afterwards called Khavaredj (the Deserters), and afterwards formed a powerful sect, equally hostile with the Motasali, to the interests of the family of the prophet; but professing many tenets, differing again from theirs. At the second battle of Saffain, Moawia caused the Koran to be carried on the points of lances in the van of his army.[1] After the action near Nèheran, Ali's compulsory abdication took place at Dowmetol-Jendel, which was shortly after succeeded by his assassination. Thus the khalifat, contrary to the order of hereditary succession, came, by means of murder and rebellion, into the family of Ommia, thirty years after Mohammed had prescribed that space of time as the period of its duration.

Of all the passions which have ever called into action the tongue, the pen, or the sword, which have overturned the throne, and shaken the altar to its base, ambition is the first and mightiest. It uses crime as a means, virtue as a mask. It respects nothing sacred, and yet it has recourse to that which is most beloved, because the most secure, that of all held

(1) Abulfeda, Annales Moslemici, I. 314.

most sacred by man,—religion. Hence the history of religion is never more tempestuous and sanguinary than when the tiara, united to the diadem, imparts and receives an increased power. The union of the supreme temporal and spiritual rule, which the steady policy of the popes, never to be diverted from its object, has for centuries in vain sought to achieve, is a fundamental maxim of Islamism. The khalif, or successor of the prophet, was not only Emir al Mominin, Commander of the True Believers, but also Imam al Moslimin, Chief of the Devout; supreme lord and pontiff, not merely invested with the standard and the sword, but also the prophet's staff and mantle. The Moslim world could yield obedience to but one lawful khalif, as Christendom to but one pope. But as three popes have often pretended to the triple crown, so have three khalifs laid claim to the supreme rule of three portions of the earth. After the family of Ommia had lost the throne of Damascus, it still maintained the khalifat in Spain, as did the family of Abbas, on the banks of the Tigris, and that of Fatima, on those of the Nile. As formerly, the Ommiades, the Abbasides, and the Fatimites reigned contemporaneously at Granada, Bagdad, and Cairo; so, at the present day, the sovereigns of the families of Katschar and Osman possess the dignity of khalif at Teheran and Constantinople; the latter with the most justice, since, after the conquest of Egypt by Selim the First, the insignia, which were preserved at Cairo, the banner, the sword, and the mantle of the prophet, together with the two holy cities, Mecca, his birth-place, and Medina, his burial-place, augmented their treasury and their dominions. They designate themselves guardians and servants of the two holy cities, Padishah and Shah (*i. e.* emperor and king); Sultan Alberrein and Khakan Albahrein, rulers and lords of two parts of the globe and two seas. They might, with great justice, entitle themselves sovereigns of three holy cities, rulers of three portions of the globe, and lords of three seas; because Jerusalem, as well as Mecca and Medina, is in their possession; because their dominion extends into Europe,

Asia and Africa; and because the Red, as well as the Black and the White Seas, lie within the compass of their sway.

Having bestowed this rapid glance on the modern dominions of the Moslimin, which the illustration of the subject justified, we shall now revert our attention to its primitive condition. The first and greatest schisms in Islamism proceeded from the contest for temporal rule, and the faith shared the dismemberment of the empire. We have already remarked the existence of the two great political and religious factions, the Motasali and Khavaredj, the apostates and the deserters, many of whose tenets differed materially from those inculcated by the ruling doctrine; but particularly that opinion which they maintained with arms, in respect to the right to the dignity of khalif and imam. This is the origin of most of the sects of Islamism, and is the fertile root from which has grown the many-branched stem of heresy.

No less than seventy-two sects are counted, according to a tradition of Mohammed, who is said to have foretold that his people would divide into seventy-three branches, of which one only is the true one, all the rest being erroneous. A very instructive sub-division and enumeration of them is found in Sheristani and also Macrisi, to which Silvestre de Sacy first directed public attention, in a treatise read by him to the Institute of France. We shall be satisfied with considering merely the two stems into which the tree of Islamism, as soon as it rose above the ground, bifurcated, and which even now, after the growth of twelve hundred years, still remain the two principal limbs which have given birth to the confused sectarian ramifications. These two divisions are the doctrines of the Soonnites and the Shiites, which, though otherwise multifarious, differ from each other principally in this,—that the former recognise, as legitimate, the succession of the four first khalifs, the latter only acknowledge the rights of Ali and his descendants. The Soonnite is shocked by the murder of Osman, and the Shiite is revolted by the slaughter of Ali and his sons. What the one execrates, the other defends;

and what the latter receives, the former rejects. This exactly diametrical opposition of most of their dogmas became only the more decisive by the lapse of time, and the separation of political interests of the nations which subscribe to them. Most of the wars between the Turks and Persians, the former Soonnites, and the latter Shiites, have always been as much religious as inter-national wars: and the efforts, so often repeated, and last essayed by Shah Nadir, of bringing about a coalition of the two parties, remained as fruitless as the endeavours, century after century, to unite the Western and Eastern Christian churches, with whose schism that of the Soonnites and the Shiites may not inaptly be compared.

The Soonnites, whose doctrine is considered among us the orthodox one,—all the delineations of the Islamitic system, hitherto published in Europe, having been derived from Soonnitic authorities,—are again divided into four classes; these differ from each other in some non-essential points of ritual ceremony: as, for example, the ritual of the Roman Catholic church, and the no less canonical ones of the united Greek, Armenian, and Syrian churches. In essential dogmas, however, they agree. These four thoroughly orthodox sects of the Soonnites, are named after the four great imams, Malek, Shaffi, Hanbali, and Abu Hanife, who, like fathers of the church, stand at their head. Their doctrine and that of the latter, in particular, which is acknowledged as the predominant one in the Ottoman empire, are sufficiently known by the admirable exposition of them by Mouradya d'Ohsson. We are less acquainted with the sects of the Shiites, who are divided into several, as for example, the Anti-Catholics into Protestant, Reformed, Anabaptists, Quakers, &c. The four principal are the Kaissaniye, Seidiye, Ghullat, and Imamie. We shall here give some particular account of these from Ibn Khaledun and Lary, both by reason of the novelty of subject, and the relation it bears to the present history. The chief ground of their difference consists in the proofs on which they rest the pretensions of Ali, and the order of succession in

which the imamat, or right to the supreme pontificate of Islamism in his family, has been inherited by his descendants.

I.—The Kaissaniye, so named after one of Ali's freedmen, maintain that the succession did not pass, as most of the other Shiites believe, to his sons, Hassan and Hossein, but to their brother, Mohammed-Ben-Hanfie. They are divided into several branches, two of which it is proper to mention: 1st, The Wakifye (*i. e.* the standing), according to whom the Imamat has remained in the person of Mohammed, and has never been transferred; he never having died, but being said to have appeared since on earth, under other names. Of this opinion were the two Arabian poets, Kossir and Seid Homairi. 2ndly, The Hashemiye, according to whom the imamat descended from Mohammed-Ben-Hanfie to his son, Abu Hashem, who bequeathed it to Mohammed of the family of Abbas, who left it to his son, Ibrahim, who was succeeded by his brother, Abdallah Seffah, the founder of the dynasty. The object of the Hashemiye was evidently to strengthen the claims of the Abbasides to the throne of the khalifat, to which one of the principal doctors and preachers of this sect, Abomoslem, essentially contributed.

II.—The second[1] principal sect of the Shiites, the Seidiye, affirm that the imamat descended from Ali to Hassan, and Hossein; from the latter, to his son, Ali Seinolabidin; and from this last to his son, Seid: whereas most of the other Shiites consider, after Seinolabidin, his son, Mohammed Bakir, Seid's brother, as the legitimate imam. Besides this order of succession, the Seidiye differ from the Imamie in two essential points;—1st. In recognizing him only as the true imam, who possesses—in addition to piety—liberality, bravery, knowledge, and other princely virtues; while the Imamie are satisfied with the mere practice of religious duties, as prayers, fastings, and almsgiving. 2nd. In acknowledging, as legitimate, according to an expression of

(1) A. D. 750; A. H. 132.

Seid, the khalifate of Ebubekr, Omar and Osman, who are rejected by the other Shiites as illegitimate, and execrated by the Imamie. This exception has obtained the Seidiye the by-name Rewafis (*i. e.* Dissenters). The Seidiye are again divided into different branches, according as they make the imamat descend from Seid to one or the other. They have given origin to many competitors for the throne, both in the east and in the west. Such was Edris, the son of Edris Mohammed's brother.[1] It was to this last, usually known by the name Nefs-sekiye (*i. e.* the pure soul), that Seid's son, Yahya, who was hanged in Khorassan, is said to have ceded his pretensions to the imamat, of which the before-named Edris availed himself to found the dynasty of the Edrissides, in his newly-built city of Fez. According to others, Mohammed, the son of Abdallah, also called the pure soul, and Mehdi, surrendered the imamat to his brother Ibrahim; and this latter to his nearest relation, Issa. These three, who raised their claims to the khalifat during the reign of Manssur, expiated them in imprisonment or with death. By their removal, the family of Abbas was established on the throne, till, at a later period, it was assailed by a descendant of Issa, with the aid of the Africans from Zanguebar (Sinji), who at that period overran Asia. In Dilem, also, a certain Nassir Atrush invited the people to recognise the claims to the khalifat of Hassan Ben Ali, a son of Omar, brother of Seinolabidin, uncle of Seid; and hence arose the power of Hassan in Taberistan. Thus the Seidiye promulgated their doctrine respecting the succession of the imamat, both in Africa and Asia, at the expense of the existing khalifat of the Abassides.[2]

III.—The Ghullat, the Exaggerating. This title, which is common to several sects, indicates the exaggeration and extravagance of their doctrines, which far exceed the bounds of reason, and in which traces of the metaphysics of the Gnostics and of Indian mysticism cannot be overlooked. They re-

(1) A. D. 787; A. H. 172.

(2) Ibn Khaledun, Book 1, c 3, § 25. Lari, Chapter of the Twelve Imams.

cognise but one imam, as the Jews admit but one Messiah; and attribute to Ali divine qualities, as the Christians do to Jesus. Some distinguish in him two natures,—the human and the divine: others acknowledge only the latter. Others are of opinion that the imams alone are gifted with metempsychosis; so that the same perfect nature of Ali has descended, and will to the end of the world descend, to his successors in the imamat in their respective turns. According to others, this series was interrupted by Mohammed Bakir, the son of Seinolabidin, and brother of Seid; who is believed by some to be still alive, wandering on earth, although concealed, like Khiser, the guardian of the spring of life. Others again affirm, that this is true only of Ali, who sits immortally enthroned in clouds, from whence his voice is heard in the thunder, and the brandished scourge of his wrath is viewed in the lightning's flash.

These sects of the Ghullat are held to be damnable heretics, not merely by the Soonnites, but also by the rest of the Shiites, as the Arians and Nestorians were so estimated, not by the Roman catholics only, but also by the Byzantine Jacobites. They received the general name of Mulhad, or "impious." The basis of their doctrine lies in their extravagant homage and *de facto* deification of the first imams; who, however, far from admitting it, condemned its supporters. Ali himself doomed some to the flames; Mohammed-Ben-Hanfiye rejected with horror the faith of Muchtar, who ascribed god-like properties to him;—and the Imam Jafer excommunicated all who hazarded the same tenet concerning himself. This, however, did not prevent its gaining both teachers and disciples.

It is not difficult to perceive its tendency, nor how convenient an instrument of sedition and usurpation it must have been found in the hands of skilful impostors or political competitors for the throne. It was easy to turn, in the name of one invisible and perfect imam, the obedience of the people from the visible and imperfect prince, or by the ascription to

an ambitious usurper of the transmigration of the souls, and the perfections of preceding imams, to achieve his investment with the sovereignty.

IV.—The Ghullat, however, notwithstanding the extravagance of their doctrines of deification and metempsychosis, were, on the whole, far from being so dangerous to the throne as the Imamie; who, indeed, adopted from them the idea of a vanished imam, but who otherwise maintained a continued series of revealed imams prior to him, but posteriorly a natural descent of concealed ones. While some closed the series of the revealed with the twelfth, and others with the seventh, none expected, from his reigning successors, the most requisite princely qualities as the Seidiye did, but merely devotion and innocence. By means of this doctrine, wily and courageous intriguers were enabled to keep their weak princes in leading strings, and by their skilful manœuvres to delude the people, to serve their own ends.

The Imamie are divided into two classes—the Esnaashrie, or the *twelvers*, so named because they make the series of revealed imams end with Mohammed-Ben-Hassan-Askeri, who was the twelfth. Of him, they believe that he disappeared in a grotto near Hella, and that he remains there invisible, to re-appear at the end of the world, under the name of Mohdi, *the leader*. The second class is the Sebiin, the *seveners*, who only reckon seven imams, in the following order: 1st. Ali; 2nd. Hassan; 3rd. Hossein; 4th. Ali Seinolabidin (*i. e.* ornament of the devout); 5th. Mohammed Bakir (*i. e.* the dealer in secrets); 6th. Jafer Sadik (*i. e.* the just); and, 7th. His son, Ismail. The latter, who died before his father, is deemed by them the last imam, and from him they are called Ismailites, as the twelvers were named Imamites. The discrepancy between them commences at the seventh imam; as the Imamites (the twelvers) deduce the imamat from Mussa Kassim, the son of Jafer and brother of Ismail, in the following order: 7th. Mussa Cassim; 8th. Ali Risa; 9th. Mohammed Taki; 10th. Hadi; 11th. Hassan; 12th. Askeri,

and his son, Mohammed Mehdi. The claims of these imams to the khalifat were so powerful and well recognised, under the first Abassides, that Maimun publicly named Ali Risa, the eighth of them, as his successor, to the great dissatisfaction of the whole family of Abbas; who would certainly have endeavoured to prevent the execution of this law of inheritance, had not the death of Ali preceeded that of Maimun.

In maintaining their sovereignty, the *Seveners*, or Ismailites, were more fortunate than the other sect. Their power first originated with the dynasty of the Fatimites, on the coast and in the interior of Africa, at Mahadia, and Cairo; and, one hundred and fifty years afterwards, in Asia, by the dominion of the Assassins, in the mountainous parts of Irak, and the coasts of Syria. By the oriental historians, the African Ismailites are termed the western, the Asiatic the eastern Ismailites.

Ere we commence our proposed subject, the history of the latter, it is of primary importance to say a few words, in circumstantial detail of the former, as being their original stock. Their founder was Obeidollah, who came forward as the son of Mohammed-Habib, the son of Jafer Mossadik, the son of Mohammed, the son of Ismail, as, in fact, the fourth in descent from the seventh imam. Ismail, in the opinion of the Ismailites, was the last of the revealed imams; and his son, grandson, and great-grandson, Mohammed, Jafer Mossadik, and Mohammed Habib were concealed imams (Mectum) till Obeidollah, as the first again revealed, asserted the rights of the family of Ismail to the khalifat. These rights, however, were long and violently contested by the Abassides, whose interest it was to annihilate together, both the genuineness of their rivals' genealogy, and the validity of their pretensions. During the reign of the Khalif Kadirbillah,[1] a secret assemblage of doctors of the laws was held, in which the most celebrated among them,

(1) A. D. 1011; A. H. 402.

Abuhamid Isfraini, Imam Kuduri, Sheikh Samir, Abjurdi, and others, declared the genuineness of the Fatimites' genealogy, and their claims to the throne, to be false and void. How well founded, if not this decision, at least the fear of the Abassides was, appeared fifty years afterwards, when the Emir Arslan Bessassiri, a general in the service of the Dilemite Prince Behaoddewlet, originally a Mameluke of the Fatimites at Cairo, transferred, for a whole year, to Bagdad, the two royal prerogatives of Islamism,—the coining of money and the public prayer, from the name of the Bagdad khalif Kaim-Biemrillah, to that of the Egyptian sovereign Mostansser.[1]

This rivalry, and the necessity of self-defence, caused the doubts which the Abassides had cast on the descent of Obeidollah, the first of the Fatimites, to fall into considerable suspicion; and they are considered unfounded by great Arabian historians, such as Macrisi and Ibn Khaledun, as being the effusion of a factious policy. The great jurist Kadi Ebubekr Bakilani is of the opposite opinion, which is supported, as we shall presently see, not only by this sheik's authority, but also by other cogent arguments derived from the esoteric doctrines of the Ismailites. In order to understand these, on which also those of the Assassins are founded, it is necessary to take a still wider view of the sects and parties into which Islamism was divided.

Religious fanaticism is continually accused by history as the fomenter of those sanguinary wars which have desolated kingdoms, and convulsed states; nevertheless, religion has scarcely ever been the end, but merely the instrument, of ambitious policy and untameable lust of power. Usurpers and conquerors perverted the beneficent spirit of the founders of religion, to their own pernicious ends. Religious systems have never operated so destructively on dynasties and governments, as in those cases where the insufficient separation

(1) A.D. 1058; A.H. 450.

of the spiritual from the temporal authorities has given the freest play to the alternation of hierarchy and tyranny. The nearer the altar is to the throne, the greater is the temptation to step from the former to the latter, and bind the diadem round the mitre; the closer the connexion of the political and ecclesiastical interests, the more numerous and prolific are the germs of tedious civil and religious wars.

The histories of the ancient Persians and Romans, of the Egyptians and Greeks, possess almost an immunity, because religion, being merely considered as popular worship, could neither weaken nor support pretensions to the supreme authority. Christianity never deluged kingdoms with blood, until it was made use of by ambitious popes and princes, contrary to the original spirit of its institution; as, under Gregory the Seventh and his successors, the crosier overpowered the sceptre; or when, to use the words of Gibbon,[1] "rebellion, as it happened in the time of Luther, was occasioned by the abuse of those benevolent principles of Christianity which inculcate the natural freedom of mankind." Entirely different was the case with Islamism, which, as we have seen, being founded as much on the sword as the koran, united in the person of the imam and khalif, both the dignity of pontiff and that of sovereign. Hence its history presents more numerous and more murderous wars than that of any other religion; hence, in almost all the sects, the chief ground of the schism is the contested succession to the throne; and hence, there is scarcely one of any importance which has not, at some period, proved dangerous to the reigning family as a political faction in the state.

There was none which did not strive to become, in the strictest sense, predominant, and to seat the princes of their faith on the throne of Islam. Their missionaries (Dai) claimed not only the faith, but also the obedience of the people, and were at once apostles and pretenders. All

(1) Chap. XIII.

the heresies, which we have hitherto mentioned, were, in spirit, essentially usurping sects. Islamism, however, bore in its bosom others still more prejudicial to its existence; sects, which trampling under foot all the maxims of faith and morality, and preaching the overthrow of thrones and altars, bore as their cognizance, equality and liberty. We have still to give some details concerning these latter; to which, in order to distinguish them from the former, to whom they are entirely opposed, we shall give the name of revolutionary.

The Persian empire, the most ancient and likewise the best regulated monarchy of the east, was the first to experience, and had, for the longest period endured, all the horrors of despotism and anarchy arising from unbounded power and resisting liberty. As long as the faith of Zoroaster preserved its primeval purity, and the sacred fire still burned in the temples, religion could neither afford a shield nor a mask to rebellion; but when, under the Sassanides, the edifice of the ancient system was shaken by new opinions and reforms, the temple and the palace began alike to totter. Innovators and heretics sprung up, and sedition undermined, at the same moment, both the altar and the throne.

The sects of Magianism are very little known to us; hence, the erroneousness of the prevailing opinions concerning the religion of the Persians. Dualism, or Manicheism, has often been cited as the original doctrine of Zoroaster. It has been attempted to combine into one system, opinions in vogue at very different epochs; hence, the vague and contradictory accounts not only of the Greeks, but even of Anquetil, and Kleuker, since the discovery of some books of the Zend; to which Herder was the first to direct our attention. His conjectures confirm what Macrisi, probably taking Sheristani as his guide, has said respecting the sects of the Magians. He enumerates several; and 1st. The Keyumerssie, followers of the ancient doctrine according to Keyumers, called the first man or king; 2nd. The Servaniye, who consider Servan (*i. e.* eternity) as the matrix and sole origin of all things; 3rd. The Zerdushtiye,

or disciples of Zerdusht or Zoroaster, the reformer of the ancient doctrine of Hom; 4th. Sfeneviye the Dualists, properly so called; 5th. The Maneviye or Manicheans; 6th. The Farkuniye, a species of Gnostics who admit two principles, the father and the son, whose discord was mediated by a third celestial power; 7th. The Masdekiye, the adherents of Masdek, who declared war against all religion and morality, and preached universal liberty and equality, the indifference of human actions, and community of goods and women. As he gave free rein to all the passions, he gained all their slaves; not merely the poor and needy,—that numerous class having nothing to lose and all to win,—but also those who, on the contrary had all to lose and nothing to win, the grandees, and King Kobad himself, the father of Nushirvan. This latter expiated the weakness of his concession by the loss of his throne, and an incarceration, from which he was released only by the wisdom and virtue of his vizier, Bisiirjimihr. His son Nushirvan, however, purified the faith, and exterminated this scandalous brood with fire and sword, without being able, as appears from later incidents, entirely to annihilate them.[1] For, in the first century of Islamism, the same spirit showed itself in the liberal doctrines of several heads of sects; till at last, in the hands of Babek and Karmath, it raised itself over heaps of carcases and ruins, the terror of the kingdom, and the abhorrence of mankind.

The Persians, says Macrisi, have ever considered themselves the freest and most cultivated of nations, and others as mere ignorant slaves. After the destruction of their empire by the Arabians, they looked down upon their victors with contempt and hatred; and sought the ruin of Islamism, not only by open war, but also by secret doctrines and pernicious dissensions, which, breaking forth in rebellion, must have shaken the kingdom to its base. As these opinions bore the stamp of irreligion and libertinism, those who main-

(1) Macrisi. Lari.

tained them were called Sindik[1] (libertines), a word corrupted from Zend, the living word of Zerdusht. Their first appearance in Islamism was in the commencement of the khalifat of the family of Abbas, of whom, the first khalifs in vain endeavoured to eradicate them with the sword. The eastern provinces of the ancient Persian empire, whither the remaining adherents of the ancient dynasty and form of worship had taken refuge, and whither Ismalism had, as yet, scarcely penetrated, were the fertile sources of these heresies so fatal to the imamat and khalifat. Thus, in the reign of the Khalif Manssur,[2] the Rawendi, who maintained the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, revolted; and twenty years afterwards,[3] under the command of Abdol Kahir, the Mohammer (*i. e.* the red, or the ass-like), so called, either because they wore red clothes, or because they called the true believers asses (the arabic root Hamara meaning, both, he has been red and he has been an ass); and in the same year, in Transoxana, the Sefidjamegan or white-dressed, founded by Hakem Ben Hashem, called Mokannaa the concealed, from wearing a golden mask; or Sasendeimah (*i. e.* the moonshine-maker), because he, at night, produced a miraculous illumination from a well at Nakhsheb, which caused the place to appear to be lighted by the moon. By this juggling he wished to attest his divine mission, as by a miracle; as Mani had proved the celestial origin of his, by the divinity of art, namely, with a book adorned with splendid paintings (Ertengi Mani). Mokannaa taught that God had assumed the human form since he had commanded the angels to adore the first man; and that, since that period, the divine nature had passed from prophet to prophet, to Abu Moslem, who had founded the glory of the Abbasides, and descended lastly to himself. He was a disciple of Abu Moslem, who was acknowledged also by the Rawendi as their head, and who seems to have been the first to introduce the doctrine of transmigration into Islamism.

(1) *Vide* Hadji Khalfa, and Reiskii's Notas ad Abulfed, 2nd. p. B. 36.
(2) A. D. 758; A. H. 141. (3) A. D. 778; A. H. 162.

Mokannaa added to the metempsychosis (Tenasukh), the incarnation of the human and divine nature, a dogma originating in India, and afterwards adopted, as we have seen above, by the Ghullat as one of their principal tenets.[1]

In the reign of Maimun, the seventh Abasside khalif, when translations, and the invitation to Bagdad of the literati of Greece and Persia, had caused the seeds of science, already planted, to bloom in full luxuriance,—the spirit of the Arabian, which was now imbued with the systems of Grecian philosophy, Persian theology, and Indian mysticism, shook off, more and more, the narrow trammels of Islamism. The appellation of Mulhad (atheist), and Sindik (libertine), became constantly more and more common with their cause, and the wisest and best informed of the khalif's court, were thus stigmatized. In the first year of the third century of the Hegira, arose a revolutionary sectarian, who, like Masdek, two centuries and a half before, in Persia, preached the indifference of actions and community of goods, and menaced the throne of the khalif with ruin, as his prototype had that of Chosru. Babek, surnamed Khurremi, either, according to Lari, from the town Khurrem, his birth-place, or, according to others, from the gay licentiousness of his doctrines (Khurrem, in Persian, signifying gay), for a space of twenty years, filled the whole circuit of the khalif's dominions with carnage and ruins, until at length, in the reign of Moteassem, he was overthrown, taken prisoner, and put to death in the khalif's presence.[2] Babek, before he delivered his captives to the axe, caused their wives and daughters to be violated before their eyes; and it is said, that, in his turn, he received the same treatment from the commandant of the castle in which he was imprisoned. When his hands and feet were struck off, by order of the khalif, he laughed, and smilingly sealed with his blood the criminal gaiety of his tenets. The number of those who fell

(1) See Herbelot, art. Mani, Erteng, Mokannaa, and Hakem Ben Hashem.

(2) A. D. 837; A. H. 223; according to Hadji Khala. A. D. 841; A. H. 227; according to Lari.

by the sword in twenty years, is estimated by historians to amount to a million. Nud, one of his ten executioners, boasted that he alone had butchered twenty thousand men,—so terrible and sanguinary was the contest between the assertors of liberty and equality, and the defenders of the khalif's throne and the pulpit of Islamism.[1]

At this tempestuous and blood-stained epoch, there lived at Ahwas, in the southern part of Persia, Abdallah, the son of Maimun-Kaddah, a son of Daissan, the Dualist. By his father and grandfather, who had introduced Dualism, from the system of the Magi into that of Islamism, he was educated in the principles of the ancient empire and faith of the Persians; and stimulated to deeds, by which, if he could not accomplish their re-establishment, he might at least achieve the overthrow of those of the Arabians.

Profoundly versed in all the sciences, and taught by the study of history and the dire experience of his own day, Abdallah, the son of Maimun, had sufficient opportunity to perceive the risk of declaring open war against the established religion and reigning dynasty, so long as the conscience of the people, and the military power, stood at their command. He determined, therefore, by a deeply laid plan, to undermine in secret, that which he dared not attack openly. His system was to be enveloped in a veil of mystery, nor was it to appear in the face of day, until it had succeeded in placing the sovereignty in the hands of its partisans. It is always extremely dangerous to endeavour, at once, to eradicate from the minds of men the deeply imprinted reverence which they feel for the throne and altars of their fathers. Men can only by degrees emancipate themselves from their prejudices; many but imperfectly, and it is but few who can throw them off entirely. As, however, it was Abdallah's design to annihilate not merely the prejudices of positive religion and authority, but to aim at the very foundation of all, he resolved to promulgate his doctrines gradually, and divided them into

(1) See Lari. Herbelot, art. Babek.

seven degrees, after the fashion of the Pythagorean and Indian philosophers. The last degree inculcated the vanity of all religion,—the indifference of actions, which, according to him, are neither visited with recompense or chastisement, either now or hereafter. This alone is the path of truth and right, all the rest imposture and error. He appointed emissaries, whom he despatched to enlist disciples, and to initiate them, according to their capacity for libertinism and turbulence, in some or all of the degrees. The pretensions of the descendants of Mohammed, the son of Ismail, served him as a political mask; these his missionaries asserted as partisans, while they were secretly but the apostles of crime and impiety. Under these two relations, they and their followers were sometimes called Ismailites, and sometimes Ibahie, "*indifferent.*" Abdallah proceeded from Ahwas to Bassra, and thence to Syria, where he settled at Salemiye: from this place his son, Ahmed, and Ahmed's sons, Abulabbas and Mohammed Sholalaa, and his envoys (Dai), at once emissaries and missionaries, spread forth his doctrines. The most celebrated of the latter was Hossein of Ahwas, who, in the country of Kufa, initiated, amongst others, Ahmed, the son of Eshaas (called Karmath), in the mysteries of revolt and infidelity, of which he soon gave an earnest to the world, in torrents of blood and the smoking ruins of cities.[1]

He called himself Karmath, from the broken Arabic letters of this name, and became the leader of the Karmathites, who, issuing from Lahssa and Bakhrein, like the Wahabees, nine hundred years afterwards, menaced Islamism with destruction. His doctrine, in addition to the circumstance of its forbidding nothing, and declaring every thing allowable and indifferent, meriting neither reward nor punishment, undermined more particularly the basis of Mohammedanism, by declaring that all its commands were allegorical, and

(1) Macrisi, in the beginning of the chapter of the Genealogy of the Fatimite Khalifs, and below, in the section on the Doctrines of the Dais; Art. beginning of the Missions of Ibtidai Dawet.

merely a disguise of political precepts and maxims. Moreover, all was to be referred to the blameless and irreproachable Imam Maassum, as the model of a prince, whom, although he had occupied no existing throne, they pretended to seek, and declared war against bad and good princes, without distinction, in order that, under the pretext of contending for a better, they might be able to unravel at once the thickly interwoven web of religion and government. The injunction of prayer meant nothing but obedience to the Imam Maassum; alms, the tithes to be given to him; fasting, the preservation of the polititał secret regarding the imam of the family of Ismail.

Every thing depended on the interpretation (Terwil), without which, the whole word of the Koran (Tensil) had neither meaning nor value. Religion did not consist in external observances (Sahir), but in the internal feeling (Bathin). According to the variations of this doctrine, which, in many points, touches those mentioned above, their assertors received various names in the different provinces of the khalifat. In Taberistan, they were called Seveners, from the seven degrees of the secret doctrines of Abdallah, the son of Maimun Kadah; in Khorassan, Mohammere (*i. e.* the Red), and in Syria, Mobeiyesè, the White, from their dress; in Transoxana, Rawendi and Borkai (*i. e.* the Veiled), because Mokannaa covered his face with a golden mask; at Ispahan, Batheni (*i. e.* the Esoteries), and also Mutewilin (*i. e.* the interpreting Allegorists); at Kufa, Karmathi, or Mobareki; at Lahssa and Bahrein, Jenabi; in Western Africa, Saidi, from Karmath, Mobarek, Jenabi, and Said, four of their chiefs. They named themselves in general Ismaili, from deducing their pretensions to the khalifat from Ismail, the son of Jafer Sadik. From their opponents, they all received in common the well merited appellations of Mulhad (*i. e.* Atheists), or Sindik (libertines[1]).

(1) Gulsheni Khalifa, the Khalif's Bed of Roses, by Nasmisade, after the Jamius-seir (*i. e.* Collector of Memoirs), and the History of Nisamal-Mulk, p. 20.

The Karmathites differed from the doctrine of Abdallah, the son of Maimun, in hoisting the standard of revolt, instead of, according to the secret system, waiting their time tranquilly, till the throne should be occupied by one of their number, and openly taking the field against the existing power of the khalifat. The contest was sanguinary, like that of Babek twenty years before; but more tedious and dangerous both to the altar and the throne. Even Khalif Motadhadbillah, who strengthened, with the iron remedy of the sword, those nerves of the khalifat, so deplorably enfeebled since his sixth ancestor, Motewekul, and received in history the name of the second founder of the Abassides, Seffahssanni, the second blood-spiller,—Abbas being the first,—was unable, with all his energy, to extirpate this pernicious brood. The astrologers, philosophers, soothsayers, and story-tellers, had entirely lost all the credit which they once possessed at court, in the reigns of Harun and Maimun:[1] these, however, being without weapons, or leaders, were in nowise dangerous; while commanders of military genius and courage, such as Abusaid, Jenabi, and Abutaher, guided the mailed arm of the Karmathites against the head and heart of Islamism. Under the conduct of the latter, the Karmathites took the holy city of Mecca, as the Wahabees have done in our own days,[2]—so little novelty do such doctrines and deeds possess in the history of Mohammedanism. Thirty thousand Moslimin fell in defence of the sanctity of the Kaaba against its impious assailants, who set fire to the temple, and carried away to Hadjar even the black stone said to have fallen from heaven in the time of Abraham. This stone was an aërolite, and for that reason, like many others, an object of popular veneration. It was restored, after a lapse of twenty-two years, when the Emir of Irak redeemed it at the price of fifty thousand ducats. The adoration of the Kaaba, which was founded on this stone,

(1) Nasmisade ibid. See also the Magasin Encyclopédique.

(2) A. D. 920; A. H. 308.

was not to have the gates of hell prevail against it. For a whole century, the pernicious doctrines of Karmath raged with fire and sword in the very bosom of Islamism, until the wide spread conflagration was extinguished in blood.

The fate of the Karmathites, like that of the followers of Babek, was a bloody lesson to those initiated into the secret doctrines of Abdallah, the son of Maimun-Kaddah, not to propagate them otherwise than covertly until they should be masters of the throne itself. At length, one of their most zealous and active partisans, the Dai Abdollah, a pretended descendant of Mohammed, the son of Ismail, succeeded in escaping from the dungeons of Sejelmessa, in which he had been confined by order of the Khalif Motadhad, and seated himself on the throne in Africa, under the name of Obeidollah Mehdi.[1] This adventurer was the founder of the dynasty of the Egyptian khalifs, who tracing their descent to Ismail, son of Jafer Sadik, and from him to Fatima, the prophet's daughter, are known by the name of the Fatimites, or eastern Ismailites. Thus the name, which hitherto had designated a sect, was applied to a race. Ismailitism, which governed as a ready tool the founder of the dynasty it had placed on the throne, was, in Africa, in every sense, the predominant doctrine; and the khalif throne of Mahadia, the first residence of these princes, soon threatened that of Bagdad. It was from that ancient metropolis of the khalifat that proceeded the allegations against the purity of Obeidollah's extraction. According to them, he was anything but a descendant of Mohammed, the son of Ismail; but was the half-brother, by a Jewess, of Hossein and Abushelalaa, the two sons of Ahmed, the son of Abdollah, the son of Maimun-Kaddah. His name was affirmed to be originally Said, but that after he had been set at liberty by Abdollah, it was changed to Obeidollah; and in fact, if it is considered that the doctrine of Abdollah, the son of Maimun, so utterly subversive of that of Islamism, became,

(1) A.D. 909; A.H. 297.

on the establishment of the Fatimite sovereignty, the prevalent one in the court and the government, and that it was first publicly taught at Mahadia, and, after the conquest of Egypt under the fourth khalif of this dynasty, at Cairo; that its chief, under the title of Daial-doat, supreme missionary of the crown, was, as Kadhiol Kodhat, or supreme judge, invested with one of the first dignities of the empire, both offices being frequently united in the same person; the supposition that the chiefs of this sect, to whom nothing was sacred and all was permitted, had placed one of their own number on the throne, acquires very great probability, notwithstanding the assertions of Macrisi and Ibn Khaledun to the contrary. The accounts which the former of these two great historians has preserved, concerning the promulgation of this doctrine, and the degrees of initiation, which were now increased from seven to nine, form a very precious and the most ancient document on the history of the secret societies of the east, in whose steps those of the west afterwards trod. Their immediate connexion with the doctrine of the eastern Ismailites, or Assassins, renders it necessary to give a brief outline of it here.

Immediately after the establishment of the monarchy of the Fatimites,[1] history mentions similar assemblages, which were convened twice a week, every Monday and Wednesday, by the Daial-doat, and were frequented in crowds both by men and women, who had separate seats. These assemblages were named Mejalisol-hikmet, or Societies of Wisdom. The candidates for initiation were dressed in white; the chief went on those two days to the khalif, and read something to him, if possible, but in every case received his signature on the cover of his manuscript. After the lecture, the pupils kissed his hands, and touched the signature of the khalif reverently with their foreheads. In the reign of the sixth Fatimite khalif, Hakem Biemvillah, (the most stupid tyrant

(1) A. D. 977; A. H. 335.

of which the history of Islamism makes mention, who desired to receive divine honours, and what is still more absurd, is to this day worshipped by the Druses as an incarnate god), these societies, the house in which their meetings were held, and the institutions for the maintenance of teachers and servants, were increased on a very large scale: an extensive building or lodge was erected,[1] called Darol-hikmet, or the House of Wisdom, and richly furnished with books, mathematical instruments, professors and attendants; access, and the use of these literary treasures was free to all, and writing materials were afforded gratis. The khalifs frequently held learned disputations, at which the professors of this academy appeared, divided according to their different faculties—logicians, mathematicians, jurists, and physicians, were dressed in their gala costume, khalaa, or their doctoral mantles. The gowns of the English universities still have the original form of the Arabic khalaa or kaftan.

Two hundred and fifty-seven thousand ducats, raised by the tenths and eighth of the tenth, was the amount of the annual revenue of this academy, for the salaries of the professors and officials, for the provision of the requisites for teaching, and other objects of public scientific instruction, as well as of the secret articles of faith: the former comprised all the branches of human knowledge—the latter inculcated, in nine successive degrees, the following principles:[2] The first degree was the longest and most difficult of all, as it was necessary to inspire the pupil with the most implicit confidence in the knowledge of his teacher, and to incline him to take that most solemn oath, by which he bound himself to the secret doctrine with blind faith and unconditional obedience. For this purpose, every possible expedient was adopted to perplex the mind by the many contradictions of positive religion and reason, to render the absurdities of the Koran still more in-

(1) A. D. 1004; A. H. 395.

(2) Macrisi, art. Mohawal and Darol-hikmet.

volved by the most insidious questions and most subtle doubts, and to point from the apparent literal signification to a deeper sense, which was properly the kernel, as the former was but the husk. The more ardent the curiosity of the novice, the more resolute was the refusal of the master to afford the least solution to these difficulties, until he had taken the most unrestricted oath; on this, he was admitted to the second degree. This inculcated the recognition of divinely appointed imams, who were the source of all knowledge. As soon as the faith in them was well established, the third degree taught their number, which could not exceed the holy seven; for, as God had created seven heavens, seven earths, seven seas, seven planets, seven colours, seven musical sounds, and seven metals, so had he appointed seven of the most excellent of his creatures as revealed imams: these were, Ali, Hassan, Hossein, Ali Seinolabidin, Mohammed Albakir, Jafer Assadik, and Ismail, his son, as the last and seventh. This was the great leap or the proper schism from the Imamie, who, as we have seen, reckoned twelve, and considerably facilitated the passing into the fourth grade. This taught, that since the beginning of the world there have been seven divine lawgivers, or speaking apostles of God, of whom each had always, by the command of heaven, altered the doctrine of his predecessor. That each of these had seven coadjutors, who succeeded each other in the epoch from one speaking lawgiver to another, but who, as they did not appear manifestly, were called the Mutes (Samit).

The first of the Mutes was named Sus, the seat as it were of the ministers of the speaking prophet. These seven speaking prophets, with their seven seats, were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, and Ismail, the son of Jafer, who, as the last, was called Sahibeseman (*i. e.* the Lord of time). Their seven assistants were Seth, Shem, Ishmael, son of Abraham, Aaron, Simeon, Ali, and Mohammed, son of Ismail. It is evident from this dexterous arrangement, which gained the Ismailites the name of Seveners,

that as they named only the first of the mute divine envoys in each prophetic period; and since Mohammed, the son of Ismail, the first of the last prophet's coadjutors had been dead only a hundred years, the teachers were at full liberty to present to those whose progress stopped at this degree, whomsoever they pleased, as one of the mute prophets of the current age. The fifth degree must necessarily render the credibility of the doctrine more manifest to the minds of the learners; for this reason, it taught that each of the seven mute prophets had twelve apostles for the extension of the true faith; for the number twelve is the most excellent after seven: hence the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twelve months, the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve bones of the fingers of each hand, the thumb excepted, and so on.

After these five degrees, the precepts of Islamism were examined; and in the sixth it was shown, that all positive religious legislation must be subordinate to the general and philosophical. The dogmas of Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras were adduced as proofs, and laid down as axioms. This degree was very tedious, and only when the acolyte was fully penetrated with the wisdom of the philosophers, was admission granted him to the seventh, where he passed from philosophy to mysticism. This was the doctrine of unity, which the Sofis have exhibited in their works. In the eighth, the positive precepts of religion were again brought forward, to fall to dust by all that preceded; then was the pupil perfectly enlightened as to the superfluity of all prophets and apostles, the non-existence of heaven and hell, the indifference of all actions, for which there is neither reward nor punishment either in this world or the next; and thus was he matured for the ninth and last degree, to become the blind instrument of all the passions of unbridled thirst of power. To believe nothing and to dare all, was, in two words, the sum of this system, which annihilated every principle of religion and morality, and had no other object than to execute ambitious designs with suitable ministers, who, daring all and

honouring nothing, since they consider every thing a cheat and nothing forbidden, are the best tools of an infernal policy. A system, which, with no other aim than the gratification of an insatiable lust of dominion, instead of seeking the highest of human objects, precipitates itself into the abyss, and mangling itself, is buried amidst the ruins of thrones and altars, the horrors of anarchy, the wreck of national happiness, and the universal execration of mankind.

END OF BOOK I.

BOOK II.

Establishment of the Order of the Assassins, and Reign of the first Grand Master, Hassan Sabah.

Egypt, that extraordinary country, so distinguished from all others by the many wonderful phenomena of nature, has ever been in history the memorable theatre of extraordinary exhibitions of the art of governing mankind by wisdom or folly in the name of heaven or earth. In the remote ages of antiquity reigned a caste of priests, in whose hands the king was the servile tool of their power, the lituus (our present bishop's crosier) was the real sceptre. Superstition, and the external worship of statues and pictures, was the religion of the people, while the secret doctrine of the initiated was concealed under symbols and hieroglyphics. Their mysteries had a particular relation to the state of the soul after death; whereas the popular belief confined its duration to that of its earthly existence. It was a deeply designed but ill-calculated policy, which excluded from the doctrine of immortality the multitude who cleave to the clod, and made it the peculiar prerogative of a certain number of elect, to whom it was permitted to soar beyond the limits of the tomb, without at the same time neglecting the duties and objects of civil life. It was imagined, that the vulgar could only fulfil them with all their energies, and to their full extent, when, instead of being actuated by views extending beyond the grave, they confine to earth the whole activity and faculty of their mind, during the space of time which intervenes between the cradle and the coffin.

Thus, neither time nor vigour would be lost in vain hopes or useless speculations; every application of them was devoted to civil existence: this was the object of the state, which reserved to itself the allotment of rewards and punishments, not only here but hereafter. In order to satisfy, in some measure, that longing after continued existence implanted by nature in every breast, though deriving little support from reason, the people sought to preserve their bodies and names for the longest possible period, by mummies and tombs: hence those mighty monuments, and the secret judgment of the dead, in which the priests, as assessors and judges, were the dispensers of this transitory immortality of stone and dust. To the few better informed, and who were not satisfied with this mummery, the judgment of the dead was symbolically explained in the mysteries, and the real immortality of the soul taught; and explanations were afforded by the priests of subjects of which they were themselves entirely ignorant.

Moses, imbued with the Egyptian policy, and initiated into the mysteries of the sacerdotal colleges, among many other of their institutions, retained this, of not imparting to his people the doctrine of immortality, which, in all probability, remained, as in Egypt, the peculiar privilege of the priestly order. We find no trace of it in the books of the Hebrews; except in the Arabic poem of Job, which, in fact, does not belong to them.

How much this concealment of the doctrine of immortality, deemed by the priests such a master-piece of policy, has repressed the spirit of the people, and impeded every loftier aspiration, is sufficiently made known to us, not only in the history of their government, but also by their still remaining monuments, which are so entirely unconsecrated by the hand of art. The sphinxes and colossal statues, the temples, and the pyramids, those astounding monuments of human activity, and of the power of numbers directed to one end, bear the stamp of greatness, from the extent of their proportions, but by no means that of beauty in their execution.

This latter dwells only in those favoured regions of light, to which art and religion are together elevated by the idea of immortality. Although this mysterious policy set bounds to the more free developement of civilization, and the elevation of the people to a higher social grade, it is nevertheless very probable, that it proceeded from purely intellectual views, and the honest intention of laying the foundation of the highest prosperity for the kingdom, and the greatest temporal happiness of the people, by the undisturbed activity of all human energies, and the continued application of them to one political object. The secret doctrine benefited the initiated, while it did not injure the profane. Of an entirely opposite nature, was, as we have seen, that which prevailed in modern Egypt, during the middle ages; the former contrived for the strengthening of the throne and the altar, the latter imagined for their ruin. As wide a chasm, as that which lies between the building of ancient Memphis and the founding of modern Cairo, divides the secret tenets of the academies of Heliopolis from those of the modern house of science. Egypt, in remote antiquity the cradle of science and social institutions, afterwards the mother of alchemy and treasure-hunting, by means of the philosopher's stone and talismans,—became, in modern times, the native soil of secret sciences and societies.

The lodge of Cairo, whose political aim was, as we have already seen, to overthrow the khalifat of the family of Abbas, in favour of the Fatimites, spread its secret doctrine, by its Dais (*i. e.* political and religious missionaries). To these were subordinate the ordinary partisans, Refik, or fellows, who, initiated into one or several grades of the mysteries, were, nevertheless, neither to teach them, nor to collect the suffrages for any dynasty; this being the peculiar privilege of the Dais, whose chief, the Dail-doat, or grand-master, resided at Cairo, in the House of Sciences. This institution remained unchanged, from its foundation by Hakem,[1] to the time of the khalif, Emr-Biahkam-illah,[2] when the Emir-ol-

(1) A. D. 1004; A. H. 395. (2) A. D. 1122; A. H. 516.

juyush, or commander-in-chief of the army Efdhal, on the occasion of an insurrection fomented by the members of the lodge,[1] caused it to be shut up, and, as it appears, to be destroyed. When, after his death in the following year, the society strongly urged their re-opening, the vizier, Maimun, refused to open the academy on the same spot, but permitted them to erect, in a different situation, another building, dedicated to the same purpose, which was Darolilm-jedide (*i. e.* the new House of Sciences); where public courses of instruction and secret meetings, as before, continued, till the downfal of the Fatimite dynasty. The effects of their doctrine soon appeared in the increasing power of the Fatimites, and the feebleness into which the khalifat of the family of Abbas gradually sank.[2] The Emir Bessassiri, one of the most zealous partisans and defenders of the former, took possession,[3] for a whole year, at Bagdad, of the two royal prerogatives of Islamism, the mint and the pulpit, in the name of the Egyptian khalif, Mostanssur, who would have retained them, had not Bessassiri fallen in the following year, by the sword of Togrul, who had hastened to the assistance of the Abbassides. In the meanwhile, the fellows, Refik, and the masters, Dai, inundated the whole of Asia; and one of the latter, Hassan-ben-Sabah Homairi, was the founder of a new branch of the sect, namely, the eastern Ismailites, or Assassins, before whose cradle we now stand.

Hassan Sabah, or Hassan-ben-Sabah, that is, one of the descendants of Sabah, was the son of Ali, a strict Shiite of Rei, who took his name from Sabah Homairi, and pretended that his father had gone from Kufa to Kum, and from Kum to Rei. This allegation met, however, with considerable contradiction from the natives of Khorassan, particularly those of Tus, who unanimously asserted that his ancestors had constantly dwelt in the villages of that province. Ali was universally suspected

(1) A. D. 1123; A. H. 517.
(2) Macrisi art. Mohaval, Darolilm and Darolilm-jedide.
(3) A. D. 1058; A. H. 450.

of heretical notions and expressions, which gained him the reputation of Rafedhi, or Motasal (Dissenter, or Separatist). He sought, by false confessions and oaths, to prove his orthodoxy to Abumoslem, the governor of the province, a strict Soonnite, and afterwards withdrew to a monastery, to lead a life of contemplation. This retirement, however, had not the effect of securing him from public report, which at one time accused him of heresy and heterodoxy, at another, of infidelity and atheism. In order to clear himself, as much as possible, from this suspicion, he sent his young son, Hassan, to Nishabur, and placed him in the school of the illustrious Mowafek Nishaburi, who, at that time past eighty years of age, not only enjoyed the well-merited consideration of being the first doctor of the Soonna, but also the advantageous reputation, which events justified, of securing the temporal happiness of all who studied the Koran and Soonna under his auspices. Great was the concourse of distinguished youths who sought from him happiness and instruction, and justified, by the developement of fortunate talents, the established opinion of the Imam's wisdom and auspicious conversation. His last pupils, even to his death, contributed to confirm his reputation:—three of them, who flourished at the same time,—Hassan, Omar Khiam, and Nisamolmulk, endued with the most splendid talents, pursued the most different careers, with the most fortunate results. They shone among the constellations of mighty minds of their age, like the three stars in Orion's belt, —Omar Khiam, as an astronomer and philosophical poet; Nisamolmulk, as grand vizier; and Hassan-ben-Sabah, as the head of a sect and founder of the Assassins. The first, useless in civil society, was innoxious, by his epicurean mode of life; the second was a beneficent, active, and learned statesman, under three of the Seljukide sultans; and the third, by his diabolical policy, became a pernicious scourge to humanity.

The ambition of the latter burst forth even in his youth, when he endeavoured to lay the foundation of his fortune,

with his two school-fellows, by mutual promises. One of them, the vizier, Nisamolmulk, that is, *order of rule*, himself relates, in his character of historian, the obligations into which they entered, and their sequel. "The general opinion is," said Hassan, one day, to the other two, "that the imam's pupils are certain of their fortune; now, let us promise each other, that if this proves true of only one of us three, he will share his good fortune with the other two." Omar Khiam and Nisamolmulk agreed to Hassan's proposal, with mutual engagements; the first too indolent to involve himself in politics, the second too magnanimous not to wish to share with the restless ambition of the third, that prosperity, which his great talents and honest industry ensured him in that career. Years elapsed, during which Nisamolmulk travelled through the countries of Khorassan, Mawarainehr, Khasnin, and Kabul, and filled the lower offices of the state, till he at last attained, under Alparslan, the great prince of the Seljuks, the highest post in the empire,—that of vizier. He received with honour his old school-fellow, Omar Khiam, who was the first to visit him, and mindful, as he himself relates, of his youthful promise, offered him his credit and influence, in procuring him an office; which is the more probable, as Nisam's knowledge of the world convinced him that Khiam's love for epicurean enjoyments would reject the offer; and that, in any case, such a rival, as vizier, could never prove dangerous to him. Omar Khiam thanked him, and merely requested peaceful leisure to devote himself, undisturbed, to the pursuit of the sciences; and, as he constantly gave the same answer to Nisamolmulk's repeated offers to make him vizier, the latter granted him an annual pension of one thousand ducats, out of the revenues of Nishabur, in which place, removed from the turmoil of public affairs, and in the bosom of luxurious independence, he henceforward devoted his life to the cultivation of his genius and the sciences, and gained great fame as a poet and astronomer. Although his love of ease did not permit him to transmit his glory to posterity, by

any considerable work, yet he has preserved it in the history of Persian poetry, merely by his four-line strophes. These are unique in their kind, by the licentiousness of their overwhelming wit, which, without the least scruple, indulged itself in pleasantries, at the expense of all pious persons, and particularly the mystics, not only on the doctrines of the Sofis, but also the Koran itself; so much, as to be held by the orthodox in the worst reputation for impiety. Omar Khiam, in the collection of his quatrains (Rubayat), and Ibn Yemen, in that of his fragments (Mokataat), merit, before all Persian poets who have gained a name, that, more particularly, of philosophical. The genius of the former is allied to that of Young, the latter to that of Voltaire.

Hassan Sabah lived in obscurity, and unknown, during the ten years' reign of Alp-arslan. Immediately, however, after the accession of Melekshah, under whom Nisamolmulk enjoyed the same unlimited power, as vizier, as he had under his predecessor,—the son of Sabah also appeared at the court of the Sultan of the Seljukides, and with harsh words from the Koran, directed against promise-breakers, reminded the vizier of the fulfilment of the obligations of his youth. Nisamolmulk received him with honour, procured him considerable titles and revenues, and introduced him to the sultan, of whom Hassan, by crafty hypocrisy, and under the mask of virtuous frankness and candid honesty, soon became master. The sultan consulted him on all important occasions, and acted according to his decision. The authority and influence of Nisamolmulk were soon essentially endangered, and Hassan laboured with zeal to accomplish the fall of his benefactor. With consummate art, he caused the smallest oversights of the divan to come to the sultan's knowledge; and on being questioned, contrived, by the most insidious representations, sophisms, and unfavourable impressions, to turn his sovereign's mind against the vizier. The most cruel blow of this kind was, according to Nisamolmulk's own confession, Hassan's pledging himself to lay before the sultan, within

forty days, the balance sheet of the revenues and expenditure of the state,—a task, to the execution of which the vizier had requested a period ten times as long. Melekshah placed at Hassan's disposal all the secretaries of the chamber, with whose assistance he performed the desired computation within the promised time. Nisamolmulk relates, that, although Hassan gained the victory, he reaped no advantage from it; for, after having sent in his accounts, he was compelled to leave the court with dishonour. He, however, does not give us the proper cause of his disgrace. According to the statement of other historians, it is very probable, that Nisamolmulk, consulting his own preservation, found means to mutilate Hassan's estimate, by the abstraction of some leaves; and as no account could be given by the latter to the sultan, of this unexpected disorder in his papers, he increased the sovereign's displeasure, in order to remove so dangerous a rival for ever from the court. He declares, very *naïvely*, in his Political Institutes (Wassaya), that if this misfortune had not befallen the son of Sabah, he would himself have been necessitated to adopt the same course,—that is, to have abandoned the court and his office.[1]

Hassan retired from Melekshah's court to Rei, and then to Ispahan, where he kept himself secluded in the house of Abufasl, in order to escape the inquiries of Nisamolmulk. He soon gained over the Reis to his opinions, and lived sometime with him. One day, he concluded the complaints which he was making against Melekshah and his vizier, with the expression, that "if he had had at his bidding but two devoted friends, he would soon have overturned the power of the Turk and the peasant" (the sultan and the vizier). These remarkable words unveil the profound and extensive plans of the founder of the Assassins, who already contemplated the ruin of kings and ministers. The canon of the whole policy of this order of murderers is comprised in them. Opinions are powerless, so long as they only confuse the brain, without

(1) Mirkhond and Devletshah; art. Shahfur of Nishabur.

arming the hand. Scepticism and free-thinking, as long as they occupied only the minds of the indolent and philosophical, have caused the ruin of no throne, for which purpose religious and political fanaticism are the strongest levers in the hands of nations. It is nothing to the ambitious man what people believe, but it is everything to know how he may turn them, for the execution of his projects. He is satisfied with finding ready slaves, faithful satellites, and blind instruments. What may not two such, animated by the soul of a third, and obeying his behests, accomplish? This truth, which lay open to the enterprising soul of Hassan, found no access to the understanding of his host, the Reis Abufasl, one of the shrewdest and most intelligent men of his time. He considered these words as a sign of madness, and doubted not that they were the effusion of delirium; for, thought he, how could it occur to a man of sound intellect, to place himself, with two adherents, in opposition to Melekshah, whose power extended from Antioch to Kashgar. Without imparting his thoughts to his guest, he placed before him, at breakfast and dinner, in hopes of restoring his health, aromatic drinks and dishes, prepared with saffron, which were considered as strengtheners of the brain. Hassan guessed his host's design, and prepared to leave him. The latter in vain employed all his eloquence to retain him;[1] he soon after repaired to Egypt.[2]

When, twenty years afterwards, Hassan had possessed himself of the strong fortress of Alamut, and the Vizier Nisamolmulk had fallen under the daggers of his assassins, and the Sultan Melekshah had followed him to the grave soon after,—the Reis Abufasl was at the castle, as one of the most zealous of Hassan's partisans. "Reis," said the latter to him, "which of us two was out of his senses, I or thou? and which would the aromatic drinks, and dishes dressed with saffron, which thou settedst before me at Ispahan, have best suited,—thee or me? Thou seest how I have kept my word, as soon as I found two trusty friends."

(1) A. D. 1078; A. H. 471. (2) Nokhbetet-Tewarikh and Mirkhond.

The reign of Sultan Melekshah, during the twenty years of which Hassan Sabah was occupied in laying the foundation of his power,—is one of the most stormy periods of middle oriental history, many ways distinguished by the downfal of old, and the rise of new, dynasties. In Taberistan, Aleppo, and Diarbekr, the races of the Beni Siad, Ben Merdas, and Beni Merwan,[1] disappeared, and in their place, the families of Danishmend-Bawend and Ortok,[2] raised themselves to the thrones of Kum, Taberistan, and Maradin.[3] The Seljukides, who, since the time of their founder, Togrul-beg, had ruled in Iran, spread their branches into Syria,[4] Karman,[5] and Asia Minor;[6] Bagdad, the metropolis of the Abbasside khalifs, was torn with intestine religious wars.[7] The Soonnites and the Shiites, the followers of the Imams, Eshaari and Hanbeli, fought sanguinary combats within the city's walls.[8] The mint, and prayers from the pulpit, had, indeed, since the death of the Emir Bessassiri,[9] been restored to the name of the family of Abbas; but in both the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, they were continued in the name of the fanatical khalif, Mostanssur, who occupied the throne of Egypt. His Dais, or missionaries, the initiated of the Ismailites, the Apostles of the lodge of Cairo, inundated the whole of Asia, in order to gain proselytes to the cause of infidelity and rebellion. It cannot afford matter of surprise that, in Hassan Sabah, their seed met with a fertile soil. We will relate the beginning of his connexion with them, in his own words, as history preserves them.[10]

"From my childhood, from my seventh year, my sole effort has been to extend the bounds of my knowledge and to increase my capacities. Like my fathers, I was educated in the tenets of the twelve imams (Imamie), and I formed an

(1) A. D. 1078; A. H. 471.
(2) A. D. 1079; A. H. 472.
(3) A. D. 1085; A. H. 478.
(4) A. D. 1072; A. H. 465.
(5) A. D. 1077; A. H. 470.
(6) A. D. 1084; A. H. 477.
(7) A. D. 1077; A. H. 470.
(8) A. D. 1079; A. H. 472.
(9) A. D. 1084; A. H. 477.
(10) Mirkhond and Takvimet-tewarikh.

acquaintance with an Ismailite Refik (Fellow), called Emire Dharab, with whom I cemented bonds of friendship. My opinion was, that the doctrine of the Ismailites was like that of the philosophers, and that the ruler of Egypt was one of the initiated: whenever, therefore, Emire spoke in favour of their principles, I disputed with him, and there was a great deal of discussion between us concerning points of faith. I did not in the least admit the justice of the reproaches which Emire lavished on my sect; nevertheless they left a deep impression on my mind. In the meanwhile he left me, and I was attacked by a severe fit of illness, during which I blamed my obstinacy in not having embraced the doctrine of the Ismailites, which was the true one; and I dreaded lest, should death await me, from which God preserved me, I might die without obtaining a knowledge of the truth: at length I recovered, and met with another Ismailite, Abu-Nedshm-Saraj, whom I questioned concerning the truth of his doctrine; Abunedshm explained it to me in the most circumstantial manner that I came fully to understand it. Lastly, I found a Dai (Missionary), called Mumin, to whom the Sheikh Abdolmelek-ben-Attash, the president of the missions of Irak, had granted permission to exercise that office. I entreated him to accept my homage in the name of the Fatimite khalif; this he at first refused, because I was of higher rank than himself, but as I urged it most pressingly, he at length acquiesced. Now when the Sheikh Abdolmelek arrived at Rei, and had become acquainted with my opinions in conversation, my demeanour pleased him so, that he immediately invested me with the office of Dai (religious and political missionary). He said to me, 'Thou must go to Egypt to enjoy the happiness of serving the Imam Mostanssur, (the reigning Fatimite khalif).' On the Sheikh Abdolmelek's departure from Rei on his route to Ispahan, I journeyed into Egypt."[1]

Hassan then had been already initiated, in Persia, in the

(1) Mirkhond.

Ismailite mysteries of Atheism and immorality, and had even been deemed worthy to become a teacher and promulgator of them. The fame of his great talents, and the authority which he had enjoyed at the court of Melekshah, preceded him; and the khalif Mostanssur, delighted with the acquisition of such a partisan, received him with honour and distinction. The chief of the missionaries, or grand-master of the lodge, Dail Doat, the Sherif Tahre Kaswimi, and some other persons of rank and influence, were despatched to the frontiers to meet him; Mostanssur assigned him a residence in the city, and welcomed him in the person of his ministers and court dignitaries, and loaded him with marks of honour and favour. According to some, Hassan remained eighteen months at Cairo, during which, although the khalif had no personal interview with him, he interested himself in every thing that concerned him, and even spoke of him in terms of the highest eulogium: so great were the recommendations and predilection of the khalif, that his relations and chief officers were persuaded that Hassan would be named prime minister. In the meantime, clouds of disunion and discord arose between Hassan and Bedr Jemali *(full moon of beauty)*, the Emirol Juyush, or commander-in-chief, who enjoyed unlimited power in the Ismailite dominions. The cause was the great dissensions, which, at that period, took place relating to the succession to the Egyptian throne: the khalif had declared his son Nesar his legitimate successor; while a faction, headed by Bedr Jemali, asserted that his other son, Mosteali, who eventually succeeded him, was alone worthy to be so. Hassan maintained the succession of Nesar, and by that means drew upon himself the inextinguishable hatred of the general, who employed every effort against him, and at length persuaded the reluctant khalif to imprison the son of Sabah in the castle of Damietta.[1]

About this period, one of the strongest towers in the city fell without any visible cause; and the terrified inhabitants

(1) Mirkhond.

saw, in this accident, a miracle performed by the fortunate stars of Hassan and Mostanssur. His enemies, and those who envied him, conveyed him with their own hands into a ship which was sailing to Africa; he was scarcely at sea, when a violent gale lashed up the waves, and filled the whole crew, except Hassan, with terror; he, calm and raised above all fear, answered one of his fellow-passengers, who asked him the cause of such security, "Our Lord (Sidna) has promised me that no evil shall befal me." The sea becoming calm some minutes afterwards, the voyagers were filled with universal confidence, and from that moment became Hassan's disciples and faithful partisans. Thus, to increase his credit, did he avail himself of accidents and natural occurrences, as if he possessed the command of both. The coolness with which he confronted the perils of the swelling sea, gave him, with the apparent rule of the elements, real authority over the mind: in the dark night of the dungeon and the storm, he meditated black projects of ambition and revenge; in the midst of the crash of the falling tower, and the thunder and lightning, and billows of the storm, he laid the foundation of his union of Assassins, for the ruin of thrones, and the wreck of dynasties.

A wind, contrary to the destination of the ship, but favourable to Hassan, drove them on the coasts of Syria instead of towards Africa; Hassan disembarked and proceeded to Aleppo, where he remained some time; thence he visited Bagdad, Khusistan, Ispahan, Yezd, and Kerman, everywhere publishing his doctrine: from Kerman he returned to Ispahan, where he resided four months, and then made a second excursion into Khusistan; after staying three months in this province, he fixed himself for as many years in Damaghan and the surrounding country: he here made a great number of proselytes, and sent to Alamut as well as other fortresses of the place, Dais of captivating eloquence. After preparing everything here for the future maturity of his plans, he went to Jorjan, whence he directed his journey towards

Dilem; he would not, however, enter the territory of Rei, because Abu Moslem Rasi, the governor of that district, having received orders from Nisamolmulk to possess himself of his person in any way, omitted nothing in execution of these instructions; Hassan proceeded therefore to Sari, and thence to Demawend. On his way to Kaswin, he passed through Dilem,[1] and at length arrived at the castle of Alamut, which became the cradle of his power and greatness. He had already, some time before, sent to this stronghold one of his most zealous and skilful Dais, Hossein Kaini, to invite the inhabitants to swear fealty to the Khalif Mostanssur. The greater number had already taken the accustomed oath to him. Ali Mehdi, the commandant, who held it in the name of Melekshah, with a few others, remained faithful to his duty, acknowledging no other spiritual supremacy than that of the khalif of Bagdad, of the family of Abbas; and submitting to no other temporal prince than the Sultan Melekshah, of the family of Seljuk. He was a descendant of Ali, and reckoned among his ancestors Dai Ilalhakk (*i. e.* the inviter to truth). Hassan ben Seid Bakeri had built this fortress two centuries and a half before.[2]

Alamut (*i. e.* Vulture's nest), so called from its impregnable position, and situated in 50 deg. 30 min. E. longitude, and 36 deg. N. latitude, is the largest and strongest of fifty castles which lie scattered about the district of Rudbar, at the distance of sixty farsangs north of Kaswin. It is a mountainous country on the confines of Dilem and Irak, watered by the Shahrud or King's river; two streams bear this name, one of which runs in Mount Thalkan, near Kaswin, the other in Mount Sheer, and flows through the district, Rudbar of Alamut. Rudbar means river land, and is applied to another district as well as this northern one, which is called "of Alamut," to distinguish it from the southern Rudbar of Lor, which is situated near Ispahan, and is watered

(1) Mirkhond. (2) A. D. 860; A. H. 246.

by the river of life, Sendrud, as the former is by the King's river, Shahrud.[1]

Hassan, who had hitherto sought in vain for some central point for the foundation of his power, at length took possession of the castle of Alamut, on the night of Wednesday, the 6th of the month Redsheb, in the four hundred and eighty-third year after the flight of Mohammed, and the thousand and ninetieth after the birth of Christ; seven centuries before the French revolution, whose first movers were the tools or leaders of secret societies, which, like the Ismailites, then openly attempted what they had in secret contemplated—the overthrow of thrones and altars. Long experience and extensive knowledge of mankind, profound study of politics and history, had taught the son of Sabah, that an atheistical and immoral system was more calculated to accomplish the ruin, than the establishment of dynasties, and the confusion rather than the ordering of states; that lawlessness may be the canon of the ruler, but ought never to be the code of the subject; that the many are only held together by the few by the bridle of the law; and that morality and religion are the best sureties of the obedience of nations and the security of princes. Initiated into the highest grade of the lodge of Cairo, he clearly penetrated their plan of boundless ambition, whose object was nothing less than the destruction of the khalifat of the Abassides, and the raising new thrones on their ruins. He, who had till now acted as Dai or religious nuncio and political envoy, in the name of the Fatimite khalif, Mostanssur, formed the resolution of securing power to himself instead of his superior, and did not apply himself to the destruction of the works of foreign wisdom and policy, so much as to found and fortify the edifice of his own,—since, in the opinion of the Moslimin, the supreme dominion was always vested in the person of the imam khalif; and the people were merely divided as to whether this was legally inherited by the families of

(1) Jehannuma, p. 296 and 304.

Ommia, Abbas or Fatima. No other resource was left to an ambitious chief, who usurped thrones and sovereignty, than to seek them under the shadow of the khalifat (at that time itself a shadow), and in the name of the reigning khalif; so had but lately the family of Seljuk, as others had done before, possessed themselves of the rule in Asia, in the name of the khalif of Bagdad. Hassan Sabah, who had been unsuccessful in his hopes at the court of the Seljukides, and had disagreed both with the sultan and his vizier, could only come forward for the khalif of Cairo: in his name, and under the appearance of the strictest piety, he gained disciples; ostensibly, for the khalifat of Cairo and religion, but in reality, for himself and the projects of his lawless ambition.

He obtained possession of Alamut, partly by stratagem and partly by force; and the artifice by which he succeeded received a higher confirmation in the eyes of the multitude by means of the Cabbala, which very luckily found, in the letters of the word Alahmut, the date of the current year 483. Hassan adopted the same trick against Mehdi, the commandant of the castle, in the name of the Sultan Melekshah, which history mentions as having been used at the foundation of Carthage and other cities. He requested, at the price of 3000 ducats, as much land as an ox's hide would only contain; he split the hide into strips, and with them surrounded the castle. Mehdi, who had already some time earlier excluded the Ismailites from the fortress, and then on an arrangement taking place had re-admitted them, was, on his not acceding to this purchase, driven out by force, and withdrew to Damaghan. Previous to his departure, Hassan gave him a laconic letter or bill of exchange, on the Reis Mosaffer, commander of the castle of Kirdhuh, in these words: "Reis Mosaffer, pay Mehdi, the descendant of Ali, 3000 ducats, as the price of the castle of Alamut. Health to the prophet and his family. God the best ruler sufficeth us." Mehdi could not believe that a man like the Reis Mosaffer, who enjoyed the highest consideration as a lieutenant of the

Seljuks, would pay the slightest respect to the bill of an adventurer like Hassan: he made, therefore, no use of it until his curiosity was spurred by necessity, when, on presenting it to the Reis, to his great astonishment, the 3000 ducats were immediately paid. The Reis, in fact, was one of the earliest and most faithful followers of Hassan Sabah; the second and most active was Hossein of Kaini: they taught and acted for him as missionaries,—the former in Jebal, the latter in Kuhistan, both names meaning Highlands, and being the northern mountainous provinces of Persia. Hassan provided his metropolis with ramparts and wells; he caused a canal to be dug, bringing the water from a considerable distance to the foot of the castle; he made plantations of fruit trees around the neighbourhood, and encouraged the inhabitants in the pursuit of agriculture. While he was thus employed in the fortification and defence of his castle, which commanded the whole district of Rudbar, promoting cultivation and raising supplies, his care and attention were still more deeply engaged with the establishment of his own religious and political system, namely, the peculiar policy of the Assassins.

A power was to be established, to which laws were to be given, and the want of treasure and troops, the great arms of sovereignty, was to be compensated in unusual ways. History showed, in the sanguinary examples of Babek and Karmath, who had led hundreds of thousands to the slaughter, and had fallen themselves the victims of their ambition, how dangerous it is for infidelity and sedition to dare an open contest with the constituted faith and government. Hassan's own experience taught him, by the slender results which the Ismailite mission had exhibited in Asia, how useless it was to attempt to propagate the secret doctrine of the lodge of Cairo, as long as its superiors had heads, but not hands at their disposal.

During the two hundred years that the empire of the Fatimites had been established in Africa, the lodge first erected at Mahadia, then at Cairo, and the system of secret

missions in favour of the Fatimites, had been organized; they had indeed succeeded in giving the authority of the Abassides a shock, but without being able to extend their own; they had assumed the two prerogatives of the mint and public prayers at Bagdad, but could keep possession of them for only a year, and lost it when Bessassiri succumbed to the arms of Togrul. Under pretence of enlisting partisans to the successors of Ismail, they had preached atheism and immorality; and thereby loosened the religious and moral bonds of civil society, without troubling themselves about compensation; they had shaken thrones, without being able to overturn, or to seat themselves upon them. Nothing of this escaped Hassan's deep reflections; and as he had not been successful in the usual routine of ministerial ambition, in playing a part in the empire of the Seljukides, he afterwards, as nuncio and envoy, paved the way to his own power, and planned a system of administration of his own. "Nothing is true and all is allowed," was the groundwork of the secret doctrine; which, however, being imparted but to few, and concealed under the veil of the most austere religionism and piety, restrained the mind under the yoke of blind obedience, by the already adopted rein of the positive commands of Islamism, the more strictly, the more temporal submission and devotion were sanctioned, by eternal rewards and glory.

Hitherto, the Ismailites had only Masters and Fellows; namely, the Dais or emissaries, who, being initiated into all the grades of the secret doctrine, enlisted proselytes; and the Refik, who, gradually intrusted with its principles, formed the great majority. It was manifest to the practical and enterprising spirit of Hassan, that, in order to execute great undertakings with security and energy, a third class would also be requisite, who, never being admitted to the mystery of atheism and immorality, which snap the bonds of all subordination, were but blind and fanatical tools in the hands of their superiors; that a well organized political body needs not merely heads but also arms, and that the master re-

quired not only intelligent and skilful fellows, but also faithful and active agents: these agents were called Fedavie (*i. e.* the self-offering or devoted), the name itself declares their destination. How they afterwards, in Syria, obtained that of the Hashishin or Assassins, we shall explain hereafter, when we speak of the means employed to animate them to blind obedience and fanatical self-devotion. Being clothed in white,[1] like the followers of Mokannaa, three hundred years before, in Transoxana, and, still earlier, the Christian Neophytes, and, in our own days, the pages of the sultan, they were termed Mobeyese, the white, or likewise, Mohammere the red, because they wore, with their white costume, red turbans, boots, or girdles, as in our own day do the warriors of the prince of Lebanon, and at Constantinople the Janissaries and Bostangis as body guard of the seraglio. Habited in the hues of innocence and blood, and of pure devotion and murder, armed with daggers (cultelliferi) which were constantly snatched forth at the service of the grand-master, they formed his guard, the executioners of his deadly orders, the sanguinary tools of the ambition and revenge of this order of Assassins.

The grand master was called Sidna (Sidney) our lord, and commonly Sheikh al Jebal, the Sheikh, the old man or supreme master of the mountain; because the order always possessed themselves of the castles in the mountainous regions, both in Irak, Kuhistan, and Syria, and the ancient of the mountains, resided in the mountain fort of Alamut, robed in white, like the Ancient of days in Daniel.[2] He was neither king nor prince in the usual sense of the word, and never assumed the title either of Sultan, Melek, or Emir, but merely that of Sheikh, which to this day the heads of the Arab tribes and the superiors of the religious order of the sofis and dervishes bear. His authority could be no kingdom or principality, but that of a brotherhood or order; European historians, therefore, fall into a great mistake in confounding

(1) Dealbati. (2) Daniel, 7, 9.

the empire of the Assassins with hereditary dynasties, as in the form of its institution it was only an order like that of the knights of St. John, the Teutonic knights, or the Templars —the latter of these, besides the grand-master and grand-priors, and religious nuncios, had also some resemblance to the Assassins in their spirit of political interference and secret doctrine. Dressed in white, with the distinctive mark of the red cross on their mantles, as were the Assassins with red girdles and caps, the Templars had also secret tenets, which denied and abjured the sanctity of the cross, as the others did the commandments of Islamism. The fundamental maxim of the policy of both was to obtain possession of the castles and strong places of the adjacent country, and thus without pecuniary or military means, to maintain an *imperium in imperio*, to keep the nations in subjection as dangerous rivals to princes.

The flat part of a country is always commanded by the more mountainous, and the latter by the fortresses scattered through it. To become masters of these by stratagem or force, and to awe princes either by fraud or fear, and to arm the murderer's hand against the enemies of the order, was the political maxim of the Assassins. Their internal safety was secured by the strict observance of religious ordinances; their external, by fortresses and the poniard. From the proper subjects of the order, or the profane, was only expected the fulfilment of the duties of Islamism, even of the most austere, such as refraining from wine and music: from the devoted satellites was demanded blind subjection and the faithful use of their daggers. The emissaries, or initiated, worked with their heads, and led the arms in execution of the orders of the Sheikh, who, in the centre of his sovereignty, tranquilly directed, like an animating soul, their hearts and poniards to the accomplishment of his ambitious projects.

Immmediately under him the grand-master, stood the Dailkebir, grand recruiters or grand-priors, his lieutenants in the three provinces to which the power of the order extended, namely, Jebal, Kuhistan, and Syria. Beneath them, were

the Dai, or religious nuncios, and political emissaries in ordinary, as initiated masters. The fellows (Refik) were those who were advancing to the mastership, through the several grades of initiation into the secret doctrine. The guards of the order, the warriors, were the devoted murderers (Fedavie), and the Lassik (aspirants) seem to have been the novices or lay brethren. Besides this seven-fold gradation from Sheikh (grand-master), Dailkebir (grand-prior), Dai (master), Refik (fellows), Fedavie (agents), Lassik (lay brothers), down to the profane or the people, there was also another seven-fold gradation of the spiritual hierarchy, who applied themselves exclusively to the before-mentioned doctrine of the Ismailis concerning the seven speaking and seven mute imams, and belonged more properly to the theoretical frame-work of the schism, than to the destruction of political powers. According to this arrangement, there live, in every generation, seven persons distinguished from each other by their different grades of rank: 1st. The divinely appointed Imam; 2nd. The proof Hudshet, designated by him, which the Ismailis called Esas, (the seat); 3rd. The Sumassa, who received instruction from the Hudshet, as they did from the Imam; 4th. The Missionaries (Dai); 5th. Mesuni, (the Freed) who were admitted to the solemn promise or oath (Ahd); 6th. Mukellebi, the dog-like, who sought out subjects fit for conversion for the missionaries, as hounds run down the game for the huntsman; 7th, Mumini, the believers, the people. On comparing these two divisions, we perceive that, according to the first, the invisible imam, in whose name the sheikh claimed the obedience of the people, and in the second, the guard, of which he made use against the foes of the order, are wanting; but that, in other respects, the different grades coincide. The *proof* was the grand-master; the Sumassa, the grand-prior; the fellows were the freed; and the dog-like the lay-brethren; the fourth and seventh, that is the preachers of the faith and the believers, the cheating missionaries, and the duped people are the same in both.[1]

(1) Nassaihol-Moluk.

We have seen above, that the first founder of secret societies in the heart of Islamism, Abdollah Maimun, the son of Kaddah, established seven degrees of his doctrine, for which reason, as well as their opinions concerning the seven imams, his disciples obtained the bye-name of Seveners. This appellation, which had been assigned, hitherto, to the western Ismailites, although they had increased the number of grades from seven to nine, was, with greater justice, transferred to their new branch, the eastern Ismailites or Assassins, whose founder, Hassan, the son of Sabah, not only restored the grades to their original number, seven, but also sketched out for the Dais, or missionaries, a particular rule of conduct, consisting of seven points, which had reference, not so much to the gradual enlightenment of those who were to be taught, as to the necessary qualifications of the teachers; and was the proper rubric of the order.

The introductory rule was called Ashinai-risk *(knowledge of the calling)*, and comprised the maxims of the knowledge of mankind, necessary to the selection of subjects suited to the initiated. Several proverbs, of much vogue among the Dais, had relation to this; they contained a sense different from their literal meaning:—"Sow not in barren soil;" "Speak not in a house, where there is a lamp;" implied "Waste not your words on the incapable;" "Venture not to speak them in the presence of a lawyer;" for it was equally dangerous to engage with blockheads, as with men of tried knowledge and probity; because the former misunderstand, and the latter unmask, the doctrine, and neither would be available either as teachers or instruments. These allegorical sentences, and the prudential rules so necessary to avoid all chance of discovery, remind us of a secret society of high antiquity, and a celebrated order of modern times;—in short, of Pythagoras and the Jesuits. The mysterious adages of the former, which have come down to us, and whose peculiar sense is now unintelligible, were probably nothing more than similar maxims to the initiated in his doctrine; and the

political prudence in the selection of subjects fit for the different designs of a society, reached the highest perfection in that of Jesus. Thus the Pythagoreans and the Jesuits have a resemblance to the Assassins. The second rule of conduct was called Teenis, *(gaining confidence)*, and taught them to gain over candidates by flattering their inclinations and passions. As soon as they were won, it was requisite, in the third place, to involve them, by a thousand doubts and questions concerning the positive religious commands and absurdities of the Koran, in a maze of scruples, which were not to be resolved, and of uncertainty, which was not to be disentangled.

In the fourth place, followed the oath (Ahd) by which the acolyte bound himself, in the most solemn manner, to inviolable silence and submission; that he would impart his doubts to none but his superior; that he would blindly obey him and none but him. In the fifth rule, Teddlis, the candidates were taught how their doctrine and opinions agreed with those of the greatest men in church and state; this was done the more to attract and fire them, by the examples of the great and powerful. The sixth, Tessiss *(i. e. confirmation)*, merely recapitulated all that had preceded, in order to confirm and strengthen the learner's faith. After this followed, in the seventh place, Teevil *(i. e. the allegorical instruction)*, which was the conclusion of the course of atheistical instruction. In Teevil, the allegorical explanation, in opposition to Tensil, or the literal sense of the divine word, was the principal essence of the secret doctrine, from which they were named Bateni, the Esoterics, to distinguish them from the Jaheri, or followers of the outward worship.[1] By means of this crafty system of exposition and interpretation, which, in our own days, has often been applied to the Bible, articles of faith and duties became mere allegories; the external form, merely contingent; the inner sense alone, essential; the observance, or non-observance of religious ordinances and moral laws,

(1) Nassaihol-Moluk, after the Mevakit of the judge Asadeddin.

equally indifferent; consequently, all was doubtful, and nothing prohibited. This was the *acme* of the philosophy of the Assassins, which was not imparted by the founder to the majority, but reserved only for a few of the initiated and principal leaders, while the people were held under the yoke of the strictest exercise of the precepts of Islamism. His greatest policy consisted in designing his doctrine of infidelity and immorality, not for the ruled, but only for the rulers; in subjecting the tensely-reined and blind obedience of the former, to the equally blind but unbridled despotic commands of the second; and thus, he made both serve the aim of his ambition,—the former by the remuneration, the latter by the full gratification of their passions. Study and the sciences were, therefore, the lot of only a few who were initiated. For the immediate attainment of their objects, the order was less in need of heads than arms; and did not employ pens, but daggers, whose points were everywhere, while their hilts were in the hand of the grand-master.

No sooner had Hassan Sabah obtained possession of the castle of Alamut, and before he had provided it with magazines, than an emir, on whom the sultan had conferred the fief of the district of Rudbar, cut off all access and supplies. The inhabitants were on the point of abandoning the place, when Hassan inspired them with new courage, by the assurance that fortune would favour them there. They remained, and the castle henceforth received the name of the Abode of Fortune. The Sultan Melekshah, who had at first viewed the efforts of the Ismailites with contempt, was at length roused to secure the internal peace, which was threatened by Hassan's insurrection. He commanded the Emir Arslantash *(Lion-Rock)*,[1] to destroy the son of Sabah, with all his followers. The latter, although he had only seventy companions, and few provisions, defended himself courageously, until the deputy Abu Ali, who was collecting, as Dai, troops and disciples in Kaswin, sent three

(1) A.D. 1092; A.H. 485.

hundred men,—who, during the night, having formed a junction with the garrison, and falling upon the besiegers, put them to flight. Sultan Melekshah, being awakened to serious consideration by this check, sent Kisil Sarik, one of his most confidential officers, with troops of Khorassan, against Hossein Kaini, Hassan Sabah's Dai, who was spreading the principles of sedition throughout the provinces of Kuhistan. Hossein retreated to a castle in the district Muminabad, where he was not less straitened than Hassan had been in Alamut. The latter now thought, that the moment was arrived for him to put into execution a decisive stroke, and long-matured plan of murder, and to rid himself of his most powerful foes, by the ready mode of dagger or poison. Nisamolmulk, the vizier of the Seljukides, great by his wisdom and power, under the three first sultans of that family, Togrul, Alparslan, and Melekshah,—he who, in his early youth, had rivalled Hassan at the school of the Imam Mosawek, in industry; afterwards, at the court of Melekshah, in their disputes concerning the dignity of vizier and the monarch's favour; and who, last of all, now openly contended with the lord of Alamut for power and rule,—he, the great support of the Seljuk empire, and the first great enemy of the order of the Ismailites,—fell, as the first victim of Hassan's revenge and ambition, under the poniards of his Fedavi, or Devoted. His fall, and the death of Melekshah, not without suspicion of poison, which followed shortly afterwards, and with which all Asia echoed,—were the frightful signals for assassination, which henceforth became Hassan's policy, and, like the plague, selected its victims from all classes of society.

It was a fearful period of murders and reprisals, equally destructive to the declared foes and friends of the new doctrine.[1] The former fell under the daggers of the Assassins, the latter under the sword of the princes, who, now roused to the dangers with which Hassan Sabah's sect threatened all thrones, visited

(1) Mirkhond.

its partisans and adherents with proclamations and condemnation to death. The first imams and priests issued, voluntarily or by order, fetwas and judgments, in which the Ismailites were condemned and anathematized, as the most dangerous enemies of the throne and the altar, as hardened criminals and lawless atheists; and which delivered them over to the avenging arm of justice, either in open war, or as outlaws, as infidels, separatists, and rebels, whom to slay was a law of Islamism. The Imam Ghasali, one of the first moralists of Islam, and most celebrated Persian teachers of ethics, wrote a treatise, peculiarly directed against the adherents of the esoteric doctrine, entitled, *On the Folly of the Supporters of the doctrine of Indifference, that is, the impious (Mulahid), whom may God condemn.*[1] In that entitled, *Pearls of the Fetwas,*[2] a celebrated collection of legal decisions, the sect of the impious (Mulahid) of Kuhistan were condemned according to the ancient sentences of the Imams, Ebi Jussuf and Mohammed, pronounced against the Karmathites, and their lives and goods given as free prey to all the Moslemin. In the "*Confluence*" (Multakath), and the "*treasures of the Fetwas*" (Khasanetol Fetavi), even the repentance of the Mulhad, or the impious, is rejected as entirely invalid and impossible, if they have ever exercised the office of Dai, or missionary; and their execution commanded as legal, even though they become converts and wish to abjure their errors; because perjury itself was one of their maxims, and no recovery could be expected from libertine atheists. Thus, the minds of both parties were mutually embittered; governments and the order were at open war, and heads fell a rich harvest to the assassin's dagger and the executioner's sword.[3]

Those who were of the highest rank were the first to fall: such were the Emir Borsak, who had been appointed by Togrulbeg first governor of Bagdad, and Araash Nisami, to

(1) The Hamakati ehli ilahat yeni Mulahide khaselehum Allah.
(2) Jevahitol Fetavi.
(3) See the Nassaihol-Moluk and the Mevakif.

whom Yakut, the uncle of Barkyarok, the reigning Seljukide sultan, had given his daughter in marriage.[1] The civil war between the brothers, Barkyarok and Mohammed,[2] concerning the territories of Irak and Khorassan, facilitated the execution of Hassan's ambitious designs; and in the bloody hotbed of intestine discord, the poisonous plant of murder and sedition flourished. By degrees, his partisans made themselves masters of the strongest castles of Irak, and even of that of Ispahan, called *Shah durye (the king's pearl)*, built by Melekshah. That prince, hunting once near this place, in company with the ambassador of the Roman emperor at Constantinople, a hound strayed to an inaccessible mountain plateau, on which the castle was afterwards situated. The envoy observed, that, in his master's territories, a place presenting so many natural advantages of fortification would not be neglected, and that on the spot a fortress would long ago have been erected. The sultan availed himself of the ambassador's suggestion and the situation, and the castle was built, which was wrested by the Ismailites out of the hands of its commander. This gave rise to the saying—"A fort, the situation of which a dog pointed out and an infidel advised, could only bring perdition."

Besides the *king's pearl*, they took also the castles of Derkul and Khalenjan, near Ispahan, the last, five farsangs distant from that city; the castle of Wastamkuh, near Abhar; those of Tambur and Khalowkhan, between Fars and Kuhistan; those of Damaghan, Firuskuh, and Kirdkuh, in the province of Komis; and, lastly, in Kuhistan, those of Tabs, Kain, Toon, and several others in the district of Muminabad.[3] Abulfetah, Hassan's nephew, captured Esdahan, and Kia Busurgomid took Lamsir, both of them being, together with Reis Mosaffer, and Hossein Kaini, as Dais, energetic promulgators of the doctrine, and supporters of the greatness of Hassan Sabah, whose most intimate friends and confidants

(1) Abulfeda Anno 494; Jihannuma, Mirkhond.
(2) A. D. 1096; A. H. 490. (3) A. D. 1100; A. H. 494.

they were, as Abubekr, Omar, Osman, and Ali, had been those of the prophet. The acquisition of these fortresses, excepting those of Alamut and Wastamkuh, which came into the possession of the Ismailites ten years earlier, happened the year after the taking of Jerusalem by the Crusaders.[1] Christianity and infidelity, the cross of the pious warriors and the dagger of the Assassins, at the same time conspired the ruin of Mohammedanism and its monarchies.

For a long period, the Assassins have only been known to Europe by the accounts of the Crusaders, and recent historians have dated their appearance in Syria later than it really took place. They, however, appeared in Palestine contemporaneously with the Crusaders; for, already, in the first year of the twelfth century of the Christian era, Jenaheddevlet, Prince of Emessa, fell beneath their daggers as he was hastening to the relief of the castle of the Kurds, Hossnal a-kurd, which was besieged by the Count St. Gilles. Four years before,[2] he had been attacked, by three Persian assassins, in his palace, as he was preparing for his devotions. Suspicion, as the author of this attempt, fell upon Riswan, Prince of Aleppo, the political opponent of Jenaheddevlet, and a great friend of the Assassins, who had gained him over by the agency of one of their emissaries, a physician, who was also an astrologer, and thus doubly qualified to deceive himself and others, without having recourse to the false doctrine of his order. This man died twenty-four days after this first unsuccessful attempt at murder; but the sanguinary views of the order were not extinguished with him. His place was supplied by a Persian goldsmith, one Abutaher Essaigh, who inflamed the Prince of Aleppo, Riswan, to deeds of blood. This chieftain, who was constantly at enmity with the Crusaders,[3] and his brother, Dokak, Prince of Damascus, favoured the emigration and colonization of the Bateni, or Assassins, as their doctrine was agreeable to him,

(1) Abulfed Anno 494; Jihannumma, Mirkhond.
(2) Anno H. 490. (3) Ibn Forat and Kemaleddin.

he being but a bad Moslem, and a freethinker. He entered into the closest tie of friendship with them, and forgot, in the pursuit, his infidelity and short-sighted policy, the interest of his people and posterity. Sarmin, a strong place, only a day's journey south of Aleppo,[1] became the residence of Abulfettah, the nephew of Hassan Sabah, who was his grand-prior in Syria, as were Hossein Kaini, the Reis Mosaffer, and Busurgomid, in Kuhistan, Komis, and Irak. A few years afterwards,[2] when the inhabitants of Apamea besought the assistance of Abutaher Essaigh, the commandant of Sarmin, against their Egyptian governor, Khalaf; he caused him to be assassinated, and took possession of the town in the name of Riswan, Prince of Aleppo, and remained in command of the citadel.[3] He could not, however, resist Tancred, to whom the town surrendered, and who, contrary to his promise, carried Abutaher prisoner to Antioch, and only released him on receiving a ransom. The Arabian historian, Kemaleddin, for this reason, accused Tancred of forfeiting his word; and, on the other hand, Albert of Aix, the Christian annalist of the crusades, blames him for granting so vile a ruffian so much as his life. His companions, however, whose lives were secured by no treaty, were delivered up by Tancred to the vengeance of the sons of Khalaf, and Abulfettah himself expired under the anguish of the torture.[4] Soon after this, Tancred took from the Assassins the strong castle of Kefrlana.

Abutaher having returned to his protector, Riswan, exerted his influence still further in schemes of assassination. Abu Harb Issa (*i. e.* Jesus, Father of Battles), a rich merchant of Khojend, a sworn enemy of the Bateni, who had

(1) Jihannumma, art: Sarmin. (2) A. D. 1107.

(3) Wilken Geschiche der Kreuzzüge, II. p. 272, after Kemaleddin, and Albert of Aix. This latter constantly confounds names: he calls Riswan, Brodoan; Apamea, Femia; Abutaher, Botherus, and the Assassins, Azopart. *Vide* Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 350 and 375.

(4) A. D. 1110; A. H. 504.

expended large sums in injuring them, arrived at Aleppo with a rich caravan, consisting of five hundred camels. An Assassin, a native of Rei, by name Ahmed, son of Nassr, had accompanied him from the borders of Khorassan, watching an opportunity to avenge on his person the blood of a brother, who had fallen under the blows of Abu Harb's people. On his arrival at Aleppo, the murderer had a conference with Abutaher and his protector, Riswan, whom he won the more easily to his purposes, as the richness of the booty, and Abu Harb's known hostility to the Assassins, invited to vengeance. Abutaher provided Assassins, and Riswan guards, for the execution of the deed. As Abu Harb was, one day, counting his camels, surrounded by his slaves, the murderers attacked him; but before they could pierce their victim's heart, they all fell themselves under the blows of the brave and faithful slaves, who exhibited their courage and attachment in defence of their master. The princes of Syria, to whom Abu Harb communicated this attack, loaded Riswan with reproaches for this scandalous breach of hospitality. He excused himself with the lie, that he had had no share in the transaction, and added, to the universal horror of his deed, the public contempt which eventually falls to the lot of all liars. Abutaher, in order to escape the daily increasing rage of the inhabitants of Aleppo against the Ismailites, returned into his own country to his sanguinary associates.[1]

As unsuccessful as their enterprise against Apamea, was the attack of the Bathenites on Shiser, of which they wished to deprive the family of Monkad and subject it to themselves. While the inhabitants of this castle had gone into the town,[2] to participate in the festivities of the Christians at the celebration of Easter, the Assassins took possession of it and barricaded the gates. On the return of the inhabitants, they were drawn up through the windows with ropes, by their wives, during the night, and drove out the Assassins.

(1) Ibn Forat and Kemaleddin. (2) A. D. 1108; A. H. 512.

Soon after, Mewdud, the prince of Mossul, fell under their daggers at Damascus, as he was walking with Togteghin, the prince of that city, on a feast day, in the fore court of the great mosque. An Assassin stabbed him, for which he lost his head on the spot.[1] In the same year[2] died Riswan, the prince of Aleppo, the great protector of the Ismailites, who made use of their swords and daggers for the defence and extension of his power. His death was the signal of theirs: the eunuch Lulu, who, with Riswan's son, Akhras, a youth of sixteen, carried on the government, commenced it with condemning to death all the Bathenites; which sentence was executed less in a legal manner than in a promiscuous carnage.

No less than three hundred men, women, and children, were cut in pieces, and about two hundred thrown into prison alive. Abulfettah,—not the one who was tortured to death by the sons of Khalaf, but a son of Abutaher, the goldsmith, and his successor, after his return to Persia, as head of the Assassins in Syria, met with a fate no less horrible and merited than his namesake: after being hewed to pieces at the gate looking towards Irak, his limbs were burnt, but his head was carried about through Syria for a show. The Dai Ismail, brother of the astrologer, who had first brought himself and his sect into credit with Riswan, paid for it with his life; several of the Assassins were thrown from the top of the wall into the moat; Hossameddin, son of Dimlatsh, a newly-arrived Dai from Persia, fled from the popular rage to Rakka, where he died; several also saved themselves by flight, and were dispersed in the towns of Syria; others, to escape the fatal suspicion of belonging to the order, denounced their brothers and murdered them. Their treasures were sought out and were confiscated.[3] They revenged this persecution variously and sanguinarily. In an audience, granted by the khalif of Bagdad to Togteghin Atabeg, of Damascus, three

(1) Abulfeda, Takwimet tevarik, Mirkhond Abulfaradj.
(2) A. D. 1113; A. H. 507.
(3) A. D. 1115; A. H. 509.

conspirators in succession attacked the Emir Ahmed Bal, governor of Khorassan, whom they probably mistook for the Atabeg. They all three fell, together with the emir, who had been selected for their daggers, and who was in reality their sworn foe, and had frequently besieged their castles. The governors of provinces, as being the principal instruments of the state for the preservation of peace and good order, were their natural enemies, and, as such, more than all exposed to their daggers. Bedii, the governor of Aleppo, became their victim,[1] as also one of his sons, who was on his way to the court of the Emir Ilghasi. His other sons cut down the two murderers, but a third sprang forward and gave one of them, who was already wounded, his death-blow. Being seized, and carried before the princes Togteghin and Ilghasi, he was condemned by them only to imprisonment, but he sought his death by drowning himself.

The following year[2] Ilghasi received a message from Abu Mohammed, the head of the Ismailis in Aleppo, with a request to put them in possession of the castle of Sherif. Ilghasi, dreading his power, pretended to grant it; but before the envoy could return with this consent, the inhabitants of Aleppo destroyed the walls, filled up the ditches, and united the castle with the town. Ibn Khashshab, who had made this proposition, in order not to increase the power of the Ismailites by the possession of the fortress, paid for it with his blood. A few years afterwards, they made a similar request to Nureddin, the celebrated prince of Damascus, for the possession of the castle Beitlaha; which was, in the same way, apparently granted, and frustrated by a similar stratagem: for the inhabitants, secretly instigated by Nureddin, to prevent the Ismailites obtaining a firm footing, immediately set about destroying their fortifications. So great was the dread in which princes held the order, that they did not dare to refuse them the strong places of their own countries, and preferred

(1) A. D. 1119; A. H. 513. (2) A. D. 1120; A. H. 514.

destroying them, to abandoning them for citadels of the power and sovereignty of the Assassins.[1]

In Persia, also, their vengeance chose the most illustrious victims. Fakrolmulk[2] *(Glory of the kingdom)*, Abulmosaffer Ali, the son of the grand vizier Nisamolmulk, who had filled the office he inherited from his father, along with his hatred of the Assassins, during the two reigns of the sultans Mohammed and Sandjar, with credit and industry, and Chakarbeg, the son of Mikail, brother of Togrul, grand-uncle of Sandjar, the reigning sultan of the Seljuks, were amongst them.[3] A sanguinary lesson for the latter, whom the son of Sabah warned by still farther menaces. He found it more adviseable frequently to restrain his powerful enemies by impending danger, and preferred unnerving their arm by terror, to multiplying uselessly avengers by repeated murders. He gained over a slave of the sultan's, who, while the latter slept, stuck a dagger in the ground close to his head. The prince was terror-struck when, on waking, he espied the murderous weapon but concealed his fear. Some days after, the grand-master wrote to him in the style of the order, brief and cutting like their stilettos: "Had we not been well-disposed towards the sultan, we might have plunged the dagger into his heart, instead of the ground."

Sandjar, who had despatched some troops against the castles of the Ismailites in Kuhistan, was the more fearful, after this warning, of prosecuting the siege; as his brother Mohammed, who had caused the two strongest fortresses of the Ismailites in Irak, Alamut and Lamsir, to be invested by the Atabeg Nushteghin Shirghir, for more than a year, died at the very moment when, being reduced to extremities, they were on the point of surrendering.[4] This death was too favourable to the Assassins, not to be considered less the work of accident than of their policy, which, though trusting

(1) Ibn Forat. (2) A. D. 1114; A. H. 508.
(3) Abulfeda, Takwimet-terarikh Mirkhond Abulfaradj.
(4) A. D. 1117; A. H. 511.

to the dagger, did not neglect the use of poison. Admonished by this, Sandjar offered to make peace with the Ismailites on three conditions:—1st. They should erect no new fortifications about their castles; 2nd. They should purchase no arms nor ammunition; and, 3rd. That they should make no more proselytes. As, however, the jurists, who had thundered the ban of general condemnation and persecution against the impiety of the order, would hear of no compromise or peace with them, the sultan fell under the popular suspicion of being a secret partisan of their impious doctrines. Peace was, however, concluded between Hassan and Sandjar; and the latter not only exempted the Ismailites from all duties and imposts in the district of Kirdkuh, but even assigned them a certain portion of the revenues of Kumis, as the annual pension of the order. Thus, this society of murderers increased daily in power and authority.

It was not, however, merely since his accession, but twelve or fourteen years earlier, that the Sultan Sandjar had exhibited tokens of forbearance towards the Assassins; for on his journey from Khorassan to Irak, he visited at Damaghan the Reis Mosaffer, venerable both on account of his age and influence, who, as we have already seen, had declared himself an adherent of Hassan Sabah, and had obtained for him, by stratagem, the treasures of the Emir David Habeshi. Some officers proposed to demand them back, but on Mosaffer's representation, that he had always loaded the inhabitants of the place with favours, as the proper subjects of the sultan, the latter lavished honours upon him. Thus died Reis Mosaffer,[1] respected and honoured as the patriarch of the new doctrine, at the age of one hundred and one.[2]

Hassan Sabah survived the most faithful of his disciples, and his nearest relations, to whom the ties of attachment and consanguinity seemed to secure the highest rights to the succession to the sovereignty. His nephew and grand-prior in Syria, Abulfettah, had fallen by the sword of the enemy;

(1) A. D. 1104; A. H. 498. (2) Mirkhond.

Hossein Kaini, grand-prior in Kuhistan, under the dagger of a murderer, probably Ostad, one of the two sons of Hassan: and Ostad and his brother under the hand of their own father, who seemed to revel even in spilling his own blood. Without proof or measure of guilt, he sacrificed them, not to offended justice, but apparently to mere love of murder, and that terrific policy, by virtue of which the order snapped all ties of relationship or friendship, to bind the more closely those of impiety and slaughter.

Ostad (i. e. *the master*), probably so called because the public voice had destined him as the successor of his father as grand-master, was put to death on the mere suspicion of being concerned in Hossein's murder; and his brother, because he had drunk wine: the former, probably, because he had, by his crime, which was without orders, interfered with his father's prerogative; the latter, because he had infringed one of the least essential laws of Islamism, but whose strict observance was part of the system of the order. In the execution of his two sons, the grand-master gave the profane and the initiated a sanguinary example of avenged disobedience to the ordinance of outward worship, and the rules of internal discipline; but probably, besides this apparent motive, the son of Sabah was urged by another, to the destruction of his race; possibly, his sons, disgusted with the long reign of their father, were expecting with impatience to succeed him; it is probable, that on that account he deemed them incompetent, as not having learned to obey, or as being wanting in the necessary princely qualities; or, it is probable, that he set them aside, in order to avoid sinking the order into a dynasty by inheritance, and that the succession of grand-masters might be determined by the nearest relationship of mind and character, irreligion and impiety. Human nature is not usually so diabolical, that the historian must, among several doubtful motives to an action, always decide for the worst; but, in the founder of this society of vice, the establisher of the murderous order of the Assassins, the most horrible is the most likely.

Of the most faithful promulgators of the new doctrine, of whom we have hitherto made mention, there still remained the Dai Kiabusurgomid, who had not quitted the castle of Lamin during the twenty years that had elapsed since he took it, and the Lieutenant Abu Ali, Dai in Kaswin. When the son of Sabah felt his end approaching, he sent for them to Alamut; and, by his last will, divided the government between them in such a manner, that Abu Ali was invested with the external command and civil administration, and Kiabusurgomid, as proper grand-master, with the supreme spiritual power and government of the order. Thus, at a very advanced age, died Hassan Sabah;[1] for more than seventy years had elapsed, since, as a youth of twenty, he studied with Nisamolmulk, under the Imam Mowasek, in the reign of Togrul. He expired, not on the bed of torture, which his crimes merited, but in his own; not under the poniards, which he had drawn against the hearts of the best and greatest of his contemporaries, but by the natural effect of age; after a blood-stained reign of thirty-five years, during which he not only never quitted the castle of Alamut, but had never removed more than twice, during this long period, from his chamber to the terrace. Immoveable in one spot, and persisting in one plan, he meditated the revolutions of empires by carnage and rebellion; or wrote rules for his order, and the catechism of the secret doctrine of libertinism and impiety. Fixed in the centre of his power, he extended its circumference to the extreme confines of Khorassan and Syria; with the pen in his hand, he guided the daggers of his Assassins. He was, himself, in the hand of Providence, like war and pestilence,—a dreadful scourge for the chastisement of feeble sovereigns and corrupted nations.

(1) A. D. 1124; A. H. 518.

END OF BOOK II.

BOOK III.

Reign of Kia Busurgomid, and his Son, Mohammed.

KIA BUSURGOMID, who had been the general and Dai of Hassan, succeeded him in the spiritual power; and trod precisely in the sanguinary steps of the founder of the order. Daggers and fortresses were the foundations of Hassan's power, and that of his successor rested on the same basis; the most illustrious leaders of the enemy either fell, or were tottering to their fall. New castles were taken or built. Thus, that of Maimundis was erected;[1] the ruin of which drew with it, in the sequel, the death of the grand-master, and the suppression of the order. Abdolmelek was declared its dehdar, or commandant. These precautions were the more necessary, as the Sultan Sandjar, who had long been deemed a secret protector of the order, now publicly declared himself their enemy. In the month Shaaban, of the same year, also, Atabeg Shirghir, overran the province of Rudbar with an army. The body, which the grand-master sent against him, put the enemy to flight, and carried off a rich booty.[2]

The war, the year following,[3] assumed a still more cruel character, when a great multitude of Bathenites were put to the sword, by order of Sandjar; nor was it altered on Mahmud's succeeding to the throne of Irak, in the place of his nephew, Sandjar.[4] This sovereign resolved to combat the

(1) A. D. 1126; A. H. 520.
(2) Mirkhond.
(3) A. D. 1127; A. H. 521.
(4) Takwimet-Tevarikh.

Assassins with their own weapons of perfidy and murder; a determination unworthy the assertor of a good cause. After being some time at open war with Kia Busurg, the sultan requested, through the medium of his grand falconer, that some one should be sent from Alamut, on the part of the grand-master, to treat of peace. The Khoja Mohammed Nassihi Sheristani was sent: he was admitted to the honour of kissing the sultan's hand, who addressed a few words to him on the subject of peace. On leaving the presence, the Khoja, or master, and his accompanying Refik (fellow) were savagely butchered by the populace.[1]

Mahmud despatched an envoy to Alamut, to excuse this action; in which, according to his own asseverations, he had had no share. Kia Busurg made answer to the envoy: "Go back to the sultan, and tell him, in my name, Mohammed Nassihi trusted to your perfidious assurances, and repaired to your court; if you speak truly, deliver up the murderers to justice; if not, expect my vengeance." Mahmud not attending to this, a body of Assassins came to the very gates of Kaswin,[2] where they killed four hundred men, and carried off three thousand sheep, two hundred horses and camels, and two hundred oxen and asses. The inhabitants followed them, but the death of one of their chief men interrupted their pursuit.[3]

The year following,[4] the sultan captured, though but for a brief period, Alamut itself, the stronghold of the order's sovereignty;[5] and immediately after, a thousand men were sent against the castle of Lamsir, who, as soon as they heard that the Refik, or companions of the order, were in advance against them, instantly fled without striking a blow. Immediately after the death of Mahmud, which was most probably caused by the machinations of the Assassins, without, however, any accusation of the kind, the companions of the order made a second irruption into the environs of Kaswin,[6] and carried off

(1) Mirkhond.
(2) A. D. 1128; A. H. 522.
(3) Mirkhond.
(4) A. D. 1129; A. H. 524.
(5) Takwimet-Tevarikh.
(6) A. D. 1131; A. H. 526.

two hundred horses, and after killing a hundred Turcomans, and twenty of the citizens, they retired. The forces of Alamut then marched against Abu Hashem, a descendant of Ali, who had usurped the dignity of imam in Ghilan, and invited the people, by manifestos, to recognize him as their legitimate lord. Kia Busurg wrote to him, advising him to desist from his aspiring projects; he, however, replied, with reviling the impious lore of the Ismailites: they made war upon him, beat him in Dilem, took him prisoner, and, after holding a council of war, delivered him over to the stake.[1]

On the death of Mahmud, when Messud ascended the throne of the Seljukides, Itsis, the prince of Khowaresm, a country lying between the confines of Khorassan, and the mouth of the Oxus, came to him, to communicate the determination he had formed, of exterminating the Ismailites. Although the large province of Khorassan lies between Khowaresm and Kuhistan, or the Highlands, where the Ismailis nestled, like birds of prey, amongst the rocks, yet the sovereign of Khowaresm, not unjustly, dreaded the approach of such dangerous neighbours, whose poniards reached even their most distant foes. Messud, participating in the maxims and designs of Itsis, presented him with the fief which had been held by Berenkish, the grand falconer, who in his irritation, took refuge with Kiabusurg, and sent his wives and children to the castle of Dherkos, which was in the possession of the Ismailites. Although this man, till now their declared enemy, had not only attacked them in open warfare, but also with their own weapons, perfidy and treachery, the grand-master considered it politic to exercise the rights of hospitality towards him, who had now flown to their protection. It was the more advisable to create a new friend to the order, as Khowaresmshah, who had hitherto shown tokens of a friendly disposition, had, all at once, declared himself an enemy. The latter sent the following message to the

(1) Mirkhond.

grand-master: "Berenkish and his party were heretofore your declared enemies; I, on the other hand, was bound to you by true attachment. Now that the sultan has given me his fief, he has sought an asylum with you; if you will deliver him up to me, our friendship will receive still further increase." Kiabusurg replied: "Khowaresmshah speaks truly, but we will never surrender our protegés to the enemy." This was the origin of tedious hostilities between Khowaresmshah and Kiabusurg.[1]

It was natural that princes, who, for a time, were blinded by the representations of the Dais, and the attractions of the Ismailitic secret doctrine, should have hastened, as friends, to their arms, but should afterwards snatch themselves away, dreading lest the embrace, like that of the Spanish maiden, should be but a form of execution, under which murdering daggers lay concealed. Thus, the Sultan Sandjar, and Itsis, shah of Khowaresm, who were both at first reckoned among the friends and partisans of the order, became their open foes; and we have seen that, at Aleppo, they enjoyed, during the reign of Riswan, the most powerful influence; but, under his son, were extirpated with the sword. Such was their fate also at Damascus; where, during the reign of Busi, they found a powerful protector in the vizier Tahir, the son of Saad of Masdeghan. The Persian Assassin, Behram of Astrabad, who commenced his operations with the murder of his uncle, gained over the vizier, who gave him the castle of Banias, as Riswan had given the more inland fortress, Sarmin, to the nephew of Hassan Sabah.[2] Banias, the ancient Balanea, signifying the old city seated in the little bay, gave its name to the castle newly erected in A. D. 1162; A. H. 454. It is a farsang, or four thousand paces, distant from the sea, in a fertile, well-watered plain; where, in former times, more than a hundred thousand buffaloes found pasture.[3] The

(1) Mirkhond. (2) Abulfeda, a. 523.
(3) Jehannumma, p. 559.

valley, into which numerous rivulets fall, is called Wady ol Jinn (the valley of demons), a place whose very name rendered it worthy of being a settlement of Assassins. From this place,[1] they became masters of the surrounding castles and towns; and Banias became the centre of their power in Syria, until they transferred it, twelve years afterwards, to Massiat.

Behram had long prosecuted the designs of the order at Aleppo and Damascus, where he was recognised and favoured as Dai, by the princes Ilghasi and Togteghin. When, by the possession of Banias, he had obtained a firm footing in Syria, the power and insolence of the Assassins attained its height. From all sides they hastened to the new point of union, and princes did not venture to protect any one against them. The jurists and theologians, more particularly the Soonnites, those universal victims, were struck dumb with fear of them, and of the disfavour of the princes. Behram did not fall by their vengeance, but by that of the inhabitants of the valley of Taim, an appendage to the district of Baalbek, and inhabited by a mixture of Nossairis, Druses, and Magians. Their brave leader, Dohak, burned to revenge the death of his brother Barak, the son of Jendel, who had been slain by the Assassins, by command of Behram; he united, for this purpose, the warriors of his native vale, with succours from Damascus, and the surrounding towns. Behram hoped to surprise them defenceless, at the head of his Ismailites; he, however, fell into their hands, and was instantly cut in pieces. His head and hands were brought to Egypt, where the khalif presented the bearer with a rich habit, and had them carried about in triumph in Cairo and Fostath. The Ismailis who escaped, fled from the valley of Tain, to Banias, where Behram, prior to the expedition, had committed the command to Ismail, the Persian. The vizier Masdeghani entered into friendly alliance with him, as with his predecessor. Ismail sent to Damascus, one of his creatures, Abulwefa, literally, *Father of*

(1) A. D. 1128; A. H. 523.

Fidelity, but, in reality, the model of perfidiousness.[1] By his intrigues, he succeeded in obtaining, not only the office of Dailkebir, or prior of the Ismailites, but also that of Hakem, or chief judge of the district.

At Cairo, the dignity of grand-master of the lodge (Daildoat), was frequently united by the Ismailites, with that of chief justice (Kadhi al Kodhat). As the attainment of rule was the object of the order, and as no means were left untried to accomplish it, Abulwefa sought conquest by means of treachery, and greatness by perjury. The Crusaders, whose power was continually on the increase in Syria, appeared to him the most fitting instruments of his ambitious designs. As the enemies of Mohammedanism, they were the natural allies of its most dangerous opponents. The bulwarks of the faith of Mohammed, shaken from without by the tempest of the Crusaders, and undermined from within by the atheistical doctrines of the Assassins, threatened an earlier and a more certain fall; and the pious warriors, in union with their impious allies, promised the sooner to erect the cross and the dagger on their ruins. Abulwefa entered into a treaty with the king of Jerusalem, by which he bound himself, on a certain Friday, to put the city of Damascus in his possession. While the Emir Busi, and his magnates, both courtly and military, were assembled at their devotions in the mosque, all the approaches to it were to be hemmed in by conspirators, and the gates of the city opened to the Christians. In return for this service, the king promised to deliver the city of Tyre into his power.[2]

Hugo de Payens, the first grand-master of the Templars, seems to have been the principal agent in urging Baldwin II., King of Jerusalem, to this strange alliance of the cross and the dagger. For ten years after its first institution,[3] this

(1) Kemaleddin and Ibn Forat; the latter calls the vizier Mardeghani Mardekani; and the prince of Aleppo, Bure instead of Busi.

(2) Abulfed, a. 523. Wilhel. Tyr. XIII. 25.

(3) A. D. 1118.

order remained in obscurity; fulfilling, besides the usual evangelical vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, a fourth, the protection of pilgrims; but still existing only as a private society, without statutes or knightly habits.

By the code of rules given by St. Bernard, and confirmed by Pope Honorius I., it raised itself at once, to the splendour of a powerful chivalric order, for the defence of the holy sepulchre, and the protection of the pilgrims.[1] According to Miræus, its members consisted of knights, esquires, and lay-brothers, which answer to the companions (Refik), agents (Fedavi), and laymen (Lassick), of the Ismailites, as the priors, grand-priors, and grand-master, did to the Dai, Dail-kebir, and Sheikh of the mountain. As the Refik were clothed in white, with red insignia, so the knights wore white mantles with red crosses; and as the castles of the Assassins arose in Asia, so did the hospitals of the Templars in Europe.

The grand-master Hugo, came this year[2] to Jerusalem, accompanied by a great retinue of knights and pilgrims, who, at his exhortation, had assumed the cross, and taken up arms in defence of the holy sepulchre.[3] The siege of Damascus was immediately decided upon. After the death of the dreaded Togteghin, which had but lately occurred, his son Tajolmoluk[4] Busi succeeded him. In his name, the vizier Tahir-ben-Saad exercised the supreme power, and, through him, the chiefs of the Ismailites, first the warrior Behram, afterwards the judge Abulwefa, with whom the treacherous surrender of Damascus, in exchange for Tyre, was agreed upon.

Taj-ol-moluk Busi having received timely notice of the designs of the Ismailites, caused his vizier, the son of Saad, to be put to death; and then gave orders for a general massacre of all of the order who were in the city. Six thousand fell by the sword, which avenged the victims of the dagger. It was not

(1) Anton, Versuch einer Geschichte des Tempelherren ordens. p. 10-15.
(2) A. D. 1129; A. H. 524.
(3) Wilken, Geschichte der Kreuzzüge. II. p. 566.
(4) The crown of kings.

an execution, but an indiscriminate slaughter. In the meanwhile, a numerous Christian army, certain of the promised surrender of the city, had advanced on the road to Damascus, as far as Marj Safar. Among them, besides many pilgrims of the west, were the king and barons of Jerusalem, with their allies, Prince Bernard of Antioch, Pontius, Count of Tripoli, and Joscelin of Edessa, with many knights and esquires. The soldiery, under the command of the constable, William of Buris, had gone with a thousand knights, to plunder the villages, and collect provisions; marching, however, as was usual with an army of pilgrims, without order and discipline, they were, with many of the knights, almost entirely destroyed, by an attack of a small body of valiant warriors from Damascus. The rest, as soon as they learned the disgraceful defeat of their brethren, flew to arms, and hastened to attack the Damascenes; to wash out with their blood the stain inflicted on the Christian army.

A dreadful darkness, however, came on, interrupted only by the glare of the lightning and howling of the tempest; in the midst of the thunder, the cataracts of heaven poured down rain, and inundated the roads, when suddenly, as if the order of the seasons had at once been changed—as if summer and winter would together have raged in all their severity, the rain and flood were changed to snow and ice. Such rapid mutations of the atmosphere, and sudden vicissitudes of the weather, from one extreme to the other, are not, indeed, rare in those countries; but they astonished the inexperienced wanderers, as extraordinary phenomena of nature.

The author of the present work has, during his travels, more than once experienced this, and in a terribly sublime manner, in the defile of Marmaris; as did the British fleet, and the Egyptian army of occupation. Heavy clouds darkened the approach of night; torrents of rain, which poured from them and from the rocks, carried away arms and tents; the howling of the storm and the roaring of the thunder, drowned the speaking-trumpets of the distressed ships, which were

driving from their anchors. On the cessation of the tempest, which lasted the whole night, and grew calmer towards morning, the first dawn showed the masts dashed to pieces by the wind, and the rocks scathed by the lightning, and covered with a large quantity of snow.

The army of the Gauls, which, in ancient times, under the command of Brennus, sacked the temple of Delphi, experienced a similar contest and alternation of seasons, and an equally violent storm.[1] And as, at that time, these natural phenomena were deemed a token of the celestial punishment of the sacrilegious presumption of the Gauls, so were they also considered by the Crusaders as a mark of the anger of Heaven at their sins, and their late compact with the Assassins, which blood and perjury could alone confirm. The only advantage which they derived from this monstrous union of piety and impiety, was the possession of the castle of Banias, which the commander, Ismail, fearing lest he should meet the fate of his brethren of Damascus, delivered up to the knight, Rainier de Brus, the same year,[2] in which the fortress of Alamut surrendered to Sultan Mahmud. Thus fell, at the same time, the two citadels of the order in Persia and Syria, and so near was the risk of its complete annihilation.

A persevering spirit of enterprise, however, overcame the untowardness of events. Both Alamut and Banias soon returned to their former possessors. The latter was re-taken, three years afterwards,[3] by Ismail, while Rainier de Brus and his soldiery lay before Joppa, with the king of Jerusalem. Among the prisoners who were carried away, Rainier lost a beloved wife; whom, on her release during a truce with Ismail, he received affectionately, but repulsed her on learning that she had neither preserved her faith among the infidels, nor her honour among the impious. She con-

(1) Justini Epitome, l. xxiv. c. 8. (2) A. D. 1129; A. H. 524.
(3) A. D. 1132; A. H. 527.

fessed her sin, and retired into a convent of devout females at Jerusalem.[1]

The less the designs of the Ismailites prospered by the sword, the more successful and persevering were they with the dagger; and, however dangerous to the order the times might be, they were not the less so to its most powerful adversaries. A long series of great and celebrated men, who, during the grand-mastership of Kiabusurgomid, fell by the poniards of his Fedavi, signalized the bloody annals of his reign; and, as formerly, according to the fashion of oriental historians, there follows, at the end of each prince's reign, a catalogue of great statesmen, generals, and literati, who have either adorned it by their lives, or troubled it with their death; so, in the annals of the Assassins, is found the chronological enumeration of celebrated men of all nations who have fallen the victims of the Ismailites, to the joy of their murderers, and the sorrow of the world. The first, under the grand-mastership of Kiabusurgomid, was Cassim-ed-dewlet[2] Aksonkor Bourshi, the brave prince of Mossul, feared alike by the Crusaders and the Assassins, as one of their deadliest enemies.[3] Having fought his last battle with the former, near Maarra Mesrin, he was, on the first Sunday after his return,[4] attacked by eight Assassins, disguised as dervishes, as he was in the act of seating himself on his throne in the mosque at Mossul: protected by a coat of mail and his natural bravery, he defended himself against the wretches, three of whom he stretched at his feet; but before his retinue could hasten to his assistance, he received a mortal wound, from the effects of which he expired the same day. The remaining Assassins were sacrificed to the vengeance of the populace, with the exception of one young man from the village of Katarnash, in the mountains near Eras, whose mother, on hearing of Aksonkor's murder,

(1) Wilken Gesthichte der Kreuzzüge, II. p. 612.
(2) Dispenser of fortune. (3) Abulfeda, ad an. 520.
(4) A. D. 1126; A. H. 520.

dressed and adorned herself for joy at the successful issue of the attempt, in which her son had devoted his life; but, on his returning alone, she cut off her hair, and blackened her face, with the deepest sorrow, that he had not shared the murderers' honourable death. To such lengths did the Assassins carry their point of honour, and what may be termed their Spartanism.[1]

Moineddin, the vizier of Sultan Sandjar, was also murdered[2] by an Assassin, hired by his enemy, Derkesina, the vizier of Mohammed, and a friend of the Ismailites. In order the better to attain his object, the ruffian entered his service as a groom. One day, as the vizier went into the stable to inspect his horses, the false groom appeared before him without clothes, in order to avoid all suspicion of carrying concealed weapons, although he had hidden his dagger in the mane of the horse, whose bridle he was holding. The horse reared, and under pretence of quieting him with caresses, he snatched his poniard, and stabbed the vizier.[3]

If Bourshi, Prince of Mossul, stood on the list of the victims of the Ismailites solely because he was the rival of their power; and an obstacle to their greatness, we shall not be surprised at finding the name of Busi, the Prince of Damascus, by whose orders the Vizier Masdeghani, and six thousand Assassins, had been massacred. The slightest pretence was sufficient to cause the blood of princes to flow beneath their stilettos; how much more when their own called, as in this latter case, for revenge. To escape was beyond the power of prudence, as they watched for years for time, place, and opportunity. Busi, the son of Togteghin, was, in the second year after the massacre,[4] attacked by its avengers, and received two wounds, one of which healed immediately; the other was, however, mortal, the following year.[5]

(1) Wilken, II. p. 531; after Kemaleddin.
(2) A. D. 1127; A. H. 521.
(3) Ibn Forat.
(4) A. D. 1130; A. H. 525.
(5) Abulfeda, ad ann. 525.

The vengeance of the Assassins seems to have descended from father to son: Shems-ol-moluk (*the sun of the king*), the son of Busi, and grandson of Togteghin, fell a victim to a conspiracy.[1] There fell, besides, under the daggers of the order, the judges of the east and the west, Abusaid Herawi, the mufti of Kaswin, Hassan-ben-Abelkassem; the reis of Ispahan, Seid Dewletshah; and the reis of Tebris.[2] These were the most celebrated of a numerous body of officers of state and jurists, who perished in heaps and unnamed. To drag from amongst the murdered the most splendid victims, is the melancholy and sorrowful duty of the historian of the Assassins.

Hitherto, their attacks had been directed only against viziers and emirs, the subordinate instruments of the khalif's power; and the throne itself, which they were undermining, had remained unstained by the blood of its possessors. The period, however, was now arrived, in which the order dared to seal their doctrine with the blood of those khalifs, to whom it was so destructive, and to deprive the successors of the prophet not merely of their temporal power, but likewise of their lives. The shadow of God on earth, as the khalifs called themselves, was, indeed, a mere shadow of earthly power; and was, when he would have asserted more, sent, by the dagger of the Assassin to the shades below.

We have seen, that the secret doctrine of the Ismailites derived its origin from the lodge at Cairo, long before the foundation of the order of the Assassins; and flourished under the protection of the Fatimites, the rivals of the Assassins, and their competitors for the throne. By a just retribution, this protection of a doctrine of irreligion and immorality was avenged on the Fatimites themselves, by the murderous order which sprung from it. The Egyptian khalif, Emr Biahkamillah Abu Ali Manssur,[3] tenth of the

(1) Abulfeda, ad ann. 529. (2) Mirkhond.
(3) The command according to the command of God.

Fatimite dynasty (whose founder, Obeidollah, had made the lodge of the secret doctrine a part of his ministerial policy), fell, in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, under the dagger of the Assassin.[1]

It is not clear whether his death proceeded from the policy of the order, or the private revenge of the family of the powerful Vizier Efdhal.[2] This emir was equally dangerous to the Christians by the zeal with which he prosecuted the war, and to the khalif, by his colossal power in the state. He was murdered by two Assassins, of whom it is uncertain whether they were the instruments of their superiors, at that time in alliance with the Crusaders, or the hirelings of the khalif. The latter is probable, from the circumstance that Abu Ali, the son of Efdhal, was, immediately after his death, thrown into prison, and on being set at liberty after the murder of the khalif, was invested with his father's dignity. As, however, Abu Ali himself shortly after fell by the dagger, it appears that these two assassinations proceeded from the profound policy of the concealed fomentors. From this period, Egypt became a scene of disorder and confusion, occasioned by the violent contests between the partisans of the khalif thrones of Cairo and Bagdad. Mostarshedbillah-Abu-Manssur-Fasl, the twenty-ninth Abasside khalif, sustained himself on the latter for seventeen years, though constantly tottering.

Hitherto, the Seljukide sultans who had, under the pretext of being the protectors of the khalifat of Bagdad, assumed all the temporal power, had, at least, left to the Abasside khalif the two highest prerogatives of Islamism,—the mint, and prayers from the pulpit on Fridays. If they stamped any coin, it was in the name of the khalif; for whom, likewise, they prayed weekly in the mosques. Messud was the first to appoint the khatibs, or Friday prayer, to be in

(1) Abulfeda, ann. 524.
(2) Wilken Geschichte der Kreuzzüge, 11, p. 593; after Renaudot.

his own name; an injury which Mostarshed was obliged, however unwilling, to endure, as he was not strong enough to resent it. A few years afterwards, however, when some dissatisfied chieftains deserted with their troops from Messud to Mostarshed, they persuaded the latter that it would be easy to subdue the sultan; he, in consequence, took the field against him. In the very first engagement, the khalif was abandoned by the greater part of his troops, and taken prisoner by Messud, who carried him to Meragha, on his campaign against his own nephew, David.

A treaty was concluded, by which the khalif engaged to confine himself within the walls of Bagdad, and to pay the sultan an annual tribute. This composition deceived the expectations of the Ismailites, who had hoped that the result of this war, between the sultan and the khalif, would be the destruction of the latter: the grand-master, therefore, resolved to complete what the sultan had begun; and that, though the khalif had escaped the sword, he should not be spared by the dagger. In the camp, two farsangs from Meragha, while Messud was absent, having gone to meet the ambassadors of Sandjar, Assassins put the khalif and his immediate suite to death;[1] and not content with that foul deed, mutilated the dead, in the most horrible manner, by cutting off the noses and ears; as though they would, to the treason of a khalif's murder, add insults to his corpse.[2]

Reign of Mohammed, Son of Kia Busurgomid.

After a blood-stained reign of fourteen years and three days, Kia Busurgomid, feeling his end approaching, named his son, Mohammed, as successor in the grand-mastership of the order; either because he really found none other worthy of the office, or that the natural desire of making the sovereignty hereditary in his family caused him to depart from the spirit

(1) A. D. 1134; A. H. 529. (2) Abulfeda, ann. 529.

of the fundamental maxims of the order, as they had been sketched out by Hassan Sabah. Be that as it may, the office, which, without respect to relationship, ought to have depended on the nomination of the existing grand-master, remained hereditary in the family of Busurgomid to the fall of the order. His death was, at first, a cause of great joy to the enemies of the Ismailites; when, however, they perceived that his son drove the chariot of restless ambition in the bloody track of his father, all Asia again sank into despair. He began, as his father had ended, with regicide; and before the votaries of Islam had time to recover from the consternation, with which the murder of the Khalif Mostarshed had overwhelmed them, their ears were horror-stricken with the intelligence of the fate of Rashid, his successor. The order had hoped, by the violent death of Mostarshed, to succeed in involving the khalifat in confusion and immediately effecting its ruin. This expectation, however, proving fallacious; and Rashid, immediately on taking possession of the vacant throne, and ere he was firmly seated on it, meditating revenge against his father's butchers, the new grand-master resolved to begin where his predecessor had ended, and to heap murder on murder, crime on crime, and to add regicide to treason.

The khalif went from Ramadan to Ispahan, where he had just begun to recover from an attack of illness. Four Assassins, natives of Khorassan, and who had mingled with his retinue, watched an opportunity of stealing into his tent, and poniarded him. He was buried on the spot where he fell; and the troops which he had collected from Bagdad, for the purpose of a campaign against the Ismailites, dispersed. When the news of this successful atrocity, and the frustrated expedition reached Alamut, the residence of the grand-master, public festivals and rejoicings were appointed on the occasion. For seven days and seven nights the kettle drums and cornets echoed from the turrets of the fortress, and published to the surrounding castles the jubilee of crime and the triumph of

murder. Proofs so cutting as the Assassins' daggers (to use an expression of Mirkhond) raised their claims beyond the reach of doubts, and imposed the silence of the grave on their opponents.

A terror but too well founded seized the khalifs of the race of Abbas, who, henceforth, did not venture to show themselves in public. The companions of impiety (Refik), and the dedicated to murder (Fedavi), spread themselves in troops over the whole of Asia, and darkened the face of the earth. The castles already in their possession were maintained and fortified, and new ones built or purchased. Thus they obtained in Syria, Kadmos, Kahaf, and Massiat: the two former were sold to them by Ibn Amrun;[1] the latter they wrested from the commandant of the lords of Sheiser,[2] and made it the centre of their Syrian power, where, even now, traces of it are to be found.[3]

While the order was thus aggrandizing itself, and striking its foes with terror, by the acquisition of strong places and the use of the dagger, the fundamental maxim, which separated so completely the secret doctrine of the initiated from the public tenets of the people, was observed to the letter; and the fulfilment of the injunctions of Mohammedanism was the more strictly exacted, the more indifferent the superiors considered faith and morals to be to themselves. The people saw only the effect of their terrible power, without perceiving the moving force, or its instruments. They saw, in the numerous victims of the poniard, only the enemies of the order and religion, which the vengeance of heaven had visited by the arm of a secret tribunal. The grand-master, his priors and envoys, did not preach sovereignty in their own name, or in that of their order, but of the invisible imam, of whom they called themselves the apostles, and who was to appear, at some future period, to assert his right to the

(1) A. D. 1134; A. H. 529. A. D. 1138; A. H. 533.
(2) A. D. 1140; A. H. 535.
(3) Mirkhond and Abulfeda.

dominion of the earth with a conqueror's power. Their doctrine was enveloped in a veil of the profoundest mystery, and ostensibly its maintainers appeared only as strict observers of the rites of Islamism. A proof of this is afforded by the answer given to the envoy of Sultan Sandjar, who had been sent from Rei to collect official information concerning the Ismailitic doctrines. He was told by the superiors, "Our doctrine is as follows: we believe in the unity of God, and consider that only as true wisdom, which accords with His word and the commands of the prophet; we observe these, as they are given in the holy book of the Koran; we believe in all that the prophet has taught concerning the creation and the last day, rewards and punishments, the judgment and the resurrection. To believe this is necessary, and no one is permitted to pass his judgment on God's commands, or even to alter a letter of them. These are the fundamental rules of our sect; and if the sultan approves them not, he may send one of his theologians to enter into polemical discussions on the subject."[1]

In this spirit, during the reign of Kia Mohammed, which lasted twenty-five years,—that of his father, Kia Busurgomid, of fourteen years,—and that of the founder, Hassan Sabah, of thirty-five, the external rites of Islamism were strictly observed. Kia Mohammed, however, had neither the intellect nor the experience of his predecessors; and it soon appeared what an error Kia Busurgomid had committed, in consulting, in his choice of a successor, the ties of kindred rather than innate talent. From his want of knowledge and capacity, Kia Mohammed was but little esteemed by the people, who transferred their attachment to his son, Hassan. The latter was regarded as a man of great attainments, and he availed himself of the good opinion of the ignorant multitude, not for the general interest of the order, but entirely contrary to its institutions, to serve the purposes of his own private

(1) Mirkhond.

ambition. Initiated into all the mysteries of the secret doctrine, deeply versed in philosophy and history, he stood forward as a popular teacher and expounder, and favoured the report which had begun to be spread abroad, that he was the imam promised by Hassan-ben-Sabah. The companions of the order respected him more and more every day, and rivalled each other in the promptitude with which they executed his behests.

Kia Mohammed, on learning his son's conduct, and the disposition of the people, convened them, and declaring his disapprobation of the proceedings of the former, said, "Hassan is my son, and I am not the imam, but one of his precursors. Whoever maintains the contrary is an infidel." Two hundred and fifty of his son's adherents were put to death, and as many more were banished. Hassan, fearing his father's anger, himself anathematized the illuminati, and wrote treatises in which he condemned the opinions of his partisans, and asserted those of his father. In this manner he succeeded, by his dissimulation, in preserving his own head, and obliterating all suspicion from his father's mind. As, however, he was in the habit of drinking wine in secret, and permitted himself to practise what was forbidden, his adherents saw, in these actions, new indications of his mission as the promised imam, whose advent was to abrogate all prohibitory commands.[1]

About this period, nearly all the Asiatic monarchies were revolutionized by the change of the order of succession; and new dynasties arose on the ruins of their predecessors. As the order of the Ismailites was inimical to all rulers, and treated hostilely by most of them, and as they infused into all governments the envenomed and pernicious influence of murder and sedition, their history stands in close relation with that of all the contemporaneously paramount dynasties; and a glance at the reigning families of Asia will not be

(1) Mirkhond.

out of place here. From the confines of Khorassan to the mountains of Syria, from the Musdoramus to Lebanon, from the Caspian to the Mediterranean, extended the widely spread ramifications of the empire of the Assassins; their centre being the grand-master, in his mountain fort of Alamut, in Irak.

We shall take a cursory glance at these broad regions of Asia, according to the political divisions of the period, and proceeding in natural geographical order, from east to west, our progress will commence with Khorassan and terminate in Syria.

Khorassan, however, first deserves mention not merely on account of its geographical position and its immediate vicinity to Kuhistan, the eastern grand-priorate of the order, but also by reason of the preponderating power of Sultan Sandjar, whose dominion had been founded at the same epoch as that of Hassan Sabah, and whose reign had proceeded contemporaneously with the first three grand-masters, and terminated only with his death, four years earlier than that of Kia Mohammed, the third grand-master.

Moeseddin Abulharess Sandjar, one of the greatest princes of the Seljukide race, and of the east, received, after the demise of his father, the Sultan Melekshah, which, as we have seen, occurred immediately after the occupation of Alamut by Hassan Sabah,[1] the vice-royalty of Khorassan, which province he governed, for twenty years, in the name of his brothers, Barkyarok and Mohammed, who, as the heads of the Seljuk family, reigned in Irak.

On the death of his brother Mohammed, in the first year of the sixth century of the Hegira,[2] Sandjar took possession of his states. He made war upon his nephew, Mahmud, who wished to assert his paternal rights, defeated him, and at length, when the sagacity of the vizier Kemaleddin Ali had mediated a peace, allotted him his paternal kingdom, as a fief, upon the following four conditions: 1st. That in the public

(1) A. D. 1092; A. H. 485. (2) A. D. 1107; A. H. 501.

prayers in the mosques, on Fridays, the name of Sultan Sandjar should stand before that of Mahmud (the prayers and the mint are the first regal prerogatives of Islam); 2nd. That the latter should have only three curtains to the door of his hall of audience (Sultan Sandjar had four, and the khalif seven; to raise and lower which was the office of the Hajeb, or chief chamberlain); 3rd. That no trumpet should sound on his entrance or exit from his palace (a flourish of trumpets was, at that time, the privilege of sovereigns, as is, at this day, the ringing of bells a mark of distinction for their representatives); 4th. That he should retain in their dignities the officers appointed by his uncle.

Mahmud submitted to these conditions; and as only the name and appearance of rule were left him, he embraced the wise resolution of not involving himself deeper in political matters, but devoting himself entirely to the pleasures of the chase, which, as an exercise and school of war, has, from remote antiquity, been considered, in the east, less as a princely amusement than a royal occupation. (Hence Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord, and Cyrus an arranger of hunting; hence, too, the most ancient monarchs of the Assyrians and Persians are represented on the monuments of Persepolis, and the amulets excavated from the ruins of Babylon, as engaged in an heroic combat with wild animals; hence, in the last Persian dynasty, the cognomen of the "Wild Ass," was given to Behramgur, one of their bravest and sport-loving princes: and hence, likewise, the immense park or royal chase of Khosru Parwis). In this spirit, Mahmud expended his treasure in the splendour of his hunting equipments; he had a pack of four hundred hounds, with gold collars and housings embroidered with pearls.[1]

Thirty years after this peace between Mahmud and Sandjar, Behramshah, the last prince but one of the once powerful dynasty of the sultans of Gasna, attempted to shake off the

(1) D'Herbelot, after Ghaffari and others.

yoke of the Seljukides; feeling, however, the enterprise to be beyond his powers, he sent ambassadors to renew his homage to Sandjar. With him he succeeded, but not so with Hossein Jehansus, the founder of the Indian dynasty of the Gurides, who, about this time,[1] raised themselves on the ruin of the power of the Gasnewides. Behramshah, the Gasnewide, yielded to the power of Hossein, the Guride, as did the latter to that of Sultan Sandjar, who drove the founder of the Gurides out of Khorassan, and then appointed him his viceroy of the Indian province of Gur (whence the name of the dynasty). The fortune, which had smiled on Sandjar in his enterprises against Mahmud, Behramshah, and Hossein, was not so favourable to him, in his wars against the people of Karakhatai, whom he attacked in the obscurity of their forests; nor against the Turcomans of the race of Oghuz, who invaded Khorassan. He lost, in the battle which he fought with Gurjash, the prince of the former, thirty thousand men, together with his harem; and Tarkhau Khatun, the first of his wives, was made captive by the Karakhtaiyis.

Still worse was his success against the Oghuz Turcomans, whom he wished to compel to an annual tribute of sheep, which they refused. He was taken prisoner by them, and confined, for four years, in an iron cage. The Turkish historians, who relate this unworthy treatment of the great Sultan Sandjar, deny Sultan Bajazet's having experienced the same from his conqueror, Timur.

Concerning this last, European writers add, that whenever he mounted his horse, he placed his foot on the neck of the Ottoman sultan, as, it is said, the Persian king, Shabur (Sapor), had done a thousand years before, to his captive, the Roman emperor, Valerian. Valerian and Bajazet perished in the captivity of Shabur and Timur; but Sandjar had the good fortune to make his escape from his barbarous conquerors, and returned to Khorassan, where he died the following year,

(1) A. D. 1150; A. H. 545.

from melancholy, caused by his bad fortune, and the desolation of his states; after a reign of fifty-one years, and a life of nearly a hundred, as he had before he became sole ruler, acted, for twenty-one years, as viceroy of his brothers, in Khorassan. His brilliant exploits, and the encomiums of the poets, have caused his name to shine among those of the most illustrious princes of the east; and have not undeservedly gained him the surname of Alexander the Second. The greatest poets of his time, Selmar and Feridedin Katib, sang his praise; but, above all, Enweri, the Persian Pindar. Unequalled in his panegyrics, either by his predecessor, Khakani, or his follower, Farjabi, who, with him, form the astral triangle of Persian panegyrists, he raised the name of Sandjar high above the regions of earth in the light of the milky way, and to the highest heavens, in the midst of the music of the spheres. While Enweri thus bestowed immortality on Sandjar in his works, the poet Sabir did him a no less essential service in prolonging his sublunary existence, by protecting him from the murderous dagger.

When Itsis, the governor of Khowareim, rebelled against Sandjar, the latter sent the poet, one of the most faithful and respected in his court, secretly to Khorassan, as a spy upon the designs of the rebellious governor. He succeeded in ascertaining that Itsis had engaged an Assassin (Fedavi), to murder the sultan, in the mosque, on a Friday. The murderer was discovered, by means of the exact description sent by Sabir to Sandjar, and, after confessing every thing, he was put to death. Itsis, however, who was aware that Sabir had caused his design to fail, had him drowned in the Oxus.[1] Sabir thus gained an immortal name, in the ranks of great poets and faithful servants, not only by his encomiastic poems, but also by his praiseworthy deeds. Sandjar, who, at first, had been favourably inclined towards the Assassins, seems to have had his eyes opened by this attempt, and to

(1) A. D. 1151; A. H. 546. Devletshah art. Enweri, Feridedin Katib, and Sabir.

have been urged to the severity with which, as we have already related, in his latter years, he pursued the order who had caused the irruption of the Turcomans.

Sandjar, if not the most dangerous, was yet, at this period, the most powerful of the enemies of the Ismailites. With the exception of the phantom of spiritual power, which sat on the throne of the khalifat, and whose nominal superiority was acknowledged by the Asiatic princes in their Friday's prayers, the most powerful sovereigns either held their states in fee, as the vassals of the Sultan Sandjar, or governed them as his lieutenants. As, in the ancient Persian empire, the seven satraps of the distant large provinces, surrounded the throne of the great king as viceroys (like the seven Amshaspande collected round the throne of Ormusd), so the rulers, of seven powerful dignities, acknowledged the Sultan Sandjar as the source of their power; which, indeed, enfeebled by distance, operated less powerfully on the extreme points of the circumference, than in the centre.

The Indian provinces of Multan and Gur, immediately to the south of Khorassan, were governed by the Sultan of the Gasnewides, Behramshah, and him of the Gurides, Hossein Jehansus, (world burning). Ahmed, the son of Soleiman, whose frequent rebellions had brought upon him as frequent punishments, ruled in northern Transoxana; and the adjacent province of Khowaresm was held in fief by, first, Kotbeddin, then his son, Itsis, two great court and hereditary dignities, who likewise held the office of chief cupbearer. In middle Persia, reigned the Sultan Mahmud, the Seljukide, under the guidance of his uncle Sandjar; and in the northern and western provinces, Aserbijan and Irak, the two dynasties of the Atabegs, founded by Amadeddin Ben Senji and the Turcoman Ildigis, acknowledged him as paramount lord. As the two powerful families of the Gasnewides and Seljukides, after reigning more than a century, were nodding to their fall, and the dynasties of the Atabegs were shooting up into multifarious branches, we think a few words relative to the origin of the latter not unsuitable.

Atabeg, not *Father of the Prince*, as it has been translated, but, *Father Prince*, or *Princely Father*, was an honorary title, first borne by the great Vizier Nisamolmulk, without any claim to unlimited authority, and still less to be hereditary. Under the successors of Melekshah, this title distinguished the highest military dignity of the empire, and was given, at the court of the Bagdad khalif, to the Emir-ol-umera (i. e. *prince of princes*); and at the court of Cairo, to the Emir-ol-juyush, or *prince of the army*. But, as at a preceding epoch, the family Buje had exercised the power of the khalifat, under the title of Emir-ol-umera, and in the west, the Merovingian race had, under the title of *maire du palais*, passed into the hands of the Carlovingians; so the Atabegs possessed themselves of boundless authority, and raised themselves into dynasties. The principal are, besides that of the Atabegs of Irak, that of Aserbijan, that of Fars, called also the family of Salgar, and that of Loristan; all of which, in the short space of five years, made their claims to unlimited rule available.[1]

Within this period, disappeared the reigning families of Rakuye, in Fars;[2] that of the sons of Togteghin, at Damascus;[3] the family Nedshah, in Yemen;[4] and that of the Gurides in Khorassan;[5] in whose stead arose the Seliki, as kings of Erzroum, and the Eyoubides, as princes of Emessa; and, three years before the death of Sandjar, the mightiest prince of his time, a still more mighty one was born,[6] Jengis Khan, the scourge of the east and the west, who afterwards converted the most fertile territories into a wilderness, and bathed the deserts with streams of blood.

Cotemporaneously with the last ten years of Salgar's reign in the east in Khorassan, Nureddin Mohammed Ben Ama-

(1) The Atabegs of Aserbijan, A.D. 1145; A.H. 540; those of Fars, A.D. 1148; A. H. 543; those of Loristan, A. D. 1150; A. H. 545. (Takwimet tevarikh.)
(2) A. D. 1142; A. H 537. (3) A. D. 1154; A. H. 549.
(4) A. D. 1158; A. H. 553. (5) A. D. 1160; A. H. 555.
(6) A.D. 1154; A. H. 549.

deddin Sengi, Lord of the Irak Atabegs, ruled in Syria, as one of the greatest princes of the east. He was a cotemporary of Sálgar, and the most powerful opponent of the Crusaders; whose historians, unceasingly employed in detailing the mischief which he caused them, cannot refuse him the just praise of his great and noble qualities. "Nureddin," says the learned William, bishop of Tyre, a man profoundly versed in history, "was a prudent, discreet man, who feared God according to the faith of his people; fortunate and an increaser of his paternal inheritance."[1] His budding power sorely oppressed that of the Christians; whose conquests put a term and measure to his. Raymond, Prince of Antioch, and Gosselin, Count of Tripoli, fell as the trophies of his victories; the first at the siege of Anab,[2] on the battle field; the second, as he was proceeding to the chase, from his residence, Telbasher,[3] was taken prisoner by a foraging party of Turcomans. The castles of Telbasher, Antab, Asas, Ravendan, Tellkhaled, Karss, Kafsrud, Meraash, and Nehrelhus,[4] fell into the victors' hands, with considerable booty.

Nureddin, as possessor of Mossul and Aleppo, was, in fact, the lord of northern Syria; but in the southern, he still wanted Damascus as a *point d'appui* for his rule. Here Mejereddin Abak,[5] the last of the Seljukides of Damascus, reigned; or, rather, with his name and with unlimited power, his vizier, Moineddin Ennar.[6] Twice had Nureddin invested it with his besieging army; at length, the inhabitants, dreading to fall under the dominion of the Crusaders, summoned him to their assistance. Mejereddin retired willingly, and received in exchange, first Emessa, then Balis, and afterwards went to Bagdad. Nureddin, having obtained Damascus, raised it

(1) Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 893.
(2) A. D. 1148; A. H. 543. Nepa, p. 915.
(3) Nokhbetet-tevarikh.
(4) A. D. 1151; A. H. 546. Turbessel, Hamtab, Hazart, Ravendel, Gesta Dei, &c. p. 920.
(5) Mejereddin, G. D. p. 893. (6) Miheneddin Ainardus (ibidem).

from the ruin caused by an earthquake, and chose it as his metropolis; adorning it with mosques, academies, libraries, hospitals, baths, and fountains. As Melekshah, the great prince of the Seljukides, had been the first to establish a high school (Medresse) at Bagdad, so Nureddin founded at Damascus, the first theological school (Darolhadiss), where the traditions of the prophet were treated of.

With the constant practice of the two most splendid oriental princely virtues, liberality and justice, he combined the strictest attention to the duties of Mohammedanism. Just and modest, as Omar Ben Abdolasis, the seventh khalif of the Ommiad family, he was pious and strict, like Omar Ben Khattab, the second successor of the prophet. He wore neither silk nor gold, but cotton and linen; and never expended on his clothes, or nourishment, more than his just lot of the fifth of the booty. He was ever engaged in the "*holy war*;" either the "*lesser*,"[1] with weapons in his hand, against the enemies of Islam; or the "*greater*,"[2] with fasting and prayer, occupying day and night in political duties and study.

The presents of foreign princes, he caused immediately to be sold, and devoted the proceeds to pious institutions, public buildings, and eleemosynary purposes. Besides presenting large sums annually, to the inhabitants of the holy cities, Mecca and Medina, and the Arabs of the desert, to induce them to allow the caravans of pilgrims to proceed unmolested; he divided, every month, five thousand ducats among the poor. He particularly honoured and rewarded jurisconsults, in whose ranks he was himself inscribed, as he had collected into a particular work, Fakh-rinuri (i. e. *glory of light*), the traditions of the prophet, relating to justice, alms, and the holy war, as the ground-work of his policy, morals, and discipline. As, during his long reign of twenty-eight years, he conquered more than fifty castles, and established in all

(1) Jihad ol asghar. (2) Jihad ol ekbar.

the cities of his dominions, mosques and colleges; and had maintained most gloriously, both less and greater war, for Islamism; so history gives him, like his father, Amadeddin Sengi, not only the honorary title Gasi, or victorious, but also that of Shehid, or martyr; because both merited the crown of martyrdom, if not in the field of battle, in that of honour, by their unwearied exercise of princely duties, and martial virtues.[1]

Religion and policy combined to decide Nureddin in favour of the khalif of Bagdad, against him of Cairo. His inclination to do homage to the former, rather than to the latter, as the successor of the prophet, would find more ready access to his mind, as on account of the great confusion prevailing in Egypt, the time seemed to have arrived for the Atabegs to tear the sceptre from the feeble grasp of the Fatimites. This long shapeless idea of Syrian policy soon received form and existence from the Egyptian civil war, between the two viziers, Dhargham and Shawer, who, under the last of the Fatimites, struggled for mastery.

In the same year[2] in which Nureddin had, by one of the most splendid victories, and the conquest of Harem, repaired the great discomfiture which he had received from the Crusaders, four months previously, at Bakia (Boquea), Shawer himself came to Damascus, to promise the third part of the revenues of Egypt, if Nureddin would aid him with arms, against his rival, Dhargham. Nureddin sent the governor of Emessa, Esededdin Shirkuh (i. e. *lion of the faith of lion's mount*), of the family Eyub, with an army into Egypt. Dhargham fell in battle; Shawer was restored to his former power, but on refusing to fulfil his promise, the lord of lion's mount took possession, with his troops, of the eastern province Sherkiye, and the chief town Belbeis. Shawer, the

(1) From the Nokhbetet-tevarikh of Mohammed Effendi, after the Akdoljemen, (i. e. *coral necklace*); the Kamil (i. e. *the complete*) of Ibn Essir, and the Miret-ol-edvar, or *mirror of ages*.

(2) A. D. 1162; A. H. 558.

most fickle of viziers, faithless alike to friend and foe, and, by his false policy, a traitor to his army and himself, called Amaury, formerly Count of Askalon, then king of Jerusalem, with the Crusaders, to his assistance, against the general of his ally; he soon, however, repented, and dismissed the Crusaders, with a sum of sixty thousand ducats.[1]

In the meanwhile, Endeddin, being reinforced with fresh troops, advanced against Cairo, and defeated the khalif at Ashmunind, and remained master of Upper Egypt, at the same time that his nephew, Yussuf, took Alexandria, and maintained himself there valiantly, for three months, against the combined besieging forces of the Egyptians and the Crusaders. At the end of this period peace was concluded; Nureddin receiving, as compensation, an annual sum of fifty thousand ducats, and the Crusaders, one hundred thousand, out of the revenues of Egypt.[2] There remained, moreover, at Cairo, a general of the Crusaders, with some thousands of men, as a garrison and protection against Nureddin's enterprises.

These advantages accorded to the king of Jerusalem, in the metropolis of Egypt, tempted him to a rupture of the peace, with the hope of becoming master of the whole country. Persuaded by the knights-hospitallers, whose grand-master hoped to maintain his order, in the possession of Belbeis, which, in warlike preparations, he had charged with a debt of more than one hundred thousand ducats, Amaury advanced with an army against Egypt. The Templars, however, refused to participate in the expedition, either from real displeasure at the rupture of the peace, or, what is more probable, from jealousy of the knights of St. John, and other hidden grounds of their mysterious policy.[3]

(1) According to the Nokhbetet-tevarikh; according to the Gesta Dei, two hundred thousand paid down, and as much promised.

(2) According to the Nokhbetet-tevarikh; according to the Gesta Dei, two hundred thousand ready money, and as much promised.

(3) Gesta Dei, p. 978.

In this predicament, Shawer applied to Nureddin, for assistance against the Crusaders, who had already[1] made an irruption into Egypt, had taken Belbeis, and were besieging the capital. New Cairo was surrounded with a wall, at which women and children laboured with untired zeal, day and night. The more ancient part of the city, Missr, usually, but incorrectly, called Old Cairo, was set on fire, by command of Shawer, and burned for fifty-four days. The Khalif Adhad despatched couriers with urgent letters to Syria, imploring the aid and assistance of Nureddin against the infidel; and to depict the highest grade of his necessity, he enclosed locks of his wives' hair, as if to say, "Help! help! the enemy is dragging our women from us by the hair of their heads."[2] Nureddin was, at that time, at Aleppo, and Esededdin Shirkuh, at Emessa, his government. Nureddin immediately intrusted him with the conduct of the Egyptian campaign; and gave him for the execution of it, two hundred thousand ducats, and a chosen body of eight thousand men, six thousand of which were Syrians, and the remainder Turcomans. In the meanwhile, Shawer and Amaury, both on the brink of despair, entered into negociations; the latter for the possession, the former for the relief, of Cairo. Shawer promised, in the name of the khalif, the enormous sum of a million of ducats, and the king was glad to receive fifty thousand ready money.[3] On this, the Crusaders retired, when the Syrians, under the conduct of Esededdin, appeared before Cairo.

The khalif, accompanied by the chief officers of his court, repaired to the camp, and complained bitterly of the excessive power of Shawer, who, merely on his own account, had invited the Franks into the country, committed Missr to the flames, and desolated the land; and entreated Esededdin Shirkuh for his vizier's head, being himself too powerless to

(1) A. D. 1168; A. H. 564. (2) Nokhbetet-tevarikh.

(3) Here again the Nokhbetet-tevarikh gives exactly half the sum mentioned by William of Tyre, according to whom, the khalif promised two millions, and paid one hundred thousand ducats. Gesta Dei, p. 979.

secure it. The latter soon became aware of the danger which threatened his life, and resolved to make away with Esededdin, together with his nephew, and the princes of his court, under the pretext of an invitation to a banquet. The project was, however, betrayed; and the intended victim retorted on the guilty head of Shawer, which was sent to the khalif. Nureddin immediately stepped into Shawer's place, as vizier and Emir-ol-juyush, with the title of Almelek-al-mansur (i. e. *the victorious king*); and as he died sixty-five days afterwards, his nephew, Yussuf Salaheddin (i. e. *Joseph, justness of faith*), was invested with the same high dignities of the empire, and received the honorary designation, Almalek-ennassir (i. e. *conquering king*). He was the founder of the dynasty of the Eyubites; his greatness, like his name, smoothed and diminished by the western historians, is more familiar to Europeans, than that of many other great princes and conquerors of the east, at whose names and deeds European languages and manners recoil.

The Syrian heroes of the Crusades have been celebrated by the Christians in Europe, and the latter by the former in Asia. Amadeddin Sengi, Nureddin, and Salaheddin, appear in European chronicles of the Crusades, as Sanguin, Noradin, and Saladin; while in the Moslem annals, the count of Tripoli, the prince of Antioch, and the king of Jerusalem, are masked under the names of Comis, Birias, and Rei. In the following book, we shall have an opportunity of mentioning Salaheddin's exploits more at large; as yet he appears as the khalif's vizier, and Nureddin's general, in whose name he administered the government of Egypt; he caused the name of his master the Atabeg, to be mentioned in the public prayers on Friday, after that of the khalif.

Nureddin thought the opportunity was now arrived to destroy the khalifat of the Fatimites, and to deprive the last of them of even the shadow of power. He commanded his lieutenant, Salaheddin, to fill up all judicial offices, which had hitherto been held by Imamis or Ismailis, with lawyers of the

orthodox sect of the Shafiites, and in the public prayers to name the Abbaside khalif, Almostanssar-biemrillah, instead of the Fatimite Adhad-lidinillah. Salaheddin delayed the fulfilment of these commands, as the people almost universally were of the sects, Rafedhi and Shii, and still hung to the phantom of the Fatimite khalifat: the last representative of that race, however, Adhad-lidinillah, very opportunely falling sick and dying,[1] Salaheddin immediately transferred the royal prerogative of prayer on Friday, from the name of the khalif of Cairo, to that of the khalif of Bagdad, after whom, Nureddin, the Atabeg of Syria, was named.

Thus, Salaheddin executed, more, indeed, for his own than Nureddin's interest, though still in the latter's name, the great stroke, by which the main trunk of the western Ismailites was overthrown; after having budded for more than two hundred years, and transplanted itself into Asia, in the branch of the eastern Ismailites, or Assassins. The throne, which the secret doctrine of the Ismailites wished to establish on the ruins of all others, was overturned, and buried the lodge of Cairo in its ruins. The khalifat of the Abbasides prevailed over that of the family of Ali, for which the envoys of the Ismailites preached and intrigued; and the phantom, in whose name they had deluded the people, vanished from the earth: an event of great magnitude, and rich in consequences; important in the history of the east, and more especially in that of the Assassins, to whom, Salaheddin, whose dominion rose on the ruins of the Egyptian khalifat, appeared a powerful and dangerous foe.

(1) A. D. 1171; A. H. 567.

END OF BOOK III.

BOOK IV.

Reign of Hassan II., Son of Mohammed, the Son of Busurgomid, known by the name of Ala-sikrihi-es-selam—that is, Hail to his memory—and his Son, Mohammed II.

In the preceding books, we traced the mysteries of irreligion and immorality up to their source, and stripped the secret doctrine of the Ismailites of the mask of pretended sanctity, under which it concealed itself from the eyes of the people. A doubt may, perhaps, have arisen in the minds of our readers, whether we have not scrutinized the system of the order too closely; and whether, as it was constantly kept secret, it may not have been somewhat slandered by the uninitiated and its enemies. The effects of the secret doctrine had, indeed, manifested themselves in the bloody traces of the dagger; nevertheless, these multiplied horrors might, perhaps, be attributed to accident, or private feuds, rather than to a regular system of infidelity and homicide. Even in our own days, the secret doctrines of many degenerate orders has been lauded as pure and innocent, although their results have appeared in the crimes of regicide and rebellion.

The Jesuits and the illuminati, though otherwise opposed as to their spirit—the former protecting, the latter undermining, thrones—have both been accused of profligate doctrines: the former, of permitting the killing of popes and kings; and the latter, of dispensing with thrones and religion. In the writings of individual members, the maxim may be found,

that it is lawful to kill kings, and to strangle the last of them with the intestines of the last priest: these horrors, however, were never publicly taught, or acknowledged by the order at large. The regicide, imputed by Pombal to the Jesuits, and the poisoning of Ganganelli, have not been sufficiently proved; and even were this the case, the Jesuits have as little confessed the guilt of Malagrida, as have the Illuminati approved of Jean de Brie's proposition of establishing a propaganda of Assassins.

As little is the secret doctrine of the Templars convicted of profligacy, by the confessions wrung from them by the torture; and if they have been accused of it by cotemporary writers, others, of later date, have, on the other hand, defended them.

In this matter, however, the case of the Assassins is very different from that of the Templars, Jesuits, or Illuminati. All that has hitherto been said of their secret doctrine of systematic infidelity and sedition, is by no means founded on untenable conjectures, historical accusations, or forced confessions; but on the free acknowledgment of their teachers and masters; who, after having long concealed the atrocities of impiety from the eyes of the world, under the mask of the most profound hypocrisy, on a sudden lifted the veil, and published, to the profane, the mysteries of atheism and immorality, hitherto the inheritance of the initiated. This was a most inconsiderate slip; most destructive to the order, and entirely adverse to the profound policy of its founder, who had formed the well-grounded opinion that the edifice of domination and civil society can be held together only by the doctrines of faith and duty; that the open abolition of all religion and morality would necessarily entail the universal destruction of the existing order of things; and that the strongest security for blind obedience is to give reins to the wildness of the passions. Moreover, besides that, by such a desecration, the secret of the few became the property of the many, the leaders and their dupes changed parts, and the

system of the order caused its own destruction from within: it also exposed itself, in all its nakedness, to its external enemies; and, by its own avowal, roused up the world to vengeance, and justified the anathemas of priests—the persecution of kings, and the curses of nations. All this had been well and thoroughly considered by the son of Sabah; not so, however, by his namesake, and third successor, Hassan the Second, the son of Mohammed, the son of Busurgomid.

He had, as we have seen already, during his father's life, stood forward, with innovations, as a prophet, and had only preserved his life from the executioner's sword by the deepest dissimulation. As soon, however, as he succeeded to the grand-mastership, he threw off the burthensome mask, and not only gave way himself to all possible extravagances, but also permitted the same license to all others with impunity. Not content with this, he could not resist the desire to mount the pulpit himself, as a popular preacher. Had he been as enlightened as his predecessors in the grand-mastership, and had the maturity of his judgment kept pace with the riches of his attainments, he would have forborne to hurl the flaming brand of infidelity and lawlessness among the people. It was of small advantage to himself, and still less for the order, that he was considered learned, and possessed of intellect, and his father heavy and ignorant.

Preservative ignorance is better than destructive erudition, and darkness itself is to be preferred to the lurid glare of a conflagration. Hassan, the son of Mohammed, determined, at whatever cost, to be an expositor, and to favour the impunity of vice, not merely by example, but also to preach from his own mouth the irreprehensibility of crime. In Ramadan, of the 559th year of the Hegira,[1] the inhabitants of the province of Rudbar were collected, by his orders, at the castle of Alamut. On the place Mossella *(the place of prayers,* situated at the foot of the castle, like the suburbs of Shiras, celebrated by Hafez),[2] a pulpit was placed, looking

(1) A. D. 1163. (2) Hafez, letter Alif.

towards Kibla (*i. e.* the country of Mecca), to which the Moslemim turn in praying, and in the four corners, four different coloured flags were planted—a white, a red, a yellow, and a green.

On the seventeenth of Ramadan,[1] the people were assembled on this place: Hassan ascended the pulpit, and commenced by involving his hearers in error and confusion, by dark and puzzling expressions. He made them believe that an envoy of the imam (the phantom of a khalif still tottering on the Egyptian throne) had come to him, and brought an epistle, addressed to all Ismailites, by which the fundamental maxims of the sect were renovated and fortified. He declared that, according to this letter, the gates of mercy and grace were open to all who would follow and obey him; that those were the peculiarly elect; that they should be freed from all obligations of the law; released from the burthen of all commands and prohibitions; that he had brought them now to the day of the resurrection (*i. e.* the manifestation of the imam). Upon this, he began to recite, in Arabic, the khutbe, or prayer, which he pretended to have just received from the imam. An interpreter, standing at the foot of the pulpit, translated to the audience in the following words:—"Hassan, the son of Mohammed, the son of Busurgomid, is our khalif, dai, and hudshet (our successor, missionary, and proof), to whom all who profess our doctrine are to yield obedience in spiritual, as well as temporal, affairs; executing his commands, and considering his words as inspired, and must not transgress his prohibitions, but observe his behests as our own. Know all, that our Lord has mercy on them, and has led them to the most high God." He then descended from the pulpit, caused tables to be covered, and commanded the people to break the fast, and to give themselves up to all kinds of pleasure, to music,

(1) According to Mirkhond and Wassah; according to the Nokhbetet tevarikh, the seventh.

and play, as on feast days; "for to-day," said he, "is the day of the resurrection" (*i. e.* the revelation of the imam).

From this day, on which crime manifested itself undisguisedly to the world, the name of Mulahid, or Impious, which hitherto had been given to the disciples of Karmath, and other disturbers of social order, by the lawyers, was now bestowed upon all the Ismailites of Asia in general. The seventeenth of Ramazan was celebrated with games and banquets; not only as the feast of the revelation, but also as the proper epoch of the publication of their doctrine. As the Moslimin reckoned their time from the flight of the prophet, so did the Mulahid, or Impious, from the revelation of the imam (*i. e.* the 17th Ramazan, in the 559th year of the Hegira.) And as the name of Mohammed was never mentioned without the addition of the "Blessed," so, henceforth, was added to that of Hassan, the words "Blessed be his Memory," which history, instead of blessing, curses. The historian Mirkhond, tells us, that he had heard from Yusuf-shah Kiatib, on the authority of credible persons who had read it, that the following inscription was over the door of the library in the castle of Alamut:—

"With the help of God,
The ruler of the world
Loosened the bands of the law.
Blessed be his name."

Hitherto, the grand-masters had always represented themselves as only the precursors of the imam, as his missionaries and envoys, and severe censors of observance of the rules of Islamism. Hassan, however, now at once asserted that he was himself the imam, in whose hand all power lay to loosen the band of the law. By abolishing them he accredited himself with the blind multitude as lawgiver and khalif.

In this character, he wrote to the presidents and envoys of the different provinces. His letter of credentials to Reis Mosaffer, the grand-prior of Kuhistan, as his namesake had

been in Irak, under the founder, Hassan Sabah, was of the following tenor: "I, Hassan, tell you that I am God's vicegerent on earth; and mine, in Kuhistan, is the Reis Mosaffer, whom the men of that province are to obey, and whose words they are to listen to as mine." The reis caused a pulpit to be erected in the castle of Muminabad, the residence of the grand-prior of Kuhistan, from which he read the letter of the grand-master to the people. The majority of the inhabitants heard the perusal with joy. They played the pipe and drum, danced and drank wine at the foot of the pulpit, and made known their contempt of law, and their libertinism in every possible way. Some few, who remained true to the doctrines of Islamism, emigrated; others, who could not resolve upon this step, stayed, and shared with the rest the reputation of impiety.

Thus the standard of the freest infidelity and most daring libertinism floated on all the castles of Rudbar and Kuhistan, as the insignia of the new doctrine; and instead of the name of the Egyptian khalif, that of Hassan resounded from all the pulpits, as that of the true successor of the prophet. Since prejudices are often more deeply rooted in the breast than religious rites and moral laws, it was easier for Hassan to assume the character of legislator than that of imam, whom the people hitherto only acknowledged in the Egyptian khalif.

In order to support his pretensions to this title, he at length found it necessary to deduce his descent in blood from the Fatimite khalifs; and although he had, in the public assembly of the 17th Ramazan, called himself the son of Mohammed Ben Busurgomid, he endeavoured to prove, partly by dark intimations, partly by ambiguous writings, the opinion that he was a son of Nesar's and grandson of the Khalif Mostanssur, during whose reign the founder, Hassan Ben Sabah, had been at Cairo, and had, in the political dissensions of the Ismailites, espoused the party of Mostanssur's elder son against his younger brother, Nesar; on which account he had been compelled by the generalissimo, Bedr Jemali, to quit Egypt, as we

have before related more at length. The rumour which his adherents dispersed abroad in confirmation of his descent was to this effect. A certain Abulhassan Seide, a confidant of the Khalif Mostanssur, had come from Egypt to Alamut a year after his patron's death, and had brought with him a son of Nesar's, whom he confided to the care of Hassan Ben Sabah, who received the envoy with great respect, and had assigned to the young imam a village at the foot of the castle as a residence, where he, after a time, married, and gave his son the name, "Blessed be his Memory."

At the same time that the imam's wife was delivered of this child, the wife of the grand-master, Mohammed, son of Busurgomid, was in her accouchement. A confidential female servant carried the young "Blessed be his Memory" into the castle, and substituted him in the place of the son of Mohammed. As this tale was too absurd to meet with easy credence, and as, according to their pure doctrine, that all was indifferent and nothing forbidden, the assertors of this genealogy were not ashamed subsequently to maintain that the young imam had had clandestine intercourse with Mohammed's wife, the fruit of which was the reigning grand-master, imam, and khalif, Blessed be his Memory. Thus, Hassan preferred being thought a bastard of the blood of the khalifs, to being deemed his father's legitimate child. The honour of the mother was sacrificed to the ambition of the son; and because adultery afforded grounds to his pretensions, the sanctity of the harem was forced to give place to the merit of ambition.

The Ismailites, who, in this manner, made Hassan a descendant of Nesar, the son of Khalif Mostanssur, were called Nesari, a name considered synonymous with the Impious or the Assassins. They gave Hassan the name of Kaimolkiamet (i. e. *Lord of the Resurrection)*, and called themselves the sect of the Resurrection or Revelation; for, by the epoch of the resurrection they understood the time when the one about to rise (Kaim, i. e. *the imam)*, should bring them near to God by the removal of all laws. This period had, according to

their pernicious opinion, occurred during the imamat of Hassan, who, on that account, emancipated the people from all legal obligations. Thus were the bounds of duty and morals at once and openly violated. Undismayed, and with heads erect, Vice and Crime stalked over the ruins of Religion and social order; and Murder, which hitherto had felled the destined victims under the mask of blind obedience, and as the executioner of a secret tribunal, now raged in indiscriminate massacres.[1]

Hassan, as might have been expected, died a martyr to his new doctrine. In the fourth year of his licentious reign, he fell at the castle of Lamsir, by the dagger of his brother-in-law, a descendant of the family Buyeb. In this murder, the historian views not so much the visitation of celestial wrath on so many crimes (which, indeed, both his predecessors and successors had better merited), as the natural punishment of insulted prudence, which, in the ordinary course of human affairs, is sooner or later avenged equally with the greatest viciousness. It was the height of imprudence in Hassan, the learned explainer, to surrender the most recondite doctrines of the order to the many-headed hydra, the people; and he sealed with his own blood the universally accorded liberty of murder.

Reign of Mohammed II., Son of Hassan II.

The conflagration which Hassan had kindled, by the revelation of the secret doctrine, was not extinguished by his blood, but, on the contrary, extended its flames through all Asia during the reign of his son and successor, Mohammed II. The first act of his government was to revenge his father's death; whose murderer, Hassan Nanwer, together with all his kindred, both male and female, bled under the executioner's axe. Instead of profiting by

(1) Mirkhond.

this bloody example, to strike into a better road, he constantly pursued the same path. He preached, even more loudly than his father, the doctrine of impiety; and, like him, asserted his rights to the dignity of supreme imam. Deeply versed in philosophical studies, he considered himself to be in these, as in other branches of knowledge, alone and unequalled. Many of his philosophical and legal apothegms have been handed down by tradition; we shall not, however, cite them in this history. He did homage by these studies, not only to the institution of the founder of the order, who, profoundly acquainted with the mathematical and metaphysical sciences, had collected books and instruments in his castle of Alamut, but also to the spirit of the ages in which the civilization of modern Persia approached the summit of its splendour; and philosophy as well as poetry were at the epoch of their greatest glory in that country. Cotemporary with his long reign of forty-six years (for so long did the clemency of heaven endure the monster on earth), lived and died a pleiad of Persian poets, greater and more illustrious than that of the Alexandrines under the Ptolemies, or that of the French poets under Francis the First.[1]

During this period flourished the lyric poets, Suseni[2] and Watwat,[3] of whom the former may be considered the creator of the metrical system, and the latter as the legislator of Persian poetry; the two great panegyrists, Khakani[4] and Sohair Faryabi,[5] who, together with their predecessor, Enweri, stand the great columns of the splendid edifice of oriental eulogium; the two great mystics, Senayi[6] and Attar,[7] the former writer of the "Ornamental Garden," Kadikat, which the well-known author of the "Garden of Roses and Fruit," Saadi, seems to have kept in view; the latter the composer

(1) Devletshah. Heerens Geschichte der Classischen Litteratur. Bouterwek Geschichte de französischen Dichtkunst.

(2) A. D. 1175; A. H. 569.
(3) A. D. 1177; A. H. 573.
(4) A. D. 1186; A. H. 582.
(5) A. D. 1201; A. H. 598.
(6) A. D. 1180; A. H. 576.
(7) A. D. 1190; A. H. 586.

of the "Dialogues of Birds" (Mantikettair) and other celebrated works, in whose footsteps trod Jelaleddin Rumi,[1] the great mystic poet of the east; lastly, Nisami, the greatest romantic poet of the Persians, the immortal bard of Khosru and Shirin.

Besides this pleiad of poets, other stars of the first magnitude shone in the hemisphere of juridical and metaphysical science. The Sheikh Abdolkadir-Gilani,[2] the founder of one of the most respectable orders of dervises, and whose monument at Bagdad is, to this day, visited by pilgrims no less frequently than that of the great Imam Ebu Hanife; the two great jurists, Ahmed Ibn Mahmud Gasnewi[3] and Imam Borhaneddin Ali Ben Ebibekr Almaraghainani;[4] the former, author of the "Mokademme" *(Prolegomena)*, the latter of the "Hedayet" (Guide), two classical works of practical jurisprudence; the secretary Amad,[5] immortal in the annals of calligraphy; the great historian Ibn Essir Jeseri,[6] the composer of the "Kamil;" and, to conclude, the philosopher Shehabneddin Sehrwerdi,[7] and the Imam Fakhr Rasi,[8] who must not be confounded with their namesakes, the former with the sheikh, nor the latter with the poet nor the physician Rhases. Both of them are remarkable, not only in the history of literature, on account of their opinions, but also in that of the Assassins, by reason of their fate, as presenting, both by their lives and their deaths, examples of the danger which the literati incurred, who either openly reproved or combatted the doctrines of infidelity.

The former, namely, the philosopher Abufeth-Yahya Ben Hanosh Ben Emirek, commonly celebrated as Shehabneddin Sehrwerdi, the writer of several metaphysical works, was put to death at Aleppo by the son of Salaheddin, by order of his father, because his doctrines had been condemned by the

(1) A. D. 1180; A. H. 576.
(2) A. D. 1170; A. H. 566.
(3) A. D. 1196; A. H. 593
(4) A. D.1196; A. H. 593.
(5) A. D. 1200; A. H. 597.
(6) A. D. 1209; A. H. 606.
(7) A. D. 1172; A. H. 568.
(8) A. D. 1209; A. H. 606.

College of Jurists as philosophical, or, in other words, as atheistical, and the shedding his blood was declared to be lawful. The Imam Fakhreddin Rasi being menaced with the same fate, escaped it, but not without great danger. During the grand-mastership of Mohammed II., the son of Hassan II., he taught jurisprudence publicly in his native city, Rei. Having been slandered by some who envied his reputation, as being secretly a disciple of the Ismailitic doctrine, and even one of their missionaries and envoys, he mounted the pulpit, and in order to clear himself from the imputation, he abused and anathematized the Ismailites. As soon as the grand-master received information of this, through his emissaries, he sent a Fedavi, or initiated Assassin, to Rei with special instructions. This man appeared as a student of law, and in that character visited the imam's college. Seven months elapsed ere he found a fitting opportunity of executing his commission. At length he watched an instant when the imam's servant was absent in quest of food, and his master alone in his cabinet.

The Fedavi entered, locked the door, and throwing the imam to the ground, placed himself with his drawn dagger on his breast. The imam demanded his purpose. "To tear out thy heart and bowels!"—"And wherefore?"—"Because thou hast spoken evil of the Ismailites in the public pulpit." The imam conjured the Assassin to spare his life, and swore most solemnly never to slander the Ismailites again. "If I leave thee," said the murderer, "thou wilt fall back into thy old ways, and consider thyself released from thy oath by artful sophistries." The imam renounced all explaining away of the oath, and was willing to abide the penalties of perjury. "I had no commands to slay thee, or I had not been wanting in the execution. Mohammed, the son of Hassan, greets thee, and requests thee to honour him with a visit at his castle. Thou shalt there receive unbounded power, and we will obey thee as honest servants. 'We despise,' says the grand-master, 'the rumours of the people, which glide from our ears like nuts from a globe; but you shall not

insult us, because your words are graven as with a graver on stone.'" The imam replied that he could not go to Alamut, but that, in future, he would not permit himself to utter a word against the lord of that fortress. Upon this the Fedavi drew three hundred pieces of gold from his girdle, which he gave him, saying, "Behold thy pension; and by a decree of the divan, thou wilt receive the same sum annually from the Reis Mosaffer. I also leave thee two dresses of Yemen for thy servant; these also the grand-master sends thee." At the same instant the Fedavi disappeared. The imam took the dresses and the money, and for four or five years the same sum was scrupulously paid him. Prior to this occurrence, he was wont, whenever he mentioned the Ismailites in a discussion, to express himself thus: "Whatever the Ismailites (whom may God curse and destroy) may say." After he had received the pension, he always said briefly: "Whatever the Ismailites may say." He answered one of his pupils, who asked him the cause of this change: "We may not curse the Ismailites; their arguments are too convincing and pointed."

This singular occurrence, which is related by several Persian historians,[1] circumstantially and concordantly, shows that the grand-master's policy did not consider murder only as the most effective measure, but also frequently deemed the fear of it, and money, preferable. It shows also that the divan, or assembly of the order, studied less the removal of their foes than the converting them into friends, especially where they were men of learning and celebrity, as their lives being spared was of far more advantage to the order in public opinion, than their violent deaths could have been.

With the exception of this anecdote of the Imam Fakhr Rasi, history mentions little or nothing of what occurred to the order during the reign of Mohammed, in the Persian provinces of Jebal and Kuhistan. It is, however, much more

(1) Mirkhond. Devletshah. Ghaffari.

fertile in events of immediate interest in the history of the Assassins, if we turn our eyes towards Syria, which was, at the same time, the celebrated stage of the glorious deeds of the Crusaders and Salaheddin. As this great prince seems to be chosen as the instrument in the hands of Providence, of the downfal of the khalifat of the Fatimites, whose partisans and missionaries the Ismailites were; so was he, likewise, very early selected by the latter as a mark for their daggers. In order to become more intimately acquainted with the man whom they marked out as their victim, and to know to what a pitch his power had risen when they made the first attempt upon his life, we shall here give, as a sequel to what has been said in the former book concerning the reign of Nureddin, a short outline of the increasing greatness of Salaheddin.

Invested after the death of his uncle, Esededdin Shirkuh, with the highest dignity in the realm, under the name of Melek Ennassir, he received from his lord, the Atabeg Nureddin, a confirmatory diploma, together with the title of Emir al Isfahlar, which means the same in Persian as the Arabic Emir al Juyush, that is, Prince of Armies. Shortly afterwards, the khalif of Bagdad sent him also a diploma, dress of honour, and present, as an acknowledgement to him for having transferred the highest prerogative of Islam, the prayer from the pulpit on Friday, from the family of Fatima to that of Abbas. At Cairo stood the treasury, in which, for two centuries, the Fatimites had amassed the wealth of Moghreb,[1] Egypt, Syria, and Arabia; its riches, surpassing all belief, was but too small for the magnanimity of Salaheddin.[2] According to Aini, an otherwise trustworthy writer, there were in this treasury alone, seven hundred pearls, each of which was, from its great size, of inestimable value; an emerald, a span long and as thick as the finger; a collection of 2,600,000 books, which, even if there is a superfluous cipher, surpassed the largest library in Europe; gold, coined and

(1) Western Africa. T.

(2) From the Okdet-ol-jeman in the Nokhbetet-tevarikh.

in bars; aloes, amber, and arms without end. A considerable part of this treasure Salaheddin divided immediately among the chiefs of his army. He appointed guardians to the library; the remainder of the collection being put for sale for ten years in succession, produced the sums requisite for the campaigns against the Crusaders, and for the buildings in Cairo.

He built the citadel and walls of that city, constructed the large aqueduct which brings the waters of the Nile to the fortress, and the noble halls, amongst whose beautifully arranged colonnades, stripped as they are of their roofs, the writer of this work has, more than once, indulged in airy visions of Salaheddin's greatness. Added to these, are an academy at the tomb of Shafii, an hospital at Cairo the modern, and a magazine of corn at Missr, the ancient capital of Egypt under the Arabians. All these architectural works bear the stamp of their founder's greatness, and on them is inscribed his name, Yusuf, which the ignorance of the present inhabitants of Cairo and Missr confounds with that of the Egyptian Joseph. Thus, in this case, as with the heroes of Grecian antiquity, the feats of several great men are united under one name. The space of centuries, which intervenes between two landmarks of human greatness, is lost to the thought of posterity, and the common becomes the more prominent as a monument of antiquity on the wide plain of history. Thus it is with the Egyptian Yusuf, whether he be the Joseph of ancient history, the minister of Pharoah and grandson of Abraham, or the Yusuf of modern history, the lieutenant of Nureddin, Salaheddin, the grandson of Eyub.

Nureddin, indeed, viewed Salaheddin's increasing greatness with a jealous eye; and felt that it was no longer in his power to recal at his pleasure the master of the treasure of the Fatimites; yet was he politic enough to confirm his lieutenant, whom he could not remove, and the latter sufficiently grateful, at least nominally, to acknowledge Nureddin as his liege lord. As he did not wish to appear in open opposition to him, and yet, in case of necessity, desired to

provide himself with a place of refuge, he undertook the campaign against Yemen,[1] whither he sent his elder brother, Turanshah, with an army. This region was, at the time, governed by Abdennebi, son of Mehdi, a disciple of the impious sect of Karmath, who exhausted the country with his extortions and oppression. The plundered treasure he collected at the tomb of his father Mehdi, at Sobeid. The walls were covered with gold, and likewise the cupola, which dazzled the eyes at some miles distance. Gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones were heaped in profusion. Abdennebi wished to make this tomb the resort of pilgrims, instead of the kasha, and for this reason he plundered the caravans going to Mecca, and added their goods to the accumulated booty of injustice and rapine.

In the sequel, several princes, and particularly those of Persia, have, from political motives, attempted to prevent the pilgrimage to Mecca, and to turn the devotion of the people rather to other burial places, as Meshed Ali's, on the Euphrates, which was also covered with plates of gold by Shah Abbas; or Meshed Ben Mussa's, at Tuss, in Khorassan, in order that, with the caravans, the money may remain in the country. Mecca, however, retained its superiority as the true and only shrine of Islamism, which triumphed over the conquests of the Karmathites and Wahabites; and whose gates, spite of the wide-spread portals of infidelity and impiety, remained to the last ever open to the pilgrim. Turanshah defeated and killed Abdennebi, the protector of unbelief, razed his father's monument, and added the treasures to those of his brother Salaheddin, in Egypt; by command of the latter he caused prayers to be repeated from the pulpit for the khalif of Bagdad and Nureddin.

After the death of Nureddin,[2] the prayers as well as the coinage were continued by Salaheddin, in Egypt and Arabia, in the name of Saleh, a boy of eleven years of age, the son of

(1) A. D. 1173; A. H. 569. (2) A. D. 1174; A. H. 570.

Nureddin, who, himself incapable as yet of governing, was in the power of his grandees, and particularly of the eunuch Gumushteghin, who transferred the young prince's residence to Aleppo, leaving Ibn al Mokaddem governor of Damascus. The Crusaders, who desired, after Nureddin's demise, to avail themselves of the favourable circumstance of his son's minority, threatened Damascus, the siege of which was only raised on the governor's disbursing to them large sums of money. Enraged at this, and being invited by some of the chief men, Salaheddin repaired in all haste to Damascus with only seven hundred horse. He reproached the governor with his unworthy conduct, and wrote to the young atabeg a respectful letter, in which he did homage to him as his lord, and averred that he had come into Syria only for his defence, his possessions being assailed on two sides, by the Crusaders and his nephew Seifeddin, lord of Mossul. The answer which was drawn up by his enemies, contained, instead of thanks, accusations of ingratitude and disobedience, and threats of very shortly removing him from the viceroyalty of Egypt.

Provoked at this, Salaheddin declared to Nial, the lord of Manbedj, bearer of the missive, that the inviolability of an ambassador alone preserved his head, and marched with his troops to Aleppo, in order, as he said, to have a personal interview with his young prince. On his way he took Hama and Hemss, and encamped in the vicinity of Aleppo. The inhabitants and the young prince, led by his guardian, the eunuch Gumushteghin, instead of coming to a peaceful conference with Salaheddin, advanced against him in arms. "God is my witness," exclaimed he, "that I wish it not to come to arms! but since ye will have it so, they shall decide." The troops of Aleppo were defeated, and fled in disorder to the city, which their opponents now began to besiege in due form.[1]

Gumushteghin, who saw no protection at hand from the swords of his valiant besiegers, had recourse to the daggers

(1) Nokhbetet-tevarikh.

of the Assassins. At that period reigned, as grand-prior at Massiat, the point, as we have seen, of the Syrian power of the Ismailites, Rashideddin Sinan,[1] a man, whose name and deeds are to this day remembered in their annals.[2]

Massiat lies in the mountain range Semak, which, running parallel with the coast of the Mediterranean, unites itself with that of Lebanon.[3] This village, with eighteen others, belongs to the territory of Hama (Epiphania). At that time it was the chief of ten mountain forts, forming the strength of the Ismailites, whose numbers are reckoned by the cotemporary annalists of the Crusaders to amount to more than sixty thousand men.[4] The names of these places are found in Hadji Khalfa's Geography;[5] three have already been mentioned in this history; namely, Massiat, Kadmus, and Kahaf; the seven others were, Akkar, Hossnalekiad, Safita, Alika, Hossnalkarnin, Sihinn, and Sarmin, and were the first colonies of the Ismailites in Syria.[6] By means of these strongholds, and the daggers of the Assassins, Rashideddin Sinan was supreme in the mountainous parts of the north of Syria. Salaheddin, the proper defender of the faith, who had given the final blow to the Fatimite khalifate in Egypt, and whose increasing power threatened to ingulph that of the Atabegs in Syria, was the natural and most dangerous enemy of the order, and consequently their daggers were unceasingly aimed against him. A large sum of money contributed to procure easier access to the grand-prior Sinan, for the prayer of Gumushteghin, that Salaheddin should be the victim of their mutual revenge. Three Assassins attacked him in the camp before Aleppo; fortunately, they inflicted no mortal wound, and were themselves cut in pieces.[7]

While the eunuch was concerting Salaheddin's fall, he

(1) Nokhbetet-tevarikh. Jehannuma.
(2) Rousseau, Mémoire sur les Ismailis, p. 13.
(3) Ibid. Ibid, p. 1.
(4) William of Tyre, p. 994.
(5) Jehannuma, pp. 591, 592.
(6) Macrisi. Abulfeda.
(7) Nokhbetet-tevarikh.

scarcely escaped his own; which his enemies, the vizier Shehabeddin Abu Saleh, and the emirs Jemaleddin, Shadbakht, and Mojahid, had conspired to ensure, in order to deprive him of the favour of Meleksaleh. To anticipate their purpose, he had recourse to the usual means dictated by his policy. As the young prince was starting on a hunting excursion, Gumushteghin presented him with a blank sheet of paper, desiring his signature for the despatch of some pressing business. Meleksaleh signed unsuspectingly, and his minister filled the paper with a letter from his master to Sinan, the grand-prior of the Assassins, requesting agents from him, for the purpose of despatching the three emirs above-mentioned. Sinan, thinking that Meleksaleh wished, by this deed, to remove some obstacles to his unbounded power, sent several murderers. Two of them, who attacked the vizier as he was proceeding to a mosque, lying near his house, without the eastern gate, were killed on the spot.

Soon after, Mojahid was set upon by three others: one seized the skirt of his mantle, to stab with more certainty; but Mojahid spurred his horse, and escaped the fatal blow, leaving his mantle behind. The people seized the Assassins, two of whom were accustomed frequently to visit Mojahid's groom. One of them was crucified; and the same was the fate of the groom, on whose breast was fixed the inscription, "This is the reward of the concealers of villains." The other Assassin was dragged to the citadel, and beaten on the pierced soles of his feet, to compel him to confess the motives of his crime. In the midst of the torture, he called out to the young prince: "Thou desirest from our lord Sinan, the death of thy slaves, and now thou punishest us for the execution of thy orders."

Indignant at this, Meleksaleh wrote a letter, full of reproaches, to Sinan, who returned him one subscribed by himself as his answer. This was the origin of a kind of correspondence between them. Rashideddin had frequently applied to the prince, for the restoration of the district of

Hajira, of which the Ismailites had been deprived. As his writing had been fruitless, he had recourse, this time, not from the pen to the dagger, but to the still more destructive means, fire. The Assassins appeared as incendiaries, who set fire to several bazaars of Aleppo, with burning naphtha. All the efforts of the governor and his people to extinguish the conflagration were fruitless, which being produced by means similar to the celebrated Greek fire, resisted pertinaciously the action of water. Many buildings were entirely consumed, and an immense quantity of rich stuffs and commodities of all kinds fell a prey to the flames. The Assassins threw burning naphtha into the streets, from the terraces of the houses, and, in the midst of the confusion, escaped the popular rage unhurt.[1]

Meleksaleh Ismail, Prince of Aleppo, whose favourite, Gumushteghin, had in vain unsheathed the dagger of the Assassins against Salaheddin, now sought assistance from the Crusaders, and his nephew Seifeddin, Lord of Mossul. The former laid siege to Emessa, but retired on the approach of Salaheddin; but Seifeddin, and Aseddin, his brother, united their forces with those of Ismail, at Aleppo. Salaheddin once more attempted to come to an amicable arrangement with the latter. He offered him, in a submissive letter, the restoration of Hama, Hemss, and Baalbek; and stipulated only for the viceroyalty of Egypt, and the possession of Damascus. His liberality was deemed weakness. A great battle was fought at Hama, in which the combined forces of Mossul and Aleppo were completely routed.[2]

From that day forward, he advanced with steady steps in the path of sovereignty, as he transferred to his own name the two prerogatives of coinage and prayer, which hitherto had remained, in Egypt and Syria, in the name of Saleh. The latter received peaceful possession of Aleppo, only by humble supplication, and the lord of Mossul, who again took the

(1) Ibn Forat. (2) A. D. 1175; A. H. 571.

field, with those of Hossn Keif and Maradin, lost at Tell, near Hama, both his camp and army. Salaheddin divided the booty among his soldiers, set the prisoners free, and took the fortresses of Asas, Manbedj, and Bosaa.

During the siege he was, a second time, attacked by an Assassin, who wounded him in the head. Salaheddin seized his hand in time, and struck him down. Another immediately rushed forward, but was cut down by the guards; two others followed with no better success.[1] Having before their eyes the example of their three precursors, who had fallen in a similar attempt, they hoped the better to attain their object by rushing on successively, and, by throwing the sultan and his guard into consternation, succeed in taking his life. The first part of their plan was more successful than the last. Salaheddin, terrified by these repeated attacks, retired to his tent, mustered his army, and drove away all strangers.[2]

The following year,[3] however, as soon as he had concluded a peace with the lords of Mossul and Aleppo, he attacked the territory of the Ismailites, ravaged it, and blockaded the fortress, Massiat. He would have carried it, and would have annihilated the power of the Ismailites in Syria, had not his uncle, Shehabeddin, Lord of Hama, moved by the entreaties of the grand-prior, Sinan, interposed, and induced his nephew to make peace, on condition that he should, in future, be secured from the Assassin's dagger; and, in fact, Salaheddin reigned fifteen years afterwards, carried on his campaigns in Egypt and Syria, and captured the strongest places of the Crusaders, even Jerusalem itself, without experiencing another murderous attack.

Whether it was that the double failure of the Assassins, restrained them from a third attempt, or that the order considered it necessary to preserve Salaheddin, the greatest enemy of the Crusaders, as a counterpoise to the growing power of the latter; or, lastly, that, contrary to the fundamental maxims

(1) Nokhbetet-tevarikh. (2) Abulfeda, ad ann. 571.
(3) A. D. 1176; A. H. 572.

of the order, some idea of the sanctity of a treaty floated in the mind of the grand-prior, though most improbably,—all the ties of religion and morality having been loosened, and the mysteries of impiety publicly divulged by the grand-masters, Hassan and Mohammed; it nevertheless appears, that Rashi-deddin Sinan struck out a path for himself, both in respect of doctrine and policy; one, too, which varied somewhat from that of his predecessors, and of the reigning grand-master. The former, as we have seen above, were the secret friends of the order of the Templars, the latter trampled on all religion. Sinan's faith and policy, however, took another direction, as is clearly shown in the unanimous accounts of cotemporary historians of the Crusaders.[1]

What William, Bishop of Tyre, and James, Bishop of Acca, on the occasion of an embassy, despatched from the Old Man of the Mountain to the king of Jerusalem, in the year 1172, relate concerning the origin, system, and discipline of the Assassins, agrees very well with that which we have derived from oriental sources, and presented to our readers in the former books: "The Assassins," say they, "were formerly the strictest observers of the laws of Mohammedanism, till the epoch when a grand-master of genius and erudition, and intimately acquainted with the Christian tenets, and doctrine of the Gospel, abolished the prayers of Mohammed, annulled the fasts, and allowed all, without distinction, to drink wine and eat pork. The fundamental rule of their religion, consists in blind submission to their abbot, by which alone they could attain eternal life. This lord and master, who is generally called the Old Man, resides in the Persian province, lying beyond Bagdad (Jebal or Irak-Ajemi). There (at Alamut) young men are educated in secret tenets and pleasures, instructed in various languages, and then sent, armed with their daggers, throughout the world, to murder Christians and Saracens without distinction; either from hatred, as

(1) William of Tyre, Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 994. Jacobi de Vitriaco Historia Hierosolymæ, p. 1062.

being enemies of their order, or to please its friends, or for the sake of a rich reward. Those, who had sacrificed their lives in the fulfilment of this duty, were adjudged to greater happiness in paradise, as being martyrs; their surviving relations were loaded with gifts, or, if slaves, set at liberty. Thus was the world overrun by these miserably misled youths, who, devoted to murder, issued joyfully from their brethren's convent, to execute the sanguinary commands they had received; appearing in different forms and disguises, sometimes as monks, sometimes as merchants; in fact, in such a variety of shapes, and with so much prudence and caution, that it was impossible for the destined victims to escape their daggers. The low and mean mob of the people are safe, inasmuch as the Assassins deem it beneath their dignity to assail them; but for the great, and for princes, no remedy remains but to ransom their lives at a heavy price; or to be constantly armed and surrounded by their guards, and exist in a continued state of alarm."

On an attentive comparison of these passages, in the works of the two learned bishops, which agree in point of meaning, with the narratives of oriental writers, much is found wanting, but nothing erroneous. The strict observance of the duties of Islamism at first, the abrogation of all commandments under the last grand-masters, Hassan II., and Mohammed II., the vow of blind obedience, the bands of Assassins devoted to death, their noviciate, the institution of the order, and its murderous policy, are here comprised in a few words. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how European historians, who, hitherto, drew from no other sources than the Byzantine and Crusading annalists, how such orientalists as D'Herbelot and Deguignes, could have regarded the Assassins as an usual dynasty of princes; whereas, here, every thing points to an order, inasmuch as they clearly speak of the abbot, convent, grand-master, rule of the order, and religion; as we should concerning the knights-Hospitallers, the Teutonic knights, and the Templars. Every

thing harmonizes with the contents of the preceding books of this history: one circumstance only, that of the superior, who sent the embassy, being inclined to Christianity, and desirous of conversion, does not agree with the systematic plan of irreligion of the then reigning grand-master. Either the Crusaders deceived themselves with the pious error, that because the grand-master had abjured Islamism, he must assent to Christianity; or, his policy induced him to preserve the king of Jerusalem in this opinion, and, consequently, as the friend of the order; or, lastly, what appears more probable than either of these conjectures, this mission did not proceed from the grand-master at Alamut, but from the grand-prior of the order in Syria, Rashideddin Sinan, Lord of Massiat.

It must have been the latter, and not the former, who paid the Templars the annual tribute, to effect the removal of which was the chief object of the embassy; and what gives our opinion the highest degree of probability, is the contents of Rashideddin's writings, which are to this day preserved in Syria, by the remainder of the Ismailites.[1] In them appear evident traces of Christianity, and of an acquaintance with its sacred books.[2]

Rashideddin Abulhasher Sinan, son of Suleiman of Basra, pretended that he was himself an incarnation of the Deity.[3] He never shewed himself but in coarse dresses of hair; he was never seen to eat, or drink, or sleep, or spit. From the top of a rock, he preached to the people, from sunrise to sunset, and was long considered by his audience as a superior being. When, however, they discovered that he limped, from having been wounded by a stone in a great earthquake,[4] he was near losing both the sanctity of his character, and his life,

(1) Extraits d'un Livre des Ismailis, par M. Rousseau, tiré du 52 Cahier des Annales des Voyages.

(2) Mémoire sur les Ismailis, par la même, tiré du 42 Cahier des Annales des Voyages, p. 13. See note (A) at the end of this volume.

(3) Extraits d'un Livre des Ismailis, p. 10.

(4) A. D. 1157; A. H. 552.

the people wishing to murder him as an impostor. He exhorted them to patience, descended from the rock, where he had preached so long as a Stylite, invited his hearers to a banquet, and succeeded, by the power of his eloquence, in inducing them unanimously to swear obedience and fealty to him as their superior.[1] He seized the moment when the grand-master of the Ismailites in Persia had exposed all the mysteries, and by that means sapped the foundations of the order, to envelope himself in the halo of an apostle, and confirm his dominion in Syria.

For this reason, he is unanimously considered by oriental historians as the chief of the Ismailitic doctrine in Syria;[2] and even to this day, his writings are esteemed canonical by the Ismailites still remaining in that country. They consist of a shapeless chaos of contradictory articles of faith, which probably are all to be understood only allegorically; a host of mutilated passages from the Koran and the Gospels, hymns, litanies, sermons, prayers, and ritual ordinances. These can hardly have been preserved in their original purity, but must have descended to us intermixed with the superstition and ignorance of later centuries, like the books of the Druses, who, now as little acquainted as the Ismailites with the spirit of their founder, possess but a very imperfect knowledge of their original dogmas, and have lost the tradition of the allegorical doctrine.

It was Rashideddin Sinan, therefore, the grand-prior of Massiat, and not the cotemporary grand-master of Alamut, who sent, in the latter years of the reign of Amaury, King of Jerusalem, the envoy Behaeddewlet, a skilful, prudent, and eloquent man, with the secret offer, that he and his followers would undergo baptism, providing the Templars, their nearest neighbours on the mountains, would release them from the annual sum of two thousand ducats, and live in brotherly and

(1) Ibn Forat.
(2) Hadji Khalfa, in the Jehannuma, and Abulfeda, ad. ann. 588.

peaceful union with them. King Amaury received the envoy with joy, promised to pay the Templars, out of his own purse, the two thousand ducats from which they begged to be released, and sent him, after keeping him for some time, back with guides and an escort, as far as the Ismailite confines. They had already crossed the territory of Tripoli, and had, therefore, arrived in the vicinity of their first castles, which are situated on the mountains in the environs of Tortossa, or Antoradus, when suddenly a body of Templars rushed from an ambuscade, and killed the envoy.[1]

Thus, these knights, who were suspected of being secretly allied to the Ismailites, and followers of their doctrine, openly proclaimed themselves likewise as Assassins: the religion of both had a bond of union in the guilt of wilful murder. The actor of this tragedy was Walter de Dumesnil, a vicious, one-eyed man; who, however, did not perform this act of atrocity from motives of private malice, but with the knowledge of the brethren, and by the command of the grand-master, Odo de St. Amand, and to avenge the order. The inducement seems to have been no other, than the Assassins having endeavoured to relieve themselves from the annual tribute of two thousand ducats to the Templars, either to purchase peace with the neighbours, or for the recompense of services performed: as, for example, as is mentioned in its place, their refusal to participate in the campaign against the Egyptian sultan, their natural protector.[2]

The king, violently enraged at this atrocity, by which the honour of the Christian name, and his own dignity, suffered so severe a blow, assembled the princes of his realm, in order to consult with them, concerning the measures proper to be adopted. Their unanimous decision was, that religion, and the royal authority, had equally suffered an affront, and could not permit this murder to pass unpunished. Seiher, of Mamedun, and Gottschalk, of Turholdt, were despatched by the

(1) Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 994 and 1143.
(2) Ibid, p. 978.

council, in the name of the king and the realm, to demand satisfaction from Odo de St. Amand, for so flagitious a deed. Odo, haughty and wicked, fearing neither God nor man, replied, bursting with arrogance and rage,[1] that he had already imposed a penance on Brother Dumesnil, and should send him to the holy father, by whom it was forbidden to lay violent hands on him; and more in the same strain, suggested by his passion. But the king, meeting the grand-master and several Templars afterwards, at Sidon, held a council, and had the murderer, as guilty of high treason, dragged from their hospital, and thrown, fettered, into a dungeon at Tyre.[2] The death of the king, which followed soon after, saved him from well-merited punishment.

The grand-master, however, met with his, by being taken prisoner by Salaheddin, in the battle of Sidon,[3] the loss of which was attributed to his fault, and dying, the same year, unpitied in his dungeon. The king, indeed, seemed absolved in the eyes of the Assassins; but the hope of converting them to Christianity was gone; and their daggers were now again unsheathed against the princes of the Crusaders, as they had already long been against the chiefs of the Moslimin. Forty-two years had elapsed, since they stabbed Raymond, the young Count of Tripoli,[4] as he was kneeling at prayer, and stained the altar with his blood. This long truce of the dagger, with the Christian chieftains, was at once raised by the atrocious murder of Conrad, Lord of Tyre and Marquess of Montferrat. Richard, King of England, is accused, both in European and Asiatic histories, of having been the accomplice, or instigator of this action, by means of the daggers of the Assassins.

It is with a reluctant pen that we indicate the circumstances and motives of this crime, which attaches to the splendid reputation of one of the first heroes of the Crusaders, a stain,

(1) Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 1215.
(2) A. D. 1173; A. H. 569.
(3) A. D. 1178; A. H. 574.
(4) A. D. 1149; A. H. 544.

which neither his military glory, nor forged documents, can obliterate from the sight of an impartial writer. The pretended letter of the Old Man of the Mountain, composed by Richard's partisans, to acquit him of the guilt of this murder, stands rather as a proof against him, since it has been proved to be a manifest invention and forgery.[1] This letter commences with an oath in the name of the law, and ends by being dated according to the era of the Seleucidæ, both entirely strange and unknown to the Ismailites; for, at this time, they publicly trampled on the law, and had substituted, for the chronology of the Hegira (which besides is the only one used in the countries of Islamism), that from the accession of Hassan II.; making it the epoch of the abrogation of the law. The writer's making the Old Man of the Mountain date from Massiat, proves, in fact, nothing, either for or against Richard; but it rather heightens the probability of the opinion we have advanced, that the Crusaders were not aware of the existence of the distant grand-master at Alamut, but considered the grand-prior of Massiat, as the Old Man of the Mountain to a certainty. According to the purport of this apocryphal work of partiality for the hero, this so much celebrated murder was only an instance of the order's revenge; the marquess having pillaged, and put to death, a brother, who was shipwrecked at Tyre; and instead of giving the order's envoy the required satisfaction, threatening to throw him into the sea. From that time, the death of the marquess was determined on; and executed, at Tyre, by two brothers, in the presence of the whole people.

All that is true in this Latin production of Nicolas of Treveth, which was either written by himself, and accepted as credible by Richard's party, consists in the circumstances of the murder. The marquess was attacked by two Assassins,

(1) Eclaircissement sur quelques circonstances de l'histoire du vieux de la Montagne. Mem: Acad. des Inscriptions, XVI., 155. Note (B) at the end of this volume.

disguised as monks,[1] who had approached him unobserved, in the market-place of Tyre. Not only do western, but also oriental historians, name Richard Cœur de Lion, King of England, as the instigator of the murderers. Alberic des Trois-fontaines expressly affirms it,[2] but with those who doubt, the contradiction of Nicolas of Treveth might be equiponderant to his charges, if the scale did not turn against Richard, with the heavy weight of the impartial testimony of oriental historians. The writer of the history of Jerusalem and Hebron, a classical work for the history of the Crusades, says, under the title of the murder of the marquess, clearly and distinctly: "The marquess had gone, on the 13th of the month Rebinlewel, to visit the bishop of Tyre; on coming out, he was attacked by two murderers, who stabbed him with their daggers. Being seized, and put to the torture, they confessed that they were employed by the king of England. They were put to death with torments."[3]

The same work contains still farther traits of Richard's craft and perfidy, which stain his character but too deeply, and justify but too much the suspicion of his being accessory to this murder. Thus, his imprisonment by Leopold of Austria, a near relation of the marquess of Tyre, seems to have been but a measure of reprisal, for the death of his kinsman.

While the English, to remove from their monarch the suspicion of this assassination, and to liberate him the sooner from his captivity, forged the above-mentioned letter[4] of the Old Man of the Mountain, to Leopold of Austria; they, at the same time, and with the same view, concocted a second, which is mentioned by William of Newbury, as having been sent by the grand-master to Philip Augustus, King of France. This letter, like the first, bears the marks of a counterfeit on its

(1) Abulfeda, ad ann. 588. Nokhbetet-tevarikh.
(2) Chron: Alberic itrium fontium, ann. 1192.
(3) Enisol-jelil ji kuds vel khalil. See Mines de l'Orient, vol. IV.
(4) See note (C) at the end.

front.[1] The grand-master of the Assassins is made to call himself "*simplicitas nostra;*" which we cannot allow our simplicity to err so far as to believe. In this palpably apocryphal writing, the Old Man of the Mountain assures the king of France, that it had never entered into his thoughts to send to France, at the desire of Richard, Assassins with regicidal designs.

This letter, the falsehood of which is still more manifest than that of the former one, proves, instead of acquitting Richard, that the murder of the marquess of Montferrat had drawn upon him the suspicion of a similar attempt against the king of France. Rigord,[2] the historian of Philip Augustus, relates, that while the king was in Pontoise, in the year 1192, being apprised by letters from Palestine, that Richard meditated his assassination, he established, for his security, a body-guard, armed with iron maces; and William Quiart,[3] who, a century after, wrote a rhyming history, openly ascribes the whole murderous system of the Assassins to the king of England, who had young men educated in the principles of blind obedience to his cruel commands, in order to sacrifice the king of France; upon which, the latter instituted his guard of *sergens à masses*. Even if these precautions were groundless and exaggerated, they, nevertheless, were occasioned by the known deeds and character of Richard. The murder of Conrad of Montferrat, thus gave rise to the English king's captivity in Austria; and, likewise, to the institution of the first royal body-guard in France.

It may, perhaps, appear a thankless and vain labour, to wish to justify the order of the Assassins, who are charged with a thousand manifest murders, from the guilt of the thousand and first; but the duty of impartiality imposes this task on the historian who remains faithful to truth, although

(1) Wilhelmus Neobrigensis; vide Dissertation sur les Assassins, par M. Falconet, dans les Memoires de l'Acad. XVII., p. 167.

(2) Rigord in du Chesne, V., p. 35.

(3) Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, XVI., p. 161.

it may neither acquit, nor condemn. Whether the order, in the person of Philip Augustus, attempted the life of one prince more or less—whether the grand-master directed the poniards of the murderers, who slew the marquess of Montferrat, moved by private revenge, or by the desire of Richard, is of little consequence; participation in murder does not lessen the guilt of the crime.

We shall not, therefore, stop to inquire whether the Arab Assassin, found in the camp of Frederic Barbarossa, at the siege of Milan, in the year 1158,[1] and against whom the emperor received timely warning, came from Spain or Syria; whether he was in the pay of the pope, or the grand-master of the Ismailites; or, whether Frederic was destined to fall a victim to the Old Man of the Mountain, or to him of the seven hills. He was, on account of his campaigns in Palestine and Italy,—his enterprises against the infidels and the papal chair, equally dreaded by the supreme pontiffs, both of Bagdad and Rome; and the khalif on the Tigris, would have had no less cause to rejoice at his death, than the khalif on the Tiber.

He, however, who profits by the commission of an atrocity, is not always to be accused of being its author. Barbarossa's grandson, Frederic II., was accused by Pope Innocent IV., in the synod of Lyons,[2] of having employed Assassins to murder the duke of Bavaria, and was excommunicated; while Frederic, in a letter to the king of Bohemia, charges the duke of Austria with having entertained similar designs against himself.[3] These accusations, however, do not prove the guilt of the accused, but only the crime of the Assassins.

Two years after[4] the death of Conrad, Marquess of Montferrat and Tyre, and that of Rashideddin Sinan, Henry, Count of Champagne, passed, on his journey to Armenia, near the territory of the Assassins; the grand-prior, the successor of

(1) Radevicus Frisingensis, l. II., c. 37. Sigonius Guntherus.
(2) Franciscus Pagus Breviarum hist. chron. crit. ad ann. 1244.
(3) Epistolæ Petri de Vineis, l. III. cap. 5.
(4) A. D. 1194.

Rashideddin Sinan, sent deputies to welcome him, and to invite him to visit his fortress on his return. The count accepted the invitation, and came; the grand-prior hastened to meet him, and received him with great honours. He took him to several castles and fortresses, and brought him at last to one having very lofty turrets. On each look-out stood two guards, dressed in white, consequently initiated in the secret doctrines. The grand-prior told the count that these men obeyed him better than the Christians did their princes; and, giving a signal, two of them instantly threw themselves from the top of the tower, and were dashed to pieces at its foot. "If you desire it," said the grand-prior to the astonished count, "all my whites shall throw themselves down from the battlements in the same way." The latter declined, and confessed, that he could not calculate upon such obedience in his servants.

After staying some time at the castle, he was, at his departure, loaded with presents; and the grand-prior told him, on taking leave, that by means of these faithful servants, he removed the enemies of the order.[1] By this horrible example of blind submission, the prior showed that he trod exactly in the footsteps of the founder of the order, who had given the ambassador of Melekshah a similar proof of the devotion of his faithful followers.[2] Jelaleddin Melekshah, Sultan of the Seljuks, having sent an ambassador to him, to require his obedience and fealty, the son of Sabah called into his presence several of his initiated. Beckoning to one of them, he said, "Kill thyself!" and he instantly stabbed himself; to another, "Throw thyself down from the rampart!"—the next instant he lay a mutilated corpse in the moat. On this, the grand-master turning to the envoy, who was unnerved by terror, said, "In this way am I obeyed by seventy thousand faithful subjects. Be that my answer to thy master."

(1) Marinus Sanutus, l. III., part X., c. 8.
(2) Elmacini Hist. Saracencia, l. III., p. 286.

As the historians of the east, as well as those of the Crusaders, agree in their relation, we cannot, except with regard to the extravagant amount of seventy thousand Assassins, (stated by William, Bishop of Tyre, at sixty thousand, and James, Bishop of Acca, at forty thousand, in which number must be included not only the initiated, but also the profane subjects of the order), raise a tenable doubt concerning the truth of the event, any more than with respect to the noviciate and discipline of the catechumens of murder, of whom, the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, was the first[1] to give accounts, discredited in his time, and doubted, even lately, by men of eminence. Since, however, this narrative has been found to agree in every point with oriental sources,[2] Marco Polo's relation receives new authority; and after his veracity, like that of Herodotus, has been doubted by the sceptical for centuries, the fidelity of the father of ancient history, and of the father of modern travels, shines, from day to day, with a still brighter lustre, from the unanimous testimony of eastern writers.

In the centre of the Persian, as well as of the Assyrian, territory of the Assassins, that is to say, both at Alamut and Massiat, were situated, in a space surrounded by walls, splendid gardens,—true eastern paradises. There were flower beds, and thickets of fruit trees, intersected by canals; shady walks, and verdant glades, where the sparkling stream bubbled at every step; bowers of roses, and vineyards; luxurious halls, and porcelain kiosks, adorned with Persian carpets and Grecian stuffs; where drinking-vessels of gold, silver, and crystal, glittered on trays of the same costly materials; charming maidens and handsome boys, black-eyed and seductive as the houris and boys of Mohammed's paradise, soft as the cushions on which they reposed, and intoxicating as the wine which they presented. The music of the

(1) Marco Polo, De Regionibus Orientalibus, lib. I. c. 28.

(2) Siret Hakem biemrillah in Mines de l' Orient, Part III., p. 201, Arabic and French.

harp was mingled with the songs of the birds, and the melodious tones of the songstress, harmonized with the murmur of the brooks. Every thing breathed pleasure, rapture, and sensuality.

A youth, who was deemed worthy, by his strength and resolution, to be initiated into the Assassin service, was invited to the table and conversation of the grand-master, or grand-prior: he was then intoxicated with henbane[1] *(hashishe)*, and carried into the garden, which, on awakening, he believed to be Paradise: every thing around him, the houris in particular, contributed to confirm his delusion. After he had experienced as much of the pleasures of Paradise, which the prophet has promised to the blessed, as his strength would admit, after quaffing enervating delight from the eyes of the houries, and intoxicating wine from the glittering goblets, he sunk into the lethargy produced by debility and the opiate; on awakening from which, after a few hours, he again found himself by the side of his superior. The latter endeavoured to convince him, that corporeally he had not left his side, but that spiritually he had been wrapped into Paradise, and had then enjoyed a foretaste of the bliss which awaits the faithful, who devote their lives to the service of the faith, and the obedience of their chiefs. Thus did these infatuated youths blindly dedicate themselves as the tools of murder, and eagerly sought an opportunity to sacrifice their terrestrial, in order to become the partakers of eternal, life. What Mohammed had promised in the Koran to the Moslimin, but which to many might appear a fine dream and empty promises, they had enjoyed in reality; and the joys of heaven animated them to deeds worthy of hell. This imposture could not remain undiscovered; and the fourth grand-master, after unveiling all the mysteries of impiety to the people, probably revealed also to them the joys of Paradise, which could, besides, have but little charms for them, to whom already every thing

(1) This appears to be a mistake, as the *hashishe* is found to consist chiefly of hemp; see notes D and E, at the end of this vol. *T.*

was permitted on earth. That which hitherto had served as a means to produce pleasure, became now itself an object; and the effects of the intoxication of opium, were the earnests of celestial delight, which they wanted strength to enjoy.

To this day, Constantinople and Cairo show what an incredible charm opium with henbane exerts on the drowsy indolence of the Turk, and the fiery imagination of the Arab; and explains the fury with which those youths sought the enjoyment of these rich pastiles *(hashishe)*, and the confidence produced in them, that they are able to undertake anything or everything. From the use of these pastiles, they were called *Hashishin* (herb-eaters),[1] which, in the mouths of Greeks and Crusaders, has been transformed into the word Assassin; and, as synonymous with murder, has immortalized the history of the order in all the languages of Europe.

(1) See the circumstantial proof of this indubitable genealogy, in the Memoire sur la Dynastie des Assassins, et sur l'Origine de leur Nom; by M. Silvestre de Sacy; read at the Institute, 7th July, 1809. And a letter of M. Silvestre de Sacy to the Editor of the Moniteur, on the Etymology of the name of the Assassins.—Moniteur, No. 359, year 1809. The reader will find both translated, in notes D and E, at the end of the volume.

END OF BOOK IV.

BOOK V.

Reigns of Jelaleddin Hassan III., Son of Mohammed Hassan II.—and of his Son, Alaeddin Mohammed III.

THE retributive and avenging Fury proceeds with steady step through the domain of history, but the traces of her silent progress are not always visible to the eye of man. Generations have passed away, and empires sunk in ruin, without its being possible, satisfactorily to point out the remote and proximate causes of their fall. The judgment of the conscientious historian stands, then, in the middle point, between blind scepticism on the one hand, and rash credulity on the other. He avoids the explaining of events as an officious interpreter of Providence, no less than wishing to behold in their progress, nothing but the concatenation of blind necessity. On the other hand, incidents emerge, from time to time, from the ocean of history, under the same circumstances and forms, and in which it is as impossible not to perceive the hand of heaven, as it is to overlook the operation of submarine fire in the formation of a new island. As in the extensive department of acoustics, different nations have appropriated different sounds to one and the same object, and have expressed it by different words,—hence, the variety of languages; so, in the many-toned domain of history, one and the same occurrence has been passed unnoticed by many nations, and, by many others, viewed and represented in different lights. Hence the variety of histories, according to the difference of the characters and genius of countries and nations.

The universally opposed *polarity*, if we may so express it, of the east and the west, appears even in the different mode of writing history. Some events are related by European, some by oriental writers, and when they coincide, the same occurrence is viewed in an entirely different light. What escapes the one is seized by the other, and the latter considers attentively what the other passes over. How very different are the judgments of eastern and western historians, concerning the original condition of mankind, the rise of kingdoms, the institution of religions, the developement of civilization, the horrors of despotism, the struggles of liberty, and the continued connexion of causes and effects! Where the one views immutable necessity, the other perceives very often blind chance; and what is deemed by the latter the consequence of a present crime, appears to the former the punishment of one long past. This, however, is not the place to proceed farther with these remarks; yet we have an opportunity of advantageously applying them to the next event which we shall have to consider.

The people of the east have the highest notions of the sanctity of filial duty and paternal authority; to them the patriarchal is the exemplar of the most perfect government. Though the violations of filial piety, and the crimes of unnatural sons, are punished in the west as in the east, and though parricides in no region escape the vengeance of heaven, yet it is only oriental historians who inculcate the experimental truth, that the curse of infanticide follows, in the same family, parricide; and that the first murdered father is avenged by the dagger of his grandson.

To the disgrace of mankind, such sanguinary examples are exhibited in the histories of the ancient Persian kings, and of the khalifs: how could they be wanting in the history of the Assassins? Khosru Parwis and the Khalif Mostanssur, who were stained with their fathers' blood, died by the hands of their sons. The resistance which Hassan,

the Enlightener, opposed to his father, was avenged on his son, Mohammed, by his grandson, Jelaleddin; first, by similar refractoriness, and then, it appears, by poison.

Jelaleddin Hassan, the son of Mohammed, and grandson of Hassan, was born in the 552d year of the Hegira, had attained the age of twenty-five years, ere he assumed the helm of affairs, and had, therefore, had sufficient time, during the long reign, or rather anarchy, to make salutary reflections on the pernicious consequences of his enlightening, and the abrogation of all ties of morality, proceeding from it. Discontented with the innovation, which had made public to the people and the profane, the secret doctrine of the founder and the initiated, he openly, during his father's life, declared himself against it, and, by that means, drew upon himself clouds of the darkest suspicion. The father feared the son, and the son the father; and their mutual dread was justified by the sanguinary examples of their predecessors.

Mohammed's father, Hassan II., had fallen by the poniard of one of his nearest relations; and Hassan I. had put to death his two sons. Father and son regarded each other reciprocally as murderers: on the days of public audience, when the latter appeared at court, the former wore a coat of mail under his clothes, and strengthened the guard; but where the dagger can find no entrance, poison may; and, in fact, as several historians affirm, Mohammed is said to have died from the effects of poison. Jelaleddin Hassan, the third of that name among the grand-masters of the order, stood forward as the restorer of the true religion, according to the strictest principles of Islamism. He prohibited every thing that his father and grandfather had declared to be allowed; commanded the erection of mosques, the re-establishment of the call to prayers, and the solemn assembly on Fridays. He called round him imams, readers of the Koran, preachers, scribes, and professors, whom he loaded with presents and favours, and appointed to the newly-built mosques, convents and schools.

He sent circulars, not only to the grand-priors in Syria[1] and Kuhistan, by which he enjoined the re-establishment of Islamism among the Ismailites, but also to the contemporary princes, to make known to them his adhesion to the true religion. He sent ambassadors to Nassir-ledinillah, the khalif of Bagdad; to the sultan of Transoxana, Mohammed Khowaresmshah; and other Persian potentates, to assure them of the purity of his faith. The khalif, the sultan, and the princes, who considered this declaration to be sincere, received the envoys with distinction, clothed them in pelisses of honour, gave them re-credentials, and, for the first time, designated their lord by the titles proper to reigning princes, and which, hitherto, none of the preceding grand-masters could assume. The imams, and great scribes of the time, issued formal declarations, in which they attested the sincerity of his conversion, and the orthodoxy of his tenets; and gave him the honorary title of Nev Musulman, or New Musulman.

As the inhabitants of Kaswin, who had hitherto lived in the greatest hostility to the Ismailites, doubted the sincerity of Jelaleddin's religious opinions, in order to remove these doubts, he went still farther: he requested them to send some persons of respectability to Alamut, who should have ocular demonstration of the truth. They appeared, and Hassan III., in their presence, burnt a number of books, which, he affirmed, were those of the founder, Hassan I., and the secret rules of the order. He anathematized the founder and the grand-masters, his predecessors, and thus attained his object; which was, that the inhabitants of Kaswin might, likewise, vouch for the orthodoxy of his doctrine.[2]

In the second year of Jelaleddin Hassan's reign, his harem, that is to say, his mother and his wife, undertook, with great pomp, the pilgrimage to Mecca. During the

(1) Abulfeda, ad. ann. 607. Mirkhond. Wassaf.
(2) Ibid.

progress, a standard was carried in front, according to the custom of orthodox princes, and water was distributed to the pilgrims. To lodge travellers, to afford them every facility and convenience, to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty; to nurse the sick and to instruct the ignorant; such are the most meritorious of good works. Hence, were founded karavanserais, bridges, and baths; eating-houses and fountains, hospitals and schools, the finest monuments of Islamism, form, in the circuit of cities and mosques, so many pious institutions. Many of these may be founded by persons of either sex, and even by eunuchs, who belong to neither.

The inscriptions on the mosques and other buildings, transmit to posterity the names of sultans and sultanas, viziers and eunuchs, and women of every rank and age. Although the latter are excluded from no public institution, on account of sex, and build bridges and schools as well as found hospitals and taverns, yet their names are found in preference on mosques, baths, and fountains; probably, because prayer and bathing are two favourite female occupations; and because, in the east, they have nowhere an opportunity of meeting in public, except at the mosque, the bath, and the well. According to the laws of Islamism, also, ablution by water is as inseparable from the prescribed prayers, five times in the day, as purity and devotion from the existence of woman: baths and fountains, therefore, are a necessary assistance to the entrance to the mosque of the female sex, who are naturally so devout. Wells, at which water is distributed gratis to the passers-by, have a still closer relation to the piety of Ismailitic women, as is indicated by their name, Sebil.

Sebil, in Arabic, "the way," means generally the road, and the traveller is hence called *Ibn-es-sebil*, the son of the road; but it more particularly signifies the way of piety and good works, which leads to Paradise. Whatever meritorious work the Moslem undertakes, he does, *Fi sebil Allah*, on the

way of God, or for the love of God; and the most meritorious which he can undertake is the holy war, or the fight for his faith and his country, *on God's way*.[1] But, since pious women can have no immediate share in the contest, every thing which they can contribute to the nursing of the wounded, and the refreshment of the exhausted, is imputed to them as equally meritorious, as if they had fought themselves. The distribution of water to the exhausted and wounded warriors, is the highest female merit in the holy war on God's way.

War is the first of the good works commanded by God; after it comes the pilgrimage, the difficulties of which, in the burning deserts of Arabia, are an image of those of a real campaign; and after the support of the warrior, that of the pilgrim, is the finest virtue in a beneficent woman. Hence, the distribution of water *(sebil)* to the caravans, the making of wells and aqueducts on the way to Mecca, have ever been a splendid object of the piety and ambition of Mohammedan princesses, from Zobeide, the wife of the Khalif Harun Rashid, down to the Ottoman sultanas. Jelaleddin's wife's distribution of water surpassed even that of the wife of Khowaresmshah, the powerful sovereign of Transoxana; and the Khalif Nassirledinillah, gave Jelaleddin's standard the precedence of that of Khowaresmshah, which circumstance afforded the first motive to the great dissensions and earnest contest between the khalif and the shah of Khowaresm.

The latter advanced with no less than three hundred thousand men against the "*City of Salvation.*" The khalif sent the celebrated Sheikh Shehabeddin Sehewerdi as ambassador to the enemy's camp; this learned envoy commenced a long and flowery oration, in praise of the family of Abbas, and the reigning khalif. Khowaresmshah, on the signification of the speech being communicated to him, replied, "'Tis well! he, who, as successor of the prophet, and clothed in his

(1) Trumpet of the holy war, from the mouth of the prophet Mohammed, son of Abdallah. Vienna, 1813.

mantle commands the faithful, should possess such property, but none of them are to be found in the descendants of the family of Abbas."

The sheikh returned without attaining his object, and Khowaresmshah advanced with his armament as far as Hamadan and Holwan, when a sudden drifting snow-storm checked his farther progress, and compelled him to retreat. As he was preparing for his second expedition against Bagdad, his army was overthrown on the confines of Kashgar, by the hordes of Jengis Khan. When Khowaresmshah's son and successor, Alaedden Tekesh, in execution of his father's plan against Bagdad, had advanced as far as Hamadan, a twenty days' snow-storm stopped him in his march.[1] Winter, and the Mongols, who rushed like snow-flakes from the north, for that time preserved the khalif city from destruction; a destruction destined afterwards to befal it at the hands of the latter. Jelaleddin, who saw no means of withstanding the approaching storm, secretly sent ambassadors to Jengis Khan, to offer him, as well as to the khalif, his homage and submission.

In this manner, the chieftain of the Ismailites, attained not only the reputation of unsullied orthodoxy, but also the actual rank of a sovereign prince, which the khalif had constantly refused preceding grand-masters. He supported his increasing credit by amicable relations and alliances with the neighbouring princes; and, in particular, maintained a good understanding with his nearest neighbour, the Atabeg Mosafereddin, the lord of Aran and Aserbijan. They combined against Nassireddin Mangeli, the governor of Irak, who had declared war against the atabeg, and invaded the territory of the Ismailites. Jelaleddin went from Alamut to Aserbijan, where he was received by the atabeg with great splendour, and loaded with presents. His army likewise experienced the liberality of the atabeg in the amplest manner: a thousand

(1) Gulsheni's Khulifa.

dinars were carried, every day, to Jelaleddin's residence, for the maintenance of his kitchen only.

The two allied princes sent ambassadors to Bagdad, desiring the khalif's aid against the governor of Irak. Nassirledinillah sent several of his most distinguished men with full powers. Encouraged by this embassy, and reinforced with subsidiary troops, they advanced against Irak, defeated and killed the governor, Nassireddin Mangeli, and appointed another in his stead.[1] After an absence of eighteen months, Jelaleddin returned to his fortress of Alamut. As, during his journey and campaigns, he had everywhere proclaimed his abhorrence of the system of his ancestors, and had corroborated his declaration by his prudent conduct, the chiefs of Islamism universally met him with kindness and friendship.[2]

He was desirous of cementing his alliance by a closer family union with the princes and viceroys of Khilan: they, however, replied, that, without the khalif's consent, they could not comply with his wishes. Jelaleddin sent an ambassador to Bagdad, and Nassirledinillah granted his viceroys permission to ally themselves with Jelaleddin: he received in marriage the daughter of Keikawus, who bore him his successor, Alaeddin Mohammed.

In order not to confound this Keikawus, viceroy of Khilan, with his namesake, the Prince of Ruyan, of the family Kawpara (which might the more easily occur, as both have been hitherto unknown to European historians), we have purposely omitted to speak of the latter, who had already, half a century before, entered into political relations with the Ismailites, his next neighbours. We shall now embrace, at one view, the fifty years' contemporaneity of the grand-masters of the Assassins, and the princes of the house of Kawpara, or Dabuye. It is, however, necessary to pre-

(1) A. D. 1214; A. H. 611.
(2) Mirkhond.

mise a few words, concerning the geographical position of the northern neighbours of the Ismailites.

The mountain range, which bounds the Persian Irak Jebal on the north, is, as it were, the bulwark of Persia, against the Caspian Sea. The partly flat, and partly hilly country, lying between it and the northern declivity of this chain, is divided into four provinces; so that two of them are situated immediately at the foot of the mountains, and the other two lie between the former and the sea coast. Dilem and Thaberistan are to the south, and on the declivity of the mountains; the former to the west, the latter to the east; beyond them lie Gilan and Mazanderan; the former to the north of Dilem, the latter of Thaberistan. This quadruply-divided territory is bounded on the north by the Caspian Sea, and on the south by the above-mentioned mountains, on the southern side of which the domain of the Ismailites extended from Alamut, the seat of government, south-easterly, to Komis and Kuhistan.

Almost in the centre of these four provinces, beyond the Caspian Alps, which maps distinguish with precision, lies the unnoticed district of Ruyan and Rostemdar, ruled by its native princes, whose family maintained its stand, uninterruptedly, for eight centuries; while in Gilan, Dilem, Thaberistan, and Mazanderan, dynasties rose and fell. As the territory of Ruyan and Rostemdar lie immediately on one side of Mount Demawend and Alamut, and its subordinate places on the other, these rulers of Rostemdar demand our attention, as the nearest neighbours of the Assassins, and, after them, the lords of Mazanderan, as the most powerful of this pentarchy. Both these ruling families, and the country over which they held sway, possess, besides the interest attaching to them, as being connected with the history of the Assassins, one more peculiar, and hitherto unnoticed in European histories; one which arises from the antiquity of their origin, and the exceedingly ancient monuments of the Persian empire, still existing in these provinces. In the time of the

ancient Persian monarchy, the family of Hanefshah reigned in Thaberistan and Mazanderan, till Korad, the father of Nushirvan, transferred the government of this country to his eldest son, Keyuss. Keyuss revolted against his brother Nushirvan, who had ascended the throne of Persia, and succumbed to his arms. One of his descendants, called Bawend, successfully re-asserted the rights of his predecessors, in the 45th year of the Hegira; and the family Bawend, of the blood of Nushirvan, although twice interrupted by the Dilemides and Alides, reigned for a period of seven hundred years, until, after their third fall, the dynasty Jelawi arose on their ruin.

No less venerable than this race of the lords of Mazanderan, to whom, likewise, Kuhistan owed obedience, was that of the family Dabuye, or Kawpara, which reigned, uninterruptedly, from the 40th year of the Hegira, when Baduspan possessed himself of the sovereignty of Ruyan and Rostemdar; to the 888th, when the family Reyumers supplied their place. Baduspan was a descendant of that blacksmith, so famous in the history of the east, Kâwe by name, who overthrew the tyrant Sohak, and hoisted his leathern apron for a flag; which, adorned with pearls and jewels, glittered till the end of the monarchy, as the national standard. Feridun, the legitimate heir, whose right to the throne the magnanimous smith proclaimed, was not only born in this province, in the village Weregi, the oldest place in Thaberistan, but also secretly educated there, during the reign of the tyrant.[1]

His mother had taken refuge there, and had fed the child with the milk of a buffalo-cow (*Kaw, cow*), the head of which, sculptured on Feridun's mace, has become no less celebrated among the national insignia, than the leathern apron. It was, then, from the mountains of Thaberistan, that the young hero commenced the fight for freedom, which the smith (Kawe) maintained in the capital. Sohak was made prisoner near

(1) History of Thaberistan and Mazanderan, by Sahereddin, in the Imperial Library, at Vienna, No. 117.

Babylon, and confined in the village of Weregi, at the foot of Demawend, whence freedom issued, and where tyranny expired. Feridun divided his kingdom among his three sons, Iredj, Turan, and Salem, and retired into his native land, to Temishe Kuti; which, according to the Shah Nameh, formed a triangle with the cities, Sari and Kurgan, the ancient Astrabad. Iredj having fallen in a contest with his brothers, his son Menutshehr; excited by his grandfather Feridun, undertook to avenge him. The bones of the three brothers repose at Sari, under an edifice of stone, which has resisted the efforts of centuries, and of thousands of men, who have endeavoured to destroy it.

The plains and glens of Thaberistan were the scene of the splendid battles of Menutshehr and Afrasiab, when Iran resisted the irruption of Turan: the whole country is, in fact, as may be perceived from this cursory topographical notice, the classic ground of ancient Persian history. Besides the descendants of Nushirvan's brother, and of the liberator, Feridun, and the families of Bawend and Kawpara, whose origin mounts to the highest Persian antiquity, that of Keyumers,[1] which reigned from the fall of the Kawpara, to the foundation of the empire of the Sefi, trace their descent from the king of the same name, who appears so darkly through the remote clouds of historical traditions, that many writers actually confound the first Persian king with the first man.

Nevertheless, this family is, as far as we know, the last which has traced its origin, authentically, to the ancient Persian kings. Chance has, in the conformity of the names of the first and last sovereign, repeated the play of words, which appears in history, in the fall of several great kingdoms. The first and last rulers of the eastern and western Roman empires, of the Seljukides, of the governors of Thaberistan, of the prophets of the Moslimin, and of the last of his successors of the family of Abbas, had similar names. The names of

(1) Jehannuma, p. 442.

Augustus, Constantine, Mohammed, Togrul, Keyumers, commence and terminate the series of Roman, Byzantine, Arabian, Seljukian, and Persian royal families; and, perhaps, the European Turkish empire will end, as it began, with an Othman.

After this glance at the great interest, which the country immediately bordering on the Ismailitic territory, to the north, presents to the lover of oriental history, both in a topographical and historical point of view, we shall again direct our attention to the rulers of Ruyan and Rostemdar, who, together, are called, Astandar. Astan means mountain, in the language of Thaberistan, a language entirely unknown in Europe; and Astandar, ruler of the mountains, is equivalent to the appellation, Sheikh-al-jebal, or the Old Man of the Mountain; that is, the grand-master of the Assassins. The latter shared this title, derived from the character of his territory, not only with the families of Kawpara, but also with that of Bawend, who ruled over Mazanderan, and, before the Ismailites, over Kuhistan; and also with the chiefs of the highlands beyond Demawend. Astan, Jebal, Kuh, are Thaberistanish, Arabic, and Persian words, signifying mountain. The sovereigns of the family Kawpara, called themselves Astandar, or Prince of the Mountains, as the grand-master of the Assassins, swaying the sceptre on the other side, was named Sheikh-al-jebal, Old Man of the Mountains.[1]

Astandar Keikawus Ben Hesarasf reigned in the first half of the sixth century of the Hegira, at Ruyan, on the one side of the Alps, while, on the other, flourished, as lord of the mountain, at Alamut, Mohammed, son of Busurgomid, grand-master of the Assassins. The innate hostility, existing between the Ismailites and all legitimate governments, was still more increased, by the natural jealousy of proximity, and by the friendly alliance between Keikawus and Shah Gazi, Prince of Thaberistan. The latter was one of the greatest and most implacable enemies of the Assassins, whose hatred

(1) Sehareddin's History of Mazanderan and Thaberistan.

against those foes of government and faith, was spurred on by motives of personal revenge. The Assassins had murdered, as he was coming out of the bath, at Sarkhos, the shah's favourite, an exceedingly handsome youth, whom he had sent with a thousand cavalry to the court of Sandjar. Shah Gasi buried him with great pomp, near the tomb of the Imam Ali Mussa, and erected a vaulted chapel over his grave, richly endowed with the lands of the surrounding villages.

From this moment he never paused in the persecution of the murderers, who, after bereaving him of what was dearer than life itself, threatened to deprive him of that also. His general, Shelku, made a nocturnal incursion into the Ismailitic territory, and immolated with the sword, many thousands of the "initiated to the dagger," and erected, in Rudbar, five towers formed of their sculls. Shah Gasi sent first against them, his brother-in-law, the prince of Dilem, Kia Busurgomid, of the same name as the then grand-master of the Assassins; and, after his death, the prince of Ruyan. Thus were irreconciliably opposed to each other, Kia Busurgomid, of Dilem, against Kia Busurgomid, of Alamut; the highland chieftain of one side of the Alps, to the Old Man of the other.[1]

When Keikawus, after the death of his nephew, Kia Busurgomid, of Dilem, united the government of that province with the lordship of Ruyan and Rostemdar, Shah Gasi, of Thaberistan, remitted the sum of thirty thousand dinars, which Dilemistan paid, as tribute to his treasury; but on condition, that he should maintain a continued war against the order of the Assassins. The effect of this was, that, at that period, they dared not show themselves anywhere in Ruyan, Mazanderan, and Dilem, and that the Moslimin of those provinces were safe from their daggers. Keikawus undertook some expeditions against Alamut itself, and plundered and ravaged the surrounding country. He wrote a

(1) Sehareddin's History of Mazanderan and Thaberistan.

letter to the grand-master Kia Mohammed, in the following words :—

" May the life of the infidel, the wicked, the accursed, the base, the reprobate, be extirpated from the face of the earth ; may the Almighty God annihilate his house, and the angel of torment prepare his dwelling in hell! God, the most high, has not in vain commanded to the faithful and the pious, the destruction of the infidel and the atheist. The greatest grace and highest favour of the Almighty, is shown in this ; that the flaming sword of perdition is waving over your heads and country ; that ye, having recourse to empty arrogance and senseless cunning, hemmed in on all sides, are now like the hunted fox, lost in the brake. What hinders ye now from showing your manhood, against us, who sit publicly every where, without chamberlains or door-keepers, guard or officers ? against me, your greatest foe on God's earth ?"

The grand-master replied in the style of the order, laconically, and cutting as their stilettoes :—

" We have read thy letter ; the contents are insults, and insult recoils on the insulter." [1]

The successor of Keikawus, Astandar Hasarasf, son of Shehrnush, struck into an entirely different line of policy. Weary of the war against the Assassins, he concluded a treaty of peace and amity, resigned his strongest castles to them, and even abandoned himself to the extravagances of drunkeness.

Two of the grandees of his court, whom he had injured by killing the favourite of one, and the brother of the other, fled to Erdeshir, King of Mazanderan ; they complained that their prince, allied with the Assassins, even trod in their steps ; and represented that, if the king should suffer this to proceed unresented, the murderers would soon spread themselves through Mazanderan, and cause universal desolation. Erdeshir entered into the spirit of this representation, retained the complainants at his court, and despatched a person of dis-

(1) Sehereddin, op. cit.

tinction to Hasarasf, to admonish him to more reasonable conduct. The admonition being ineffectual, his nobles deserted him, and fled to Erdeshir's court; others took up arms against him, supported by Erdeshir with an army. Hasarasf, thus abandoned, went over to the Assassins, with whom he sought refuge.

Shah Erdeshir appointed the Seid Eddai Ilulhaki Aburisa, governor of Dilem. In a nocturnal attack, executed by Hasarasf, supported by the Ismailites, the seid was slain; and Shah Erdeshir swore that he would not rest, till he had revenged the murder of the seid, with the death of Hasarasf: the latter fled to the strong castle, Welidj. Erdeshir took Nur and Nadju, and besieged Welidj for a considerable time; finding, however, the investment of it too difficult, he retreated, and appointed Hesbereddin Khurshid, viceroy of Ruyan and Rostemdar, in place of Hasarasf. The latter went into Irak, and thence to Hamadan, where he sought protection from Togrul, the last sultan of the Persian line of the Seljukides.

Togrul sent an ambassador to Erdeshir, to intercede for Hasarasf; the shah of Mazanderan replied: "If Hasarasf wishes to regain the sovereignty of Ruyan, let him do penance for his impiety, and break off his connexion with the Assassins; or the sultan may point out another place, where he may be beyond the alliance of the order of murderers." The Seljukide sultan approved of the decision of the king of Mazanderan. Hasarasf fled to Rei, where he sought the hand of the daughter of Serajeddin Kamil, and aid from his father-in-law. Being unable to effect his purpose, he went straight with his brother, to Shah Erdeshir, who wished to confine him to the castle of Welidj. The commandant, who had formerly served under Hasarasf, refused to imprison his former lord; at length, however, Hasarasf terminated his unquiet life, being murdered by Hesbereddin, unknown to Erdeshir.

The shah caused his infant son to be brought up, but ere he attained his majority and the government of Ruyan, he

fell by the hand of one Bistun, who pretended to the sovereignty. The murderer fled to Alamut, which had ever been the safest asylum for such criminals. The grand-master immediately offered to deliver him up, if Erdeshir would, in return, surrender the village of Herdjan to the order. Erdishir would not consent, but replied to the envoy, "What is a wretch like Bistun, that I should yield one of my possessions to the Assassins for him?" This happened in the 610th year of the Hejira, that is, in the third of the re-establishment of Islamism, by the grand-master, Nev Mussulman, who, on offering to give up the murderer, remained, indeed, true to his newly-adopted system of restoring religion, yet at the same time made this measure of policy subordinate to the interest of the order.

Although no murder stains the history of Jelaleddin's reign, and so far his conduct was in full accordance with his system, the historian is, nevertheless, compelled not only to question the purity of his motives, but also the sincerity of his return to the doctrines of Islamism. Two circumstances place this in a very suspicious light. In the first place, the just mentioned refusal to deliver up the murderer, who had sought within the walls of Alamut, the usual sanctuary of impiety, unless in return for the cession of a village; secondly, in the burning of the books, when Jelaleddin pretended to celebrate an *auto da fe*, of the works and rubrics of former grand-masters, in order to convince the deputies from Kaswin of the truth of his conversion. In this, however, it is probable that he consumed the works of the dogmatists and fathers of Islamism, while the great library of freethinking and immorality, together with the metaphysical and theological works of Hassan Sabah, the founder, were preserved, though secretly, and only, as we shall see below, devoted to the flames on the fall of Alamut and dissolution of the order.

It is, therefore, more than probable, that Jelaleddin's conversion of the Ismailites to Islamism, so loudly proclaimed abroad, and his public abjuration of the doctrine of impiety,

was nothing else than hypocrisy and deeply designed policy, in order to re-establish the credit of the order, which had been exposed to the anathemas of priests, and the ban of princes, by the inconsiderate publication of their doctrines, and to gain for himself the title of prince, instead of the dignity of grand-master. Thus the Jesuits, when they were threatened with expulsion by the parliament, and with a bull of dissolution from the Vatican,—when, on all sides, the voices of cabinets and countries rose against the principles of their morals and policy,—denied their doctrine of lawful rebellion and regicide, which had been imprudently hinted at by some of their casuists, and openly condemned the maxims which they, nevertheless, secretly observed as the true rules of the order.

This assertion of a purer moral system and genuine Christianity, availed little in reinstating in the possession of their former greatness and power, the once unmasked and exposed order of the Jesuits; and equally small success had the Assassins, in regaining their preceding influence and authority, by this system of proselytism, which was preached from every pulpit. The twelve years' reign of Jelaleddin was too short to efface from the minds of the people the traces of a system which had lasted fifty years. Under his son and successor, the Ismailites sank anew into their old habits of impiety and crime, by which they and their forefathers have been the abhorrence of the world and the outcasts of mankind. Poison had put an end to the bloody reign of Mohammed II. the predecessor and father of Jelaleddin; it likewise accelerated the accession of his son, and successor, Alaeddin Mohammed III., a boy of nine years of age. The poisoned goblet, which had supplied the place of the poniard, was now replaced by it. The dagger raged unceasingly, by order of the boy, among his own relatives, who were accused as accomplices in the poisoning of his father. According to the doctrine of the Ismailites, the imam, even though a youth, is always considered as having attained his majority, and the efficiency of his commands is neither enfeebled by the age of childhood

nor the childishness of age. His orders require unlimited obedience, as emanating from the higher power, centered in the vicegerent of the Deity, and the Ismailites blindly followed the deadly behests of the young prince, by which their hands, for twelve years unused to the dagger, again became accustomed to it.

Reign of Alaeddin Mohammed III., Son of Jelaleddin Hassan Nev Musulman.

Although, in the warm climate of Arabia and Persia, human nature arrives sooner at maturity, and the intellect sooner attains the freedom of independence, than in the colder region of Europe, we can more easily conceive a maiden of nine to be marriageable, than a boy of the same age to be capable of governing. It appears more natural that Aishe should, at the age of nine, have become the bride of the prophet Mohammed, than that his namesake should, at the same age, have assumed the throne of the Assassin sovereignty. If this is not surprising, still less is it so that the boy, scarcely emancipated from the care of the harem, should surrender to it both himself, and the administration of affairs. The women governed, and Alaeddin amused himself with feeding sheep, while the Assassins, as heretofore, raged as wolves in the folds of Islamism. All the wise ordinances, which Jelaleddin, the new Musulman, had instituted for the advantage of religion and morality, were abolished by Alaeddin, the new infidel. Atheism and licentiousness again raised their heads, and the dagger was once more red with the blood of virtue and merit. In the fifth year of his reign, Alaeddin, having bled himself without the knowledge of his physician, an excessive loss of blood threw him into a deep depression and melancholy, from which he never recovered. From that time, no one ventured to propose to him any remedies, either for himself, or the disorders of his government. Whoever

spoke anything in the least displeasing to him, concerning political affairs, received torture or death for his answer; thus every thing was concealed from him, whether domestic or foreign, and he was without any friends or advisers, who could venture to lay representations before him. The evil increased beyond all measure; the finances, the army, the administration, sunk into the fathomless abyss of utter ruin.

Alaeddin, nevertheless, treated the Sheikh Jemaleddin Ghili with great reverence; he was entirely devoted to him, and sent him an annual pension of five hundred dinars, on which the sheikh lived, although he enjoyed besides a gratuity from the prince of Farsistan. The inhabitants of Kaswin reproached him for distributing the latter, and living on the money of the impious; the sheikh replied, "The imams declare the executions of the Ismailites and the confiscation of their goods to be lawful; how much more lawful, then, is it, to make use of the money and goods which they give of their own accord!" Alaeddin, to whose ears, probably, this talk of the Kaswiners came, affirmed that he spared them only on the sheikh's account; and that if Jemaleddin Ghili did not reside there, he would fill sacks with the earth of Kaswin, and hang them on the necks of its inhabitants, and drive them to Alamut. He ordered a messenger, who gave him a letter of the sheikh's once when he was intoxicated, to receive a hundred blows of the bastinado, and said to him, "Thoughtless and foolish man that thou wert, for giving me a letter of the sheikh's when I was intoxicated; thou shouldst have waited till I had come from the bath, and recovered my senses."[1] Besides the sheikh, Alaeddin held in considerable estimation the great mathematician, Nassireddin, of Tus, who had been sent as a hostage to Alamut, by Mohammed Motashem Nassireddin, to whom he had dedicated his celebrated work, Akhlaki Nasseri *(the Ethics of Nassir)*. He, as we shall soon see, as prime minister of

(1) Mirkhond.

Alaeddin's successor, supported, for a time, the tottering edifice of the Ismailitic rule; it fell, however, at last, affording to the world a remarkable proof, of what talents and a thirst for revenge, are able to effect in the maintenance, and overthrow of thrones.

During the reign of this weak prince, there took place the following negotiation with Sultan Jelaleddin Mankberni, the last of the sultans of Khowaresm, according to the relation of an eye-witness. On his return from India, he had appointed the Emir Orkhan, governor of Nishabur, immediately bordering on the possessions of the Ismailites.[1] Orkhan's lieutenant, in his absence, ravaged, by bloody and repeated attacks, the territories of Tim and Kain, the capitals of Kuhistan and the principal seat of the Assassins. One of the latter, Kemaleddin, came as ambassador, to request the suspension of hostilities; Orkhan's lieutenant, however, deigned to give no other answer than the silent but emphatical one, of drawing several daggers from his girdle, and throwing them on the ground, before the envoy, signifying, either that he wished to show his contempt for the daggers of the Assassins, or that he would have him to understand that he would meet dagger with dagger. This hieroglyphical style of embassy is a chief feature in the diplomacy of the east, which not only speaks to women in the language of flowers, but also to princes, by images and symbols rather than words. The most ingenious messages of this kind mentioned by eastern writers, are those which passed between Alexander and the Indian king, Porus, who endeavoured to surpass each other in subtilty and vaunting. They terminated in Alexander's sending for a cock to pick up the corn which was shaken from a sack before him: intimating that though the hosts of the Indians should be as numerous as the grains of corn, the Greeks, as brave as game cocks, would soon swallow them up. A companion to this hieroglyphic of the

(1) Mohammed Nisawi, Biography of Jelaleddin Mankberni.

cock, is afforded in that of the dead hen, which Alexander is said to have sent to Darius, concerning the claim of the tribute of golden eggs or besana (beisa, meaning an egg), to explain to him, that the hen which had laid these golden eggs was dead. These, and similar hieroglyphical embassies, were as little effectual in settling the quarrel between Darius and Alexander, as they were in the case of the Ismailites, who resolved to procure for themselves that satisfaction which had been denied them.

While Sultan Mankberni was residing at Kendja,[1] Orkhan was attacked without the city walls by three Assassins, and killed on the spot; they then, with their bloody daggers in their hands, entered the city, and shouted the name of the grand-master, Alaeddin: they thus proclaimed the power and sovereignty of their superior in a manner most befitting a combination of homicides, namely, by blood and unsheathed poniards. They sought the vizier, Sherfal-mulk (*nobility of the kingdom*), in the divan of his house, but not finding him there, he being with the sultan, they wounded one of his servants, as a token of their visit; they ran through the streets of the city, and declared themselves to be Assassins, in which capacity, they had already, at the grand vizier's residence, left dagger wounds instead of a visiting card; their insolence, however, did not go, this time, unpunished; the people crowded together, and put them to death with a shower of stones.[2]

In the meanwhile, an Ismailite envoy, Bedreddin Ahmed by name, having travelled as far as Barlekan, on his way from Alamut to the sultan's court, on being informed of the above occurrence, inquired of Sherfal-mulk, the vizier, whether he should continue his journey forwards, or return; the vizier, knowing the enterprising vigour of the Assassins, and

(1) A. D. 1226; A. H. 624.

(2) Mohammed Nissawi's Biography of Sultan Mankberni, and Hassan ben Ibrahim, both extracted in Quatremére's Notice Historique sur les Ismaeliens, in vol. IV. Mines de l'Orient.

dreading the fate of Orkhan, answered that he might come in all security; and on his arrival, the vizier applied all his energies to the satisfaction of his demands, which were the suspension of the ravages of the Ismailite territory, and the cession of the fortress of Damaghan. The vizier succeeded in having the first point promised, and the second was allowed, in a solemn instrument, in consideration of the annual sum of thirty thousand pieces of gold. The sultan departed on a journey to Aserbijan, and the envoy remained as the vizier's guest.

At a grand banquet, the wine having already mounted to their heads, the envoy said to his host, that, in the immediate retinue of the sultan, among his guards, marshals, and pages, there were several Ismailis. The vizier, curious to become acquainted with these dangerous unknown, entreated the ambassador to produce them, and gave him his handkerchief as a pledge that no harm should befal him. Immediately five of the most confidential of his chamberlains stepped forward as disguised Assassins.

"On such a day, at such an hour," said one of them, an Indian, to the vizier, "I could have murdered thee with impunity, and unobserved; and, if I did not, it was merely from the want of my superior's command."

The vizier terrified, and apparently naturally timid, and still more so when intoxicated, stripped off his clothes, threw himself, in his shirt, at the feet of the five murderers, conjuring them, by their own lives, to spare his; and protesting, that he would be a more faithful slave of the grand-master, Alaeddin, than of the Sultan Mankberni.

The sultan, on hearing of the cowardly baseness of his vizier, sent him an angry message, with the command to burn the five Ismailites alive. Sherfal-mulk would gladly have avoided the execution of this command; at length, he reluctantly obeyed, and caused the five Assassins to be thrown on the pile, in the flames of which they deemed themselves happy, in being the sacrifice of their master, Alaeddin.

Kemaleddin, the superintendent of the pages, whose duty it was, more than that of any other officer of the court, to watch over the immediate retinue of the sultan, was condemned to death, for admitting Assassins among the pages. The sultan then departed for Irak, and the vizier remained in the province of Aserbijan, and with him the relater of this occurrence, Abulfatah Nissawi. While they were staying at Berdaa, Salaheddin came from Alamut, as ambassador of the grand-master, who, being admitted to an audience of the vizier, spoke as follows:—"Thou hast sacrificed five Ismailis to the flames; to ransom thy life, pay for each of these unhappy men the sum of ten thousand pieces of gold."

The vizier, confounded by the message, treated the envoy with distinction, and then commanded his secretary, Abulfatah Nissawi, to prepare a deed in due form, by which he bound himself to pay the Ismailis the annual sum of ten thousand ducats, in addition to the thirty thousand due from them to the sultan's treasury. At so dear a rate did emirs and viziers purchase a respite of their lives from the daggers of the Assassins, which were constantly pointed against their breasts.

Alaeddin could seek counsel from the Sheikh Jemaleddin, and the astronomer, Nassireddin, in spiritual and temporal affairs, in objects of politics and science; but neither of them could afford him a remedy for his diseased brain and mental malady. To find a skilful physician, he applied by embassies to the Lord of Farsistan, the Atabeg Mosafareddin Ebubekr, who endeavoured to gratify him, from the natural dread of the dagger, common to all the princes of the time, and which made them incline to fulfil the wishes of the prince of the Ismailites.[1] He despatched the Imam Behaeddin, son of Siaeddin Elgarsuni, one of the first physicians, distinguished alike by his theoretical science and his practical art; who employed his attainments, not without some success, in the

(1) Wassaf.

cure of Alaeddin. When the latter was somewhat better, he could never obtain license to return. For this once, it was not the death of the sick, but of the convalescent, that released the physician. Alaeddin died, not from the consequences of his early loss of blood, but from the usual remedy of the order,—assassination.

Ambition, and the fear of not attaining the supreme power till late, or not at all, was the cause of his murder, as it had been of similar preceding ones. Alaeddin had several sons, and had declared the eldest of them, Rokneddin, while yet a child, his successor. As he grew in years, he was honoured as their superior, by the Ismailites, who made no difference between his commands and those of his father. Alaeddin, irritated by this premature obedience,[1] declared that the right of succession was transferred to another of his sons; but the Ismailites paid no attention to this declaration, in accordance with the received maxim of their sect, that the first declaration is always the true one, and that with it the business ends. Our readers may recollect a similar example, in the history of the Egyptian khalif, Mostanssur, mentioned in the second book, who first declared his son Nisar, and afterwards, being compelled by the Emir-ol-juyush, his younger son, Mosteali, as his successor; whence arose the great schism of the Ismailites, some adopting the side of Nisar, and others that of Mosteali.

Hassan Sabah, the founder of the Assassins, who was at that time in Egypt, was obliged to quit the country, as he belonged to the former; and much the more natural was the prepossession of the Ismailites, which, in the spirit of their founder, decided in favour of the first declaration Rokneddin, fearing for his life, which was threatened by his father, resolved to retire from the court, and to wait in some strong castle for the moment which should call him to the government.

(1) A. D. 1255; A. H. 653.

The same year, Alaeddin afforded likewise matter of suspicion to several of his grandees, and occasion to look after their personal safety. They concealed their well-grounded fears, under the mask of the most fawning adulation, and conspired with Rokneddin against Alaeddin's life, in order to secure their own. Hassan of Masenderan, no Ismailite, but a Mussulman, but who stained his faith by a disgraceful connexion with Alaeddin, was selected by them to be the murderer; and as he was the instrument of Alaeddin's unnatural lust, to be the instrument of his unnatural death. They watched the opportunity when Alaeddin lay, as usual, intoxicated among his sheep and shepherds. In order to devote himself to this pleasure, he had built a wooden house near his flocks; and while he was sunk in sleep, Hassan of Masenderan, by command of Rokneddin, shot him through the neck with an arrow. The murderer received the proper reward: he and his children were put to death, and their bodies burnt. The planner of the murder was tortured, if not by the stings of conscience, by the reproaches of his mother, until the vengeance of heaven reached him also.

Thus Alaeddin, whose father had been poisoned by his nearest relation, was murdered by an Assassin employed by his son; and the horror of parricide revenged parricide. Thus we come back upon the remark so frequently repeated by oriental historians, and noticed by us in the commencement of this book, that parricide begets parricide; as though heaven would proclaim the atrocity of the crime, by the horror of the punishment; as if an unnatural son were the only fitting executioner of an unnatural son, and the terrible alone could revenge the terrible.

If a double parricide stain the annals of other dynasties, nature and terror stop with the second, lest, by a long enchainment of horrors, and a series of parricides, our belief in humanity, and in the most sacred feelings, should expire. The history of the Assassins alone, in heaping atrocity on atrocity, surpasses hell itself; we see four murders in suc-

cession, by near relations, criminally and horribly avenged by near relations. From Hassan, the Illuminator, to the fall of the order, the blood of the grand-masters dropped, from step to step, down to the last: two of them died by the hands of their sons; two by those of their nearest relatives: poison and the dagger prepared the grave which the order had opened for so many.

Hassan fell by the dagger of his brother-in-law, and his wicked son, Mohammed: the latter, aiming at the life of his son, Jelaleddin, was anticipated by him with poison; which murder was again revenged by poison, by his nearest relative. Alaeddin, son of Jelaleddin, had the mixer of the poison put to death, and was himself murdered, by his own son's command. The place of the ruby goblet of Jemshid, and the sparkling sword of Rustam, the royal insignia of the ancient Persian kings, was supplied with the Assassins, by the envenomed cup and polished dagger. The grand-masters directed it to the hearts of their enemies, without being able to turn it from their own. Their guards, the devoted to death, were common murderers. Hell reserved for the grand-masters themselves the privilege of parricide.

END OF BOOK V.

BOOK VI.

Reign of Rokneddin Kharshah, the last Grand-master of the Assassins.

The crimes of the society of murderers, which had long ago exceeded the measure of humanity, had, at length, filled to overflowing that of retributive vengeance: after an existence of a hundred and seventy years, the tempest of destruction fell, with terrific fury, on the Assassins. The conquering power of Jengis Khan, thundering in the distance, had passed innocuously over their heads; but under the third of his successors, Mangu Khan, the whirlwind of Mongols swept over the eastern world, and, in its desolating progress, carried away, along with the khalifat, and other dynasties, that of the Assassins. In the year 582 of the Hegira,[1] when the seven planets were in conjunction, in the sign Libra, as they had been, a century before, in that of Pisces,[2] all Asia was trembling, in expectation of the end of the world, which astrologers had declared was to happen, the first time by a deluge, and the second by hurricanes and earthquakes. But if, the first time, a swollen mountain torrent drowned only a few pilgrims, in order not to put the prophecy to the blush; and the second, there was so little wind on the appointed night, that lights burnt freely in the open air, on the top of the minarets, without being extinguished; nevertheless, at both periods,

(1) A. D. 1186.
(2) Takwimet-tevarikh, ann. 489 and 582. A. D. 1095.

political revolutions came to the help of the astrologers' predictions, who had interpreted the conjunction of the planets as indicating physical changes.

At the end of the fifth century of the Hegira, the deluge of the Assassins inundated the whole of Asia; and at the end of the sixth, Jengis Khan rushed on, like a hurricane, and the earth quaked under the hoofs of the Mongols. The rage of the tempest afterwards spread through all Asia, and the shocks of the earthquake carried their ruin as far as Europe. During the reign of Mangu, the conquest of China and Persia was completed by his brothers, Kublai and Hulaku; and as the preponderating power of the latter, trod into ruins the citadel of the Assassins, and rolled the khalif's throne in the dust, his expedition to Persia deserves our most particular attention.

Tandju Newian, the general of Mangu Khan, who covered the frontiers of Iran, sent to his master the ambassadors of the khalif of Bagdad, who complained of the atrocities of the Assassins, and besought him to extirpate the vile race. Their complaints were seconded by those of the judge of Kaswin, who was at the khan's court, and went in armour to the audience, fearing the daggers of the Assassins, against whose crimes he raised the voice of humanity. Mangu immediately collected an army, which he placed under the command of his brother, Hulaku, whom, on departing, he addressed in the following words: "I send thee, with much cavalry and a strong army, from Turan to Iran, the land of great princes. It is thine, to observe the laws and ordinances of Jengis Khan, in great things, and in small, and to take possession of the countries from the Oxus to the Nile. Assemble round thee, with favours and rewards, the obedient and the submissive; but tread into the dust of contempt and misery, the refractory and mutinous, with their wives and children. When thou hast done with the Assassins, begin the conquest of Irak. If the khalif of Bagdad comes forward willingly to serve thee, then shalt thou do him no harm; but, if he refuse,

let him share the fate of the rest."[1] Upon this, Hulaku went from Kara Kurum to the camp, and put his forces in order, and reinforced them with a thousand families of Chinese fire-work makers. These latter managed the besieging machines and the artillery of flaming naphtha, which has been known to Europe, under the name of the Greek fire, since the Crusades; but was long before used by the Arabs and Chinese, as well as gunpowder.[2] In Ramasan,[3] he broke up his camp; and receiving constant reinforcements on his march, he halted for a month, first at Samarkand and afterwards at Kash.

Hither came Shemseddin Kurt and Emir Arghun, from Khorassan, offering him its homage, and from hence he sent ambassadors to the princes of the surrounding countries, with this message: "By command of the khan, I am advancing against the Assassins, to destroy them: if ye will support me in this enterprise, your trouble shall be rewarded—your country protected; but if ye conduct yourselves negligently, I will, after having finished this affair, advance against you; so shall ye know it—it is foretold to you." As soon as the news of the approach of his victorious standard was spread abroad, ambassadors appeared from Rum, from Sultan Rokneddin, Prince of the Seljuks in Fars, from the Atabeg Saad of Irak, Aserbijan, Kurdjistan, and Shirwan, to offer the homage of their masters.

The beginning of the month Silhidje, in the 553rd year of the Hegira, Hulaku crossed the Oxus by a temporary bridge, and amused himself by lion hunting on the hither side. Here winter overtook him, and the cold was so severe, that most of his horses perished. He was compelled to wait till spring, when Arghun Khan appeared at his command in the camp; the political affairs of the latter were conducted by his son Gherai, Ahmed Bitegi, and Khoja Alaeddin Ata-

(1) Mirkhond, fifth Part, History of the Mongols.
(2) See Mines de l'Orient, part I. p. 248.
(3) A. D. 1253; A. H. 651.

mulk, the vizier, writer of the celebrated historical work Jehan Kusha *(Conqueror of the World)*. Hulaku marched from Shirgan to Khawaf, whence being himself attacked with indisposition, he despatched his general, Kayu Kanian, on the conquest of Kuhistan. He went himself to Tus, the native city of the greatest Persian poet, astronomer, and vizier, Ferdusi, Nassireddin, and Nisamolmulk; the renowned burial-place of the Imam Ali Ben Mussa Risa, and established his quarters in a newly-laid out garden of Arghun Aka. From thence he went to Manssuriye, where the wives of Arghun and his lieutenant, Aseddin Taher, gave him a sumptuous banquet. He then sent the Prince Shemseddin Kurt as ambassador to Nassireddin Mohtashem, Rokneddin's governor in Sertakht. Although an old man, Nassireddin, the first patron of the astronomer of the same name, who has immortalized his memory by his ethical work dedicated to him, nevertheless accompanied the envoy in person, to the camp of Hulaku, who loaded him with marks of distinction.

Hulaku, on arriving on his march at Junushan, commanded the place, which had formerly been destroyed by the Mongols, to be rebuilt, at the public expense; he then returned to Khirkan, where he sent another embassy to Rokneddin Kharshah, the lord of Alamut, summoning him to obedience and submission. Rokneddin had just ascended the throne, still reeking with the blood of his father, and followed in his political conduct the treacherous advice of his vizier, the great astronomer, Nassireddin of Tus. The latter had presented a work to the Khalif Mostrassem: for which, instead of receiving honours and rewards, as he expected, he only gained contempt and insult. Alkami, the khalif's vizier, jealous of Nassireddin, objected to the work, that, in the dedication, the title of "Vicegerent of God on Earth," was wanting; and the khalif, who thought it badly written, threw it into the Tigris.[1]

(1) Ali Effendi's Historical Writings. Imperial Library at Vienna, No. 125.

From this moment, the insulted *savant* swore vengeance against the vizier and the khalif, and fled to Alamut, where the grand-master still clutched his dagger, beneath which more than one vizier and one khalif had already fallen. As the grand-master, however, did not interest himself with sufficient earnestness in Nassireddin's revenge, or did not expedite it quickly enough, for the approach of Hulaku drew the attention of the order away from the khalif to the consideration of their own defence; and as, according to all probability, the citadel of the Ismailites would, at length, be obliged to succumb to the hosts of the Mongols, Nassireddin immediately changed his plan and designs. He resolved, in the first instance, to deliver up his master, and the castles of the Assassins, to the advancing victor, in order to ensure, by treachery, the means to his ultimate revenge, and to pave the way for the destruction of the khalif's throne, with the ruins of the order. He thus extended the prospect of his revenge, and his joy at the fall of his foes took a wider compass. The vizier and the khalif would only have bled under the poniards of the Assassins; the burning brands of the Mongols, however, menaced the conflagration of the capital, and the whole edifice of the khalifat. The lust of destruction must have been great in that mind, which could sacrifice the Assassins to its revenge, because they unsheathed their daggers too slowly for his purpose.

By the advice of Nassireddin, Rokneddin Kharshah sent to Baissur Nubin, Hulaku's general, who had already reached Hamadan, an embassy of submission, and expressing his desire to live in peace with every one. Baissur Nubin answered, that as Hulaku was not far off, Rokneddin would do best to go to him in person. After several messages, it was determined, that Rokneddin should send his brother Shehinshah in Baissur's suite to Hulaku. Shehinshah addressed himself to Baissur, and the latter gave him his own son, as escort on his way to Hulaku; he himself, however, by command of his lord, entered the district of Alamut, with

his army, on the 10th of the month Jemesi-ul-ewel, in the 654th year of the Hegira.[1] The Assassins and the troops of the order occupied a height near Alamut, which they defended obstinately against the Mongols. The rock was steep, and the occupying party numerous. The assailants, compelled to abandon the attack, burned the houses of the Ismailites, and ravaged the fields. While this happened near Alamut, and after Shehinshah had arrived at Hulaku's quarters, the latter sent an envoy to Rokneddin, with the command as follows:—"Because Rokneddin has sent his brother to us, we pardon him the guilt of his father and his partisans; he himself, who has, during his short reign, as yet proved himself guilty of no crime, shall destroy his castles, and repair to us."

At the same time, Baissur received orders to suspend the ravaging of the province of Rudbar. After the arrival of these orders, Rokneddin caused some of the battlements of Alamut to be knocked down, and Baissur withdrew his troops from Rudbar. By order of Rokneddin, Sadreddin Sungi, one of the most respectable of the order, went, accompanied by an envoy of Hulaku's, to the latter's camp, to announce submissively to him, that the prince of the Assassins had already begun to demolish his castles, and that he was proceeding in the work of destruction; that he, however, dreading the presence of Hulaku, requested the term of a year, after the lapse of which, he would appear at his court. Hulaku sent back Sadreddin, the Ismailite envoy, accompanied by one of his basirakis, or officers, and wrote to the grand-master:—"If Rokneddin's submission be sincere, let him come to the imperial camp, and cede to Basikaki, the deliverer of this letter, the defence of his country."

Rokneddin, misled by his evil genius, and the ill advice of Nassireddin, delayed his obedience to this command. He sent the vizier, Shemseddin Keilaki, and his cousin, Seifeddin

(1) A. D. 1256.

Sultan Melik Ben Kia Manssur, again, with ambassadors, to Hulaku, to cloak his refusal to appear in person, under bad excuses. He commanded, at the same time, his governors and commanders of Kuhistan and Kirdkuh, to hasten to the Mongol camp, and to proffer their homage.

As soon as Hulaku reached Demawend, which lies immediately on the mountains of the Assassins, he despatched the vizier, Shemseddin Keilaki, to Kirdkuh, to bring the commander of that fortress into the camp, in pursuance of Rokneddin's command; one of the envoys, who had accompanied the vizier and Rokneddin's cousin to the camp, was sent, on the same mission, to Kuhistan, and the latter proceeded, with Hulaku's ambassador, to the castle of Maimundis, where Rokneddin had established his residence, in order to inform him that "the ruler of the world had now advanced as far as Demawend; there was now no longer any time for delay; but if he wished to wait a few days, he might, in the meanwhile, send his son." These ambassadors arrived at Maimundis the beginning of Ramasan, and gave the intelligence that Hulaku's victorious standards were floating on the frontiers, and communicated his commands. At this news, Rokneddin and his people fell into stupid astonishment and helpless terror. He answered the ambassador that he was ready to send his son, but then, urged by the persuasion of his wives and short-sighted advisers, he delivered to the envoy the child of a slave, who, being of the same age as his son, was substituted for him, and requested that Hulaku would allow his brother, Shehinshah, who was still at his court, to return. Hulaku, who was already on the confines of Rudbar, easily unmasked the imposture, and, without betraying his discovery, sent back the child, two days after, with the information that, on account of his youth, the khan would not detain him; and that, if he had an elder brother, he might be sent into the camp, in exchange for Shehinshah, who would then be permitted to return.

In the meanwhile, the governor of Kirdkuh had arrived in the camp, and Hulaku, who now permitted Shehinshah, Rokneddin's brother, to return, dismissed him with these words: "Tell thy brother to demolish the castle of Maimundis, and come to me: if he comes not, the Eternal God knows the consequences." During these negociations, the Tawadgi or recruiters of the Mongols, had collected so considerable a number of troops, that hill and dale swarmed with them. On the seventh of the month Shewal, Hulaku appeared in person before Maimundis, to undertake the siege of that fortress, and a battle took place on the 25th.

Rokneddin, ill advised, and still worse betrayed by Nassireddin, sent, at length, his other brother, Iranshah, together with his son, Kiashah, and the vizier, Nassireddin, into the camp, to offer his homage and submission, and to request a free retreat. They were accompanied by the most distinguished members of the order, who bore rich presents. Nassireddin, instead of speaking for his prince, and placing the strength of the fortress in the balance of the negotiation, told Hulaku, that the security of the castles of the Ismailites need not trouble him, that the stars foretold clearly the downfal of their power, and the sun would accelerate their ruin. The surrender of the place was then agreed upon, on condition of an unmolested retreat, and on the 1st of the month Silkide, Rokneddin, and his ministers and confidents, evacuated the castle of Maimundis, and went into Hulaku's camp. The gold and the presents, which he brought with him, were divided among the troops. Hulaku had compassion on Rokneddin's youth and inexperience; he having scarcely been seated more than a year, on the throne of his fathers. He gave him good words and flattering promises, retained him as his guest, but the traitor, Nassireddin, as his vizier. The latter, who had put the fortress and the grand-master into the hands of the khan, and had laid the axe at the root of the Assassin power, had effrontery enough to compose

a chronograph on this occurrence, which immortalizes his treachery and revenge, containing the date of this affair, in two verses.[1]

In Hulaku's camp, Rokneddin was given into the custody of a guard of Tartars; and officers of the khan accompanied the grand-master's deputies into the district Rudbar, in order to demolish the castles belonging to the Assassins, there situated: others were despatched to the two grand-priorates of Syria and Kuhistan, to summon the commandants of the places belonging to the order, to surrender them to Hulaku, in the name of the last grand-master. The number of these strongholds amounted to more than a hundred; and these, by which the mountainous parts of Kuhistan, Irak, and Syria, were crowned, formed the girdle of the Assassin's power, reaching from the shores of the Caspian to those of the Mediterranean sea; in all these, the dagger was the insignia of dominion. In Rudbar, alone, more than forty were levelled with the ground, all well fortified and full of treasure. The three strongest refused obedience to Hulaku's summons, and Rokneddin's commands; the commanders of Alamut, the grand-master's capital, of Lamsir and Kirdkuh, replied, that they were waiting for the khan's arrival to surrender them to him. Hulaku struck his camp, and appeared, in a few days, before Alamut; he sent the captive grand-master to the foot of the ramparts to persuade the inhabitants by promises and threats, to surrender; Rokneddin obeyed, but the governors of the fortress refused to yield. Hulaku left a blockading force before Alamut, and marched to Lamsir, whose inhabitants came out to meet him, and offer their allegiance; the constancy of

(1) Besal areb sheshsad u panchah u chehar shud
Yek shumbah awal meh Silkide bamdad.
In the six hundred and fifty-fourth year, it was
Early on Sunday, on the first of Silkide.
Mirkhond.

the Alamuters being shaken by this, they sent an envoy to Rokneddin, to beg him to intercede with the enraged prince in their favour.

By the mediation of Rokneddin, Hulaku allowed the commander a safe conduct to the camp. The inhabitants requested three days to remove their money and goods, this was permitted; and, on the third, the castle was given up to pillage. Alamut, or the Eagle's Nest, so called from its inaccessible height, lay on a rock, which presented the shape of a lion kneeling, with his neck stretched on the ground: the walls rose from the lion's rock, which they equalled in solidity, as it did them in its perpendicular rise; they were vaulted for the defence of the garrison; the rock was excavated into corn magazines and cellars for honey and wine; these had been, for the most part, filled in the time of Hassan Sabah; and so excellent was the choice of the spot, and the care bestowed upon it, that neither had the wheat become mouldy, nor the wine sour; which was considered by the Ismailites as a miracle of their founder. The Mongols, who, without knowledge of the locality, sought in the subterraneous chambers and cellars, for treasure, fell into the wine and honey.

The armies of the Assassins being scattered, and their poniards broken in the destruction of their fortresses, Hulaku returned in the month Selhidje, of the same year, to Hamadan, where he had left his children. Rokneddin, who accompanied him, was treated with kindness, either from pity or contempt. Entirely degenerated from the blood of his fathers, he had not even the virtues of a common Assassin,—courage, and contempt of death; still less those of a grand-master,—strength of rule and state-craft. Already morally a slave, even before he fell into the hands of Hulaku, he still showed himself in the same character by the meanness of his pursuits. A Mongol girl, of the lowest grade, was the object of his affections, and Hulaku, who neglected no opportunity of exposing him to the shafts of public scorn, commanded a solemn marriage, on being asked for the slave by

the prince of the Assassins. After the completion of the ceremony, Rokneddin begged the favour of being sent to the great khan Mangu: Hulaku was, at first, astonished at this senseless request, by which Rokneddin sought his own destruction; as, however, he did not feel himself called upon to prevent it, he gave him permission, and a troop of Mongols, as an escort. Rokneddin had promised on his way to persuade the garrison of Kirdkuh, the last castle of the Assassins which still held out against the Mongols, to surrender. He left Hulaku's camp at Hamadan, on the first of Rebi-ul-ewel, in the 655th year of the Hegira;[1] as he passed Kirdkuh he sent the inhabitants a public message, requiring them to surrender; he, however, secretly instructed them to hold out, and to deliver the fortress up to no one.

By this foolish, contradictory policy, by which he had already entailed the ruin of the order, he now accelerated his own. On arriving at Karakurum, the khan's capital, the latter, without admitting him to an audience, sent him the following message: "If thou pretendest to be submissive, wherefore hast thou not surrendered the castle of Kirdkuh? return, and demolish the yet unyielded castles; then mayest thou share the honour of appearing in our imperial presence." When Rokneddin and his escort, had reached the Oxus, on his return, the latter, under pretence of taking refreshment, made him dismount, and pierced him with their swords.

Mangu had already, some time before, issued the command to Hulaku, to exterminate all the Ismailites, and not to spare even the infant at his mother's breast: and immediately upon Rokneddin's departure, the sanguinary task was commenced, which had only been delayed till Kirdkuh and the remainder of the castles of the Assassins in Kuhistan and Syria should have fallen. He sent one of his viziers to Kaswin, to put to death, indiscriminately, Rokneddin's wives, children, brothers, sisters, and slaves; only two rela-

(1) A. D. 1257.

tions (females apparently) of Rokneddin, were selected from this devoted band, not for mercy, but to be the victims of the princess, Bulghan Khatun's, private revenge; her father, Jagatai, having bled by the Assassin's daggers. A command, similar to that given to the governor of Kaswin, was issued to the viceroy of Khorassan. He assembled the captive Ismailites, and twelve thousand of these wretched creatures were slaughtered, without distinction of age. Warriors went through the provinces, and executed the fatal sentence, without mercy or appeal. Wherever they found a disciple of the doctrine of the Ismailites, they compelled him to kneel down, and then cut off his head. The whole race of Kia Busurgomid, in whose descendants the grand-mastership had been hereditary, were exterminated. The "devoted to murder" were not now the victims of the order's vengeance, but that of outraged humanity. The sword was against the dagger, and the executioner destroyed the murderer. The seed, sowed for two centuries, was now ripe for the harvest, and the field ploughed by the Assassin's dagger, was reaped by the sword of the Mongol. The crime had been terrible, but no less terrible was the punishment.

The castles of the Assassins in Rudbar and Kuhistan, Kain, Tun, Lamsir, and even Alamut, the capital, were now in the hands of the victor. Kirdkuh alone, whose garrison had been encouraged not to yield, by Rokneddin, when on his way to Mangu, resisted the besieging forces of the Mongols for three years. It is situated in the district of Damaghan, near Manssurabad, on a very lofty mountain, and is, probably, the same as the castle Tigado, mentioned by the Armenian historian, Haithon, who has converted the three years' siege into one of thirty years' duration.[1] Circumstantial details of this siege, are found in Sahireddin,[2] the historian of Masenderan,

(1) Bengertus. Joachimus Camerarius, Arnoldus Lubecensis. Haithon Armenensis, quoted in Withof's Meuchelmörderischen Reich. der Assassinen. p. 168, et seq. Bengertus, by mistake, places Tigado in Syria.

(2) Tarikhi Masenderan. Imperial Library, Vienna. No. 117.

and Ruyan, whose princes, having done homage to the overwhelming power of Hulaku Khan, received his commands to besiege Kirdkuh, while he was engaged in his expedition against Bagdad. At that period, the throne of Masenderan was filled by Shems-ol-Moluk Erdeshir, of the family of Bawend; and at Ruyan reigned the Astandar, or mountain prince, Shehrakim, of the family Kawpare. They were united in the bonds of friendship, relationship, and contiguity of situation. The prince of Ruyan had given his daughter in marriage, to the shah of Masenderan, and Hulaku Khan promised himself a large result from the wisdom of his measures, in imposing upon them both the conduct of the siege of Kirdkuh.

It was in the beginning of spring, that the poet, Kutbi Ruyani, who was in the camp of the allied princes, sung a solemn poem, in honour of spring, in the language of Thaberistan, beginning—

> The sun has now once more passed from the Fish to the Ram,
> Spring waves her flowery banner to the east wind.

By this distich, inserted by the historian, Sahireddin, in his work, the existence of a particular language in Thaberistan is made known to Europe. It consists of a mixture of Mongol, Ouigour, and Persian words.[1] The inspiration of the native poet, had so great an effect upon the two princes, that, without waiting for the khan's permission, they raised the siege, and marched home, in order fully to enjoy, in their native plains, the delights of returning spring, unmindful of the wrath of Hulaku Khan, of which they soon felt the full weight. Gasan Behadir, was despatched from the army, to chastise them for their disobedience. The prince of Ruyan, who had first set his son-in-law the bad example of withdrawing, had the magnanimity to take the whole fault upon himself, and, in order not to expose his own, and his relative's possessions, to the

(1) Mines de l'Orient. vol. III.

ravages of the Mongols, he went, of his own accord, to Amul, where Gasan Behadir had encamped. He had the good fortune to appease the khan, and received, both for himself and the shah of Masenderan, a new investiture of their principalities, which had been declared forfeited by their disobedience.

The effect of this invocation of spring, of the Thaberistani poet, is, although in an opposite manner, no less remarkable in martial and literary history, than are the hymns, with which Tyrtæus animated the Spartans to the combat; and, if the Greek poet has been imitated in our own time, in the songs of the Prussian and Austrian soldiery, and with the happiest effect, nevertheless, no siege has ever been raised yet, either by the Pervigilium Veneris, or by Bürger's imitation of it. This desertion of the siege, by the two commanders, explains its protraction, for full three years; a period, which, without being extended to thirty, appears amply sufficient, since Alamut, the strongest of the Assassin's fortresses, yielded, on the third day, after being summoned by Hulaku.

After the fall of Alamut, the residence of the grand-master, and the centre of the order, Atamelik Jowaini, the learned vizier and historian, asked and obtained from Hulaku, permission to search the celebrated library and archives of the order, for the purpose of saving the works which might be worthy of the khan's preserving. He laid aside the Koran and some other precious books, and committed to the flames, not only all the philosophical and sceptical works, containing the Ismailite doctrine, and written in harmony with it, but also all the mathematical and astronomical instruments, and thus at once destroyed every source from which history might have derived a more circumstantial account of the dogmas of the Ismailites, and the statutes of the order. Fortunately, in his own history, he preserved the results of the information which he derived from the library and archives of the order, together with a biographical sketch of Hassan Sabah, from which all the more modern Persian historians, as Mirkhond

and Wassaf, have collected their stores, and which we ourselves have likewise followed.[1]

The existence of this library, at the time of the Conquest, convicts of hypocrisy the sixth grand-master, Jelaleddin Nev Musulman; since he could not have committed to the flames, in the presence of the deputies of Kaswin, the archives and doctrinal works of the order which remain preserved, for the inquisitorial zeal of Atamelik Jowaini. This fanatical zeal has, at all periods, but particularly in the middle ages, converted millions of books into ashes. If the west does, not unjustly[2] (as Gibbon believes), accuse the Khalif Omar of the conflagration of the Alexandrian library, the east returns the charge with the accusation of the burning of the books at Tripoli, where an immense library of Arabic works was consumed by the Crusaders.[3] The assertion that, in the former place, the baths were heated for a space of six months with the wisdom of the Greeks, is as extravagant as that in Tripoli alone, three millions of Arabic manuscripts fed the flames: but that both conflagrations were lighted up by the torch of fanaticism, is not, on that account, the less an historical fact, clearly attested and confirmed by the first historians of the east.[4] The library of Alexandria was burnt by the Moslimin, because, according to the instructions of Omar, the Koran only was the book of books, and all knowledge not contained in it was vain and useless. The library at Tripoli was consumed by the Christians, because it contained, for the most part, nothing but the Koran, and the works written on it. At Alamut the Koran was preserved by Jowaini, and the philosophical works written against it, doomed to destruction; and at Fas, a century before, an *auto da fe* of theological books

(1) Memoire Historique sur la Vie et les Ouvrages d'Alaeddn Atamelik Djovaini, par M Quatermére. Mines de l'Orient, II. p. 220.

(2) View of the Sciences of the East. Encyclopedie.

(3) Memoires Géographiques et Historiques sur l'Egypte, par Quatremére, II. p. 506.

(4) Macrisi. Ibn Khaledun, Ibn Forat, Abulfaraj.

was held by Sultan Yakub.[1] Had these two alone been lost, there would not be so much reason to complain; but with them, the conflagrations of Alexandria and Alamut swept away treasures of Grecian, Egyptian, Persian, and Indian philosophy.

(2) Takwimet-tevarikh.

END OF BOOK VI.

BOOK VII.

Conquest of Bagdad—Fall of the Assassins—Remnant of them.

In the fall of Alamut, the centre of the Assassins was gone; the props of their authority were broken, in the loss of the castles of Rudbar and Kuhistan. Still, the grand-prior of Syria refused submission to the grand-master's orders to surrender,—the armies of the Mongols being, as yet, too distant to compel his obedience. A far greater object occupied the mind of Hulaku, than the destruction of a few Syrian mountain forts, in which the order, after the fall of Alamut, and the annihilation of the Ismailites in Persia, might yet, though with difficulty, raise its head. He entertained no less a project than the conquest of Bagdad, and the overthrow of the khalif's throne, on which the Arabs had, in the prophet's name, already, for six centuries and a half, ruled over the world of Islam. This great event is, not only by its immediate consequences, but also from its proximate cause, inseparably connected with the destruction of the Assassins.

In the second year after the fall of Alamut, and, consequently, before the conquest of Kirdkuh the last fortress of the Assassins, which only surrendered in the third year of the siege, Bagdad, the queen of the cities of the Tigris, fell. The overthrow of the khalifat, as we have seen, in the instructions given by Mangu to his brother Hulaku, did not enter immediately into the plan of the khan, who merely claimed

submission and troops, but Nassireddin, the great *savant* and traitor, who had delivered the capital of the Assassins into the conqueror's hands, and had paved a road to his own revenge, over its ruins, laboured unceasingly to urge Hulaku to the destruction of the khalifat. Besides the close connexion of this event with the one which we have described, it is in itself so great and important, in the history of Asia, and the middle ages,—so attractive, from the novelty and rarity of the subject, that we cannot deny our readers and ourselves the pleasure of following the khan, in his expedition from Alamut to Bagdad.

The siege and conquest of Constantinople, by the Turks, is, perhaps, the only event in history, worthy to be compared with that of Bagdad, by the Mongols; and the fall of the long-sinking Byzantine empire, may be placed by the side of that of the khalifat. The conquest of other cities, on whose sieges history has dwelt with astonishment and admiration, or with pity and terror, is less mighty in its consequences, because, under their ruins, no throne of universal sway has been buried. This interest is wanting, in the most obstinate and glorious sieges of ancient and modern history, however remarkable by the great names of the assailants, or the consummate skill with which they may have been prosecuted, or the patient courage with which they have been defended. Tyre and Saguntum, illustrious in their besiegers, Alexander and Hannibal; Syracuse, which has immortalized the names of Marcellus and Archimedes; Rhodes, twice attacked by Demetrius Poliorcetes, and defended against the Turks, by Villiers de l'Isle Adam; Candia, and Saragossa; have all earned unfading glory, by the lion courage of their inhabitants and defenders; but, although these cities fought for the highest of earthly objects—their country's freedom, still their fall did not draw down with it the seat of the ancient dominion over half the world.

The history of the conquest of other celebrated cities, the seat of universal monarchy, such as Babylon and Persepolis, under whose ruin were buried the Assyrian and Persian

monarchies, is wrapt in the distance of thousands of years, and impenetrable obscurity. The destruction of Jerusalem eclipses in the brightness of its lustre that of all those cities; not, however, on account of the importance of its power, or of its siege, for that by Khosroes was not less remarkable than that by Titus; but because the latter was described by Tacitus. If Gibbon had had access to the sources which are at our command, the conquest of Bagdad would not have shone with less splendour, in his immortal work, than that of Constantinople, nor would it have been so briefly treated. What we want of his power of expression, must be supplied by the richness of the material.

After the fall of Alamut, and the other fortresses of the Assassins, except that of Kirdkuh, Hulaku vacated the territory of Kaswin, and marched to Hamadan, whither his general, Tanju Nowian, hastened from Aserbijan, to lay an account of his victories at the foot of the throne. Hulaku dismissed him, with instructions to advance to Rum and Syria, and to subject the whole of Asia and Africa, to the extreme western boundary, to his dominion. In the month of Rebiulewel, in the 555th year of the Hegira, he commenced his march against Bagdad, and proceeded as far as Tebris, whence he sent an ambassador to the khalif, Mostassem, with the message: "When we went out against Rudbar, we sent ambassadors to thee, desiring aid; thou promisedst them, but sentest not a man. Now, we request that thou wouldst change thy conduct, and refrain from thy contumacy, which will only bring about the loss of thy empire and thy treasures."

The ambassadors having despatched their mission to Mostassem, the latter sent the learned Sherefeddin Ibn Jusi, the most famous orator of his time, and Bedreddin Mohammed, of Nahjiwan, to Hulaku, with a haughty message. The khan, irritated at this, gave more easy audience to the counsels of Nassireddin, who continually urged him to march against Bagdad, and to the treacherous invitation of Ibn Alkami, the khalif's vizier. Moyededdin Mohammed Ben Mohammed Ben

Abdolmelek Alkami, who, as vizier, administered the affairs of the khalifat with unlimited power, and, by the blackest treachery, caused its fall, is stigmatized ignominiously, as traitor, throughout the whole east; and the name of Alkami is not less abhorred, in their history, than is that of Antalcides, in that of the Greeks: as eloquent, and versed in poetry and the polite literature of the Arabs, as Nassireddin was in the mathematical sciences, he was no less faithless to his lord. Both poet and mathematician were traitors.[1]

Nassireddin had personal cause of complaint against Alkami, who, by his censure, had occasioned the khalif's throwing into the Tigris the poem dedicated to him by the former; adding, that it was, in every respect, badly written. It is probable, that Nassireddin was a better astronomer than poet; but it is still more probable, that Alkami was jealous of the credit which he might gain with the khalif. The vizier would not have deemed it necessary to warn the viceroy of Khorassan, Nassireddin Mohteshem, with whom the astronomer was, against a mediocre or bad *Kasside*, who was a juggler, and wished to insinuate himself into the favour of the khalif. Out of respect for Alkami, the viceroy, on this warning, threw the astronomer into prison, notwithstanding he had dedicated his great work, Akhlaki Nassiri, to him. He escaped to Alamut, where, as vizier of the last grand-master, he, meditating revenge against Alkami and the Khalif Mostassem, laid the foundation of it in the ruin of the Assassins.

Ibn Alkami, like Nassireddin, swore vengeance against the khalif: he had to complain, not only of the neglect of some of the grandees and favourites being unpunished by Mostassem, but also, he feared for his own personal security, on account of some severe measures against the Shiites, to which sect he himself belonged. He entered, therefore, on the same path of treachery, in which Nassireddin had already preceded him, and besieged the ear of Hulaku, with complaints and

(1) Mirkhond. Wassaf. Gulsheni Khulifa.

invitations, which were readily accepted. Nassireddin, Hulaku's vizier, and Ibn Alkami, the khalif's, played mutually into each other's hands. The contemporaneous fall of two such powerful sovereignties, as that of the Assassins and of the khalifat, caused by the jealousy and treachery of an astronomer and a wit, is unique in history.[1]

Ere we commence the detail of the fall of the khalif throne of Bagdad, it will be proper to premise a few words, relating to the foundation and splendour of this renowned city.

Bagdad, the city, valley, or house of peace, the citadel of the holy, the seat of the khalifat, called also the oblique,[2] from the oblique position of its gates, was founded, on the banks of the Tigris, in the 148th year of the Hegira, by Abujafer Almansur, the second khalif of the Abbas family. It stretches two miles along the eastern banks of the river, in the form of a bow with an arrow on the string, and is surrounded by a brick wall, whose circumference of twelve thousand four hundred ells, is interrupted by four gates and one hundred and sixty-three turrets. When Mansur resolved upon building the city, he called his astronomers, at whose head was his vizier, Nevbakht *(i. e. new fortune)*, to determine a fortunate hour for laying the foundations; and the latter chose a moment when the sun stood in the sign Sagittarius, by which the new city was promised flourishing civilization, numerous population, and long endurance. At the same time he assured the khalif, that neither he, nor any of his successors, would die within the walls of this capital; and the confidence of the astronomer, in the truth of his prophecy, is less surprising than its fulfilment by thirty-seven khalifs, the last of whom, Mostassem, during whose reign Bagdad fell, did not die within its walls, but at Samara, a place built below Bagdad, on the banks of the Tigris, by Motassem, the eighth Abbaside

(1) Aali's Historical Sketches. Imp. Lib. Vienna. No. 115.

(2) Dar-es-selam, the house of peace. Wadi-es-selam, the valley of peace. Medenet-es-selam, the city of peace. Burj ol evlia, castle of the holy. Sevra, oblique.

khalif (called the eighther from the coincidence of the number eight, in his nativity) for his Mameluke guard.[1]

As Bagdad, from the circumstance of no khalif having died within its walls, merited, most peculiarly, the name of the House, Valley, or City of Peace; so, also, on account of the great number of holy men of Islam, who are buried within or without it, and whose tombs are so many objects of the pilgrimages of the Moslimin, it gained the title of Bulwark of the Holy. Here are the mausolea of the greatest imams and the most pious sheikhs. Here reposes the Imam Mussa Kasim, the seventh of the twelve imams, who, in direct descent from Ali, claimed the right to the throne and the khalifat, on account of their relationship to the prophet; also, the imams, Hanefi and Hanbeli, the founders of two of the four orthodox sects of the Sunna; the sheikhs, Juneid, Shobli, and Abdol-kadirghilani,[2] the chiefs of the mystic sect of the sofis.

In the midst of the monuments of the imams and sheikhs, stand those of the khalifs, and their spouses; of which that of Zobeide, the wife of Harun al Rashid, has, by the strength of its construction, survived the repeated captures and destructions of Bagdad, by the Mongols, Persians, and Turks. Equally splendid specimens of Saracenic architecture are the academies, colleges, and schools; two of which have immortalized the names of their founders in the history of Arabic literature. The academies, Nisamie and Mostansarie, the former instituted in the first half of the fifth century of the Hegira, by Nisam-ol-mulk, the great grand-vizier of Melek-shah, sultan of the Seljuks, the latter, built two centuries later, by the Khalif Almostansar-billah, with four different pulpits for the four orthodox sects of the Sunnites.

The most magnificent of all the palaces was that of the Khalif Moktader-billah, called the "House of the Tree,"[3] and seated in a wide extent of gardens. In the middle of the

(1) Jehannuma, p. 459.
(2) Ibid, p. 479, 480.
(3) Dar-es-shedshret.

vestibule, near two large basins of water, stood two trees of gold and silver, each having eighteen branches, and a great number of smaller boughs. One of these bore fruit and birds, whose variegated plumage was imitated with different precious stones, and which gave forth melodious sounds, by means of the motion of the branches, produced by a mechanical contrivance. On the other tree were fifteen figures of cavaliers, dressed in pearls and gold, with drawn swords, which, on a signal being given, moved in concert. In this palace, the Khalif Moktader gave audience to the ambassadors of the Greek emperor, Theophilus,[1] and astonished them with the numbers of his army, and the splendour of his court.[2] A hundred and sixty thousand men stood in their ranks before the palace; the pages glittered in golden girdles; seven thousand eunuchs, three thousand of whom were white, the rest black, surrounded the entrance; and, immediately at the gate, were seven hundred chamberlains. On the Tigris floated gilded barks and gondolas, decorated with silken flags and streamers. The walls of the palace were hung with thirty-eight thousand carpets, twelve thousand five hundred of which were of gold tissue; and twenty-two thousand pieces of rich stuff covered the floors. A hundred lions, held by their keepers with golden chains, roared in concert with the sound of fifes and drums, the clang of the trumpets, and the thundering of the tamtam.[3]

The entrance to the audience chamber was concealed by a black silk curtain; and no one could pass the threshold, without kissing the black stone of which it was formed, like the pilgrims at Mecca.[4] Behind the black curtain, on a throne seven ells high, sat the khalif, habited in the black mantle

(1) A. D. 918; A. H. 306.

(2) There is a more circumstantial detail in Abulfeda, Part II. p. 332, and Jehannuma, pp. 459 and 478, and in the Gulsheni Khulifa and Lari, than in Gibbon, c. LII.

(3) The Persian Damdama, as well as the Arabic Thanthana, and the Latin Tinnitus, are onomatopœias of this musical sound.

(4) Mirkhond, Wassaf, Gulsheni Khulifa.

(*borda*) of the prophet, girded with his sword, and holding his staff in his hand as a sceptre. Ambassadors, and even princes, who received investiture, kissed the ground in front of the throne, and approached, conducted by the vizier and an interpreter, and were then honoured with a habit of ceremony (*khalaat*), and presents. So Togrul-beg, the founder of the Seljuks, on receiving investiture from the Khalif Kaimbiemrillah, was dressed in seven caftans, one over the other, and presented with seven slaves, from the several different states forming the khalifat. He received two turbans, two sabres, and two standards, in token of being invested with the sovereignty of the east and the west.[1]

These proceedings of the khalif's court were copied by that of Byzantium; and traces of them have been preserved to the present day, in the ceremonials of the great kingdoms both of the east and the west. Theophilus, whose love of splendour rivalled that of the khalif, built a palace in Constantinople, the exact counterpart of the "House of the Tree," even to the golden tree,[2] and the artificial singing birds on it; which was no less an object of admiration to the envoys of the European courts, than the original at Bagdad had been to the Greeks. The etiquette of the khalif's court, which was repeated at Byzantium, still subsists at the Constantinopolitan courts, as Luitprand describes it. When the khalif rode out, he was saluted with the shouting a long formula of benediction;[3] in the same manner was the Greek emperor, with the cry of "Many years" (πολυχρονιζειν)! and so is the Ottoman sultan, at this day, with the usual "*Tehok-yasha*" (may he live long)! The two turbans, which are placed before him when he enters the mosque, signify his sovereignty over Asia and Europe; the prophet's sword and mantle are preserved in the treasury of the seraglio. The *borda*, that is, the Arabian prince's mantle of black, afterwards embroidered

(1) Deguignes, Part II. p. 197, and Abulfeda, ad. ann. 449.
(2) Continuator Theophanis. Gibbon, c. LIII.
(3) Mirkhond, Wassaf, Gulsheni Khulifa.

with gold, is still worn by the princes of Lebanon, and the emirs of the desert; its colours, black and gold, were adopted in the livery of the Roman emperor.

The military force no longer bore any proportion to the splendour and magnificence with which the sinking throne of the khalifat was still enriched, as in the glorious days of Moktader. The army, indeed, still consisted of sixty thousand cavalry, under the command of Suleimanshah; but even this number was diminished by Ibn Alkami's treachery. The latter proposed the curtailing the forces, and dismissing the men, in order to save their pay and preserve the treasure; and, in spite of the opposite warning of the four greatest officers of state, the commander-in-chief, Suleimanshah, the first and second ink-holders, or secretaries of state, and the chief cup-bearer, he lulled the khalif into security from the danger of the Mongols, so that he carelessly stretched himself on the pillow of ease and effeminacy.

While he was occupied with the conquest of Kuhistan, and the extirpation of the Assassins, Hulaku received a letter from Ibn Alkami, who promised to deliver into his hands, the bulwarks and treasure of the khalif city; and magnifying the charms of the capture, he studiously depreciated the dangers of the attempt, till they disappeared. The khan, however, did not blindly trust the traitor's promises; the former unsuccessful attempts upon Bagdad were too fresh in his memory. Churmaghun, the general of Jenghis Khan, had, during the reign of the Khalif Nassirledinillah, twice advanced against Bagdad, with an army of a hundred and twenty-four thousand men; and twice was he beaten back, with the loss of the greater part of his forces. Hulaku had recourse to Nassireddin, his vizier, and, through him, to the stars; in which the latter naturally read the overthrow of the khalifat, so long determined upon by his revengeful spirit. Ibn Alkami's divining-rod struck on the deeply-concealed vein of Nassireddin's inveterate rancour, and treachery responded to revenge.

In accordance with Nassireddin's counsels, Hulaku, as soon as he reached Hamadan, sent the before-mentioned embassy to the khalif, whom he requested to send to meet him, one of the two secretaries of state, the chief cup-bearer, or the commander of the army, with whose opposition to his views he was fully acquainted. The khalif sent the learned orator, Ibn-al-jusi, who poured the oil of his eloquence into the fire of wrath, and returned, without performing his task. Hulaku, still more enraged, commanded the Emir Sogranjan to advance to Erdebil, and cross the Tigris, and then to form a junction with the troops of the Emir Boyanje, on the western side of Bagdad. In the meanwhile, he himself broke up his head-quarters at Hamadan. On the news of the advance of the Mongol vanguard reaching Bagdad, the khalif despatched Fetheddin, one of his oldest and most experienced commanders, with the secretary of state, Mujeheddin, one of his young favourites, and a thousand cavalry, armed with lances, who, in the first action, beat the Mongols, and forced them to retreat.

Fetheddin's grey-headed experience wished to encamp; but Mujeheddin's youthful arrogance incited him so long with insulting charges of cowardice and treachery, that he, at last, gave orders to pursue the enemy. They overtook them at the western branch of the Tigris, called Dojail, or Little Tigris. Fetheddin mounted a common horse, on whose fore and hind legs he had iron chains fastened, and so remained in one spot, to show to all that he was determined not to desert his post in the field, and that he would either conquer or die there. Night, and the fatigue of both armies, put an end to the combat, and dropping their arms, they sank into those of sleep; but while the khalif's army were buried in slumber, the Mongols cut through some dykes, and the water broke impetuously on the opposing forces. The darkness of the rushing waters, and that of the night, was made still darker, by the despair of the army. Then they saw the words of the Koran fulfilled: "Darkness on darkness; everywhere

darkness;" and, like Pharoah's host, they were buried in the waves. The brave old Fetheddin, whose prudence would have averted the danger, perished; and the rash youth, Mujeheddin, whose arrogance had produced it, escaped with two or three companions, who brought the news of the catastrophe to Bagdad. So blind was the khalif's partiality to his favourite, so slight his sorrow for the loss of his army, that on receiving the intelligence, he merely exclaimed, three times, thankfully: "God be praised for the preservation of Mujeheddin!" And when the enemy had already advanced as far as Jebel-Hamr (the red mountain), three days' march from Bagdad, and he was informed of their approach, he only replied: "How can they pass that mountain?" All representations to the contrary were either unheard or ineffectual.

In the meanwhile, the main body of the Mongols had pushed forward on the road of Yakuba, and was encamped on the eastern bank of the Tigris. Then only did the khalif command the gates of Bagdad to be shut, the fortifications to be garrisoned, and preparations to be made for defence. The two secretaries and Suleimanshah once more led the *élite* of the army, against the enemy. The battle lasted two days, with various fortune, but with equal loss: on the third, Hulaku prohibited the Mongols from renewing the attack, and resolved to enclose the city in a blockade. On all the heights without the city, and on all the towers and palaces which commanded it, were placed projectile engines, throwing masses of rock and flaming naphtha, which breached the walls, and set the buildings on fire.

At this period, the three presidents of the sherifs, or descendants of Ali, who resided at Helle, on the banks of the Euphrates, not far from the ruins of Babylon, sent a letter to Hulaku, in which they offered their submission, and added bitter complaints of the wrongs which they had suffered from the khalif. They informed him, that according to a tradition preserved by their glorious ancestor, the Lion of God, the

sage of the faith, the son-in-law of the prophet Ali, the son of Abu-taleb, the period of the fall of the family of Abbas, and the conquest of Bagdad, was arrived. Hulaku, equally pleased with the homage of the descendants of the prophet and with the prophecy, answered them graciously, and commanded his general, Emir Alaeddin, to occupy the district of Helle, and to protect the inhabitants from violence. Thus their hatred against the family of Abbas secured them against the rage of the Mongols.

After the siege had lasted forty days, the khalif convoked a general assembly of all the grandees of the realm, in which Ibn Alkami spoke at great length of the innumerable host of the Mongols, and the impossibility of long resisting them; he therefore, recommended a treaty with Hulaku, who was more desirous of the treasures than the dominions of the khalif; he advised a mutual alliance between a daughter of Hulaku and a son of the khalif, and between a daughter of the latter and a son of the former, that the ties of peace and friendship might be drawn the closer. For this purpose, the khalif should go in person to the khan's camp, and thus the blood of thousands would be spared, the city preserved from utter destruction, and the khalifat fortified against every enemy by the acquisition of so powerful an ally.

The fear and pusillanimity of the khalif caused him to listen to Alkami's faithless advice. He sent him, in the first place, into the camp to negociate peace, under the same conditions as had been offered to him from Hamadan; he returned with the answer, probably suggested by himself, that "What was admissible at Hamadan, is no longer so before the gates of Bagdad." Then, only one of the great dignities of the realm was demanded; now all four were, namely: the commander of the army, Suleimanshah, the two ink-holders or secretaries of state, and the chief cup-bearer. The siege continued six days longer with renewed vehemence; on the seventh, Hulaku caused six letters of immunity to be prepared, in which it was stated that the kadis and the seids, the

sheikhs and imams who had not borne arms should be secure of their lives and property; these letters were attached to arrows, and shot into the city on six sides. One of the two secretaries, who despaired of the safety of the city, and was more anxious for his own, embarked on the Tigris to seek it in flight; as however, he came abreast of Kariet-ol-akab, he was stopped by a body of the Mongol troops, posted there for the purpose of cutting off the communication betwen Medain and Basra. Three of his vessels fell a prey to the flaming naphtha, and he was himself compelled to return. The khalif, who had already renounced all hope, now sent Fakhreddin Damaghani, and Ibn Derwish, with presents to Hulaku, and to treat with him concerning the conditions of peace. These two, however, returning without success, he despatched, on the following day, his son Abulfase Abdorrahman, with very considerable presents, and, on the third, his brother Abulfasl Abubekr, with the noblest and greatest personages in the state. These embassies were as fruitless as the first, and the vizier, who was sent into the camp along with Ibn-al-jusi, again brought back the surrender of Suleimanshah and the secretaries, as the indisputable condition of the khalif's free exit.

Suleimanshah, and one of the secretaries, after being assured of a safe conduct, went to Hulaku, who sent them back to the city, commanding them to bring with them their families and whole household, in order that he might send them unobstructedly to Syria and Egypt; they returned to the camp with a considerable escort of troops, who seized this opportunity of deserting the city. Different quarters had just been assigned them, when an Indian struck out the eye of one of Hulaku's principal emirs, with an arrow; Hulaku seized this accident as a pretext for the most sanguinary rage; he commanded the secretary of state and his suite to be put to death, and the general, Suleimanshah, and his officers, to be brought, bound, before him: he said to him, "How comes it, that so great an astrologer as thou could not foresee the

hour of thy death? Wherefore didst thou not counsel thy lord to enter the path of submission, in order to save thy own life and that of others?" Suleimanshah replied, that "the khalif's evil star had made him deaf to good advice." After some interrogatories and replies of this kind, the general and his officers were put to the sword.

Many thousands, who had surrendered into the hands of the conqueror on the faith of the safe conduct, were murdered, unarmed, after they had been separated from each other, on pretence of being sent into different provinces; a cold-blooded and faithless cruelty, which, however, is not without example, having been repeated both in the east and in the west. The history of Alexander, of Charlemagne, Jengis-khan, Timur, and other conquerors, presents us with instances similar to this atrocity of Hulaku, agreeing also wonderfully with it in the number of the victims,—from three to four thousand,—as well as in the circumstances of the promised safe retreat, the division into detachments, and the dialogue held with the commanders, who, for that very reason, were the more certain of their lives being spared.

The khalif seeing no farther hope of saving his life except by surrendering to the conqueror, repaired to the khan's camp, after a siege of forty-nine days, on Sunday, the 4th of the month Jafer, in the 656th year of the Hegira; he was attended by his brother and his two sons, together with a suite of nearly three thousand persons, kadhis, seids, sheikhs, and imams; only the khalif and the three princes, his brother and two sons, together with three of the suite (one in a thousand), in all, seven persons, were admitted to an audience. Hulaku concealed the perfidy of his designs under the mask of smooth words, and the most friendly reception. He requested the khalif to send word into the city that the armed inhabitants should throw away their weapons, and assemble before the gates, in order that a general census might be taken. At the order of the khalif the city poured out its unarmed defenders, who, as well as

the person of Mostassem, were secured. The next day, at sunrise, Hulaku issued commands to fill up the ditch, demolish the walls, pillage the city, and massacre the inhabitants. The ditch, according to the expression of the Persian historian, deep as the deep reflections of wisdom, and the walls as high as the soaring of a lofty mind, were, in an hour, levelled. The army of the Mongols, as numerous as ants and locusts, mined the fortifications like an ant-hill, and then fell upon the city as destructive as a cloud of the latter; the Tigris was died with blood, and flowed as red as the Nile, when Moses, by a miracle, changed its waves into blood; or, it was at least as red as the Egyptian river is to this day, when it is swollen by that annual miracle of nature, its overflow, and coloured red by the red loam and sand which it washes down from Abyssinia; affording a natural explanation of the Mosaic miracle.

The city was a prey to fire and the sword; the minarets and domes of the mosques glowed, like fiery columns and cupolas; from the roofs of the mosques and baths, flowed melted gold and lead, setting on fire the palm and cypress groves which surrounded them. The gilded battlements of the palaces fell like stars to the earth,—like the demons who endeavoured to scale the battlements of Heaven. In the mausolea, the mortal remains of the sheikhs and pious imams, and in the academies, the immortal works of great and learned men, were consumed to ashes; books were thrown into the fire, or where that was distant and the Tigris near, were buried in the waters of the latter. Gold and silver vessels from the palaces and kitchens of the great, fell, in such quantities, into the hands of the ignorant Mongols, that they sold them by weight, like brass or tin. The treasures of Asiatic splendour and art, accumulated for centuries in the khalif's city, became the booty of barbarians. So great a quantity of Persian and Chinese gold tissues, Arab horses, Egyptian mules, Greek and Abyssinian slaves of both sexes, coined and uncoined gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones, was

found, that the private soldier became richer than even the chiefs of the army or the khan himself had ever been before. And yet the treasures of the khalif's palace had not been touched, as these the khan retained for himself.

After four days' pillage, he went, on the 9th of the month Safir, in company with the khalif, to the palace of the latter; where he, as his guest, as he said, desired his host to give him all that he was able. This Mongol politeness struck the khalif with such terror, that his whole body trembled, and as he either had not the keys, or could not find them, he ordered the bolts and locks to be broken open. Two thousand costly garments, ten thousand ducats, and many jewels, were brought out; which the khan, without deigning them a glance, distributed among his suite, and then turned to the khalif, with the words: "Thy public treasures belong to my servants; now produce thy concealed ones." Mostassem pointed to a spot, on excavating which were found the two basins of treasure, so celebrated in the history of the khalifat, each filled with bars of gold, weighing each a hundred miscals. Nassir-ledinillah's wise economy had commenced filling these two vessels; Mostanssur's prodigality emptied them; and Mostassem's avarice again replenished them.

An anecdote is told, in the history of the last reigns of the khalifs, that Mostanssur, when he paid his first visit to this treasure, prayed aloud: "Lord, my God! grant me the favour to be enabled to empty both these vessels during my reign!" The treasurer smiled, and being asked his reason, he said: "When thy grandfather visited this treasure, he besought heaven to reign only until he had filled these two basins; while thou desirest precisely the reverse." Mostanssur applied this gold in the foundation of useful institutions, which immortalize his name; particularly in the erection of the celebrated academy, which was named after him, Mostansariye, and also Omm-ol-Medaris, that is, the Mother of Academies. Mostassem, on the other hand, hoarded gold from avarice; whereas, a politic application of his riches, in the

pay of troops and tribute, might have saved his throne from ruin.

Hulaku's cruelty to Mostassem, realized the Grecian fable of the wishes of King Midas. He commanded plates filled with gold to be placed before him, instead of food; and on the khalif's observing that gold was not food, the Mongol told him, by an interpreter: "For that very reason that it is not food, wherefore hast thou not rather given it to thine army to defend thee, or distributed it amongst mine to satisfy me?" Too late, Mostassem repented the consequences of his avarice, and after spending a sleepless night, tormented with the pangs of hunger and conscience, he prayed, in the morning, in the words of the Koran: "O Lord, my God! possessor of all power; thou givest it to whom thou wilt, and takest from whom thou wilt; thou raisest up and pullest down whomsoever thou pleasest; in thy hands is all goodness, and thou art mighty over all things!"

The khan now held a council of his ministers, to deliberate concerning the fate of the khalif; and it being their unanimous opinion, that prolonging his existence would only be preserving the bloody seeds of war and insurrection, and that only with his life could the dominion of the khalifat be terminated, his death was determined. But as Hulaku himself deemed it improper that the khalif should suffer as an ordinary criminal, and the blood of the prophet's successor be shed by the sword, Mostassem was wrapped in a thick cloth, and beaten to death. So great was the religious veneration for the sacred person of the khalif, and thus did eastern etiquette extend even to the execution of kings. From similar motives of reverence, the Ottoman sultans, when a revolt costs them their lives, are not strangled, but are put to death by compression of the genitals:—a singular and elaborate trait of executioner tenderness!

As the pillage and sack of Bagdad had commenced four days before the khalif's death, so it continued forty days afterwards; till the barbarians dropped their swords from

fatigue, and fuel was wanting for the flames. If we abstract the usual horrors of insulted humanity, which have been repeated in every sacked city, and only in Bagdad were carried to the highest pitch of enormity, we shall not blame the Mongols so much in their conquest of that city, for the conflagration of the mosques, and the desecration of the mausolea, for the destruction of the immense treasures, and the melting of the gold and silver vessels, nor even for the demolition of the bulwarks of holiness, and the overthrow of the khalif throne, as for the annihilation of the libraries, and the loss of many hundred thousand volumes, which fell a prey to the flames.

They consisted of the treasures of Arabic literature, the accumulation of nearly five hundred years; together with the relics of the Persian, which had probably been saved from the destruction of Medain. As the second khalif had commanded his general, in Egypt, to consume the Alexandrian library, so he also caused that of Medain, the residence of Khosroes, to be thrown into the Tigris; and Omar, whom some European historians have in vain endeavoured to exculpate from this high treason against literature, is loaded with the double guilt of the double *auto da fe* of the Greek and the Persian library, by fire and water. As the Arabs destroyed these libraries, five centuries before, in two years; so did the Mongols, in the same space, annihilate the Arabian libraries of Alamut and Bagdad. To this double conflagration must be added, that of the great libraries of Tripoli, Nishabur, and Cairo, in the same century. Thus the conjunction of the seven planets in the same sign of the zodiac, which indicated, according to some astrologers, an universal deluge, and according to others, an universal conflagration, might be justly understood to signify the inundation of the Mongols, and the burning of the libraries.

A most melancholy observation is suggested by the destruction of the libraries of Alamut and Bagdad; it is, that the fall of both was caused by the guilt of learned men: the

former, by the perfidy of the astronomer, Nassireddin; the latter, by the treachery of the *bel esprit*, Ibn Alkami; both being sacrificed to their revenge. The fate of these two learned statesmen, distinguished alike by their great talents and evil hearts, who caused the overthrow of the Assassins and the khalifat, falls now to be mentioned. A few words will suffice. After the conquest of Bagdad, Nassireddin built the celebrated observatory of Meragha; by which, as well as his astronomical tables, both his name and that of Hulaku are immortalized in the history of astronomy. Thus that science derived, at least, some advantage from the many evils in which astrology had been its handmaid. Ibn Alkami, the man of letters, and vizier, instead of the reward he expected, reaped that of a traitor. As such, treated by the Mongols with the most profound contempt, he died, in a few days, a prey to remorse and despair. The inhabitants of Bagdad wrote on every wall, over the gates of the caravanserais and schools, in large letters cut in marble: "The curse of God on him who curses not Ibn Alkami!" One of the traitor's partisans, a Shiite, having expunged the "not" from one of these inscriptions, was punished with seventy blows of the bastinado. The name of Ibn Alkami is intimately interwoven with that of Nassireddin, in the history of the fall of the Assassins, and the khalifat. Asia long trembled from the shock of the violent fall of the empire of the dagger, and the prophet's staff.

The conquest of Bagdad has almost diverted us from our proper object, not merely by the intrinsic importance of the subject, but also on account of its intimate connexion with the end of the Assassins, whose overthrow prepared that of the khalifat.

After their castles in Rudbar and Kuhistan had been razed to the ground, and numbers of them massacred and scattered, they still maintained their stand, for fourteen years, in the mountains of Syria, against the armies of the Mongols, the Franks, and the Egyptian sultan, Bibars, one of the

greatest princes of the Circassian Mamelukes of Egypt. This prince, who zealously sought for supreme power, was not inclined to share it any longer with the remains of the Assassin order, which had been chased from the mountains of Persia. During his reign, Frank and Arab vessels put into the Egyptian ports,[1] with embassies; which the Christian and Arabic princes, such as the German emperor, Alphonso of Arragon, the commander of Yemen, and others, sent with rich presents to the Syrian Ismailites. Bibars, in order to show that he was far above all fear of the order, levied on all these presents the usual customs; and sent to the superior in Syria, a letter, full of threats and reproaches. Terrified and humbled by their misfortunes in Persia, they answered submissively, and with the request that the sultan would not forget them in his peace with the Franks, but include them in his treaty, in token of his protection of them as his slaves; and, in fact, Bibars, who, in this year, concluded a peace with the knights-hospitallers, made the abolition of the tribute paid by the Ismailites, one of the conditions of the treaty. The following year, he received an embassy of the Ismailites, who sent him a sum of money, with the words: "That the money which they had hitherto paid to the Franks, should, in future, flow into the treasury of the sultan; and serve for the pay of the defenders of the true faith.[2]

Three years afterwards,[3] when Sultan Bibars was marching against the Franks, in Syria, the commanders of the different towns appeared to do him homage. Nejmeddin, the grand-master of the Assassins, however, instead of following this example, requested a diminution of the tribute, which the order now paid to the sultan instead of the Franks. Saremeddin Mobarek, the commandant of the Ismailite fortress, Alika, had formerly drawn upon himself the anger of the sultan; but having received pardon on the intercession of the governor of

(1) A. D. 1165; A. H. 664.
(2) Macrisi, in the Book of the Sects. Ibn Forat.
(3) A. D. 1269; A. H. 668.

Sihinn, or, according to others, of Hama, he appeared with a numerous suite, in Bibar's presence, who received him into favour and loaded him with honours. He granted him the supreme command of all the castles of the Ismailites in Syria, which were no longer to be governed by Nejmeddin, but by Saremeddin, in the name of the sultan of Egypt. Massiat, as the property of the sultan, was subjected to the command of Emir Aseddin. In conformity with his orders, Saremeddin appeared before the walls of this fortress; of which he possessed himself, partly by stratagem, and partly by the massacre of a number of the inhabitants. Nejmeddin, the late grand-master of the order, an old man of seventy years of age, and his son, implored the sultan's clemency. He had compassion on them; and granted the former the restoration of his authority, in conjunction with Saremeddin, in consideration of an annual tribute of a hundred and twenty thousand drachmas. A contribution of two thousand gold pieces, was required of Saremeddin; and Nejmeddin left his son in the sultan's court, as a pledge of his obedience and fidelity.[1]

In the meanwhile, Saremeddin having taken possession of Massiat, drove out Aseddin, the governor named by the sultan; but not being able to maintain the place against the approaching forces of the sultan, he threw himself into the castle of Alika. Aseddin returned from Damascus, whither he had taken refuge, again to Massiat, to the command of which he was restored by the sultan's troops, who left him a garrison and body guard. Malik Manssur, Prince of Hama, who had been charged by Bibars with the restoration of the emir, and the deposition of Saremeddin, took the latter prisoner, and brought him before the sultan, who threw him into a dungeon. The castle of Alika surrendered to the sultan's army on the 9th of Shewal.

Nejmeddin, the former grand-prior, again held the com-

(1) Macrisi. Ibn Forat. (2) A. D. 1270; A. H. 669.

mand of the Ismailite castles in Syria,[3] in the name of the sultan, by whom Shemseddin was retained at court, as the pledge of his father's fidelity. On a suspicion being raised against him, he came in person to court, and offered, with his son, Shemseddin, to deliver up all the castles, and to live in future in Egypt; his offer was accepted, and Shemseddin departed for Kehef, to induce the inhabitants to surrender within twenty days. Not appearing, however, at the end of this term, the sultan admonished him, by letter, to fulfil his promise; and Shemseddin desired that the castle of Kolaia should be left in his possession, in exchange for which he engaged to yield all the rest. The sultan acceded to his request; and sent Aalemeddin Sanjar, the judge of Hama, for the purpose of receiving from Shemseddin, the oath of allegiance, and the keys of Kehef; the inhabitants, however, secretly instigated by the latter, refused to admit the envoy.

A second embassy having no better effect, Bibars gave orders for the castle to be besieged. On this, Shemseddin left Kehef, and repaired to the sultan, who was encamped before Hama, and was honourably received; receiving, however, intelligence in a letter, that the inhabitants of Kehef had sent Assassins into the camp, in order to murder his principal emirs, Bibars caused Shemseddin and all his suite to be arrested, and carried into Egypt. At the same time, two officers of the order, who had persuaded their friends in the castle of Khawabi, to surrender to the sultan, were seized at Sarmin. This castle surrendered to negotiation, that of Kolaia to force; and, in the following year, those of Menifa and Kadmus fell into the sultan's hands. The inhabitants of Kehef wished to oppose a longer resistance; but being closely blockaded, and cut off from all relief, they at length sent Bibars the keys of the town; and the Emir Jemaleddin Akonsa made his entry on the 22d of Silvide.

From this moment, Bibars was master of all the forts and castles which had been in the possession of the Ismailites; and he ruined their power in Syria, as Hulaku had done in

Persia. Next to Massiat, the residence of the grand-master, Shiun, a strong place on a rock, abundantly supplied with water,[1] and at a short day's journey from Latakia, had been lately particularly distinguished, by the valiant exploits of its commandant, Hamsa, one of the greatest heroes among the Syrian Ismailites. This Hamsa must not be confounded with Hamsa, the companion of the prophet, and one of the bravest heroes of Mohammedanism; nor with Hamsa, the founder of the religion of the Druses. The numerous battles and enterprises of the Assassins, their valorous defence against the armies of the Crusaders, and the Egyptian sultan, Bibars, and the adventurous character of their whole history, offered a fertile source to the Syrian romance writers and story-tellers; a source of which they did not fail to avail themselves.

This was the origin of the Hamsaname, or Hamsiads,[2] a kind of chivalrous romance, modelled after the style of the Antar, Dulhemmet, Benihilal, and other Egyptian works. After the conquest of Syria, by the Ottomans, the tales of the feats and adventures of Hamsa passed from the mouths of the Arabian story-tellers and coffee-house orators, to those of the Turks; and Hamsa, together with Sid Battal (Cid y Campeador) the proper Cid of the orientals, an Arabian hero, who fell in battle against the Greeks, at the siege of Constantinople, by Harun al Rashid,[3] afforded the richest materials for Turkish romances, which are exclusively occupied by the feats of Hamsa and Sid Battal. The tomb of the Sid in the Anatolian Sanjak Sultanoghi is, to this day, a much frequented resort of pilgrimages, enriched by the Sultan Suleiman, the legislator, with the endowment of a mosque, a convent, and an academy.[4]

The conquest of Massiat was succeeded by that of Alika, and, at length, two years after, by that of Kahaf, Mainoka Kadmus, and of the other castles on the Antilebanon; and

(1) Jehannuma.
(2) Ibid, p. 590.
(3) About A. D. 790; A. H. 109.
(4) Jehannuma, p. 642.

thus the power of the Ismailites was overthrown, both in Syria and Persia. One of their last attempts at assassination is said to have been directed against the person of St. Louis, King of France, but the falsity of this supposition has already been demonstrated, by French writers.[1]

The power of the Ismailites had now terminated, both in Persia and Syria; the citadels of the grand-master, in Rudbar, and of the grand-priors, in Kuhistan and Syria, had fallen; the bands of the Assassins were massacred and scattered; their doctrine was publicly condemned, yet, nevertheless, continued to be secretly taught, and the order of the Assassins, like that of the Jesuits, endured long after its suppression. In Kuhistan, in particular, remains of them still existed; that being a region which, on account of its very mountainous character, was more impracticable than the surrounding countries, and, being less accessible to the persecutors of the order, it afforded the partisans of the latter a more secure asylum.

Seventy years after the taking of Alamut and Bagdad, in the reign of Hulaku's eighth successor, Abu Said Behadir Khan, the great protector of the sciences, to whom Wassaf dedicated his history, the whole of Kuhistan was devoted to the pernicious sect of the Ismailites, and the doctrine of Islamism had not yet been able to enter the hearts of the natives, hard as their mountain rocks. Abusaid determined, in concert with the lieutenant of the province, Shah Ali Sejestani, to send an apostolic mission, for the conversion of these miscreants and infidels. At the head of the society of missionaries, which was composed of zealous divines, was the Sheikh Amadeddin, surnamed of Bokhara, one of the most esteemed jurisconsults, who, on the destruction of that city, had fled to Kuhistan. His grandson, Jelali, in his work, "Nassaih-ol-Moluk" (*Counsels for Kings*), dedicated to the

(1) Eclaircissemens sur quelques circonstances de l'Histoire du Vieux de la Montagne, Prince des Assassins. Histoire de l'Académie des Inscriptions, XVI. p. 163.

Sultan Shahrokh, the son of Timur, relates the history of this mission from the mouth of his father, who had accompanied his grandfather to Kuhistan.[1]

Amadeddin, with his two sons, Hossameddin and Nejmeddin, the father of Jelali, and four other Ulemas, in all seven persons, went to Kain, the chief seat of the Ismailites; where, since the illuminative period of Hassan II., the mosques had fallen down, the pious institutions decayed—where the word of the Koran was no longer heard from the pulpit, nor the call to prayers sounded from the minaret. As prayer, five times a day, is the first of the duties of Islamism, and the call to it proclaims aloud the creed of the faithful, Amadeddin resolved to commence his mission with it. He went, therefore, with his six companions armed, to the terrace of the castle of Kain, from whence, they began, at the same instant, to cry out on all sides: "Say God is great! there is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet. To prayers! Up! to do good!" This summons, to which the unbelieving inhabitants had long been unaccustomed, instead of collecting them in the mosque, excited them to a tumult against the summoners; and, although the latter had taken the precaution to be armed, they did not deem it expedient to purchase the crown of martyrdom with their lives, by defending themselves, but took refuge in a drain, where they hid. As soon as the people were dispersed, they again mounted the terrace, and repeated the call to prayers, and the retreat to the drain. In this manner, their obstinate zeal, supported by the power of the governor, succeeded in accustoming the ears of the infidels to the formula of the summons to prayer, and then to that of prayer itself; and sowed the good seed of the true doctrine of Islamism on the waste field of infidelity and atheism.[2]

While the political wisdom of Abusaid was endeavouring to extirpate the Ismailite doctrine in Persia, its ashes still

(1) Nassiah-ol-Moluk, by Jelali. Imp. Library Vienna, No. 163.
(2) Ibid.

smouldered in Syria; and, from time to time, threw out destructive flames, which were extinguished in the blood of the slaughtered victims. As it had originated in Egypt, and had but served as an instrument of the ambitious designs of the Fatimites; so the Circassian sultans of that country availed themselves of the last fruits of the wide-spread tree of murderous policy, in order to execute their revenge, and to try the dagger on those enemies who resisted the sword. A memorable instance of such an attempt, is afforded us in the history of the Emir Kara Sonkor, who had deserted the court of the Egyptian sultans, and had entered into the service of the khan of the Mongols.

Two years after[1] Abusaid had sent the before-mentioned learned Jelali to Kuhistan, the Egyptian sultan, Mohammed, the son of Bibars, sent no less than thirty Assassins from Massiat to Persia, to sacrifice the Emir Kara Sonkor to his vengeance. They arrived at Tebris, and the first having been cut to pieces in his murderous attempt, the report was soon spread that Assassins were come to murder the Khan Abusaid, the Emir Juban, the Vizier Ali Shah, and all the Mongol nobles. A second attempt on the life of Kara Sonkor cost, like the former one, that of the murderer. A similar attack had been made on the governor of Bagdad, and Abusaid, the great khan, prudently shut himself up in his tent for eleven days. Nevertheless, the Egyptian sultan, Mohammed, did not give up his vengeful attempt on the life of Kara Sonkor. He sent a merchant, named Yunis, to Tebris, with a large sum of money, to hire new Assassins. Yunis sent for them from Massiat, and concealed them in his house. One day, as the Emir Juban was riding in company with the Emirs Kara Sonkor and Afrem, two Assassins watched a favourable opportunity to murder the two latter. The first assailant, who was too hasty in his attack on the Emir Afrem, only tore his clothes with his dagger, instead of wounding his breast,

(1) A. D. 1326; A. H. 720.

and being cut down on the spot, the second did not think it advisable to approach Kara Sonkor.

Inquiries were immediately set on foot into the Funduks *(Fondaehi)* of Tebris, for the purpose of discovering the haunts of the Assassins; the merchant, Yunis, was arrested, but his life was preserved by the interest of the vizier. The Emirs Afrem and Kara Sonkor took all necessary precautions for the preservation of their own. A servant of the latter, a native of Massiat, searched the whole city of Tebris, to find out the Assassin who was to have poniarded his lord; and found him, at last, in the person of his own brother. The emir, in order to gain him over, gave him a hundred pieces of gold, and a monthly salary of three hundred dirhems, together with other presents; for which, he was induced to betray his accomplices. One of them escaped; another stabbed himself; a third expired under the torture, without confessing anything.

In the meanwhile, the Assassins at Bagdad executed their commission better than those at Tebris. One of them threw himself on the governor, as he was going out to ride, and plunged his dagger into his breast, saying: "In the name of Melek Nassir;" and escaped so quickly to Massiat, that he could not be overtaken. From that place, he sent information of the accomplishment of the murder of the governor, to Sultan Mohammed.[1] The two emirs redoubled their vigilance; and, by means of the Ismailite in Kara Sonkor's pay, discovered four others, who were immediately put to death. Nejmeddin Selami, who had been sent as ambassador, from Mohammed to the Khan Abusaid, insinuated himself into a confidential intercourse with the Emir Juban, and the vizier. He informed his master of the execution of the four Assassins; in whose place four others were immediately sent; three of them being arrested and discovered, expired under the pangs of the torture; fortunately for Selami, the fourth

(1) Macrisi, in the Book of Sects. Abulfeda.

escaped, who was the bearer of the sultan's letter to his plenipotentiary at Massiat, whence he apprised the sultan of the ill success of his mission.

Selami continued his negotiations with the Emir Juban and the vizier, so happily, that they concluded a peace with the sultan, on condition that he should send no more Assassins into their country. Notwithstanding this, the Emir Kara Sonkor was attacked anew, while he was hunting, by a murderer, who only, however, wounded his horse in the thigh, and was immediately killed by the guard. Even in the suite of the Emir Itmash, who came on his second embassy to Abusaid's court, two Assassins were detected; one of whom immediately stabbed himself, and the other, after refusing to confess, was put to death in chains. Juban loaded Itmash with reproaches, saying that, by sending these murderers, the sultan scoffed at the treaty; and the ambassador assured him, in return, that if they really were Assassins, they must have arrived at Tebris, before it was signed. After Itmash and Selami had returned to the sultan, their master, in Cairo, the latter wrote once more to the Massiat Ismailites, reproaching them for not fulfilling their contract. They sent him for answer, one of their best Fedavis, a great eater, who devoured a calf, and drank forty measures of wine a-day. After being kept some time, at Keremeddin's house, in Cairo, he went to the court of the great Khan Abusaid, in the suite of Selami, who was sent as ambassador, with presents.

At the feast of Bairam, when the emirs were attending the khan, Selami ordered the Assassin to watch the moment when Kara Sonkor should leave the palace, from the banquet: "The first," said he, "who comes out, is the destined victim." By accident, the vizier called the Emir Kara Sonkor back, just as he was on the point of quitting the palace; and the governor of Rum, who was dressed in red, like him, fell beneath the blows of the murderer, who jumped from a roof on to the governor's horse, and stabbed him. Being taken, he died under the most horrible tortures, without confessing a word.

Murderer succeeded murderer, in attempting to satisfy the sultan's desire of revenge; but, fortunately, Kara Sonkor escaped them all. If we may credit the testimony of Macrisi, no less than one hundred and twenty-four Assassins lost their lives in attempting that of Kara Sonkor; so little is the life of man in the power of his species, and so incapable are the tools of murder of cutting the thread of those days, which the Almighty has numbered.

Three generations after Abusaid's mission, when the whole of Kuhistan had returned, at least in appearance, within the pale of the true faith, the Sultan Shahrokh, the son of Timur, sent Jelali, of Kain, who usually lived in Herat, and was thence called Al Herat, and Al Kaini, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of belief in that province. Jelali felt himself the more called upon to engage in this inquisitorial affair, as his grandfather had presided over the apostolic mission, and because the prophet had appeared to him in a dream, and put a broom in his hand, with which he was to sweep the country. He interpreted this vision as a celestial call, by which he was appointed to the high office of cleansing away all the impurities of unbelief; and he entered upon it with a conscientious zeal, and a spirit of more than Islamitic toleration. His before-mentioned work, "The Counsels for Kings," contains the results of the report of his inquiry given to Sultan Shahrakh, and likewise, some information respecting the secret policy of the still unconverted Ismailites, taken from Jovaini's "History of Jehan Kusha *(the Conqueror of Worlds)*."

Within the space of eighteen months, Jelali travelled through the whole of Kuhistan; and every where found that the Ulemas, or teachers of the law, were true orthodox Sunnites. The seids, the descendants of the prophet, passed for such; and, still more, the dervises, who represented themselves to be sofis, or mystics. The emirs of Tabs and Shirkuh were good Sunnites; but the commanders of the other castles, and even the servants of the government *(Beg-jian)*,

were to be suspected. For the rest, the peasants, merchants, mechanics, were all good Moslimin.

Notwithstanding the people were entirely devoted to the true doctrine of Islamism, still it appears that the order preserved its existence in secret, long after the loss of temporal power, in the hope of, sometime or other, recovering it, under more favourable circumstances. The Ismailites, indeed, no longer ventured to unsheath the dagger against their foes; but the chief aim of their policy, to acquire influence in affairs of state, remained; they, in particular, sought to make proselytes of the members of the divan; in order, by this means, to secure the majority of voices in their favour, and to stifle in their birth, all complaints and denunciations of their secret doctrine. For this reason, the author of "Jehan Kusha, *(Conqueror of the World)*," as well as the writer of the "Sias-set-ol-moluk" *(Art of Governing; or, Discipline of Kings)*, warns princes to place in the divan none of the officers of Kuhistan, who were, more or less to be suspected, on account of their principles. When intrusted with the management of the finances, they were, indeed, never in arrear with their contracts; so that the public treasury had never any claims against them; they, however, ruined the villages which they farmed, and sent the surplus of the taxes to their secret superiors, who still preserved an existence at Alamut, the centre of the ancient splendour of the order. Thither also flowed a portion of the revenues of pious institutions, the produce of which was destined for the support of mosques and schools, servants of religion, and teachers. Similar well-intentioned warnings have, in our own times, been frequently given to princes: the attentive ear of government is always the most powerful obstacle to the rise of secret orders and societies to power.

Remains of the Ismailites still exist both in Persia and Syria,[1] but merely as one of the many sects and heresies of Islamism, without any claims to power, without the means of

(1) Mémoires sur les Ismaelis et Nossairis de Syrie, adressé à M. Silv. de Sacy, par M. Rousseau. Annales des Voyages. Cahier XLII.

obtaining their former importance, of which they seem, in fact, to have lost all remembrance. The policy of the secret state-subverting doctrine of the first lodge of the Ismailites, and the murderous tactics of the Assassins, are equally foreign to them. Their writings are a shapeless mixture of Ismailite and Christian traditions, glossed over with the ravings of the mystic theology. Their places of abode are, both in Persia and Syria, those of their forefathers, in the mountains of Irak, and at the foot of Antilebanon.

The Persian Ismailites recognise, as their chief, an imam, whose descent they deduce from Ismael the son of Jafer-Es-sadik, and who resides at Khekh, a village in the district of Kum, under the protection of the shah. As, according to their doctrine, the imam is an incarnate emanation of the Deity, the imam of Khekh enjoys, to this day, the reputation of miraculous powers; and the Ismailites, some of whom are dispersed as far as India, go in pilgrimage, from the banks of the Ganges and the Indus, in order to share his benediction. The castles in the district of Rudbar, in the mountains of Kuhistan, particularly in the vicinity of Alamut, are still inhabited, to this day, by Ismailites, who, according to a late traveller, go by the general name of Hosseinis.[2]

The Syrian Ismailites live in eighteen villages, dispersed round their ancient chief place, Massiat, and are under the rule of a sheikh or emir, who is the nominee of the governor of Ḥamah. Being clothed in a pelisse of honour, he engages to pay to Hamah an annual sum of sixteen thousand five hundred piastres; his vassals are divided into two parties, the Suweidani and Khisrewi: the former so named after one of their former sheikhs; the latter, for their extraordinary veneration of the prophet Khiser (Elias), the guardian of the spring of life: the former, who are by far the smaller number, live principally at Feudara, one of the eighteen places under

(1) Extrait d'un livre des Ismailis, pour faire suite au Mémoire sur les Ismailis et Nossairis. Annales des Voyages, LII.

(2) A topographical Memoir on Persia.

the jurisdiction of Massiat; three miles east of that fortress lies a strong castle, whose name, pronounced Kalamus, is probably the same with the Kadmos of Arabian historians and geographers; from thence, the chain of mountains, after several windings, descends to the sea, near Tripoli.

In 1809, the Nossairis, the neighbours and enemies of the Ismailites, possessed themselves, by treachery, of their chief fortress, Massiat; the inhabitants were pillaged and murdered; the booty amounted to more than a million piastres in value. The governor of Hamah did not suffer this rash enterprise of the Nossairis to go unpunished; he besieged Massiat, and compelled them to resign the fortress to its ancient possessors; the latter, however, sunk into complete political insignificance. Externally they practise the duties of Islamism with austerity, although they internally renounce them: they believe in the divinity of Ali; in uncreated light as the principle of all created things; and in the Sheikh Rashi-deddin, the grand-prior of the order in Syria, contemporary with the grand-master, Hassan II., as the last representative of the Deity on earth.

We shall mention here, in passing, as they are neighbours of the Ismailites, the Nossairis, the Motewellis, and the Druses, three sects anathematized by the Moslems, on account of their infidelity and lawlessness. Their doctrine agrees, in many points, with that of the Ismailites; their founders having been animated with the same spirit of extravagant fanaticism,—of unprincipled licentiousness. The Nossairis and Druses are both older in their origin than the eastern Ismailites; the former having appeared in Syria, as a branch of the Karmathites, as early as the fifth century of the Hegira; the latter received their laws from Hamsa, a missionary of Hakembiemrillah's from the lodge of Cairo. The former believe, like the Ismailites, in the incarnation of the divinity in Ali; the latter consider that maddest of tyrants, Hakembiemrillah, as a god in the flesh. Both abjure all the rules of Islamism, or only observe them in appear-

ance; both hold secret and nocturnal assemblies stigmatized by the Moslimin, where they give themselves up to the enjoyment of wine and promiscuous intercourse.

The origin and doctrine of the Motewelli is less known than that of the Nossairis and Druses. Their name is corrupted from Motewilin, the *interpreters*; and therefore, probably, indicates a sect of the Ismailites, who taught the *Tenvil*, or allegorical interpretation of the commands of Islamism, in opposition to the *Tensil*, or positive letter of the word, not from God, the sense of which is a command to the true believer.[1]

The reproach of immorality, which these sects share in common, is certainly much more applicable to the Motewellis than to their neighbours. For the inhabitants of the village of Martaban, on the road from Latakia to Aleppo, who offer travellers the enjoyment of their wives and daughters, and who consider their refusal as an affront, are Motewellis.[2]

In still worse report than the Ismailites, Motewellis, Nossairis and Druses, are some tribes of Syrian and Assyrian kurds, who are called Yezidis, because they hold in peculiar veneration Yezid, the khalif of the Ommia family, who persecuted, sanguinarily, the family of the prophet, and likewise the devil, neither of whom they curse like other Moslimin. Their sheikh is called Karabash, that is, Blackhead, because he covers his head with a black scarf. The name of their founder is Sheikh Hadi, who, according to opinion, prayed, fasted, and gave alms for all his future disciples; so that they believe themselves exempted from these duties of Mohammedanism, and that, in consideration of his merits, they will go to heaven without appearing before the tribunal of God.[3]

All these still existing sects are designated by the Moslimin, generally, Sindike (*freethinkers*), Mulhad (*impious*), and

(1) De Tenvil et Tensil autore Silvestre de Sacy, in novis Commentariis Societatis Göttingensis.

(2) Volney Voyages.

(3) Jehannuma, p. 419.

Batheni (*esoterics*), and, on account of their nocturnal assemblies, sometimes the one, sometimes the other, receive from the Turks the name of *Mumsoindiren*, or the *extinguishers*; because, according to the accusations of their religious adversaries, they extinguish the lights, for the purpose of indulging in promiscuous intercourse, without regard to kindred or sex.

Similar charges have been, at all times, raised against secret societies, whenever they concealed their mysteries under the veil of night; sometimes groundlessly, as against the assemblies of the early Christians, of whose innocence Pliny affords a testimony; sometimes but too well founded, as against the mysteries of Isis, and, still earlier, against the Bacchanalia of Rome. As the latter was the first secret society mentioned in Roman history, as dangerous to the state, and which assumed religion as a cloak to every enormity, the similarity of the subject, renders the mentioning them not out of place here.

As, in the sixth century, after the flight of the prophet, and the establishment of Islamism, the pest of the Ismailites threatened, under the appearance of religion, to undermine and overthrow the edifice, so, also, in the sixth century, after the foundation of Rome and the republic, the pest of the Bacchanalians, menaced the ruin of the city and the state, under the mask of religion.[1]

"A Greek, of mean extraction," says Livy, "came first into Etruria, skilled in none of the arts which that most learned of all nations has devoted to the culture of the mind and the body, but a sacrificer and soothsayer; not that he spread his doctrine by public teaching, or filling the mind with a sacred horror, but, as the president of secret and nocturnal sacrifices. At first, but few were initiated; afterwards, however, the people, both men and women, were admitted. In order to attract the mind the more, wine and

(1) Livy. l. XXXIX. c. 8.

banquets were added to religious sacrifices. When the intoxication of the wine, night, the mixture of the sexes, and of youth and age, had extinguished every shadow of shame, vice and corruption of all kinds burst forth, every one having at hand the means of gratifying his desires. There was not merely one species of vice and the mere promiscuous intercourse of noble youths and maidens; but also from this source proceeded false witnesses, false documents, false informations, and accusations, poisoning, and secret murder,—so secret, indeed, that even the bodies of the dead were not found for sepulture. Much was attempted by stratagem, but most by violence. Violence remained concealed, because, in the midst of the yells, and noise of cymbals and drums, the cries of the violated and the murdered could not be heard."

The consul, Posthumus, had no sooner given intelligence to the senate of the discovery of the existence and object of this secret society, than the latter adopted the most powerful measures, for the safety of the state and the commonweal, and proceeded against the members of the Bacchanalia, as criminals against the state, with the utmost rigour. The speech of the consul to the people, advised them to watch over the peril which threatened the state, from the conspiracy of vice with religion. "I am not sure (said he) that some of you may not have fallen into error; for nothing has a more deceptive appearance than corrupted religion. When the Deity is made a cloak for iniquity, the mind is seized with terror, lest, in the punishment of human imposture, some divine law may be transgressed." This unveiling of crime, from which the mask of religion had been torn, and the rigour with which the Bacchanalians were persecuted, not only in Rome, but also throughout Italy, with the sword and exile, stifled, in its birth, the monster whose increasing strength menaced the state with ruin. Had the princes of the east acted in the same spirit towards the first secret societies and the emissaries of the lodge of Cairo, as the senate and consuls had done, the sect of the Ismailites would never have

attained political influence, nor would the blood-dropping branch of Assassins have sprouted from that poisonous stem.

Unfortunately, as we have seen in the course of this history, several princes were themselves devoted to the secret doctrine of infidelity and immorality, and others were deficient in strength to restrain its progress with effect. Thus, through the blindness of princes and the weakness of governments—through the credulity of nations, and the criminal presumption of an ambitious adventurer, like Hassan Sabah, the monstrous existence of secret societies and an *imperium in imperio*, attained so frightful an extent and power, that the murderer seated himself openly upon the throne, and the unbounded dominion of the dagger in the hands of the Assassins was an object of terror to princes and rulers, and insulted mankind in a manner unexampled and unique in history. We have, more than once, briefly pointed out the analogy which the constitution of the order of the Assassins presents with contemporary or more modern orders; but, although so many points of similarity are found, which can neither be accidental nor yet spring from the same cause, but which, probably, through the medium of the Crusades, passed from the spirit of the east into that of the west, they are still insufficient to make a perfect companion to the order of the Assassins, which, thank Heaven, has hitherto been without parallel. The Templars, incontrovertibly, stand in the next rank to them; their secret maxims, particularly in so far as relates to the renunciation of positive religion, and the extension of their power by the acquisition of castles and strong places, seem to have been the same as those of the order of the Assassins. The accordance, likewise, of the white dress and red fillets of the Assassins, with the white mantle and red cross of the Templars, is certainly remarkably striking.

As the Templars, in many respects, trod in the footsteps of the Assassins, so also did the Jesuits, whose exertions for the aggrandisement of their order, and its preservation, if not by political power, at least by secret connexions and influence,

agree entirely with the similar policy of the Assassins after the fall of Alamut. The Assassins were, themselves, as we have seen, a branch of the Ismailites, the proper Illuminati of the east. The institution of their lodge at Cairo; the various grades of initiation; the appellations of master, companions, and novices; the public and the secret doctrine; the oath of unconditional obedience to unknown superiors, to serve the ends of the order; all agree completely with what we have heard and read, in our own days, concerning secret revolutionary societies; and they coincide not less in the form of their constitution, than in the common object of declaring all kings and priests superfluous.

The ostensible object of this institution was in itself sufficiently laudable, and the exoteric doctrine had merely for its object the extension of knowledge, and the mutual support of the members. The house of science, at Cairo, or the public school of the lodge, was the temple of the sciences, and the model of all academies; the greater number of the members were certainly deceived into good faith by the fair exterior of a beneficent, philanthropical, knowledge-spreading form; they were a kind of Freemasons, whose native country, as we have seen, may really be sought and found in Egypt, if not in the most ancient times, at least in the history of the middle ages. As in the west, revolutionary societies arose from the bosom of the Freemasons, so in the east, did the Assassins spring from the Ismailites.

Traces of retribution immediately executed, which fulfilled the sentence of the order as infallibly as though it were the arm of fate itself, are, perhaps, likewise to be found in the proceedings of the Vehme, or secret tribunal, although its existence only commenced two hundred years after the extermination of the order of murderers in Asia.[1] The insanity of the enlighteners, who thought that by mere preaching, they could emancipate nations from the protecting care of

(1) Kopp, Ueber der Verfassung der heimlichen Gerichte in Westphalen.

princes, and the leading-strings of practical religion, has shown itself in the most terrible manner by the effects of the French revolution, as it did in Asia, in the reign of Hassan II; and as, at that period, the doctrine of assassination and treason openly proceeded from Alamut, so did the doctrine of regicide produce from the French National Convention, in Jean de Brie, a legion of regicides. The members of the Convention who sat with Robespierre on the side of the mountain, and who decreed the king's execution, would have been satellites worthy of the Old Man of the Mountain. Like the initiated to murder, they almost all died a violent death.

The dominion of the Assassins sank under the iron tramp of Hulaku; their fall drew after it that of the ancient throne of the khalif, and of other dynasties; thousands bled under the conquering sword of the Mongols, who went forth as the scourge of Heaven—like Attila and Jengis Khan, to steel with blood the deadened nerves of nations. After him, the remains of the hydra of Assassination quivered in the remnant of the sect of the Ismailites, but powerless and venomless; held down by the preponderance of the government in Persia and Syria; politically harmless, somewhat like the juggling of the Templars of the present day, and other secret societies watched by the vigilant eye of the police in France.

In writing this history, we have set two things before us as our object, to have attained which is less our hope than our wish. In the first place, to present a lively picture of the pernicious influence of secret societies in weak governments, and of the dreadful prostitution of religion to the horrors of unbridled ambition. Secondly, to give a view of the important, rare, and unused historical treasures, which are contained in the rich magazine of oriental literature. We have but seized the prey which the lions of history have abandoned: for Müller, in his twenty-four books of history, has not mentioned the Assassins at all; and Gibbon, who, according to his own avowal, let no opportunity escape him of painting scenes of blood, has treated them but superficially;

although, at the same time, both these great historians have snatched from oblivion, with the pencil of the most masterly description, many other insignificant events, the sources of which were accessible to them. We may easily estimate from this condensed account of all that is worth knowing of and concerning the order of Assassins, and which is but sparingly scattered through the works of eastern writers, how many concealed rarities and costly pearls are to be found in the untrodden depths of the ocean of Oriental history.

END OF BOOK VII.

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NOTES.

Note A, page 127.

After giving a view of the dogmas of the Ismailites, Rousseau adds:—*

"Such were, substantially, the dogmas of the first Ismailis; and such, nearly, are those which their descendants in Syria profess to this day. I say, nearly; for there can be no doubt that the latter, having fallen so tremendously from their ancient social organization, must also have lapsed from their original faith. This belief, now more than ever disfigured, is become, to the last degree, extravagant, from a mass of abuses and senseless superstitions, introduced in the course of time. A certain Sheikh Rashideddin, who appeared among them, I believe, three hundred years ago, put the finishing stroke to their errors, by making them believe that he was the last of the prophets, in whom the divine power was to be manifested. This impostor, who was profoundly versed in the sacred writings, appears to be the author of the book, some fragments of which I have translated, and in which he promulgates his principles as if he were himself the Almighty."

Note B, page 131.

The sovereign of the Assassins is called *sheikh*, by oriental authors. Vincent le Blanc names him, *Séguémir*, a word compounded of *sheikh* and *emir*, and makes him reside in Arabia; but nothing that such an author says is astonishing. The Arabic word *sheikh*, which is equivalent to the Latin *Senior*, and which has its two significations in the lower Latinity, has been ridiculously rendered *Vetus*, *Vetulus*; *Senex*, instead of *Senior*, when *Dominus* was not meant. We read *Vetulus de Monte*, in the chronicle of Nicholas of Treveth, A. D. 1236; *Vetulus de Montanis*, in that of William de Nangis, of the same year; *Vetulus de Montibus*, several times in Sanuto; and *Senex de Montanis*, in the Latin translation of Marco Polo. In Haïton, *Sexmontius* is but the contraction of *Senex montis*, which Batilli, who translates it, *Prince of Six Mountains*, has not understood: we have seen him called *Summus*

* Annales des Voyages, cahier XLII. p. 13 of the article, and 283 of the collection.

Abbas, Prolatus, Magister Cutlellorum, by James de Vitri: in the same author, we read that this sovereign was commonly called *simplex*. He gives himself the title of "*Simplicitas Nostra*," in his letter to Philip Augustus, handed down by William of Newbury: this is one of the two which have been supposititiously attributed to him. This *simplicity* consisted in inhumanly putting to death those whom he deemed enemies of his sect, or whom he regarded as extortioners, as William of Tyre expresses himself. The Assassins exercised their enormities alike, against both Mahommedans and Christians: we see in history the catalogue of khalifs, princes, and viziers, slain by their emissaries.* I am also convinced, that the sheikh, simple as he entitled himself, caused assassinations to be committed at the solicitation of other princes, from motives of interest, in which religion had no share. We are justified in believing this, from what their commandant in Syria said to Henry the Second, Count of Champagne, when he invited him to pass through his domains: "*Si inimicum aut insidiatorem regni haberet, ab hujus modi servis suis continuò interfici procuraret.*" These are the words given by Sanuto; so that, when the chief of the Assassins is made to speak otherwise, in his letter, dated from Massiat, and inserted by Nicholas of Treveth, in his chronicle (A. D. 1192): "*Sciatis quod nullum hominem mercede aliqua vel pecuniâ occidimus*," it is a reason why we should suspect it to be false. In fact, it is very probable that the English fabricated the letter addressed to Leopold, Duke of Austria, in order to procure the liberty of King Richard I., whom he detained in prison; and that, at the same time, they addressed another to Philip Augustus, to remove his suspicions about the murder of the Marquess of Montferrat, and to obviate his acting hostilely against them in their king's absence. The best justification of Richard must be derived from the generosity of his character, whatever ferocity his valour may have possessed. This king, when mortally wounded at the seige of Chaluz, in the Limousin, by a cross-bowman, not only pardoned him after the town was taken, but also before his death ordered him to have a hundred shillings given to him.

* Two khalifs; one of Bagdad, the other of Egypt; Herbelot, art. Bathania. Tapares, Sultan of Khorassan, Ann.: Comnen. Alexiad. Book VI. A king of Mossul and Seljukide prince; Extracts from the History of Abulfeda, by Deguignes. The celebrated Vizier Nisamolmulk, Herbelot, art. Melekshah:—without reckoning many other assassinations recounted by Abulfaraj, in different parts of his ninth dynasty.

With regard to the true cause of the assassination of Conrad, Marquess of Montferrat, there is great reason to believe that Humphrey, Lord of Thoron, the first husband of Isabel, the daughter of Amalric, and heiress to the kingdom of Jerusalem, seeing his wife, together with the crown, fall into the possession of Conrad, employed the Assassins as the ministers of his revenge.*

Note C, page 132.

The following is the supposititious letter, from the Old Man of the Mountain, to Leopold Duke of Austria, as given in "Rymer's Fœdera," vol. i. p. 23:—

"Limpoldo, Duci Austriæ, Vetus de Monte, salutem: Cum plurimi reges et principes ultra mare Ricardum Regem Angliæ et Dominum de morte Marchisi inculpant, juro per Deum qui in æternum regnat, et per legem quam tenemus, quod in ejus morte culpam non habuit; est causa siquidem mortis Marchisi talis.

"Unus ex fratribus nostris, in unam navem de Salteleya ad partes nostras veniebat et tempestas forte illum apud Tyrum impulit, et Marchisus fecit illum rapi et occidi, et magnum ejus pecuniam rapuit. Nos vero Marchiso nuncios nostros misimus mandantes, ut pecuniam fratris nostri nobis redderet, et de morte fratris nostri satisfaceret, quam super Reginaldum Dominum Sidonis posuit. Et nos tamen fecimus per amicos nostros quod in veritate scivimus, quod ipse fecit illum occidere et pecuniam illius rapere.

"Et iterum alium nuncium nostrum, nomine Eurisum misimus ad eum, quem in mari mergere voluit; sed amici nostri illum a Tiro festinanter fecere recedere, qui ad nos cito pervenit et ista nobis nunciavit. Nos quoque ex illa hora Marchisum desideravimus occidere. Tunc quoque duo fratres misimus ad Tirum, qui eum apertè et ferè coram omni populo Tiri occiderunt.

"Hæc itaque fuit causa mortis Marchisi, et bene dicimus vobis in veritate, quod Dominus Ricardus Rex Angliæ in hac Marchisi morte nullam culpam habuit: et qui, propter hoc Domino Regi Angliæ malum fecerunt, injustè fecerunt et sine causa.

"Sciatis pro certo quod nullum hominem hujus mundi pro mercede aliqua, vel pecunia occidimus, nisi prius malum nobis fecerit.

"Et sciatis quod literas istas fecimus in domo nostra ad castellum

* Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, tom XVII. p. 168. Falconet; Dissertation sur les Assassins Peuple d'Asie, 2e partie.

nostruim Massiat, in dimidio Septembris, anno ab Alexandro millesimo quingentesimo decimo quinto."

Which may be rendered as follows:

"To Leopold, Duke of Austria, the Old Man of the Mountain sends, greeting:

"Seeing that many kings and princes, beyond sea, accuse the Lord Richard, King of England, of the death of the marquess, I swear, by the God who reigns for ever, and by the laws which we observe, that he had no share in his death: the cause of the marquess's death was as follows:—

"One of our brethren journeying in a ship, from Salteleya to our parts, was driven by a tempest near to Tyre; and the marquess had him seized and put to death, and laid hands on his money. Now, we sent our messengers to the marquess, requiring him to restore our brother's money, and give us satisfaction for our brother's death, of which he accused Reginald, Lord of Sidon; but we ascertained the truth, by means of our friends, that it was the marquess himself who caused him to be slain, and his money to be seized.

"And again we sent another messenger to him, by name Eurisus, whom he would have thrown into the sea, had not our friends caused him to depart hastily from Tyre: he came quickly to us, and told us these things. We, therefore, from that hour have desired to slay the marquess; so, then, we sent two brethren to Tyre, who killed him openly, and almost before the whole people of Tyre.

"This, therefore, was the cause of the marquess's death; and we tell you of a truth, that the Lord Richard, King of England, hath had no share in this death of the marquess; and they who, on that account, ill treat the king of England, do it unjustly, and without cause.

"Know ye for certain, that we slay no man in this world for any gain or reward, unless he have first injured us.

"And know, that we have drawn up these present letters in our palace, in our castle of Massiat, in the middle of September, in the fifteen hundred and fifteenth year after Alexander."

Note D, page 137.

Memoir on the Dynasty of the Assassins, and on the Origin of their Name, by M. Sylvestre de Sacy, read at the public meeting of the Institute of France, July 7th, 1809.

Among the writers who have transmitted to us the history of those memorable wars, which, for a space of nearly two centuries, unceasingly depopulated Europe, in order to carry destruction and desolation throughout the finest regions of Asia and Africa, there is scarcely one who does not make mention of that barbarous horde, which, established in a corner of Syria, and known by the name of Assassins, rendered itself formidable both to the orientals and occidentals, and exercised its atrocities indifferently against the Moslem sultan and the Christian prince. If the historians of the Crusades have mingled a few fables with the information which they have handed down to us, regarding the tenets and manners of these sectarians, we ought not to feel surprised; for, the terror which they inspired, scarcely permitted our warriors to search very deeply into their origin, or to procure exact data concerning their religious and political constitution. Even their name has been disfigured and presented under a multitude of different forms, and it is to this that we must attribute the uncertainty of modern critics as to its origin and etymology. Among all the writers who have devoted their attention to historical and critical researches into the subject of the Assassins, none has shed more light upon it than M. Falconet. Nevertheless, as this learned gentleman had not applied himself at all to the study of the languages of the east, and could not, therefore, avail himself, in his inquiries, of the assistance of the Persian and Arabian writers, whose works had never been either published or translated, he has not been able to trace the Assassins up to their true origin, nor to give the etymology of their name. It is to supply this defect in his labours that I have decided upon treating this subject anew. In a dissertation, which I submitted to the judgment of the *classe*, and of which I shall present you with a short analysis, I proposed to inquire, what was the doctrine of this sect, and by what ties they were related to one of the principal divisions of Mohammedanism; and, lastly, why they had received a name, which, passing with a slight change into the west, has furnished several modern languages with a term expressive of a cool premeditated murder.

It is a most singular circumstance, which cannot fail to strike us in studying the history of the religion and power of the Mohammedans, that their empire, which, in a small number of years, subjected the whole of Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Persia, and several other vast regions of Asia and Africa, was, from the very first, torn by intestine divisions, which seemed as though they would arrest its progress, and insure the neighbouring potentates against the invasion which menaced them. It is difficult to explain how the spirit of faction, which armed the Musulmans against each other, should not have checked the rapidity and extent of their conquests; but, without stopping to consider this point, which forms no part of our subject, we shall content ourselves with stating the fact, that the death of Mohammed was the signal of discord amongst those who had embraced his doctrine, and hitherto fought under his victorious standard. Ali, Mohammed's cousin, and husband of his daughter, Fatima, who, to an ardent zeal for the new religion, added more instruction than the rest of the Musulmans, seemed destined to supply the place of the legislator and pontiff of Islamism, and to complete the work left still imperfect by him. But Mohammed had not had the prudence to name his successor; or, if he had done so, as Ali's partisans generally maintain, he had not given his nomination sufficient publicity to prevent its being contested; and he had neglected to invest it with that divine sanction which he so well knew how to give to all his determinations, even when the interests of his household, and the altercations excited by his wife's jealousy, were the only matters in question. Ali, in consequence, saw the wise Ebubekr, the fierce Omar, and the weak Othman, preferred before him; and it was only after the violent death of the latter, that the suffrages of the Musulmans seemed to unite in his favour. Scarcely had he ascended the throne, ere an ambitious man, supported by a powerful family, declared himself his rival; and succeeded, by treachery, and availing himself of Ali's faults, in stripping him of an authority, whose legitimacy was irrefragable. Ali soon fell beneath the murderer's dagger. His two sons were not long in experiencing the same fate; and, from that moment, were laid the immoveable foundations of that schism, which, to this day, divides the disciples of Mohammed into two great hostile factions, which, for several centuries, ceased not to steep the eastern provinces of the empire in blood, and was felt in the most southern parts of Arabia, and even on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

The partisans of Ali themselves soon split into several parties; and though united in their veneration for the blood of the prophet, which flowed in the veins of the descendant of Ali, they neither agreed in the prerogatives they attached to this noble origin, nor on the branch to which the right to the dignity of imam was transmitted. This name, which comprises the idea of all temporal and spiritual power, and which, in the opinion of some fanatics, was nearly co-equal with that of divinity, was the watch-word of all the enemies of the khalifs descended from the houses of Moawia and Abbas; but they did not all recognise the same person as imam. One of the most powerful, among the factions formed of the followers of Ali, was that of the Ismailians, so called, because they maintained that the dignity of imam had been transmitted, through an uninterrupted succession of descendants, from Ali to a prince named Ismail; and that, since his time, this same office had been filled by personages unknown to man, awaiting the moment when the posterity of Ali should at length triumph over its enemies. A character peculiar to this sect is, that it explains all the precepts of the Musulman law allegorically; and this allegory was pushed so far by some of the Ismailian doctors, that it tended to nothing less than the abolition of all public worship, and the foundation of a purely philosophical doctrine, and a very licentious moral code, on the ruins of all revelation and divine authority. To this sect belong the Karmathites, whose enormities we shall not here mention, to whom the Wahabees, who, at this time, fill several of the provinces of the Ottoman empire with the terror of their name, and who, under the mask of reformers, appear destined to overthrow the Mohammedan religion, seem to have succeeded. From this same sect issued the Fatimite khalifs. These, after establishing themselves in Africa, were not long in depriving the khalifs of Bagdad, of Egypt and Syria, and they formed a potent empire, which lasted two centuries and a half, until it was overthrown by Saladin. These Fatimite khalifs acknowledged themselves to be Ismailians; but the interests of their policy obliged them to disguise the secret doctrines of their sect, which were known only to a small number of adepts, and the most intolerant of them imposed no other obligation on their subjects, than the recognition of Ali and his descendants' right to the sovereignty, and to vow a mortal hatred against the khalifs of Bagdad. In the person of the Fatimites, the Ismailians had ascended the throne, and deprived the Abassides of a considerable portion of their empire: but their ambition was not satisfied. The race of the prophet ought not to share the sovereignty

with the descendants of usurpers, and even the honour of Islamism, and of the doctrine taught and propagated by the imams, required that all Musulmans should be united in the same faith, and pay obedience to a single legitimate pontiff. To attain this end, missionaries, spread throughout all the oriental provinces, secretly taught the dogmas of the Ismailians, and laboured unceasingly to increase the number of their proselytes, and to inspire them with the spirit of revolt against the khalifs of Bagdad and the princes who acknowledged their authority.

About the middle of the sixth century of the Hegira, one of these missionaries, named Hassan, son of Ali, having been gained over to the Ismailians, afterwards signalised himself by his zeal in the propagation of his adopted sect. This man, in other respects a good Musulman, being persuaded that the Fatimite khalif, Mostanssur, at that time reigning in Egypt, was the legitimate imam, resolved to repair to his court, deeming himself happy in being able to proffer his homage, and to revere in him the image and vicegerent of the Deity. For this purpose, he left the northern provinces of Persia, where he was exercising the secret and dangerous functions of missionary, and proceeded to Egypt. His reputation had preceded him thither. The reception which he met with from the khalif, rendered it beyond the reach of doubt, that he would soon be called to the first offices. As usual, favour excited jealousy, and Hassan's enemies soon found an opportunity of rendering him an object of the khalif's suspicion. They even wished to have him arrested; but Mostanssur acceding reluctantly to their plans of revenge, they were satisfied with putting him on board a vessel bound for the northern coast of Africa. After some adventures, strongly tinged with the marvellous, Hassan returned to Syria, and thence passing through Aleppo, Bagdad, and Ispahan, he traversed the several provinces submitted to the Seljukide rule, everywhere performing his missionary functions, and omitting no means to effect the recognition of Mostanssur's pontificate. After much travelling about, he at length established himself in the fortress of Alamut, situated in ancient Parthia, a short distance from Kaswin. The predictions of Hassan and some other missionaries, had multiplied the partisans of the Ismailites in these regions so considerably, that it was far from difficult to him, to compel the governor of that fortress, commanding in the name of the Sultan Melekshah, to sell it to him for a moderate sum of money. Having become master of the place, he was able to maintain him-

self in its possession against all the sultan's forces; and, by the insinuations of the missionaries, whom he sent into the environs, and by planned excursions, he subjected several places in the immediate neighbourhood, and erected for himself an independent sovereignty; in which, however, he only exercised his authority in the name of the imam, whose minister he acknowledged himself to be. The position of Alamut, situated as it is in the midst of a mountainous region, caused its prince to receive the title of *Sheikh al Jebal* (*i. e. Sheikh*, or *Prince of the Mountains*); and the double sense of the word *Sheikh*, which means both prince and old man, has occasioned the historians of the Crusades, and the celebrated Marco Polo, to call him the "*Old Man of the Mountain.*"

Hassan and his successors, for nearly three centuries, were not satisfied with having established their power in Persia: they soon found means to possess themselves of several strong places in Syria. Masyat, a place situated in the mountains of the Anti-Libanus, became their chief seat, in that province; and also the residence of the Prince of Alamut's lieutenant. This branch of the Ismailites, which had settled in Syria, is the one mentioned by the western historians of the Crusades, and to which they have given the name of *Assassin.*

Before proceeding to the etymology of this name, we ought to observe, that Hassan, and the two princes who succeeded him in the sovereignty over the Ismaïlites of Persia and Syria, although attached to the peculiar tenets of the sect, nevertheless observed all the laws of Islamism; but, under the fourth prince of this dynasty, a great change took place in the religion of the Ismailites. This prince, who was named Hassan, son of Mohammed, pretended that he had received secret orders from the imam, by virtue of which he abolished all the external practices of Musulman worship; permitted his subjects to drink wine, and gave them a dispensation from all the obligations which the law of Mohammed imposes on its followers. He publicly announced, that the knowledge of the allegorical sense of the precepts, dispenses with the observation of the literal sense; and thus gained the Ismailites the name of *Mulahid*, or the *Impious*; a title by which they are most frequently designated by oriental writers. The example of this prince was followed by his son; and, for about fifty years, the Persian and Syrian Ismailites persisted in this doctrine. After this period, the worship was restored and preserved among them, until the entire destruction of their power.

The embassy which the Old Man of the Mountain, of the historians

of the Crusades, that is, the sovereign of the Ismailites, sent to Amaury I. King of Jerusalem, falls under the reign of one of the two apostate princes, whom we have just mentioned. It is true, then, as William, Archbishop of Tyre, says, that the prince by whom this embassy was sent, had suppressed all the practices of the Musulman religion, destroyed the mosques, authorized incestuous unions, and allowed the use of wine and pork. When we read the sacred book of the Druses, or the fragments which we possess of those of the Ismailites, we have little hesitation in believing, that this prince, as the same historian asserts, was acquainted with the books of the Christians, and that he had formed a wish not to embrace the Christian religion, but to study more accurately its doctrines and observances.

Let us now pass to the name *Assassin*. This word, as I have already said, has been written in a variety of ways; but to confine myself to those possessing the best authority, I shall state, that it has been pronounced *Assassini*, *Assissini*, and *Heississini*. Joinville has written *Haussaci*. The limits which I have prescribed myself, forbid my entering here into the discussion of the various etymologies of this name, which have been proposed by different learned persons. Suffice it for me to say, that they have all been mistaken, because they had, no doubt, never met with the word in any Arabic author. The Assassins are almost always called by oriental historians, *Ismailites*, *Mulahid* (i. e. *the Impious*), or *Batenites*, signifying *partisans of the allegorical sense*. Only one literary person, in a letter, preserved by Menage, had a glimpse of the true etymology; but he had erected it on bad foundations, as he had not the slightest suspicion of the motive which led to the Ismailites being designated by this term.

One of the most illustrious, most certainly, of the victims to the fury of the Ismailites, is Saladin. It is true, this great prince escaped their attacks; but he was twice on the point of losing his life by these wretches' daggers, for which he afterwards reaped a striking revenge. It is in perusing the account of these reiterated attempts, in some Arabic authors, contemporaries of Saladin, and ocular witnesses of what they relate, that I have been convinced that the Ismailites, or, at least, the men whom they employed to execute their horrible projects, were called, in Arabic, *Hashishin* in the plural, and *Hashishi* in the singular; and this name, slightly altered by the Latin writers, has been expressed as exactly as possible by several Greek historians, and by the Jew, Benjamin, of Tudela.

As for the origin of the name in question, although I have not

gleaned it from any one of the oriental historians that I have consulted, I have no doubt whatever that denomination was given to the Ismailites, on account of their using an intoxicating liquid, or preparation, still known in the east by the name of *Hashish*. Hemp leaves, and some other parts of the same vegetable,* form the basis of this preparation; which is employed in different ways, either in liquid, or in the form of pastiles, mixed with saccharine substances; or even in fumigation. The intoxication produced by the *hashish*, causes an ecstasy similar to that which the orientals produce by the use of opium; and, from the testimony of a great number of travellers, we may affirm, that those who fall into this state of delirium, imagine they enjoy the ordinary objects of their desires, and taste felicity at a cheap rate; but the too frequent enjoyment changes the animal economy, and produces, first, marasmus, and then, death. Some, even in this state of temporary insanity, losing all knowledge of their debility, commit the most brutal actions, so as to disturb the public peace. It has not been forgotten, that when the French army was in Egypt, the general-in-chief, Napoleon, was obliged to prohibit, under the severest penalties, the sale and use of these pernicious substances; the habit of which has made an imperious want in the inhabitants of Egypt, particularly the lower orders. Those who indulge in this custom, are, to this day, called *Hashishin;* and these two different expressions explain why the Ismailites were called by the historians of the Crusades, sometimes *Assissini*, and sometimes *Assassini*.

Let us hasten to meet an objection, which cannot fail to be made against the motive on which we found the origin of the denomination of Assassins, as applied to the Ismailites. If the use of intoxicating substances, prepared from hemp leaves, is able to disturb the reason; if it throws a man into a sort of delirium, and makes him take dreams to be realities; how could it be proper for people who had need of

* The following is an extract from a late work on Botany, published by Professor Burnett, of King's College, which is strongly confirmatory of De Sacy's views; the same is likewise stated by Dr. Ainslie. *T.*

"In India, hemp is cultivated as a luxury, and used solely as an excitant. It possesses several peculiar intoxicating powers, and produces luxurious dreams and trances. The leaves are sometimes chewed, and sometimes smoked as tobacco. A stupifying liquor is also prepared from them; and they enter with opium, betel nut, sugar, &c. into various narcotic preparations. Prepared hemp is called by the Arabs *hashish*, &c. &c."—Burnett's Botany, p. 560.

all their *sang-froid* and mental calmness, in order to execute the murders with which they were charged, and who were seen to proceed to countries most remote from their own residence, to watch many days for an opportunity favourable to the execution of their designs; to mix among the soldiers of the prince whom they were about to immolate to the will of their chieftain; to fight under his colours, and skilfully to seize the instant which fortune offered for their purpose? This, certainly, is not the conduct of delirious beings, nor of madmen, carried away by a fury which they are no longer able to control; such as travellers describe those who *ran a muck*, so much dreaded among the Malays and Indians. One word will suffice, in answer to this objection; and with this, Marco Polo's account will supply us. This traveller, whose veracity is now generally acknowledged, informs us, that the Old Man of the Mountain educated young men, selected from the most robust inhabitants of the places under his sway, in order to make them the executioners of his barbarous decrees. The whole object of their education went to convince them, that, by blindly obeying the orders of their chief, they insured to themselves, after death, the enjoyment of every pleasure that can flatter the senses. For this purpose, the prince had delightful gardens laid out near his palace; there, in pavilions, decorated with every thing rich and brilliant that Asiatic luxury can devise, dwelt young beauties, dedicated solely to the pleasures of those for whom these enchanting regions were destined. Thither, from time to time, the princes of the Ismailites caused the young people, whom they wished to make the blind instruments of their will, to be transported. After administering to them a beverage which threw them into a deep sleep, and deprived them, for some time, of the use of their faculties, they were carried into those pavilions, which were fully worthy of the gardens of Armida; on their awaking, every thing which met their eyes, or struck their ears, threw them into a rapture, which deprived reason of all control over their minds; and uncertain whether they were still on earth, or whether they had already entered upon the enjoyment of that felicity, the picture of which had so often been presented to their imagination, they yielded in transport to all the kinds of seduction, by which they were surrounded. After they had passed some days in these gardens, the same means which had been adopted to introduce them, without their being conscious of it, were again made use of to remove them. Advantage was carefully taken of the first moments of an awakening, which had broken the charm of so much

enjoyment, to make them relate to their young companions, the wonders of which they had been the witnesses; and they remained themselves convinced, that the happiness which they had experienced in the few days which had so soon elapsed, was but the prelude, and, as it were, the foretaste of that of which they might secure the eternal possession, by their submission to the orders of their prince.

Although some exaggeration might be supposed to exist in the Venetian traveller's recital; and although, instead of crediting the existence of these enchanted gardens, which is, however, attested by many other writers, we should still reduce all the wonders of that magnificent abode to a phantom, produced by the exalted imagination of the young men who were intoxicated with the *hashish*, and who, from their infancy, had been nursed with the idea of this happiness; it would not be the less true, that we here find the use of a liquor, destined to deaden the senses, and in which we cannot overlook, that its employment, or rather abuse, is spread throughout a great part of Asia and Africa. At the epoch of the Ismailitic power, these intoxicating preparations were not yet known in the Moslem countries. It was only at a later period, the knowledge of it was brought from the most eastern regions, probably even from India into the Persian provinces. Thence it was communicated to the Musulmans of Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. No doubt, the Ismailites, whose doctrines had several points of resemblance with those of the Indians, had acquired this knowledge earlier, and preserved it as a precious secret, and as one of the principal springs of their power. This conjecture is supported by the fact, that one of the most celebrated Arabian writers attributes the introduction amongst the Egyptians, of an electuary prepared from hemp, to a Persian Ismailite.

I shall conclude this memoir by observing, that it is not impossible that hemp, or some parts of that vegetable, mixed with other substances unknown to us, may have been sometimes employed to produce a state of phrenzy and violent madness. We know that opium, the effects of which are, in general, analogous to those of intoxicating preparations made with hemp, is, nevertheless, the means made use of by the Malays, to throw themselves into that state of fury, during which, being no longer masters of themselves, they murder every one they meet, and blindly precipitate themselves into the midst of swords and lances. The means employed thus to alter the effects of opium is, if travellers are to be believed, mixing it with citron juice, and to allow the two substances to incorporate for a few days.

Note E, p. 137.

*To the Editor of the Moniteur.**

Paris, December, 23, 1809.

Sir,

You were kind enough to insert in your 210th number, of the 29th of July last, the memoir on the dynasty of the Assassins, and on the origin of their name; which I read at the public sitting of the Institute, on the 7th of the same month. That memoir has occasioned a letter, dated from Marseilles, the 16th of September, 1809, and signed "M. R., Old Residents in the Levant;" to be likewise inserted in your 269th number, of the 26th of September.

I do not know whether I am mistaken in suspecting, that the signature of that letter disguises a justly celebrated name, whose authority might have added great weight to the objections contained in the letter, had the writer of it been inclined to make himself known. However, as the author, or authors, of that letter, in attacking (although in the most gentlemanly manner, and with the most obliging expressions) the etymology of the word *Assassins*, which I have proposed, display no common knowledge of the Arabic language, I think it becomes me to justify my opinion, and reply to their objections; the more so, as the paper which I read at the public sitting of the 1st of July, was but a very brief extract from a much more extended memoir; and that this memoir, as well as all the others that I have submitted to the judgment of the Ancient History and Literature Class of the Institute, will, perhaps, not be published during my lifetime, owing to the caprice of circumstances, which neither I myself, nor that class of the Institute, have power to control.

The origin which I attributed to the word *Assassin*, appears, to the authors of the letter in question, to be *too far fetched;* consequently, they propose another; and affirm, that the name of the Assassins is nothing more than the plural of *Hassas*, "a word which," they add, "is employed by the people of Syria, and even of Lower Egypt, to designate *a thief of the night—a robber.*"

These gentlemen might have supported their opinion by most respectable authorities; for their etymology is not new; and I did not fail to make mention of it, as well as of a host of others, which were, perhaps, unknown to them, in my memoir, read at the private sitting.

* Vol. XLI. No. 359, Monday, 25th December, 1809.

This discussion was not admissible in a reading destined for a public meeting; I have, therefore, suppressed it entirely. Permit me to transcribe a few lines here:—

"Thomas Hyde, I remarked, who had, no doubt, never encountered the true denomination of the *Assassins*, in any Arabic writer, believed, that it must be the Arabic word *Hassas*, derived from the root *Hassa*, which signifies, amongst other things, to *kill*, to *exterminate*. This opinion has been adopted by Menage and the learned Falconet. M. Volney has likewise admitted it, but without citing any authority."

I then discussed the various etymologies proposed by M. de Caseneuve, the prelate, J. S. Assemani, M. Falconet, the celebrated Reiske, M. Court de Gebelin, the Abbé S. Assemani, of Padua, and lastly, Le Moyne; and I showed that none of these writers had given the true etymology of the name, with the exception of Le Moyne, who had, indeed, perceived, that the denomination of *Assassins* or *Assissins*, was derived from the Arabic word *Haschisch* (Hashish). "But," I add, "M. Le Moyne did not know why the Ismailites bore the designation of *Haschischin* (*Hashishin*), and he has given a very bad reason, which has caused the proscription of his etymology."

Messrs. M. R. assuredly imagine, that it is merely conjecturally that I have maintained that the Ismailites were designated by the name of *Haschischin* (*Hashishin*), by the Arabs: for they express themselves thus: "The oldest Italian and French authors commonly write *Assassini*, sometimes *Heissessini*, and *Assissini;* Joinville wrote it *Haussaci*. On these grounds, M. de Sacy *doubts not*, that the Arabic which has served as the type, was *Haschisch* (*Hashish*), signifying *herb*, in general, and in one particular meaning, *hemp*. Now, because the Arabs have long known how to prepare a beverage from hemp, which intoxicates and maddens like opium; and because this beverage has sometimes been made use of to stimulate fanatics to the deed, which the Musulmans call *the holy war*, namely, *premeditated murder*, M. de Sacy will have it, that the whole sect of the Ismailites, which supplied many of this kind of fanatics, was called *Hachichi* or *Haschischi* (*Hashishi*); that is, the *herb people*. but, in order to establish this, it is necessary, in the first place, to prove, that the use of this beverage was habitual and general among this sect; so much so, as to distinguish them from all other Arabs, who used it, but without becoming murderers like them. History teaches us nothing similar. It even appears, that this artificial means could

only have been employed when their primitive zeal began to cool; but, moreover, the word *haschisch* (*hashish*), differs too strongly from the words *Assassin*, *Heissessin*, and *Haussaci*, to have served as their original root."

These gentlemen will allow me to observe, that if they had read with attention my printed Memoir, and the report made by my esteemed colleague, M. Ginguené, of the labours of the Ancient History and Literature Class, since the 1st of July, 1808, they would have found that there was no conjecture in it at all on my part. In fact, it was in quoting different passages of Arabic authors, relating to the enterprises undertaken at different periods by the Syrian Ismailites against Saladin, that I proved to demonstration, that those writers employed indifferently, in the same work, the names *Ismailites*, *Batenites*, and *Haschischin* (*Hashishin*), as synonymous; and that the chief of this horde of ruffians, was called the Possessor of the *Haschischa* (*Hashisha*). I even took occasion to observe, that the Byzantine writers called the Assassins *Chasisioi;* and that the Jew, Benjamin of Tudela, names them in Hebrew, *Haschischin* (*Hashishin*).

These facts being incontestable, I had to inquire what was this *Haschisch* or *Haschischa* (*Hashish* or *Hashisha*), possessed by the chief of the Ismailites, from which these latter derived their name of *Haschischin* (*Hashishin*); and, certainly, it needed no great stretch of imagination, to discover the *haschischa* of the Ismailites in that of the Syrians and Egyptians of the present day. I afterwards showed, by very positive historical testimony, that, at the period when the Assassins signalized themselves by their atrocities and murders, the use of intoxicating preparations made with hemp had not yet been introduced among the Musulmans; lastly, I proved by a host of facts, and the testimony of Marco Polo, that the *hashish* was not used among the Ismailites for the purpose of throwing those to whom it was administered, into a state of madness and frenzy, during the continuance of which they performed the most barbarous actions, almost consciously; but, that it was a secret known only to the chief of the sect, and which he employed, to deprive for a time of the use of their reason, those young men, whom he wished, by means of every kind of seduction, which could inflame the imagination and exalt the sense, to inspire with blind obedience to his behests.

The chief reason why the authors of the letter which I am controverting, have a difficulty in admitting that the word *Assassins*, or

Assissins, is actually derived from *Haschischin*, is, that they cannot believe that western writers could have substituted the articulation of the Arabic *Sin*, that is, of an *s*, for that of *Schin* (*Shin*), which answers to our *ch* (*sh*. Eng.); but they have perhaps forgotten, that, at the epoch of the Crusades, the Latin language was the common idiom of writers throughout Europe; and that, in that language, the sound of the Arabic *Shin*, cannot be expressed. We must also add, the Arabic *Shin* is not in general pronounced so strongly as our *ch*, (*sh*, Eng.); and that the Arabians themselves have often used it for the Greek sigma, and the Latin *S*, of Latin names; such as Pontus, Orosius, Philippus, Busiris, &c., and lastly, that the Moors in Spain, in writing the Castilian in Arabic characters, made use of the *Shin* to express *s*; for example, in the words *los cielos y las tierras*. (See Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits, tome IV. page 631 & 642.) Perhaps, we have an example of the substitution of our s, for the Arabic *shin*, in the word *Sarrasins* (*Saracens*).

Here, again, I am at variance with the authors of the letter, who reject the etymologies which have been hitherto proposed, of the name of the *Sarrasins* (*Saracens*), in order to derive it from *Sarrag* or *Sarradj*, a word, meaning, according to them, *a saddle-man*, and, consequently, *a horse-man*. These gentlemen will not take it ill, if I deny the consequence, and if I remark, that *sarradj*, or, as it is otherwise pronounced, *sarrag*, never did, and never could, according to the analogy of the Arabic language, signify any thing but *a man who makes or sells saddles for horses, or a stable-boy who takes care of these animals' harness*. As I do not wish to be believed on my word alone, I shall quote Golius, who has not omitted the word *Sarrag*, as is asserted in the postscript to the letter, and who translates it thus: *Qui confecit ephippia et ea quæ ad equi et currus apparatum spectant* (one who makes saddles, and every thing belonging to the harness of horses and carriages). Menins, who translates it into Latin, by *Ephippiarius, qui Ephippia et quæ ad ea spectant conficit—qui curam equorum et apparatus eorum ephippii et phalerarum habet;* in Italian, by *sellaro, palfreniere;* and in French, by *sellier, palfrenier*. Germanus de Silesia, who makes it correspond with the Italian sellaro: lastly, Father F. Cannes, who, in his Spanish and Arabic Dictionary, makes use of the Spanish word *Sillero*, to translate it. The objections which Messrs. M. R. make against one of the etymologies of the word *Sarrasins* (Saracens), which several learned men have derived from the word *Sarikin*, robbers, are destitute of weight. It

is not true, that we cannot admit this etymology, without, at the same time, supposing that the Arabs called themselves *robbers*; because, in fact, the Arabs known to the Greeks and Latins by the denomination of *Sarrasins* (Saracens), did not give themselves that name at all, but received it from the neighbouring tribes, who may very well have termed them *brigands*. This objection has no more force against those who derive the name of *Sarrasins*, *Saracens*, *Saraceni*, from *sharki*, or *sharaki*, that is, *eastern*. If this latter be the true origin of the name, it is beyond a doubt that it was first given to some Arabs, by nations inhabiting a more western country, and that it might afterwards have been applied to the greater part of the nation. As, according to either hypothesis, the word *Sarrasins* (*Saracens*), will have an Arabian origin, there will be some probability in supposing, that this denomination, which succeeded that of the *Scenites*, was first given to the Nomade Arabs by the civilized tribes settled in the north-east of Arabia, and who recognised the Roman authority. In either case, if these etymologies appear too forced, I should prefer confessing, that we are ignorant of the origin of the word, than deriving it from an expression which is in no respect proper to characterize the Arabian nation.

I shall conclude, by observing, as I did in my Memoir, that, perhaps, the word *Hashishin*, or *Hashashin*, for both are used, did not properly designate all the Ismailites, but was peculiarly applied to those who were destined to the Assassin service, and who were also known by the name of Fedawi (or *devoted*). "I have not, up to this day," I said, at the conclusion of my Memoir, "met with a sufficient number of passages in which this word is employed, to hazard a decided opinion on the subject; but I am led to believe, that among the Ismailites, those only were termed *Hashishin*, who were specially educated to commit murder, and who were, by the use of the *Hashish*, disposed to an absolute resignation to the will of their chief; this, however, may not have prevented the denomination from being applied to Ismailites collectively, especially among the Occidentals."

Accept, &c. &c.

SYLVESTRE DE SACY.

THE END.

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