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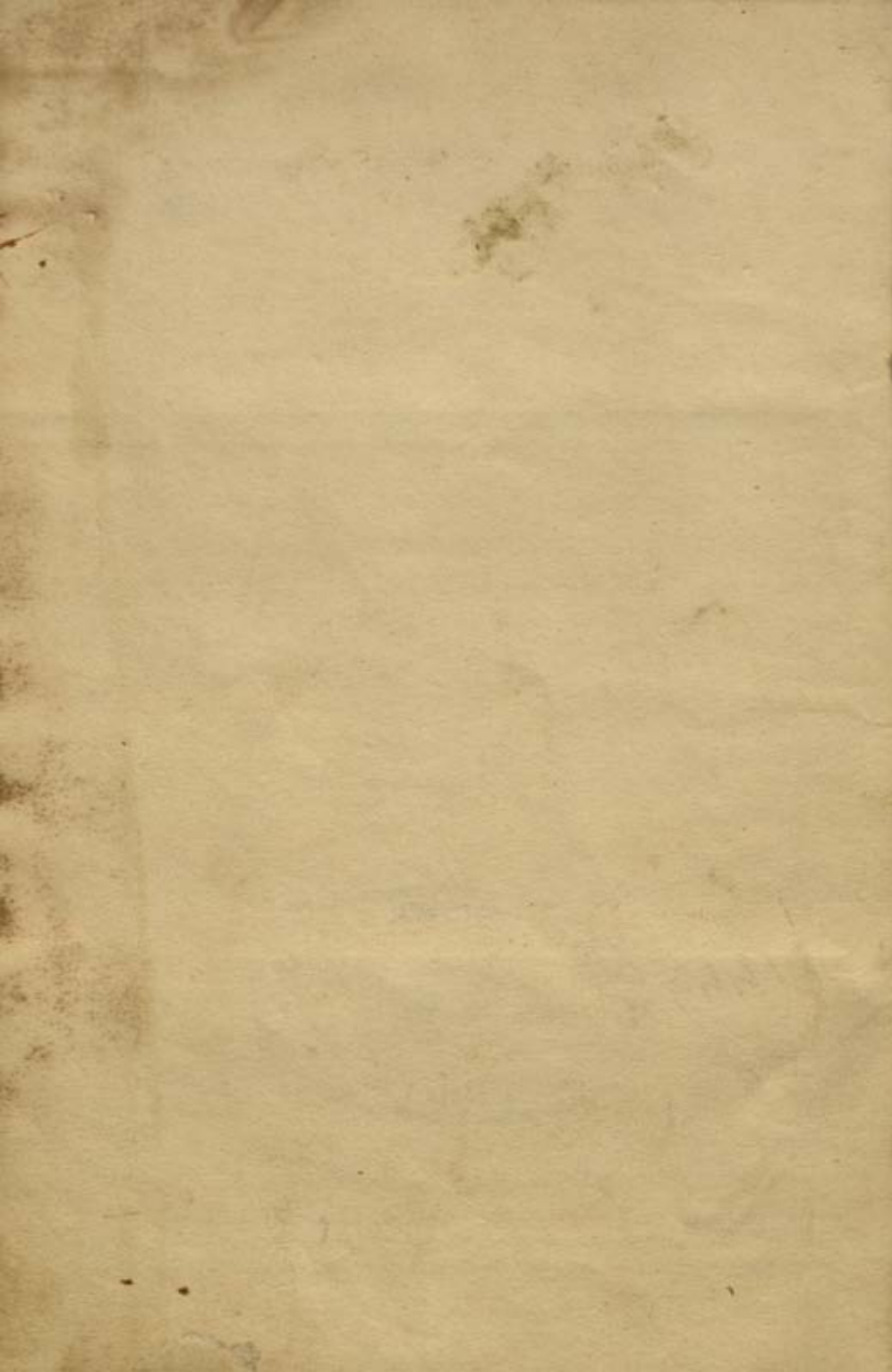
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# GUIDE

TO THE

## TAJ AT AGRA;

FORT OF AGRA;

AKBAR'S TOMB AT SECUNDRA,

AND

## RUINS OF FUTTEHPORE SIKREE,

TRANSLATED FROM A PERSIAN M.S.S. WITH AN ENGLISH  
VERSION OF THE POETRY INSCRIBED ON THE  
WALLS, TOMBS, ETC.; DESCRIPTION OF  
THE TAJ, AND EXTRACTS FROM  
SEVERAL NOTICES ON  
THE SUBJECT.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

Eight years ago the first edition of this little work was presented to the PUBLIC as an endeavour, in some degree, to supply the great want experienced by many travellers of obtaining an account of the MAGNIFICENT TAJ AT AGRA, and the remarkable ruins in the neighbourhood. The public appear to have favored the book then ; as not one single copy of the first edition can now be procured, as far as advertising for it goes. The Persian work has, therefore, been re-translated, and the Hand-Book somewhat enlarged. Eight years ago numbers of visitors were constantly viewing the Taj ; but now their numbers must be greatly increased, since a railway will convey them to within a few miles of it ; and the person who would pass by Agra without seeing this "*Crowning Edifice of the World*" must, indeed, be either a Goth or a Vandal. This little book may also be used as an accompaniment to those magnificent views of the Taj, which are now placed within the reach of every one by the beautiful Art of Photography.

PUNJAB,

1862.

J. T. N.

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## PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

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The Compiler of this little attempt at a Guide Book to the Taj at Agra, &c., had hoped that before the Second Edition was exhausted, some more competent person would have brought out a work on The Taj, Agra, and its neighbourhood, it is much to be regretted that such an undertaking has not yet been accomplished, for surely it is worthy of one, and materials for a most interesting Volume abound ; but such a work being still wanting, and the whole of the Second Edition of " The Guide Book " having been disposed of, a Third Edition has been published. The Glorious Monument of the Taj has become a " world-wide sight," and is now a days visited by travellers from most parts of the Globe who must rest contented with this slight sketch, until something better is produced.

PUNJAB,  
1869.

J. T. N.

*J. T. N.*

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"In the name of God the Most Merciful and Kind."

"May He prosper this undertaking."

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THIS BOOK gives an account of Bunnoo Begum, whose title was Mumtaz Mahal (of all families the most illustrious), better known as Taj Beebi, and Noor Jehan (Light of the World), the wife of Shahjehan Badshah Gazeer, the daughter of Nawab Asif Khan, Prime Minister, and grand daughter of Nawab Etmaddowla ; also the history of Secundra, the Fort at Agra, and ruins of Futtehpoore Sikree, the names of the Head workmen, and the different stones used in the construction of the Taj.

Shah Jehan, Emperor, Conqueror of Worlds, Protector of the Poor, Taker by the hand of the distressed, most learned and illustrious, had four sons by his Empress, Mumtaz. The first born was Dara Shikoh, whom the Emperor appointed as his successor, and who lived with him ; he was Governor of Hindustân.

The second, Shah Shoojah (like Joseph), and very learned ; he was Governor of Bengal ; he collected all the wise and clever men around him, and in every way was obedient to his father.

"Happy the man who hath a son like this ;

"Who by obedience added to his parent's bliss."

The third son was Aurungzeb Alumgeer ; he governed the Deccan with great wisdom.

The fourth was Mahomed Murad Buksh ; he governed Goozerat, Tatta and Bukkur on the Indus with great wisdom, and never did any thing without the advice of his father.

The Emperor had also four daughters, accomplished beautiful and obedient. The first, Unjeman Arra Begum ; the second, Gatee Arra Begum ; the third, Jehan



Emperor did nothing but weep, and beat his breast, saying in the language of the poet Sadi :—

" Money abides not in the palm of those who careless live,  
" Nor patience in the lover's heart, nor water in a sieve."

EASTWICK TRANS.

At last the Empress left this world, and went to the next, living with the Puris in heaven ; her mortal remains were interred at first in a garden near the present site of the Taj, and when her tomb was prepared for her, they were afterwards removed with great ceremony to the vault underneath the Taj.

Plans were brought of every kind and description of Mausoleum in the world, and laid before the Emperor, who, after much thought and study, selected that presented to him by one Isâ Mahomed Effendi, a celebrated architect, who was sent by His Highness the Sooltan of Room (Turkey) ; and a model of it was first made in wood ; and during a space of 17 years precious stones and marble were collected,

The date of the death of the Begum is given in these versus :—

" When Mumtaz Mahal left this world,  
" The howris opened the gates of heaven for her,  
" And the angels gave this last verse for the date,  
" The resting place of Mumtaz Mahal is in heaven."

This last verse being read, each letter in the Persian standing for a figure, gives 1040 of the Hijree, which, allowing for the Mahomedan way of counting, would be 1630 A. D.

The Emperor Shahjehan Shahboodeen Mahomed himself wrote these versus in praise of his beloved wife, and of the tomb erected over her :—

" What a beautiful and lovely place for a tomb,  
" Like those in the time of Kais ;\*  
" Truly a place for lovers to sleep ;  
" The ground made of sweet amber  
" As in the seventh heaven.

\* Mujnoo and Leila. Lovers celebrated in Oriental poetry.

An edifice like those in the garden of paradise ;  
 The sweet fragrance spreads all around.  
 The hours sweep its courts clean  
 With their drooping eye-lashes ;  
 Its walls and doors set with jewels,  
 Its air pure, and water sweet.  
 The architect of this beautiful place  
 Brought the water from the "Chushma-i-Faiz."\*  
 The rain from the clouds of mercy  
 Falls continually on its lofty dome.  
 Should any one enter its holy precincts,  
 And ask a boon of the High God,  
 It will undoubtedly be granted him.  
 Every one living here is celebrated  
 Throughout the world for hospitality.  
 One might imagine the soft breezes  
 Left this place without receiving any thing ;  
 There are plenty of the plants called the flower of generosity,  
 And they are filled with their sweet perfume.  
 The flowers laugh, but hide their heads ;  
 The clouds rain, but it is the rain of compassion.  
 Should any sinner seek protection at its gates,  
 His sins are forgiven, like those of the dwellers in heaven.  
 The buds of the trees always wish to laugh,  
 The breezes are so gentle, they do not annoy the flowers.  
 They are "behind the curtain ;" for is it not the resting place  
 Of a spotless beauty ? and they hide in a corner,  
 While the blushing buds expand.  
 Any one seeking protection here will find it.  
 For the place is consecrated to the High God.  
 If any wicked person should come here  
 The pages of the book, the Recording Angel,  
 Keeps against him, will be made clean.  
 If the sun and moon see this place  
 Their eyes even will be full of the tears of compassion.  
 In this place, covered by the blue vault of heaven,  
 The sun itself is a receiver of benefits.  
 The heavens also are expectants of benefits,  
 For as soon as the sun retires  
 The moon attends to receive the bounty.  
 Life is pleasant in this place, for it is full  
 Of entertainment for the stranger and the poor,  
 Before this, eternity did not ever exist,  
 Death himself has removed his presence from here.  
 The builder could not have been of this earth,  
 For it is evident the design was furnished him by heaven ;  
 Its foundations are as firm as those of the world,  
 And like the creed of the faithful.  
 I know not how all the colors came here,  
 But they must have come for protection  
 When the builder made it ; it was intended  
 For everlasting peace, and a place of security.  
 When the hand of eternity laid its foundations,  
 The winter time of year fled afar to the jungles."

pre  
Raj

Taj  
This is written on the sides of the Begum's tomb.

\* Celebrated fountains situated somewhere in one of the Mahomedan heavens.

The splendid tomb of Unjeman Bunnoo Begum, whose title was Muntaz Mahal, was made in 1040 of the Hijree.

This is written on the side of the left hand tomb, that of Shahjehan Emperor.

The magnificent tomb of the king, inhabitant of the two heavens, Ridwan and Khool; the most sublime sitter on the throne in Illeeyn (the starry heaven) dweller in Firdoos (paradise) Shahjehan Badsha Gaze, peace to his remains, Heaven is for him; his death took place the 26th day of Rujub in the year 1076 of the Hijree, or 1665 A. D. From this transitory world Eternity has marched him off to the next.

The names of some of the workmen who came from divers countries to assist in the building of the Taj :—

The Head Master was Isâ Mahomed, his salary was Rupees 1,000 a month.

The illuminator, Amarnud Khan, inhabitant of Shiraz, also at 1,000 a month.

The Master Mason, Mahomed Hunif, from Bagdad, also at 1,000 a month.

The golden cupola became broken by a violent storm before it was finished, and the son of Isâ Mahomed Shareef undertook its repair: he received Rupees 500 per month. A great many other workmen were employed, some from Turkey, Persia, Dened Cuttack and the Punjab, and received salaries varyife, from 100 to 500 Rupees a month.

Names and weight, also the value of some of the stones :—

The white marble came from Jytpore in Rajpootana.



The yellow, from the banks of the Nurbudda, a square yard of this cost Rupees 40.

The black marble came from a place called Char-koh (four hills), a yard square of this cost 90 Rupees.

Crystal from China, one square yard 570 Rupees.

Jasper from the Punjab. Cornelian from Bagdad. Turquoises from Thibet. Agate from Yeman. Lapis-lazuli from Ceylon, the square yard cost 1,156 Rupees. Coral from Arabia and the Red Sea.

Garnets from Bundelkund. Diamonds from Punnah in Bundelkund : it is, however, very doubtful if any of these were used, although as many of the precious stones have been picked out by the Jâts and the Europeans when they severally took Agra ; there may have been a few in some of the flowers. The plum pudding stone from Jaisilmere.

Rock spar from the Nurbudda. The philosopher's stone from Marcheen. The load stone from Gwalior. The onyx from Persia. The chalcedony from Villait. Amethyste from Persia. Sapphires from Lunka, and the red sand stone, of which 1,14,000 cart loads were used, came from Futtehpoore Sikree ; many other stones were also used in the inlaying the flowers, which have no name in our language.

Most of these were received in lieu of tribute from different nations under the Emperor's rule, or were made presents voluntarily, or otherwise, by the different Rajahs and Nawabs.

The celebrated and far renowned Taj Mahal, or Taj Beebi-ka-Roza, is situated on the left bank of the river Jumna coming up the river ; and is about two miles from the town of Agra, and one mile from Cantonments ; it forms a prominent object in the horizon for many miles, and is even visible just as a white speck

through the misty atmosphere at a distance of twenty miles. This elegant building is certainly one that can hardly disappoint any body ; it brings to memory those fairy palaces one imagined after reading "the thousand-and-one-nights," and according to the state of the atmosphere, so does the marble tomb assume different colours ; early in the morning before the sun is up, it appears light blue ; as the sun rises, it takes a rosate hue, and often a bright yellow ; when a storm is impending, and the dark blue clouds hang over it, it looks a violet color. But, perhaps, its most beautiful phase of all, is when seen by moonlight. The best place, then, to see it, is about forty yards down the straight walk leading to the gateway on the left hand side ; it then looks like a floating palace in the air, and as you approach it seems to recede ; the moonlight by its charming indistinctness gives the Taj enormous height, and no doubt a person having seen the place only by moonlight, might be a little disappointed in viewing it by day, but surely not much. The mosque at St. Sophia in Constantinople, though very splendid, does not come up to this "CROWNING EDIFICE OF THE WORLD," for the former place is so surrounded with houses and different incongruous buildings, that its magnificence is greatly deteriorated thereby ; the nearest approach, perhaps, to the exquisite beauty of the latter, are those most lovely palaces of the Alhambra, in Granada. The Taj stands alone in all its majesty in an enclosure laid out as a garden of about twenty or five-and-twenty acres, and has two jawâbs (answers), buildings with domes made of red sand stone on either side ; thought by the natives greatly to enhance its beauty, and to show off by contrast its pure white color. It would be difficult to say if the Taj would be better standing quite alone, but as it is, the *coup d'œil* is magnificent. The height from the ground to the crescent on the pinnacle, is said to



be 296 feet.<sup>?</sup> There are four very elegant minarets on the sides of the platform on which the Taj is built; these are of great symmetry and beauty, and said to be of the smallest possible circumference to stand such a great height; for each of these are 225 feet high<sup>?</sup>; they are ascended by a spiral staircase, and a magnificent view of Akbarabad and its environs rewards the venturesome climber for his labor.

You enter the precincts of the Taj, first through an archway into a large enclosure filled with trees, and then the principal gateway comes in view; its archway is very high, and the sides covered with illuminations from the Koran; going through this you descend a few broad steps into the garden, which, in spite of the vish praise bestowed on it by native poets, to an Englishman must seem rather stiff and formal, perhaps it is more to the taste of a Dutchman. The walks are paved, and there is a row of fountains down the centre, the sides of the walks being planted with lofty cypresses.\* The fountains are made to play sometimes, generally on a Sunday. The water is drawn up into a large tank some forty feet above the level of the fountains, and then allowed to play; the column of water is nothing very striking, but is at any rate as good as those miserable failures in Trafalgar Square, of which Londoners are so proud, and on which Frenchmen smile. The clever native youths make a lime or orange remain as it were suspended in mid air; by the force of the water the lime is sometimes, when the water is at its full power, carried up into the air to the height of 15 or 20 feet, and gradually descends as the column of water diminishes in power; to a person, who may never happen to have seen this before, the effect is most curious and striking. Young Agra is in the habit of making bets as to whose orange or lime

\* Planted by an English Civilian who had an eye to the beautiful.



will keep up longest, and great excitement is caused among this generally apathetic race by such puerile and innocent amusement. Perhaps, however, a Newton might have discovered some valuable properties in gravity, by watching the orange, as he is said to have done, whilst watching the apple which fell on his learned nose.

By some it is thought the Taj looks best when lighted up by blue lights from the minarets, but this gives a very artificial and stage-like effect, and it is far better when left to Nature alone.

The actual graves of the Begum and Emperor are below those on the second stage; these upper ones being, as the natives call them, the jawâbs (answers), they are of the usual shape prevalent among the faithful, and are of pure white marble, inlaid with flowers most elegantly arranged, made of precious stones; on the tombs in the upper stage, these flowers are even still more artistically inlaid, and one flower, which looks as if intended for a rununculus, has 36 different kind of stones used in its formation.

Softly as you enter this upper part, or your own voice will stun you;—for as the poet says:—

"Speak'neath your voice, and hardly breathe a sigh,  
 "For every sound is hidden here, and noise obliged to fly;  
 "But say a prayer as softly as you can,  
 "Ten thousand angels will respond.—ARMAN."\*

The effect of this echo is very beautiful when not excited too much; some soft notes of the voice, or a musical instrument, are prolonged with reverberations, and indistinct sweet sounds for several minutes; a very pleasing effect is obtained by fastening a small musical box on a pole and elevating it up the dome; but a lady's voice is, perhaps, the most beautiful way of invoking the gentle murmers of the Angels supposed to inhabit the vault above; from which hangs, or

\*Mercy, not Amen.

used to hang, an ostrich egg on a golden cord, with a button of some precious stone ; this is supposed to be intended for the representation of the World floating about in the immensity of space.

The outside lower court yards are paved with black and white squares of marble, and on the flooring of the right hand jawâb, or red mosque, is traced out the upper part of the dome of the Taj, and the pinnacle with its ball and crescent, the natural size. There are some rooms fitted up for the accommodation of Europeans at the end of this red mosque which, I believe, can be had upon application to the Executive Engineer, or whoever has charge of the Taj ; in the cold weather these are pleasant enough, but in the hot season quite insufferable from the heat and glare. \*In this court is a curious pillar made of some porous stone, and so cunningly balanced on its plinth, that it can be pushed so as to make it rock backwards and forwards ; but no amount of pushing with the hand can upset it ; this is supposed to be the clever device of the builder, Mahomed Hunif, and was intended to signify that, though the kingdom of the Emperor might be a little shaken, it would never be upset. The truth of which was fully exemplified to the poor Emperor Shahjehan when his rebellious son put his eyes out, and confined him for years in the fort of Agra.

Sunday is great day at the Taj with the inhabitants of Agra ; crowds attend from the city and from the country around, and every hue and fanciful color of dress may then be seen ; first and foremost, precocious "young Agra" youths from the college, with their white garments and small pugrees, imitating what they fancy a European swagger, and profaning the sanctity of the place with most unoriental whistling, which dreadfully disturbs the devout contemplation of that

\* This has been removed now into Cantonments, where it is quite out of place.



Moolah, who is counting his beads and looking as if the Taj belonged to him alone. Then the clean-dressed Mahomedans from the Government offices, and the Kâit or Hindoo writer ; now a group of country people staring with open eyes headed by some loquacious old grandame, who takes care to inform every one that "the Feringees" stole all the precious stones out of the inland flowers in the Taj walls. When Agra was taken by Lord Lake, the 22nd Dragoons may have done a little pilfering in this line ; but the example had been set them by the Jâts when they looted Agra ; as I do not think a European soldier would have imagined the stones to be so precious had he not seen they had been picked out before.

Then parties of Bunniahs, who even on a gala-day cannot dress clean enough to hide their profession ; that foremost man has had the whole of his pleasure trip spoilt by the idea that he has left his shop for the day in the hands of his nephew, who he is sure will cheat him in some way to the amount of a few pie ; he sees no beauty in the Taj ; he does not enjoy the fragrance of the flowers ; true it is he utters the words "*Ram, Ram*" of astonishment, meaning "wonderful, wonderful, God bless me ;" but he does not mean it for the Taj ; he is repenting of his rashness in leaving his shop, and mentally adding up imaginary balances of what he might have gained by remaining at home attending to his shop.

The dirty dressed Affghan may also be seen, who declares that the tomb of Mahmood of Guznee is a much grander affair than the Taj ; it is as well those Agra Mahomedans, just before him do not understand what he is saying, or there would be a war of words, accompanied by showers of spittle perfectly awful to contemplate.



Some times a clean-dressed Persian may be seen with his black lamb skin cap\* and shining waist dagger ; he generally shows off his superior knowledge by reading to himself the Persian inscriptions, which the crowd know as much the meaning of, as the crowd in London do of the Latin written upon our tombs and monuments ; some Moulvie will stop, and the Persian will expatiate upon the beauties of Hafiz or Sadi, from which latter poet he declares himself to be a direct descendant.

Out side the Taj garden are plenty of refreshment stalls after the Indian fashion, with sweetmeats of every possible disgusting taste ; parched corn of sorts, the most filling food at the price ever invented, also kawabs, little balls of roasted meat, so highly spiced as perfectly to disguise there taste, whether made of camel, horse or donkey ; the common beverage seems water, conveyed about in the usual leather skin, and sold two brass cups full for one pie ; however I have seen young Agra actually drinking infidel vulgar pop.

At other times when these melas, or fairs, are not held, there reigns a deep silence in and around the Taj, which may be described by Congreve's lines in the Mourning Bride :—

" No, all is hushed and still as death ; 'tis dreadful ;  
How reverend is the face of this tall pile,  
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,  
To bear aloft its arched and ponderous roof ;  
By its own weight made steadfast and unmoveable,  
Looking tranquillity ! It strikes an awe  
And terror on my aching sight."

The gardens of the Taj are kept up by Government, and in the proper season are very beautiful, the whole place being scented with sweet perfume. There are many very good fruit trees, such as Bombay mangoes, of very superior quality ; guavas, oranges, limes, loquats,

\* The real Kuzulbash, not that kind of a half and half Bussbee affair, certain High Personages wore when they came to see us lately.

&c., &c., and several specimens of the palm genus not to be found in the N. W. Provinces. The fruit trees have generally been let out to native gardeners, who derive a thriving trade during the season; these gardens are now very well looked after, and reflect great credit on those who have the care of them. The native account of the cost of the Taj gives 98,55,426 Rupees as having been given by the Rajahs and Nawabs. And out of the Emperor's private treasury 86,09,760 Rupees, which would give in £1,846,518,6, or nearly two millions. There are said to have been two silver doors, at the entrance of the Taj, which are stated to have cost 1,27,000 Rupees, and were studded with 1,100 nails, each having a head made of a Sonat Rupee; these gates were taken away and melted up by the Jâts when they attacked and sacked Agra in 1801.

As to the style of architecture I should be diffident in giving an opinion; some say it is Florentine; some declare it is perfectly Oriental; certain it is I have never seen any style like it either in Italy, Turkey or Spain, and only one kind like it in India; it may be that it is Florentine Engrafted on the Eastern. The natives, of course, ignore its European origin, and declare it was designed and built alone by one Isâ Mahomed Effendi, who was sent by the Sultan of Room (Turkey) to the Emperor Shahjehan for this very purpose. Other accounts, just as reliable as the above, state it was designed by a French architect, whose name was Austin - Bordeaux, and who lived at the Emperor's court. Austin's Tomb. || tomb of this foreigner was still extant a few years in the grave yard of the Roman Catholic Cathedral Agra, but still this, does not prove he built the Taj.

The labor was all forced, and very little payment made in cash to the 20,000 workmen who were said to have been employed for 17 years in the construction of this wonderful pile; an allowance of corn was daily



given them, and even this was cruelly curtailed by the rapacious officials placed over them. There was great distress and frightful mortality among them, and the peasantry around Agra certainly did not worship the memory of the innocent Empress. The poet describes them to have cried out :—

" Have mercy God on our distress,  
" For we die, too, with the Princess."

The following is an extract from Mr. Slide-side's diary, a gentleman who visited the Taj in 1854 :—

" To a lover of architecture a visit to the Taj would fully repay all the dangers and difficulties he might be subjected to from a long sea voyage, or the slow, tedious land carriage in India (we have got the rail since then) ; the sensations of pleasure and delight, a view of the buildings about Agra create, cannot be described ; no pen can do justice to the beauty of the architecture or grandeur of the designs. The eye is never weary of gazing on the dome and minaret of the Taj ; many an hour by day and night I spent in contemplation of the beauty and elegance of the shrine containing the remains of the Emperor Shahjehan and his wife, the former of whom died in 1666, and the latter some thirty years previous. The cost of the building was upwards of three millions of money, and the time occupied extended over twenty years, during which time twenty thousand men are said to have been employed.

" The original design was to have erected another building on the opposite bank of the Jumna, connecting the two by a bridge, as separate mausoleums for the emperor and his wife ; on the death of the former, civil dissensions arose in the country, and bloody feuds prevented the magnificent designs being completed.

" A flute or cornet sounded in the vault beneath the dome, increasing and diminishing as it rings through



the arched alcoves in countless echoes, spreading over the dome, and gradually growing more beautifully faint and sweet, fills the soul with heavenly raptures, and fancy fondly realizes the Chorussus of angels. Their golden harps they took, harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side like quivers hung, and, with preamble sweet of charming symphony, they introduce—

“ Their sacred song, and waken raptures high  
“ Melodious part, such concord is in heaven.”

It will scarcely be believed that this wonderful work of art, this magnificent specimen of architecture, narrowly escaped being pulled down and sold for its value under the Government of Lord W. Bentineck.

“ The garden at the Taj is often converted into a scene of wassail and riot. The ashes of the great monarch are polluted by the tread of strangers, and the lively sounds of music mingle with the dirge of the mournful cypress. If Agra had been only a military cantonment, the contempt of the military for life, and the hazards they run in battle frays, might have partly accounted for the desecration of a tomb by thoughtless youngsters, licentious middle aged men, and apathetic warriors : but Agra is the largest civil station in Bengal, where men, long passed the meridian of life, daily assemble in solemn conclave to consider matters of life and death ; where the interests and happiness of an enormous population are hourly the subject of communication ; where religious principles are inculcated by precept and example, with an outward show actuated by reason or “ self-interest ;” and strange it is that none of the censors could draw attention to the scandal of feasting in the charnel-house, or flirting beneath the shade of the cypress.”

The following is taken from the columns of the *New York Tribune*, a paper which it is not likely many

of my readers could have seen, and is from the talented pen of Mr. Bayard Taylor, an American gentleman, who visited Agra in 1853.—

“I purposely postponed my visit to the Taj-Mahal—the most renowned monument of Agra—until I had seen every thing in the city and its vicinity. The distant view of this matchless edifice satisfied me that its fame was well deserved. So pure, so gloriously perfect did it appear, that I almost feared to approach it, lest the charm should be broken. It is seen to the best advantage from the tomb of Itmaddowla, the Prime Minister of Shahjehan, which stands in a garden on the northern bank of the Jumna, directly opposite the city. I spent an afternoon at this tomb and the Rambagh, (Garden of Rama) two miles further up the river. The former is a mausoleum of white marble, elegantly sculptured and inlaid, standing on a raised platform, from the corners of which rise marble minarets. Its design shows the same purity of taste, the same richness of fancy, which I had previously remarked in the Motee Musjid, and afterwards in the Taj.

“The Rambagh is a garden which, I believe, formerly belonged to the Mogul Emperors, and is now kept in order as a place of recreation by the Government. Too much praise cannot be awarded to the British rulers in India for the care with which they have restored and protected all the monuments of the past, expending large sums to prevent the mosques, palaces and tombs of the former rules from falling into decay. On account of the humidity of the soil, and the abundance of insects and reptiles, the Rambagh is traversed by raised stone causeways, the principal of which inclose water tanks and fountains. It is a pleasant shady retreat, with a stone valcony over-hanging the rapid Jumna, and commanding a view of many ruined



palaces on the opposite bank. There are suites of apartments, comfortably furnished, which are let to visitors at the rate of a rupee a day ; but when the applications are frequent, no one is allowed to stay more than eight days, in order to give a chance to others. My friends brought their servants and a handsome tiffin, of which we all partook in the largest chamber. We returned across the bridge-of-boats in the evening. The Hindoos had lighted lamps in front of the many little shrines facing the water, and in some of them stood persons waving a torch back and forth before the face of the god, crying out at the same time, " Ram, Ram, Ram, Seeta Ram ! " This ceremony, with the pouring of the Jumna water over the image, and decorating it with wreaths of flowers, appears to be the only form of worship observed. There are more substantial offerings made, but if the God gets them, the Brahmins take care he shall not keep them. To return to the Taj. For you expect me to describe it, and I must comply, though reluctantly, for I am aware of the difficulty of giving an intelligible picture of a building which has no counterpart in Europe, or even in the East ; the mosques and palaces of Constantinople, the domed tent of Omar at Jerusalem, and the structures of the Saracens and Mamlooks at Cairo have nothing in common with it. The remains of Moorish art in Spain approach nearest to its spirit, but are the scattered limbs, the torsos, of which the Taj is the perfect type. It occupies that place in Saracenic art, which, in a letter from Constantinople, I mistakenly gave to the Sulamany mosque, and which, in respect to Grecian art, is represented by the Parthenon. If there were nothing else in India, this alone would repay the journey.

" The history and associations of the Taj are entirely poetic. It is a work inspired by love, and consecrated



to beauty. Shahjehan, the "Selim" of Moore's poems, erected it as a mausoleum over his Queen, Noorjehan, "The Light of the World," whom the same poet calls Noor-Mahal, "The Light of the Haram," or more properly "Palace." She is reputed to have been a woman of surpassing beauty, and of great wit and intelligence. Shahjehan was inconsolable for her loss, and has immortalized her memory in a poem, the tables of which are marble and the letters jewels. For the Taj is poetry transmuted into form, and hence when a poet sees it, he hails it with the rapture of a realized dream. Few persons are aware that the "Light of the Haram" was a real personage, and that her tomb is one of the wonders of the world. The native miniature painters in Delhi show you her portrait, painted on ivory—a small rather delicate face, with large, dark, piercing eyes, and black hair flowing from under a scarf adorned with peacocks feathers. likeness of Mumtaz

"The Taj stands on the bank of the Jumna, rather more than a mile to the eastward of the fort of Agra. It is approached by a handsome road cut through the mounds left by the ruins of ancient palaces. Like the tomb of Akbar it stands in a large garden, inclosed by a lofty wall of red sand stone, with arched galleries around the interior, and entered by a superb gateway of sand stone, inlaid with ornaments and inscriptions from the Koran, in white marble. Outside of this grand portal, however, is a specious quadrangle of solid masonry, with an elegant structure intended as a caravanserai on the opposite side. Whatever may be the visitors impatience, he cannot help pausing to notice the fine proportions of these structures, and the rich and massive style of their construction. The gate to the garden of the Taj is not so large as that of Akbar's tomb, but quite as beautiful in design. Passing under the open demivault, whose arch hangs high above you,

an avenue of dark Italian cypresses appears before you. Down its centre sparkles a long row of fountains, each casting up a single slender jet. On both sides, the palm, the banyan, and the feathery bamboo mingle their foliage; the song of birds meets your ears, and the odor of roses and lemon-flowers sweetens the air. Down such a vista and over such a foreground rises, the Taj.

“It is an octagonal building, or rather a square, with the corners truncated, and each side precisely similar. It stands upon a lofty platform, or pedestal, with a minaret at each corner, and this, again, is lifted on a vast terrace of solid masonry. An oriental dome swelling out boldly from the base into nearly two-thirds of a sphere, and tapering at the top into a crescent tipped spire, crowns the edifice, rising from its centre, with four similar, though much smaller, domes at the corners. On each side there is a grand entrance, formed by a single pointed arch, rising nearly to the cornice, and two smaller arches (one placed above the other) on either hand. The height of the building is 262 feet, and of the minarets about 200 feet. But no words can convey an idea of the exquisite harmony of the different parts, and the grand and glorious effect of the whole structure, with its attendant minarets. The material is the purest white marble, little inferior to that of Carrara. It shines so dazzlingly in the sun that you can scarcely look at it near at hand, except in the morning and evening. Every part—even the base—is inlaid with ornamental designs in marble of different colors, principally a pale brown, and a blueish violet variety. Great as the dimensions of the Taj are, it is as laboriously finished as one of those Chinese caskets of ivory and ebony, which are now so common in Europe. Bishop Heber truly said :—“The Pathans de-



signed like Titans and finished like jewellers." Around all the arches of the portals and the windows—around the cornice and the domes—on the walls, and in the passages are inlaid chapters of the Koran, the letters being exquisitely formed of black marble. It is asserted that the whole Koran is thus inlaid in the Taj, and I can readily believe it to be true. The building is perfect in every part. Any dilapidations it may have suffered are so well restored, that all traces of them have disappeared.

*Incorrect*

I ascended to the base of the building—a gleaming marble platform, almost on a level with the tops of the trees in the garden. Before entering the central hall, I descended to the vault where the beautiful Noorjehan is buried. A sloping passage, whose walls and floor have been so polished by the hands and feet of thousands, that you must walk carefully to avoid sliding down, conducts to a spacious vaulted chamber. There is no light but what enters at the door, and this falls directly upon the tomb of the Queen in the centre. Shahjehan, whose ashes are covered by a simpler epitaph, raised somewhat above her's, sleeps by her side. The vault was filled with the odors of rose, jasmine and sandal-wood, the precious attars of which are sprinkled upon the tomb. Wreaths of beautiful flowers lay upon it, or withered around its base. These were the true tombs, the monuments for display, being placed in the grand hall above, which is a lofty rotunda, lighted both from above and below by screens of marble and jasper, and ornamented with a wainscoting of sculptured tablets representing flowers. The tombs are sarcophagi of the purest marble, exquisitely inlaid with blood stone, agate, cornelian, lapis-lazuli, and other precious stones, and surrounded with an octagonal screen six feet high, in the open tracery of which lilies, irises and other flowers are interwrought



with the most intricate ornamental designs. It is of marble, covered with precious stones. From the resemblance of this screen and the workmanship of the tomb to Florentine Mosaic, it has been supposed that it was executed by an Italian architect; and I have even heard it stated that the Taj was designed by an Italian artist; one look at the Taj ought to assure any intelligent man that this is false—nay, impossible, from the very nature of the thing. The Taj is the purest Saracenic in form, proportions and ornamental designs. If that were not sufficient, we have still the name of the Moslem architect sculptured upon the building.

I consider it extremely doubtful whether any Italian had any thing to do with the work, though it is barely possible he may have been employed upon the screen around the tombs. In the weekly account of the expenditures for building of the Taj there is a certain sum mentioned as paid to "the foreign stone-cutter," who may either have been Italian, Turkish or Persian. As for the flowers represented on bas-relief on the marble panels, it has been said that they cannot be found in India. Now these flowers, as near as they can be identified, are the tulip, the iris, (both natives of Persia) and the lotus. But I noticed a curious feature in the sculpture, which makes it clear that the artist was native. The flowers lack perspective, which would never have been the fault of an Italian artist of Shahjehan's time—about the middle of seventeenth century. Bishop Heber has declared that he recognized Italian art in the ornaments of the Taj, but he declared also that its minarets have no beauty, that the fort of Agra is built of granite, and many other glaring errors, both of taste and observation, which I have no time to point out. The dome of the Taj contains an echo more sweet, pure and prolonged than that in the Baptistery of Pisa, which is the finest in Europe. A single mu-

cal note, uttered by the voice, floats and soars overhead in a long, delicious undulation, fading away so slowly that you hear it after it is silent, as you see, or seem to see a lark, you have been watching after it is swallowed up in the blue vault of heaven. I pictured to myself the effect of an Arabic or Persian lament for the lovely Noorjehan sung over her tomb. The responses that would come from above, in the pauses of the song, must resemble the harmonies of Angels in Paradise. The hall, notwithstanding the precious materials of which it is built, and the elaborate finish of its ornaments, has a grave and solemn effect, infusing a peaceful serenity of mind, such as we feel when contemplating a happy death. Stern, unimaginative persons have been known to burst suddenly into tears on entering it; and whoever can behold the Taj without feeling a thrill that sends the moisture to his eye, has no sense of beauty in his soul.

The Taj truly is, as I have already said, a poem. It is not only a pure architectural type, but also a creation which satisfies the imagination, because its characteristic is beauty. Did you ever build a castle in the air? Here is one brought down to earth, and fixed for the wonder of ages; yet so light it seems, so airy, and when seen from a distance, so like a fabric of mist and sunbeams, with its great dome soaring up, a silvery bubble, about to burst in the sun, that, even after you have touched it, and climbed it to its summit, you almost doubt its reality. The four minarets which surround it are perfect—no other epithet will describe them. You cannot conceive of their proportions being changed in any way so little as half an inch, without damage to the general effect. On the one side of the Taj is a mosque with three domes of red sandstone, covered with mosaic of white marble. Now on the opposite side there is a building precisely similar, but of no use whatever, ex-



cept as a balance to the mosque, lest the perfect symmetry of the whole design should be spoilt. This building is called the *jawâb*, or "answer." Nothing can better illustrate the feeling for proportion which prevailed in those days—and proportion is art. In comparing these master-pieces of architecture with Moorish-remains in Spain, which resemble them most nearly, I have been struck with the singular fact, that while at the central seats of the Moslem empire, art reached but a comparative degree of development, here and there on the opposite and most distant frontiers, it attained a rapid and splendid culmination.

The capitals of the Caliphs and the Sultans—Bagdad, Cairo, Damascus and Constantinople—stand far below Agra and Delhi, Granada and Seville in point of architecture, notwithstanding the latter cities have but few and scattered remains. It is not improbable that the Moorish architects, after the fall of Granada, gradually made their way to the eastward, and that their art was thus brought to India, or at least that they modified and improved the art then existing. The conquest of India by Baber, (grandson of Tamerlane, and grand-father of Akbar) is almost coeval with the expulsion of the Moors from Granada.

But the sun grows hot; it is nearly noon. We have spent three hours in and around the Taj, and we must leave it. Nothing that is beautiful can be given up without a pang, but if a man would travel he must endure many such partings. I must add, however, before we go, that on the opposite side the Junna there is an immense foundation-terrace, whereon it is said Shahjehan intended to erect a tomb for himself, of equal magnificence, but the rebellion of his sons and his own death prevented it. What the Gods permitted to Love they forbade to Vanity. A Shekh, who takes care of

i.e., a Khadim



the Taj, told me that had the Emperor carried out his design, the tombs were to have been joined by a bridge with a silver railing on each side. He told me that the Taj, with its gateways, mosques and other buildings attached, had cost seven crores of Rupees, Spanish dollars 35,000,000. This is, however, quite impossible, and, I believe, that the real cost is estimated at £1,750,000 (Spanish dollars 8,750,000) which does not seem exaggerated.

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## THE FORT AT AGRA.

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This is written on the Motee Musjid (or Pearl Mosque) in the fort, in Persian verse :—

"This Place of prayer is one of splendour,  
 Like the "Bital Mamour" in the seventh heaven,  
 Whose whiteness is slave to the morning dawn,  
 From whose brightness the sun receives light.  
 Its strong flooring is joined to ursh (heaven),  
 And its dome of magnificence is joined together  
 Like the leaves in paradise.  
 Its lofty walls show it to belong to a beautiful mosque ;  
 Each picture of the flowers on its marble walls  
 Is like the stars of heaven made into a bouquet.  
 The fountains of the sun spring here,  
 Every golden pinnacle shines on it like the chandeliers of heaven ;  
 Its arches are filled with light  
 Like the moon on the first night of Eed.\*  
 On its four sides is the strong fort of Agra,  
 Built of red stone, whose walls reach to heaven ;  
 If you were to see them you would say  
 They were a halo to the mosque,  
 Like as is round the moon  
 Made of the clouds of mercy of God.  
 And the circumference of the sun of splendour  
 Was a bright cloud which rained down bounty.  
 Truly this building is one of those from the highest heaven,  
 And made of one beautiful shining pearl.  
 Before this the dazzling purity of marble was never so displayed ;  
 Since the creation of the world there never was such a splendid  
 And worship inspiring temple.  
 By the orders of the most exalted King (like Solomon in wisdom),  
 (Like Abraham the friend of God in faith),  
 The civilizer of the world, whose residence will be in heaven,  
 On whom is the shadow of God, the foundation of the world,  
 The support of Princes. On account of whose footsteps  
 The earth is most proud, and fancies its self heaven,  
 Distributor of the presents of heaven on earth,  
 With whom fortune and wealth are both in love,  
 And beautiful angels of heaven are his well-wishers ;  
 Heaven even is a suppliant for some dust of this palace ;  
 The fire of Hell is an anxious expectant from the edge of his sword,  
 The great, the magnificent, the just, the generous,  
 The merciful and kind, King Akbar ; was this  
 Noble house of prayer built in 1610 A. D."

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\* The Mahomedan festival, in which they commemorate the offering up of  
 Ismael, not Isaac ; the feast is fixed by the appearance of the new moon.

This is written around the black marble slab in the fort of Agra, one of the thrones of the Emperors :—

" Its length is 11 feet, width 7 feet, depth 2 feet. This was the throne  
A mighty king, that his sword cut the heads of his enemies [of such  
In two, whenever it was drawn from its jewelled scabbard ;  
It was the proof stone of all the Kings, upon the earth ;  
And as this stone proves gold and silver, "  
So did the sun and moon prove its temper. "

The Poet is endeavoring to ascertain its date.

There is then a verse which says :—

" This kind of stone comes only from heaven. "

From this verse is obtained, in the manner I have before described, that it was made in the year 1010 of the Hijree :—

" Whilst the heavens are the throne of the Sun,  
So long will the throne of Selim remain.  
Always like the light of the goodness of God ;  
So will this throne of Huzrat Sultan Selim Akbar Shah,  
When Akbar the heir to the Crown and signet sat on this throne. "

He then issued the laws for the world, (*i. e.* the celebrated " Ain Akbaree," Laws of Akbar).

Mr. Slide-side speaking of the fort at Agra says :—  
The fort of Agra, with its red sand stone battlements of great height (some 60 feet) is the finest structure of the kind I have seen in India as far as appearances go, but a mud fort would stand a greater amount of cannonading, the wall of the fort would crumble under a few discharges of heavy ordnance ; the first place I visited was the arsenal, in which are deposited the celebrated gates of Somnath, about which Lord Ellenborough issued a proclamation, which gave his political opponents great scope whereon to vent their indignation, and proclaim to the world the frightful consequences which might, but did not, follow his Lordship's ebullition of vanity. The gates are composed of elaborately carved and inlaid sandal-wood. The Pearl Mosque, those marble domes and gilded spires rise high above



the dingy battlements, is allowed to be the priceless pearl amidst the pure and spotless shrines erected to the worship of God and the Prophet."

Our Agra enchanted American, above quoted, says :—

"Agra is still called by the natives Akbarabad—the city of Akbar—from the renowned Emperor to whom it owes its origin. All its former splendour grew up under his reign, and all its architectural remains, except the Taj-Mahal, date from his time. In this respect it differs from Delhi, which, although still called by the Mahommedans Shahjehanabad (from Shahjehan, the grandson of Akbar,) is more especially the capital of the Mogul Emperors, and bears the memorials of many successive reigns. Yet I doubt whether their combined feebleness can equal the sunlike lustre of Akbar's name, and whether their city, with all its stores of historical associations, can so interest and attract the traveller as this, the capital of the greatest man who ever ruled India.

The modern city is not even the shadow of the ancient capital; *that* has wholly passed away, except the fort—a city in itself—and some ruined palaces on the bank of the Jumna. But for nearly two miles in every direction the mounds, remains of walls, and other indications of habitations are abundant.

Much more was to be seen a few years ago than at present, but as the old bricks were constantly taken to construct new buildings, their vestiges gradually disappeared. The population, which once numbered more than half a million, has dwindled to about 10,000, and the native city has little more interest to the traveller than any ordinary Indian town—Indore for instance. There is one principal street passing through its whole

length to the gates of the fort, and in this are situated the residences of the wealthier inhabitants, which are generally of brick or red sand stone. The verandahs and hanging balconies, with their exquisite Saracenic arches, carved ornaments and stone lattice-work, remind one of Cairo. The street is also a sort of bazar, and during the day presents a very busy and animated scene. It is so narrow that two vehicles can with difficulty pass, while other streets of the city are only attainable by pedestrians. On the side facing the Jumna there are few striking buildings, except the Custom-house, once the palace of a rich native. Stone ghâts here and there lead down to the holy stream, which is now so diminished by the dry season that it does not occupy more than the one-third of its bed. South of the city are the cantonments, divided into civil and military lines, and occupying a space of five miles in length by nearly two in width. Broad roads, as smooth and hard as a floor, run in all directions, and offer admirable drives for the inhabitants, whose buggies may be seen at all hours of the day dashing back and forth. A spacious square plot planted with trees is called the park, and beyond this rises the lofty spire of the English Church. The various public buildings, the Bank, the Post-Office, the Government House and others are distinguishable from the private residences by their size, but have little pretension to architectural beauty. The fort, which contains the palace of Akbar, and the celebrated Motee Musjid, or Pearl Mosque, is one of the grandest structures of the kind in India. It is about a mile and a half in circuit, and its stately embrasured battlements of red sand stone are seventy feet high. Nothing can be more imposing than the view of this mass of masonry, rising high above the domes of the modern city, and almost overlapping the domes of the Jumma Musjid, which stands without its gates. Its appearance, nevertheless, is very

Jumna



deceptive with regard to strength ; for the walls, impregnable as they look, are mere shells, and would not stand a single day's cannonading.

Before entering the fort I visited the Jumma Musjid. The front of the mosque, faces the principal gate, a broad enclosed square, which is now used as a market place intervening between. The mosque stands on a lofty platform, which is reached by a spacious flight of steps. In India all places of worship, except the inner shrines—the holy of holies—are open to the conquerors, who walk it booted and spurred, where the Hindoo and Moslem put their shoes from off their feet. I should willingly have complied with this form, as I did in other Mahomedan countries, but was told that it was now never expected of an European, and would be in fact a deformation of his dignity. The Jumma Musjid is a melancholy picture of ruin. The walls, which inclose the foremost, are tumbling down, and the inlaid inscriptions, which surround the facade, are falling out piece by piece. The body of the mosque is divided into central, and two smaller side halls, each of which opens upon the court yard by a lofty arched portal, and is surmounted by a swelling oriental dome of corresponding proportions. India being east of Mecca, the mosque, of course occupies the western side of the court, and at each of the adjacent corners rises a lofty and graceful minaret. This is the plan upon which all Indian mosques are built, and they vary in architectural beauty according as the portals, the domes and minarets approach a true artistic proportion.

Crossing by a drawbridge over the deep moat, which surrounds the fort, we passed through a massive gateway and up a paved ascent to the inner entrance, which shows considerable taste. It consists of two octagonal towers of red sand stone, inlaid with ornamental designs in white marble. The passage between them

covered by two domes, which seem to rise from accretisms of prismatic stalactites as in the domes of the Moorish Alhambra. This elegant portal, however, instead of opening upon the courts of the palaces, ushers you into the waste of barren inroads covered with withered grass. But over the blank red walls in front, you see three marble domes glittering in the sunshine like new-fallen snow, and still further the golden pinnacles of Akbar's palace, and these objects hint that your dream of the magnificence of the Great Mogul will not be entirely dispelled.

But, first, let us visit the modern arsenal, which was once the *divan* or judgment seat of Akbar. It was formerly an open portico, or *loggia*, the roof resting on three rows of pillars, which were connected by Saracenic arches; but at present the outer row of arches being walled up, it forms a spacious hall, divided into three aisles. All the weapons of modern warfare, with here and there a crooked scimitar or battle axe of ancient times, are ranged around the pillars and between the arches in those symmetrical groupings peculiar to instruments of death. At the intersections of the central arches hung tri-colored banners of red, blue and yellow, with the names of the British victories in India inscribed upon them in English and Sanscrit. The great curiosity, however, is the celebrated gates of Somnath, which were carried off by that stern iconoclast, Sultan Mahmood of Ghuznee. Somnath was a holy Brahminical city on the coast of Goojrat, and noted at that time for the wealth and magnificence of its temples. It is related of Mahmood that after having taken the city and commenced demolishing the idols, the Brahmins offered him immense sums if he would spare the deity of their great temple. Mahmood was only tempted for a moment. "Truth, he said," is better than gold; "and, raising his iron mace, he smote the



idol, which as it split, poured from its hollow body a store of gold and jewels far exceeding what the Brahmins had offered him. This incident has afforded a subject for poetry to Ruckert, the German, and Lowell, the American poet.

The gates were taken by Mahmood to his capital of Ghuznee, where they remained until the recent invasion of Afghanistan by the English, when that fantastic individual, Lord Ellenborough, bore them off to Agra. They are about twelve feet high, elaborately carved and inlaid, and said to be composed entirely of sandal-wood. On one of the panels, three metal bosses are nailed. According to tradition they were taken from Mahmood's shield. In the centre of the hall is the throne whence Akbar pronounced judgment after the cases had been discussed in his presence. It is a pavilion of white marble, inlaid with jasper and cornelian in the form of flowers, ornamental scrolls and sentences of the Koran. Below it, is an immense slab of white marble, on which he was accustomed to seat himself. Beyond the arsenal, and in that part of the fort everlooking the Jumna, is the monarch's palace, still in a tolerable state of preservation. Without a ground-plan it would be difficult to describe in detail its many courts, its separate masses of building and detached pavilions, which combine to form a labyrinth so full of dazzling, architectural effects, that it is almost impossible to keep the clue. On entering the outer courts I was at once reminded of the Alhambra. Here were the same elegant Moorish arches, with their tapering abutments of open filigree work resting on slender double shafts—a style as light, airy and beautiful that it seems fit only for a palace of fairies.

Akbar's palace is far more complete than the Alhambra. No part has been utterly destroyed, and marks of injury by time and battle are comparatively

slight. Here a cannon-ball has burst its way through the marble screen of the Sultan's pavilion ; there an inlaid blossom of cornelian, with leaves of blood stone has been wantonly dug out of its marble bed ; the fountains are dry, the polished tank in the "bath of mirrors" is empty, the halls are untenanted—but this is all. No chamber, no window or staircase is wanting, and we are able to re-people the palace with the household of the Great Emperor, and to trace out the daily routine of his duties and his pleasures.

The substructions of the palace are of red sand stone, but nearly the whole of its corridors, chambers and pavilions are of white marble, wrought with the most exquisite elaboration of ornament. The pavilions overhanging the river are inlaid, within and without, in the rich style of Florentine mosaic. They are precious caskets of marble, glittering all over with jasper, agate, cornelian, bloodstone and lapis-lazulli, and topped with golden domes. Balustrades of marble, wrought in open patterns of such rich design that they resemble fringes of lace when seen from below, extend along the edge of the battlements. The Jumna washes the walls seventy feet below, and from the balconies attached to the *zanana*, or women's apartments, there are beautiful views of the gardens and palm groves on the opposite bank, and that wonder of India, the Taj, shining like a palace of ivory and crystal about a mile down the stream. The most curious part of the palace is the *Shish-Mahal*, Palace of Glass, which is an oriental bath, the chambers and passages whereof are adorned with thousands of small mirrors, disposed in the most intricate designs. The water falls in a broad sheet into a marble pool over brilliant lamps, and the fountains are so constructed as to be lighted from within. Mimic cascades tumble from the walls over slabs of veined



marble into basins so curiously carved that the motion of the water produces the appearance of fish. This bath must once have realized all the fabled splendours of Arabian story. The chambers of the Sultans and the open courts connecting them are filled with fountains.

Though the building is an incrustation of gold, marble and precious stones, water is still its most beautiful ornament. Within these fairy precincts lies the garden still overrun with roses and jasmine vines, in the midst of which fountains are playing. There is also a court paved with squares of black and white marble, so as to form a pachisi-board. This game resembling backgammon, but instead of ivory pieces it was played on this colossal board by Akbar and his wives, or eunuchs, with girls who trotted from square to square as the moves were made.

On an open terrace in front of the *Divan-é-Khas*, where Akbar sat on great occasions, is his throne, a slab of black marble about six feet square. It is cracked entirely through, which my old guide accounted for by saying that when the Mahrattas took Agra the Rajah of Bhurtpore seated himself on the throne, whereupon it not only cracked from side to side, but blood gushed out of its top in two places. When Lord Ellenborough was Governor-General of India he also sat there, causing it to shed blood a second time. There are two red stains on its surface, which sufficiently attest these miracles to all good Musselmans. Opposite the throne is a smaller one of white marble, where, if tradition may be relied on, the Emperor's fool, or jester, took his place and burlesqued his master. Before leaving the fort I visited the Motee Musjid, or Pearl Mosque, as it is poetically and justly termed. It is, in truth, the pearl of all mosques, of small dimension, but absolutely perfect in style and proportions. It is

lifted on a lofty sand stone platform, and from without nothing can be seen but its three domes of white marble and gilded spires. In all distant views of the fort these domes are seen like silvery bubbles which have rested a moment on its walls, and which the next breeze will sweep away. Ascending a long flight of steps, a heavy door was opened for me, and I stood in the court yard of the mosque on its western side, and the pure blue of the sky over head. The three domes crown a corridor open towards the court, and divided into three aisles by a triple row of the most exquisitely proportioned Saracenic arches. The Motee Musjid can be compared to no other edifice that I have ever seen. To my eye it is absolutely perfect. While its architecture is the purest Saracenic, which some suppose cannot exist without ornament, it has the severe simplicity of Doric art. It has in fact nothing which can properly be called ornament. It is a sanctuary so pure and stainless, revealing so exalted a spirit of worship, that I felt humbled, as a Christian, to think that our noble religion has never inspired its architects to sur-pass this temple to God and Mahomed."

Mr. Taylor does not seem to have seen the curious underground passages, where the ladies of the Haram, it is said, played hide-and-seek before the Emperor, clothed only in the garb of Eve, and dashed through the fountains of water making the passages resound with merriment, and the apathetic boatman, gliding down the river, stared up at the lofty walls in wonder what the laughter meant. This passage is said to communicate with the Taj, and also an old house in ruins in cantonments, but no one has yet found it out; at the end of the passage there is a deep well, said to have been used to put the unfaithful ones in when sentenced to death. Two soldiers some years ago fell down this well, and were either killed by the fall, or were starved to death,



as their bodies were not found until some days afterwards. The authorities *after* this gave orders to have the end of the passage bricked up.

\*There is also a large bason called Piyala-i-Akbari (Akbar's cup), by others called Houz-i-Akbar (Akbar's Bath). I have been unable to translate the Persian inscription around its edge from the cup having been exposed to the weather, the writing consequently has become nearly illegible; but from the little that can be read, it seems to have been used as a mortar to grind powder in; this cup, bath, or mortar, is about eight feet high, about six feet in diameter and about six feet deep, with small steps running up the outside, and down the inside, it is made of a single stone, and that of a kind not common at Agra; the color and substance being like a common grindstone. There is wreath of flowers round it, and in basso-relievo. This used to be in front of the arsenal. There are also some most magnificently carved pillars of red sand stone, so elaborate as to defy minute description, with arched corners, like the carving of a Chinese card case. These are in a court by themselves, with a roof made of long slabs of stones, looking now in a most dangerous state. As this appears coeval with nothing else in the fort, I am inclined to think these pillars, &c. were brought from Ojaïen, or that neighbourhood, and set up in the fort either for their great beauty, or for the same reason which prompted a certain Governor-General, when he placed some wooden gates in the fort, viz., vanity. For "Great" and "Noble" as King Akbar was, he was not altogether free from this royal vice.

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\* This has also now been removed into cantonments.

## SECUNDA.

These verses are written on King Akbar's tomb :—

I begin by calling on the name of God  
 To help me to describe this wonderful place,  
 God, the pure, the everlasting, who gives  
 The throne, crown, and seals to all kings on this earth ;  
 Who creates things out of empty space,  
 Whose nature is mercy and justice,  
 From whose bounty all the wants of mankind are supplied,  
 The door of whose durbar stands open  
 Alike to rich and poor, day and night,  
 The Creator of gems from mere earth, and water,  
 And of that priceless pearl, a pure life.  
 In the beginning of his bounty he created two worlds,  
 One he hides from us, the other is open to our view ;  
 He is the giver of the world as a serai to kings  
 With the pavilion of royalty and wealth,  
 That their subjects may live through their justice ;  
 His garden remains bright with flowers throughout the year ;  
 If any king lives like this, with justice  
 The shadow of God will always be over him ;  
 And the stranger will look on him as one of his family ;  
 In the year 962 Hijree (about 1555 A. D.)  
 The Emperor Akbar, the shadow of God,  
 Sat upon his golden throne,  
 Before which the heavens bowed in respect ;  
 He adorned the world with equity and justice ;  
 The hearts of the inhabitants of the world  
 Were made to rejoice by him ;  
 The multitude go before him to receive presents ;  
 No one goes away empty handed ;  
 Many have received exalted honors from him,  
 A look from his eyes, is as it were the key of the earth,  
 Which becomes there like a pearl,  
 And is better than life even.  
 He takes the country of his enemies  
 With only one attack, when his eye-brows are directed that way ;  
 His kindness to his people, is like that of God,  
 On whatever he looks it is made perfect.  
 If any poor man seeks protection at his court  
 Like as thought flies from the fish to the moon (i. e. earth to heaven),  
 He then becomes exalted.  
 His praises were so spread over the world,  
 As a secret which will not remain in the breast ;  
 Thus he adorned the world as God had intended him ;  
 He reigned with great glory for 52 years.  
 When Akbar gave inhabitants to the world by his justice,  
 With which he abounded, like a heart full of a secret,  
 He was king of even more than the seven kingdoms ;  
 Now he inhabits eight heavens.  
 To the wise and the learned this world  
 Is only as it were a caravanseraï ;  
 Do not seek for kindness in it, like the brightness of the nine heavens,  
 Because there is nothing permanent in it while there is death ;



The world is full of hatred, do not place confidence in it,  
 Life is like the mirage of the desert,  
 Because the kindness of hate is deadly.  
 From it the thirsty soul was never satisfied.  
 On account of the justice of Akbar  
 This world became like the highest heaven ;  
 In his reign this globe was happy,  
 And the sky and earth were obedient to his will ;  
 But they broke their word, and from jealousy  
 Threw kindness away from them ;  
 He passed through this world of ingratitude,  
 And went to the abodes of the blessed ;  
 Where by the blessing of God may he remain happy for ever,  
 For the inhabitants of heaven were pleased at his advent.

These verses are written around the doorway of the tomb of King Akbar :—

According to the orders of the King of Kings Zuljelâl,  
 Whose kingdom remains for ever,  
 The earth was populated, so as to be matter of astonishment  
 To the clever and the learned ;  
 Before the days of kindness in the world he was created,  
 The protection of God was bestowed on him,  
 When the protection was hidden i. e. when the Emperor died ;  
 It was then bestowed on another,  
 This is the way in this world,  
 He did not take away his treasury with him,  
 But left it to benefit others after him.  
 Events are every moment taking place,  
 And never remain the same for any one.  
 Exalted unto the heavens his place was in Urash,  
 (The ninth heaven where the throne of God is.)  
 Before his exalted station the mountains  
 Are in comparison only as a piece of straw.  
 When he sat upon his splendid throne,  
 He ruled the world by the will of God.  
 His crown was splendour, his throne was splendour,  
 He was kind, generous, merciful,  
 Favored by fortune, and most learned.  
 He spent the riches of this world,  
 He gave them to the poor, he took, and he left them ;  
 In the garden of the world he sowed the seed of goodness,  
 He brought this plant from the garden of Eden ;  
 His life was like the splendour of the sun and moon.  
 May the memory of it remain for ages  
 Like the light of God.

These lines are written on the sides of the north door :—

Such a splendid and magnificent doorway,  
 That it is higher than those in the ninth heaven ;  
 From its shadow the faces of the stars shine bright ;  
 This doorway is the ornament of heaven,  
 And of the seven kingdoms of the world,  
 And is an emblem of the splendour of King Akbar.

Mr. Slide-side says :—The tomb of Akbar at Secundra, about eight miles from Agra, built of red

sand stone, with the exception of the upper story, which is of white marble, rises in five terraces to the height of one hundred feet, accessible by narrow flights of stone staircase. The view of the neighbouring country was extensive, but unfortunately Agra itself was not visible ; the dome of the Taj alone loomed large in the horizon. On the tomb lay a wreath of flowers still moist with the morning dew ; how forcibly it brought to my recollection the words of the Psalmist :—" For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, seeing that it is past as a watch in the night."

The American author before quoted, describing Secundra, says :—It takes its name from Alexander, whose invasion of India has thus been commemorated by the Moguls. The great Macedonian, however, did not penetrate so far as this, his battle with Porus having been fought on the Jhelum, or Hydaspes, beyond Lahore. The road to Secundra is studded with tombs, and there are many remains of palaces on the bank of the Jumna. The tomb of Akbar stands in the midst of a large square garden, which has a lofty gateway of red sand stone in the centre of each of its sides. From these four gateways, which are upwards of seventy feet high, four grand causeways, of hewn stone, converge to the central platform, on which the Mausoleum stands. The intermediate spaces are filled with orange, mango, banana, palm and peepul trees. In the centre of the causeways are immense tanks and fountains. The platform of white stone, which terminates these magnificent approaches, is about four hundred feet square. The Mausoleum, which is square, measures more than three hundred feet of a side, and rises in five terraces, in a pyramidal form, to the height of one hundred feet. Around each of the terraces runs an arched gallery surmounted by rows of cupolas, resting on circles of



small pillars. The material of the edifice is red sandstone, except the upper story, which is of white marble.

A long descending passage leads from the main entrance to a vaulted hall in the centre of the structure ; light is admitted through a few small openings in the dome, barely sufficient to show you a plain tomb in the form of a sarcophagus, with a wreath of fresh flowers lying on it. Beneath it is the dust of Akbar, one of the greatest men who ever wielded a sceptre ; the fourth descendant in a direct line from Tamarlane, the grandson of Baber, the Conqueror, and grand-father of Shahjehan ; in him culminated the wisdom, the power and the glory of that illustrious line. I doubt if the annals of any family that ever reigned can furnish six successive monarchs comparable, in greatness of their endowments, splendour of their rule to Baber, Humayoon, Akbar, Jehangeer, Shahjehan and Aurungzeb.

On the summit of the Mausoleum, which is open to the sky, and surrounded by screens of marble, wrought into patterns of marvellous richness and variety, stands a second tomb under a pavillion of marble covered with a gilded dome. This is exquisitely sculptured, containing the ninety-and-nine names of God in raised Arabic characters, enfolded in elaborate scroll-work. At each corner of the upper terrace are two marble turrets, the domes of which are covered with gilded and emblazoned tiles. The screens of marble filigree around the sides are arranged in panels, no two of which present the same design. There are small openings at intervals through which I looked out on the level country watered by the Jumna, yellow sandy tracks near the river, but receding into green wheat-fields and dark mango groves. Agra was almost hidden from sight by the trees, but among them rose the spires of

two Christian Churches, the red battlements of the Fort, and farther off the dome of the Taj a silvery disc, like the gibbous moon just hanging on the horizon. A warmth, and sunny silence like that of Egypt hung over the landscape ; what I had seen of the splendour of the Moguls, and what I then saw, overpowered me like a magnificent dream. We in America hear so little of these things, and even the accounts we get from English travellers are so confused and unsatisfactory, that you must pardon me, if, in attempting the description, I lose myself in detail. I thought the Alcazar of Seville and the Alhambra of Granada had already presented me with the purest type of Saracenic, but I was mistaken ; I find here in India conceptions of art far nobler, and embodiments far more successful. There is a Saracenic, as distinctly as there is a Greek and a Gothic school of art—not the inferior but the equal of these."

The two minarets on each side the main entrance of the Secundra Bagh have had their tops knocked off ; the natives say by order of Lord Lake when he took Agra in 1803, because some European soldiers fell from the top of them, this I can hardly imagine to have been the real reason. It is said the Jâts when they sacked Agra turned their cannon from mere wantonness and to leave their mark upon these elegant minars. This is much more likely to be true.

At Secundra is also the tomb of the Begum Marie, a Portuguese lady, who was the wife of King Akbar, and who no doubt exerted great influence over him towards tolerating Christians in the way Akbar is known to have done ; this tomb was used before the mutiny, and may be now, as a printing office by the Church Mission established at Secundra, and which suffered so terribly during the rebellion in 1857.



## FUTTEHPORE SIKREE.

About 22 miles from Agra are the magnificent ruins of the favorite residence of Akbar—Futtehpore Sikree—will worthy of a visit from the traveller. Mr. Taylor says :—About three hours after leaving Agra Futtehpore Sikree was in view. A low range of red sandstone hills appeared in the west, with here and there a crumbling ruin on the crest. The extremity of this range, about four miles distant, was covered with a mass of walls, terraces and spires, crowned with a majestic portal, which rose high above them, gleaming through the sky with a soft red lustre as the sun rose full upon it. As I approached nearer I found that this part of the hill was surrounded with a lofty wall of red sandstone, with a machicolated or notched parapet, and spacious gate, through which my road ran. It is almost entire, and upwards of six miles in circuit, enclosing a portion of the plain on both sides the hill. Driving through the deserted gateway, I was amazed at the pile of ruins which met my eye. Here was a narrow hill, nearly a mile and a half in length, and averaging a hundred feet in height, almost entirely covered with remains of palaces, mosques and public buildings, in some places nearly as perfect as when first erected, in others little else than shapeless masses of hewn stones.

Innumerable pavilions, resting on open arches, cupolas and turrets, shot up from this picturesque confusion ; but the great portal, of which I have already spoken, dominated over all, colossal as one of the pylons of Karnak. The series of arched terraces, rising one above another up the sides of the hill, gave the place an air of barbaric grandeur, such as we imagine Babylon to have possessed, and of which there are traces in

Martin's pictures. But here, there was nothing sombre or stern; the bright red sandstone of the buildings, illumined here and there by a gilded spire, was bathed in a flood of sunshine, and stood so shadowless as almost to lack perspective against a cloudless sky. The modern village of Futtehpore at the foot of the hill was adorned with beautiful trees, and that part of the plain enclosed within the ancient walls was green with fields of young wheat. I drove through the long rambling street of Futtehpore, not without considerable risk of destroying the stock of the native merchants, for the space between their shop boards was scarcely wider than my gâree. I came to the palace of Rajah Beer-Bul, one of Akbar's Prime Ministers. It is an exquisite building, quite uninjured, and has been fitted up with furniture for the convenience of visitors to the palace.

The royal residence of Akbar was on our left; the grand durgâh, or tomb of Shekh Selim Chisti, on the right, and the empty quadrangles into which we looked showed no trace of ruin. The stone pavements were partly overrun with grass, but not a block of the arched corridors surrounding them had tumbled from its place. How like yesterday seemed the Futtehpore of three centuries ago. The palace was deserted, not ruined, and its Lord not dead, but absent. I felt like an intruder in the sculptured halls of Beer-Bul, and should not have been much surprised had a chobdar made his appearance, with his silver mace to drive me away.

The guardian of the place, a lusty old Mussulman, named Shekh Basharat Ally, came to make his salam, and conduct me over the ruins. He is a stout old man, of fifty-five, with a grey moustache, and face expressive of great good will and good humour. He wore a white turban, and a cotton gown tied on the left shoulder,



so as to expose the left side of a sleek and most capacious chest. The Hindoos and Parsees tie their garments on the right shoulder in opposition to the Musulman. Busharat Ally was a very devout follower of the Prophet, and knew most of the Koran in Arabic. He was greatly delighted when I addressed him in that language, and thereafter was continually repeating prayers and singing passages of the Koran that I might perceive how much he knew. After breakfast we set out to make a thorough survey of the place. I should first state that Futtehpore Sikree was a country residence of Akbar's, and stood in the same relation to Agra as Windsor Castle does to London.

It was completed in 1571, and for twelve years his court was stationed there ; at that time it must have been a populous place, but it is probable that the dwellings of the lower classes of natives consisted then, as now, of mud huts, for there are very few ruins on the plain surrounding the hill. The existence of a mint, and other public edifices on a large scale, show that it was considered as a temporary capital, rather than a mere place of summer resort. Commencing with the Emperor's palace, we first visited the separate dwelling assigned to his Christian wife. This unlike other Moslem buildings is covered with paintings in fresco, evidently by Persian artists. They are said to represent the adventures of the hero Rustum, as related in Firdous's "Shah-Namah." Certain niches, however, over the doors and windows contain pictures of a different character, and certainly have a religious significance. On one side are the Hindoo Gods and Goddesses—the elephant—Headed Gunesh, Mahadeva and Lakshmi—and on the other two tablets, almost obliterated, but still sufficiently distinct to show that one of them is intended for the Annunciation. Akbar's latitude in religious matters is well known, but I had not given him credit

for so much toleration as this would imply. Among the ornamental designs of this palace, the Greek cross is not unusual, and it is related that when the Jesuits solicited the Emperor's protection, he replied to them:—"What would you have? See! I have more crosses on my palace than you in your churches."

The buildings of the palace cover the crest of the hill, having superb views on both sides, over many a league of the fruitful plain.

There is quite a labyrinth of courts, pavilions, small palaces, gateways, tanks, fountains and terraces, and I found it difficult to obtain a clear idea of their arrangement. Most of the buildings are so well preserved that a trifling expense would make them habitable. For a scholar and a poet I can conceive of no more delightful residence. Adjoining the palace of the Christian woman stands the *Panch-Mahal*, (Five-Palaces), consisting of five square platforms, resting on richly carved pillars, and rising one above another, in a pyramidal form, to a considerable height. Beyond it is a court-yard, paved with large slabs of sandstone, and containing a colossal *pachisi*-board, such as I have described in speaking of the palace at Agra. In one corner of the court-yard is a labyrinthine building, of singular design, wherein the ladies of the Emperor's *zanana* were accustomed to play hide and seek in. A little further is a sort of chapel, two stories high, and crowned with several cupolas. One entering, however, I found that there is but one story, extending to the dome, with a singular pillar in the centre, rising to the height of the upper windows. This pillar has an immense capital of the richest sculpture, three times its diameter, with four stone causeways leading to the four corners of the chapel, where there are small platforms of the shape of a quadrant; tradition says that this building was used by



Akbar as a place for discussing matters of science or religion, himself occupying the capital of the centre pillar, while his chief men were seated in the four corners.

In this same court is a pavilion, consisting of a pyramidal canopy of elaborately carved stone, resting on four pillars, which have a cornice of peculiar design representing a serpent. This pavilion approaches as near the Hindoo style of building as is possible, without violating the architecture of the palace, which is a massive kind of Saracenic. It was the station of a Gooroo, or *Hindoo* Saint, whom Akbar, probably from motives of policy, kept near him. The palace of the Sultana of Constantinople is one mass of the most laborious sculpture. There is scarcely a square inch of blank stone in the building. But the same remark would almost apply to the whole of the palace, as well as that of Beer-Bul. It is a wilderness of sculpture, where invention seems to have been taxed to the utmost to produce new combinations of ornament. Every thing is carved in a sandstone so fine, that, except where injured by man, it appears nearly as sharp as when first chiselled. The amount of labour bestowed on Futtehpore throws the stucco filigrees of the Alhambra quite in the shade ; it is unlike any thing that I have ever seen. And yet the very name of this splendid collection of ruins, which cannot be surpassed anywhere outside Egypt, was unknown to me before reaching India ! We paid rather a hasty visit to the *Dewan-i-khass*, the *Dewan-i-amm* and the mint. The latter is an immense quadrangle half blocked up with ruins. In the *Dewan-i-amm* is the balcony where Akbar usually made his public appearance in the morning to the crowd waiting in the court to see or petition him. He was greeted on these occasions with a cry of "Allah-ho-Akbar" ! (God is Great), to which he invariably replied :—"Jallo-jallalohoo" ! (May

his glory shine); this was a mode of salutation introduced by himself, because the two phrases contain his name—"Jallal-ud-deen Akbar." I have frequently heard a very similar style of address in Bohemia, where the greeting is:—"Praised be JESUS CHRIST!" And the answer:—"In eternity. Amen."

On the north side of Beer-Bul's palace, a little further down the hill, is the famous elephant gate, Akbar at one time intended to make a fortress of the place, and commenced by building this gate, which in a very noble structure, flanked by two octagonal bastions. But Shekh Selim Chishti, in whose sanctity the Emperor had great faith, threatened to leave, in case the plan was carried out, and the fortress was, therefore, relinquished. On each side of the gate is a colossal elephant on a lofty pedestal, but both the animals have lost their trunks, and are otherwise mutilated. A steep paved road, between gardens hanging one below the other on arched terraces, interrupted occasionally by ruins of palaces, leads down the hill to the elephant's tower, a minaret about 90 feet high, and studded from top to bottom with tusks of elephants. There is much discussion concerning its character, but the most plausible supposition is that it was erected by Akbar over the grave of a favorite elephant. It is called by the natives the "Hiran Minar" (Antelope Tower.)

By this time it was two hours past noon, and I still had the famous durgah to see. We, therefore, retraced our steps, and ascended to the highest part of the hill, where the tomb rises like a huge square fortress, overtopping the palace of Akbar itself. We mounted a long flight of steps, and entered a quadrangle so spacious, so symmetrical, so wonderful in its decorations, that I was filled with amazement. Fancy a paved court-yard 428 feet in length by 406 in breadth



surrounded with a pillared corridor 50 feet high, with a gateway, one of the noblest in the world, 120 feet high, triple-domed mosque on either side, a large tank and fountain in the centre, and opposite the great portal the mother-of-pearl and marble crystal, with its gilded domes, ivory pillars, and wreaths of wondrous flower-like ornaments, inwrought in marble filigree. The court, with its immense gate, seemed an enchanted fortress, solely erected to guard the precious structure within.

Shekh Selim Chishti was a very holy man, who became known as such by his intimacy with tigers, several of whom lived with him in a cave on the hill where his tomb now stands. His renown reached the ears of Akbar, who, finding him to be a man of apparent sanctity and considerable wisdom, built the palace of Futtehpore Sikree, it is said, to be near him. He consulted him on all important occasions, and, as the story goes, was finally indebted to him for an heir to the throne. For some time after Akbar's accession he was without a son, and twice demanded of the Shekh if he should ever have one. "No," said the latter; "it is not so written." Now he, the Shekh, had an infant son six months old; for these Moslem saints are the reverse of celibates. Upon Akbar coming to make the demand a third time, and receiving the same answer, this infant, who was present at the interview in his cradle, suddenly spoke, although never before had he even lisped a syllable. "Father," said he, "why do you send away the Conqueror of the World in despair?" "Because," said the Shekh, although he marvelled not a little at this—"there is no son written for him, unless another will give the life of a child destined for him; and who will do this?" "If you will permit me, father," said the infant, "I will die that a son may be born to the Emperor"—and even before the Shekh

signified his consent, he gave up the ghost. That day an heir to the throne was conceived, and in due time born. There are scandalous persons, however, who say that this is an allegory, veiling a truth, and that the Shekh, in procuring an heir to the Emperor, did, in fact, give up his own son, but without destroying his life. Be that as it may, Jehan-Ghir, the son of Akbar, bore the name of Selim until he ascended the throne.

We were allowed to enter the inner corridor, which surrounds the Shekh's tomb, and to look in, but not to cross the threshold. The tomb, as well as a canopy six feet high, which covers it, is made of mother-of-pearl. The floor of jasper and the walls of white marble, inlaid with cornelian. A cloth of silk and gold was spread over it like a pall, and upon this were wreaths of fresh and withered flowers. The screens of marble surrounding the building are the most beautiful in India. They are single thin slabs, about eight feet square, and wrought into such intricate open patterns that you would say they had been woven in a loom. The mosque, which is of older date than the tomb, is very elegant, resembling somewhat the hall of the Abencerages in the Alhambra, except that it is much larger, and of white marble, instead of stucco. Busharat Ally informed me that the durgah was erected in one year from the wealth left by Shekh Selim Chishti at his death, and that it cost 37 lakhs (£370,000.)

Busharat Ally sung an Arab love song, and told us tales of the time of Akbar. Some of these could not very well be repeated, as, like most Eastern stories, they were narratives of skilful intrigue; but there was one relating to Beer-Bul himself, which I give in the Shekh's words, merely omitting some of his endless repetition of phrases.

"One day," so began the old man, "Akbar Shah



and Rajah Beer-Bul were sitting together ;” Akbar said to Beer-Bul, “ what would you do if a great misfortune fell upon you ? said Beer-Bul “ I should give myself up to pleasure.” “ How to pleasure !” said Akbar, “ when you were unfortunate ?” “ Still said Beer-Bul I should do it.” The next day Akbar said to Beer-Bul take this ruby and keep it till I call for it. Now it was a ruby worth millions of rupees, such as there never was in the world before or since. So Beer-Bul took the ruby home to his daughter, and bade her keep it carefully, for it belonged to Akbar Shah ; and she locked it up in a chest with three locks.

Now Akbar sent to the greatest robber in the place, who was condemned to death, and had him brought before him. ‘ Robber,’ said he, ‘ I will give you your life if you can do one thing for me.’ ‘ What is that said the robber ?’ ‘ You must steal from my Minister, Beer-Bul, a ruby which I gave him to keep said Akbar Shah.’ The robber agreed, and no sooner had he gone into the city upon his errand than he sent for a very cunning little old woman. There is now no woman living who is so cunning as she was, although—“ interpolated the Shekh with a sly twinkle of the eye”—there are still some who would be a match for Eblis himself. Well, this little cunning old woman went to Beer-Bul’s daughter and engaged herself as a servant, and she gradually so won her confidence, that Beer-Bul’s daughter showed her the box with the three locks and the ruby. So she fetched the keys, opened the locks, took the ruby, and gave it to the robber ‘who brought it to Akbar.’ Akbar threw it into the Jumna, and then sent for Beer-Bul. ‘ Bring me the ruby,’ said he. ‘ Very well,’ said Beer-Bul, and went home to bring it but behold ! it was stolen. ‘ Well, where’s the ruby’ said Akbar ? ‘ Your Majesty shall have it in fifteen days.’ ‘ Very well’ said Akbar, but remember your head is security for it.

Beer-Bul went home and said to his daughter, 'we have fifteen days to live—let us spend them in festivity.' So they ate, and drank and gave feasts and dances till in twelve days they had spent many lakhs of rupees, and there was not a *pie* left them to buy food. They remained thus two days. On the fourteenth morning the daughter of a fisherman, who fished in the Jumna, said to her father :—'father, the Rajah Beer-Bul and his daughter have had nothing to eat for two days ; let me take them this fish, which Beer-Bul's daughter received with many thanks, and immediately cooked.' But as they were eating it there came a pebble into Beer-Bul's mouth. He took it out in his fingers, and, wah ! it was the ruby. Next morning he went to Akbar and said :—'here is the ruby as I promised,' Akbar was covered by surprise, but when he had heard the story he gave Beer-Bul two crores of rupees (£200,000) and said that he had spoken the truth—it was better to rejoice than to grieve in misfortune.

The moral of this story is rather awkwardly brought out, but the plot is curious from its resemblance to the Ring of Polycrates. It was spun out to a much greater length in the Shekh's relation.

I shook hands with Busharat Ally, and drove slowly down the hill, and out of the gate. I was about two miles distant when the sun went down in a broad crimson glory, and my last view of Futtehpore Sikree was a dark hand, sublime against the deepening brilliancy. But I shall long remember the day I spent in its palaces."

To this may be added some stories that Busharat Ally related to me in 1853. I do not know if during the late mutiny the rebels *forced* or persuaded this worthy gentleman to join them or not, or whether he is



the custodian of Futtehpore Sikree ruins still ; if he is, I beg his pardon for even having hinted at his ever having seen a rebel, more especially having joined them. This Busharat claimed to be a direct descendant of Shekh Selim Chishti ; and all his stories he vouched were true having been handed down in the traditions of his family.

Beer-Bul, as has been said, was Akbar's Prime Minister, he was a Hindoo, of great wit, wisdom, and erudition, and a philosopher withal, enjoying a large amount of the Emperor's confidence,

“ One day as King Akbar and Beer-Bul were out walking followed by the State elephants—Akbar asked him in his opinion which was the best, the collective strength of a whole army, or the individual wisdom of a clever man ; Beer-Bul answered—“ the wisdom of a clever man.” The Emperor then made signs to the mahout of his elephant to make the animal rush on and attack Beer-Bul, which was done ; this man of expedience instantly seized a pariah dog by the tail, which was sitting close by, waiting for some scraps from a cooly's dinner, and swinging the howling dog in the air brought it with great force on the head of the elephant, who immediately turned tail and ran off screaming with fright to his stables two coss off. Beer-Bul turned round to the Emperor saying :—“ Where is the strength of your army gone.” The Emperor was so pleased with his presence of mind, under trying circumstances, that he ordered him a new dress of honor, and promised that he would never do any thing without consulting him.

Another time Akbar was out hunting and lost his way ; he suffered much from thirst, chancing to see a labourer cutting sugar-cane, he rode up and asked the

man to give him a piece to chew, the man went into the midst of the khet, and brought a large cane; the Emperor then asked the man what was the necessity for his going into the midst of the field to get a cane when there were plenty close by. The countryman answered:—"The king is worthy of the best, I brought the largest in the field." Akbar then asked him that if he knew he was the king, why he had not made an obeisance, which was a king's due. The man answered:—"The obeisance is rather due to me, I have received no benefits or favour from the king, whereas the king has from me." Akbar said:—"There is some truth in this fellow's reasoning;" and, taking off a signet ring, he gave it to the man, and told him to present himself next day at durbar, and ask a favour at the same time returning the ring. When Akbar returned home he told Beer-Bul of the affair, who blamed him very much for giving such a valuable ring to a peasant, and with which he could do so much harm.

Akbar averred that he could trust the man; Beer Bul said that the ring was gone for ever. The man did not present himself at durbar next day, and many months passed away without hearing any thing about the ring further than Beer-Bul's continual reproaches to the king for his folly. Now it chanced that King Akbar and Beer-Bul were riding out one day in the country, when the Emperor at a distance espied this very countryman engaged at the plough, he told Beer-Bul of it and asked his advice. Beer-Bul said:—"If the man is innocent he will continue his ploughing, but if guilty, he will run off into the jungles upon seeing you." The king approached, but the man went on with his work. Akbar then asked why he had not come to the durbar and brought back the ring. The man said:—"Oh king, as I was returning that evening to my village I chanced to take the ring out of my pocket just to see



it was all safe." The kotwal happened to oversee me, and immediately had me seized, banged on the head with lathies, and your ring taken by force from me; saying "what punishment is due to a thief who has stolen a ring?" He also warned me that if I made any complaints about it, my lot should be vile; Akbar then said:—"Why did you not report this at the durbar the next day? You would have had justice." The countryman answered:—"Oh king would such an one as I, have been believed; I should have been put in prison, perhaps have lost my life. Beer-Bul said—"there is truth here, but it is mixed with error, let us go to the village, and see the kotwal." Akbar ordered the countryman to be mounted on an elephant, and to show the way to the village. When they neared the place, the king and Beer-Bul went on ahead, and entered the kotwal's house, who made profuse expressions of delight at the visit and professions of devout obedience to the king, who kept his eye on the man, and saw him take off a ring from his finger and conceal it in his waistbelt. The king, then, ordered all the head people of the place to be assembled, and asked them if they were satisfied with the kotwal; they all with one accord poured forth his praises, saying, that their destiny was good to be under such a worthy man; now the kotwal was the veriest villian in the world, and was hated, but much feared because he had the signet of the king, by means of which he carried on all kinds of oppression, extortion and injustice. The king then said—"how much is your salary?" and the kotwal told him it was 50 rupees a month; the king then asked how is it that you can live in such magnificence upon 50 rupees a month? Explain this, that I may take a lesson, and reduce the expenditure of my kingdom. At this close questioning the face of the kotwal became white with fear. The king then said to the head men of the village—"you

are all well satisfied with the kotwal, but I will produce one of you who is not so ;" and he then gave orders for the elephant with the ploughman on it, to advance.

When the kotwal saw him, his head fell on his breast, and the dark shadow of confusion overspread his face, and speech left his lips. The villagers when they saw the turn affairs were taking, loaded the kotwal with abuse and revilings of his tyranny and oppression, such is the way of this world. Akbar ordered all the property of the kotwal to be confiscated and given to the ploughman, whom he made kotwal instead ; and also ordered a fine of 100 rupees to be levied on the village because the men had spoken false before him—and this to be given to the religious mendicants. The former kotwal had the plot of land and hut of the husbandman given him for his lot. The ploughman turned out an honest man, and was afterwards advanced to the situation of inspector of chillars, which was a very lucrative appointment. Beer-Bul said—"the seed I have sown has increased a hundred fold, my advice is no longer required by you, Oh king your wisdom now exceeds mine." The kotwal's name was Fyz Buksh, the ploughman was Ramdeen.

The Emperor Akbar was given to repartee, and the making of riddles, one of these were—why is a melon like a woman ? *Answer.* Because if the melon falls on the knife, or the knife on the melon, the latter is always the sufferer. The wit of this I leave the reader to discover, but remember it was a royal joke, so you are bound to consider it very clever.

Another time Akbar and Beer-Bul were taking the air in the state barge on the river Jumna. The Emperor was turning round in his hand a valuable rosary called in the native language *mala*, it chanced to slip off his hand into the river ; Akbar called out to



Beer-Bul—"mala do," (give me back my rosary ; also meaning, bring and give me your mother.) Beer-Bul replied—"bahne do," (let it go, also meaning give me your sister.) This play on the words may be difficult to be understood by the English reader ; but is considered the acme of repartee by natives.

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FUTTEHPORE SIKREE IN THE OLDEN TIME TAKEN FROM A  
SKETCH PUBLISHED IN AN AGRA PERIODICAL OF 1852.

Let us begin with examining the position of the ruins. This ancient palace, which stood to the imperial Agra of Akbar's time, in the same relation which Windsor and Versailles now bear to London and to Paris, was situated upon a ridge of rocks of secondary sandstone. Upon one side of the ridge is now found the village of Futtehpore, upon the other, that of Sikree: both were included within the lofty walls, six miles in circumference, of the palace town. Upon the highest part of the ridge, excepting that afterwards occupied by the tomb of the Shekh Selim Chishti, stood the body of the palace, now adapted to the purposes of a Tahsili. This, I presume, to have contained the domestic apartments of the Emperor and his suite, exclusive of the zanâna. To the immediate west of this may still be seen the gracefully carved and cupolated apartments of the Rajah Beer Bull, whilst again to their south-west are those, which tradition has apportioned to the two celebrated brothers, Feizi and Abul Fazl,—buildings now employed for the use of a Government school. On the east of the body of the palace above mentioned was the zanâna, consisting of some separate and other conjoined chambers for the ladies of the household, and also the khâwbgah of the Emperor in which was a tank with fountains and a garden. On one side of the zanâna, outside the walls, stands the picturesque panchmahalla, which is of a pyramidal shape, formed by five stories or platforms supported by open pillar-work, each story lessening from the lower one, so as to leave a broad gallery all round. It was, perhaps, used for servants to sit or sleep upon. The *dewan-i-khass* adjoins the front of the khâwbgah; it is a large enclosed



oblong space ; here are still to be found the privy council chamber, the pachîsi-board, the gurû's seat, and the hide and seek. The first of these is a most unique building. Though apparently from without, of two stories, on entering you find that the upper chamber consists only of the summit of a massive pillar rising in the centre of the lower floor, from which summit narrow causeways of stone join the four angles of the building ; at each of these there is a door and staircase, and the angles are connected with each other by a narrow gallery running round at the same elevation as the top of the pillar. This central pillar is most richly clustered with carved stone ornaments, and is bordered above with a little balustrade. Imagination could, perhaps, be scarcely authentically contradicted in suggesting any origin for this curious design ; nor does it seem likely that the arrangement could ever have been of any utility, or intended for more than an allegorical purpose. The least difficult explanation may then seem, that the emblem signifies the ministers of the Emperor coming from the four quarters of the compass, to give their counsel, and receive his commands. The pachîsi-board is another quaint whim, though certainly Imperial in its eccentricity. The squares of the board are formed by large squares of stone, sufficiently big for a person to stand, or even sit upon, in the oriental fashion. The game is usually played by four persons, each of whom is supplied with four wooden or ivory cones, which are called "gôts" and are of different colours for distinction. Victory consists in getting these four pieces safely though all the squares of each rectangle into the vacant place in the centre—the difficulty being, that the adversaries take up in the same way that pieces are taken up at backgammon. Moving is regulated by throwing "couries" whose apertures falling uppermost or not, affect the amount of the throw

by certain fixed rules. But on this Titanic board of Akbar's, wooden or ivory "gôts" would be lost altogether ;—what was to be done ? Sixteen girls (I suppose slaves, or dancing girls), dressed distinctively, say four in red, four in blue, four in white, four in yellow—were trotted up and down the squares, taken up by an adversary and put back at the begining again—and at last after many difficulties, four of the same color would find themselves giggling into their dopattas together in the middle space, and the game was won. The fancy was certainly indicative of oriental views of women—but as it must have been productive of many a merry laugh, in which I have no doubt the poor girls heartily joined—why, perhaps, no great harm was done ! Akbar prided himself on the latitude of his religious opinions, and accordingly entertained a gurû. The âsan of this holy man is a handsome stone throne, Indian in its style of architecture, being exceedingly massive in all its proportions. Close by it are the passages, where some of the ladies used to beguile an hour or two of their long day with a game at "ankh machouli," or blind man's buff. On the east of the *dewan-î-khass* was the *dewan-î-amm*, and a communication through the wall which divided them enabled the Emperor to take his seat at once on the covered platform from whence he could be observed by all present. To the south again of the *zanâna*, stands a chamber with a pillared verandah in front, which may have been a kutcherry or *duftar-khana*. These were probably the principal original buildings. It is recorded by the historian, Abdul Kadir, that the palace was finished in the same year in which the Shekh Selim Chishtee died ; his *durgah* was, therefore, not built till a later period. But surrounding what I have attempted to describe, and covering the hill on either side, may still be found the remains of a mint, of baths, of streets, saraes, of private houses, whilst the



space between the foot of the hill and the walls, in most directions, was doubtless occupied by a swarming and dirty bazar, exhibiting that curious propinquity of squalor to magnificence, which is so essential an element in every oriental scene, and forms generally a sad emblem of the state of society. The principal streets leading up to the ridge of the hill must have presented a striking appearance. We should not, however, confuse our idea of the scene with European notions; for instance, there was probably nothing very showy about the shops. The druggists with their coloured bottles, and tinsel decoration, the drapers with a show cloth or two hung up before the stalls, the saddlers with their ornamented trappings and horsings, and those who made up punkas of gay feathers or banners of silk embroidered with gold—all such might tell in scenic effect. But that branch of trade, which is so peculiarly connected with our ideas of the costliness and splendour of the east—the jewellers, goldsmiths, silversmiths and filigree workers, present no public "*Storr and Mortimer*" exhibition of their resources. Those merchants who dealt in jewels and ornaments, had them safe at the bottom of closed trunks; whilst the shops of those who were themselves working jewellers, offered nothing more exciting to the imagination, than what might be called forth by a whitesmith's forge at home. The interest of the scene doubtless chiefly consisted in the different races of men by whom all avenues were thronged, distinguished by their different costumes, and divided by habits and prejudices into separate groups. Here the fair complexion, Jewish features, fine form and ample robes of the Affghan—there, the round and vulgar little money-changer from Goozerat, with his soiled chupkun and his yellow pagri. Here the bare head and beautiful muslin of the Bengalee, with his quick eye, rapid speech, his effeminate bearing and his feeble frame—there the

red turban, the thick moustache, the broad shoulders, the sturdy calves of the Rajpoots. This fat porpoise of a man with no more hair on his head than Mr. Micawber, whose vast breasts rest on his vast stomach, and whose vast stomach rests on his vast thighs, is a Chaube from Muttra. He is copying Sanscrit (which he does not understand) for the Shekh Fieze, who is reading with a pundit. The Chaube writes a little on old pieces of paper, then stops and chaunts what he has written, rolling his body in time to the strain. In another place, a pale graceful youth, by profession a *kush-navis*, is writing out an eulogy of the Emperor for a young poet, who hopes to lay it ornamented with serawls and illuminations before Abul Fāzal, or Aziz. Something like this, perhaps, though of course the merest out line is here given, was the picture to be daily seen in the busy thoroughfares of Futtelipore. And now having in a manner prepared our theatre, let us bring on one or two of the principal characters, and let us, as a way of doing so, imagine the conduct and drama of a single day in the palmiest time of good King Akbar. We are told that the palace of Futtehpore was completed in the year 979 Hijri, which answers to our year 1571.

Akbar would then be scarcely thirty years old ; it will suit us better, however, to put our day at a much later period, when the Emperor's sons were grown up around him, when his power was thoroughly established, and the effects of his genius had manifested themselves. We will not specify, however, any supposed date, lest we entangle ourselves with historical anachronisms, merely generally laying the time as being when Akbar was advancing in years, but when the chief ornaments of his court were yet left around him.

It would be very easy to describe the events of a day in such a manner that an oriental scholar should be



able to point out few mistakes, for the information afforded us, both by the Emperor's own son and by Abul Fazal, is so minute that following it we could not well be wrong; but as the object of our day is merely to illustrate the place, the events we shall imagine will be immediately suggested by the uses to which we suppose the different buildings were appropriated; we beg pardon before hand for all blunders that we may unconsciously commit,

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It is scarcely day. But already a roll of drums is heard, and cannon discharged, break rudely and abruptly the silence of the "solitary morning." The Emperor is an early riser, and the moment of his rising from his couch is announced in this noisy fashion. You will remember that there is a door opening to the south in the khwābgah into the space on the opposite side of which the duftar-khana stands. Before this doorway, shortly after the roll of the drums, a considerable crowd assembles; immediately at the entrance are drawn up double lines of chobdars or mace bearers, each carrying a silver stick; outside of these are burkundazes and other armed attendants. In front, and conversing together in groups, stand handsomely-dressed men, who are evidently, both by their deportment and by the respect they meet with from the miscellaneous crowd which girds in the whole scene, courtiers of influence and reputation. One feature of the *ensemble* must not be omitted; no one wore beards, except, indeed, such strangers as might be casual spectators, and whom neither interest nor necessity had compelled to conform to the etiquette of the court.

The door of the khwābgah opens, the large drums thunder from the noubutkhana over the great door-way

of the palace. A nakib issues forth, mace in hand, and proclaims, in that monotonous tone so familiar to dwellers in the East, the titles of his master. Immediately after him appears in the door-way a broad-chested man of somewhat advanced years. He is simply dressed, but there is a certain chasteness in the simplicity which shows that some little care has been taken to produce it. The material is white muslin, but gold thread is introduced in many parts with a very tasteful effect. You remark his arms—they are so unusually long—his face is very clear, and the color of the blood so discernible, as to give a rich tinge to his olive complexion; his eyebrows are joined and lowering, which tends to give a severe expression to the excessive bright eyes, which they half conceal. This is Akbar. His appearance is the signal for a loud and general cry of "Allaho Akbar," to which the Emperor, standing still in the door-way for a moment and bowing very slightly, answers "Jilli-Jalalihû."

This mode of salutation and its answer had been introduced by himself, and it will be observed that the two phrases include his name "Jilal-oodîn Akbar." The courtiers now pressed forward, and were severally noticed with kindness; then forming a ring round the Emperor, the whole procession moved on foot towards the durgah.

Akbar was very early to-day, and the azân had not yet been proclaimed. Whilst they were moving slowly along, the voice of the muazzin was heard from the high up cupola of the durgah gateway. The first words he uttered were the same as those which the submissive multitude had just repeated "Allaho Akbar," God is great! But coming from the serene height and in a slow, solemn chant, they seemed to bear a more pregnant meaning, and to suggest to a contemplative mind the full interpretation, which the eloquent Massillon



once gave them ; who, when preaching the funeral sermon of the 14th Louis, commenced in a deep undertone, "*Louis est mort ! Dieu seul est grand !*" There was one amongst the attendant courtiers, who, on hearing the first sound of the azân, stood perfectly still. He was a man of sharp, severe features, and noted as the most rigid Mahomedan about the court. It is directed in the Haddîs, that if a person be walking when the azân is sounded, he stand still and reverently listen. Abdul Kâdir, the bigotted historian, for it was he, was not one lightly to omit obedience to the sacred ritual. A gay man, of most polished manners, who was walking by the Emperor's side looked round when Abdul Kâdir was left some little distance behind ; and, catching the Emperor's eye, they both laughed. This was the celebrated Abul Fuzl, well-known to be as lax in matters of faith as Abdul Kâdir was rigid. The whole party had now reached the eastern gate of the durgâh, on the steps of which an attendant received the Emperor's shoes, as no one was permitted to pass within that sacred precinct except with feet-bare. The beautiful quadrangle, which was now entered, has been justly admired by strangers from a distant and more civilized continent as a very perfect work. On the western side, is a lofty and noble mosque, on the southern a massive and imposing gateway, rising high into the air and seen for many a mile from the level country beneath, standing up against the brightness of an eastern sky ; on the north, but erected apart from the clusters which run all around the building, is the shrine, the tomb of the Shekh Selim Chishti, who is said to have predicted the birth of Jehangeer, and from whom that prince previous to his accession bore the name of "Selim." The actual tomb is of mother-of-pearl, but enclosed in a small chamber of white marble, which is itself again enclosed in a larger chamber of the same

material. This outer chamber is lighted by large squares of that lattice-work which has rendered the Moresque architecture celebrated throughout Europe, and beautiful ruins of which still astonish, whilst they delight the wanderer in Spain. The rich creamy tinge of the marble, the elaborate yet exact design of the tracery, the completeness of the finish render these lattices, perhaps, unrivalled in India. A support to the roof outside somewhat in the shape of the figure "S," of which there are several, strikes one as out of character, being evidently of Indian design.

In the middle of the quadrangle, prayer-carpet were spread opposite to the mosque, and the relative of the Shekh, who was now the Mutuwallie of the durgâh, was present to read the prayer. The Emperor and his courtiers formed themselves into one long line, and prostrations and other attitudes were performed by the whole assembly in concert, which formed a curious scene.

After prayers, the Emperor passed for a moment within the tomb of the Shekh, for whom he entertained an affectionate remembrance, casting upon it the simple tribute of a jessamine flower. When he returned to the gateway, by which he had entered, elephants, led horses, and mounted out-riders, were found in attendance. As the noble elephant upon which Akbar mounted rose from the ground, guns fired, drums were loudly rolled, and the procession swung into motion to the voice of the nakib, whose sonorous compliments and adulation were taken up by a large crowd of spectators. As the Emperor passed along, his train was swelled by many courtiers, dependants and others, who, having made their salaam from some conspicuous corner, put their horses in line. The name of the "Hira Minar" having been whispered about, it became generally known that the Emperor was going to indulge in a little matchlock shooting.



The Deer Tower is within the walls immediately under the hill in a north westerly direction. There is a paved road leading to it from the palace, which passes under a large gateway, called the "Hâthi Pol," or elephant gate, from two of these animals sculptured in stone, which stand one on each side of the entrance from without. Akbar appears to have thought the massive shape of the elephant an imperial and appropriate ornament to a gateway ; for it will be remembered that after the defeat of Jeimal, the Emperor caused figures to be cast of that chief and his brother, which he placed upon carved elephants erected by the gateway of the fort of Delhi ; and many years after, the French traveller, Bernier, visiting that place was impressed by these vast statues with feelings of respectful awe. It was a gay sight when Akbar passed under the Hathi Pol. First a troop of cavalry, their spears glittering, their horses fretfully champing the bit ; then chobdars, and chuprassies with red turbans and sashes, on camels amongst them the nakib still vociferous ; the leading courtiers surrounded the Emperor's elephant on elephants also, and the mighty animals roll along, tinkling with bells and waving their rich trappings as they go. Other courtiers and officers of the palace follow on horseback, each with their own burkandazes and attendants on foot. A band of the rude but not ineffective music of the country accompanies, and their drums are most briskly answered by those of the durbanân from over the gateway. The "Hiran Minar" is a single tower, standing by itself on a small raised platform. The lower part of the shaft bristles with the not very pretty ornamentation of imitation elephants tusks. They are of stone, covered with chunam, and the tusk is squared off as they usually are in large animals, perhaps the ends were gilt in imitation of the brass clamps often attached, which may have improved them.

The Emperor ascended to the top of the tower attended only by an old chuprassie, who carried two matchlocks. After Akbar had amused himself for some time firing at deer, which were driven across an open space at a fair distance from the minár, he sent word down that he was now satisfied with sport, and ordered a review of cavalry to commence, which had been arranged for that morning.

A man now ascended the minar, richly dressed, his countenance not wholly unpleasing, but still haunted by that terrible expression of uncertainty of temper, which so marked his character; for it was Prince Selim. He saluted his father, and stood by his side looking on as the cavalry came into sight. There was a fine young man leading the troops—mounted on a showy horse, who every now and then glanced up to the minar, as if for approval, this was Prince Khusru, Selim's son. He had recently got his mansab, and was proud as of it as lad could be.

The inspection of cavalry concluded, Akbar and the Prince came down, and mounting on elephants moved in procession towards the palace. There is a large seraie on the right of the minar as you return to the Hathi Pol. Travellers of many nations were standing in front of this place, having come out to see the Emperor pass. Amongst them were two men of swarthy hue dressed in ecclesiastical cassocks. The Emperor's eye immediately caught them, and he, apparently knowing what nation and calling they were of, gave an order for them to attend him in the evening.

When Akbar arrived within the palace, he alighted at the gate of the building, which is now the Tahsil. Here he partook of a repast, and afterwards sent for the Rajah Beer-Bul. The Hindoo Chief, a man of agreeable and cheerful features, came over, plainly dres-



sed, in a nālki or large open litter, accompanied by his secretaries and a few foot men, and was soon hard at work with Akbar in political papers and converse. It was now a busy time in the town—marketing was going on briskly in the streets, men were washing and dressing in the public manner the east admits of, some were cooking and others were eating their food with the peculiar solemnity of oriental meals. In one place was loud haggling about a bargain, in another some bunniah was vociferating “*dohâi pâdsah*” against a trooper, who had taken much more atta than was right for his money. Everywhere noise, everywhere bustle and life.

At twelve, Akbar dismissed the Rajah after a hard morning's work, wishing to be left alone, as he said, for a meditation on the orb which then stood at meridian height.

And now came on that time so full of unaccustomed imagery to an European mind, the noon of an Indian day—imagery, indeed, whose picturesque features familiarity has not concealed from the perception of native writers. The Rajah Sudraka in his drama of the “Toy Cart” thus describes the mid-day scene :—

“— The cattle dozing in the shade  
Let fall the unchamped fodder from their mouths :  
The lively ape with slow and languid pace  
Creeps to the pool to slake his parching thirst  
In its now tepid waters ; not a creature  
Is seen upon the public road, not braves,  
A solitary passenger—the sun.”

And more poetically the great Kalidasa says in the “Hero and Nymph” :—

“Its past mid-day. Exhausted by the heat  
The peacock\* plunges in the scanty pool,  
That feeds the tall tree's root : the drowy bee  
Sighs in the hollow chamber of the lotus  
Darkened with closing petals : on the bank  
Of the now tepid lake the wild duck lurks,

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\*Something new in ornithology peacocks' plunging and diving.

Amongst the sedgy shade ; and even here†  
The parrot from his wiry bower complains,  
And calls for water to allay his thirst."

Can this be the Futtehpore of three hours ago all slumber and silence ? drowsy shrouded figures stretched on every shop-board, scarce a soul in the streets.

"The very houses seem all sleep."

Pompeii could scarcely be calmer.

As there is nothing to be seen out of doors let us peep in imagination into forbidden seclusions, let us enter the seraglio. There is a chamber prettily carved with grapes and other ornaments in a corner of the zanana which they tell you was occupied by the Turkish wife. We are not cold critics but warm believers in every thing just now ; therefore, we must not scrutinize too severely the probabilities, but call up to imagination's eye the Lady of Constantinople.

It is a difficult thing to describe female beauty, and oriental beauty especially can only be caught by glimpses, and much must always be left for fancy to fill in. Look at any of the Heroines of the Waverly Novels, a phrase or two is all the great artist often gives of external portrait. Sir Bulwer Lytton's picture of Lucretia is one of the most elaborate descriptions of personal appearance perhaps we have. The following passage from Aubrey De Vere's "Picturesque Sketches of Greece and Turkey" contains a portrait of an oriental beauty, which shall be here transcribed. A curious adventure took him into a Turkish haram, and this was one of the inmates.

The favorite wife was a Circassian, and a fairer vision it would not be easy to see. Intellectual in expression she could hardly be called ; yet she was full of

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† The scene—a garden.



dignity, as well as plaint, grace, and of sweetness. Her large black eyes, beaming with a soft and stealthy radiance, seemed as if they would have yielded light in darkness ; and the heavy waves of her hair, which, in the excitement of the tumultuous scene, she carelessly flung over her shoulders, gleamed like a mirror. Her complexion was the most exquisite I have ever seen, its smooth and pearly purity being tinged with a colour unlike that of a flower or of fruit, of bud or berry, but reminded me of the vivid and delicate tints which sometimes streak the inside of a shell. Though tall, she seemed as light as if she had been an embodied cloud, hovering over the rich carpets like a child that does not feel the weight of its body ; and though stately in the intervals of rest, her mirth was a sort of rapture.

She too had that peculiar luxuriousness of aspect, in no degree opposed to modesty, which belongs to the East : around her lips was wreathed, in their stillness, an expression at once pleasurable and pathetic, which seemed ever ready to break forth into a smile : her hands seemed to leave with regret whatever they had rested on and in parting to leave something behind ; and in all her soft and witching beauty she reminded me of Browning's lines.

"No swan-soft woman, rubbed in lucid oils,  
The gift of an enamoured God, more fair."

With the exception of Browning's lines, which I cannot say I like, this seems to me very beautiful, and as far as I can judge gives a correct idea of oriental beauty generally. If you are not satisfied I must refer you to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's. "Fair Fatima;" for I dare not try my hand after De Vere."

The Lady of Constantinople was seated on cushions of white silk and dressed in a caftan of pale blue and silver, a Turkish waistcoat of pale pink, and drawers of

pale blue and white stripes. She seemed lonely and distressed, a satâr lay on her lap, she took it up and struck a few irregular chords, and then passing into a simple melancholy air, she sung some Turkish words which bore a burden of this sort :—

## SONG OF THE LADY OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

### I.

I pant for the azure sea,  
And its breezes fresh and free,  
For the home I would view once more,  
Sits by the gusty shore.  
And my heart turns to thee,  
Oh ! Istamboul  
To the city of the sea,  
And the home of my soul.

### II.

The gleams of the sultry noon,  
Broad o'er the Anderoon ;  
Perfumes of Indian flowers,  
Breathe through the dizzy bowers ;  
And my heart, &c., &c.

### III.

Hope came with the sea-born gale,  
Cheering if doomed to fail,  
Comes with this slumberous air  
A deep though a calm despair !  
And my heart, &c., &c.

There was a Greek slave asleep in a corner of the apartment, a dark-eyed Ægean islander. The music fell softly on her ears, and helped to aid the beautiful illusions of slumber, that she was far away and happy again in her own bright home.

The city woke from its repose by three o'clock, where men were not fairly on their feet again, they were chattering to each other, lazily, from charpoys. The streets buzzed and hummed again with life. The loud laughter and merry shouts of children at play, rang in the air. Servants who would be wanted as soon as the evening set in, as chuprassies and attendants,



were slowly getting some of their clothes on. Dancing girls, who lived in the upper room over shops, were gradually appearing in their little balconies, either chatting with their own musicians, or laughing and joking with people in the streets. Led horses began to pass by, their heads reined tightly up, their eyes bandaged and their grooms holding them by a long handkerchief. The dogs got up out of the dust and limped about, snarling amongst themselves over garbage. Akbar had spent the afternoon in a sort of desultory chat with Abul Fuzl and Feizi. He had sent for them about one o'clock, for he had happened to remember the two priests who were standing at the serai in the morning. And then, from remembering them, his thoughts passed to other priests who had come before, and with whom he had had discussions. So he sent for his two friends to consult what difficult questions should be put to the priests, and to chat, generally, on the subject of religion. The laxity of Akbar's faith as a Mussulman, and his singular freedom from bigotry, has led some to regard him as an earnest inquirer, from whom, unhappily, the circumstances of his birth, education, and position concealed the truth ; and, in this point of view, he has been compared to Scipio. That he was constantly, with jesting Pilate, asking "what is truth ?" There can be no doubt, but he seems to us, as far as we can understand his character, to have been more interested in the question than its answer. He was more amused at new doctrines, new theories, new objects of veneration than burdened with the difficulties which surrounded the acceptance of any of them. And there surely is no parallel between a grave and powerful mind bowed down, everlastingly, with the stern dilemmas of that great enigma—Whence and Wither? and the superficial curiosity of an intellect, that was too restless to bind itself permanently to any particular code of opinions.

When Abul Fazl and Feizi were leaving the Emperor which they did, surrounded by a vast number of petitioners, and others—some political, some literary umed-wars; another party was seen approaching the palace.

The principal figure amongst them was a young man reclining in a languid way in a litter; he was very flashily dressed and was leaning on one arm, laughing and talking to his servants, who were most of them jauntily dressed, and impudent looking youths. Feizi and Abul Fazl were just getting into their litters as this new arrival came up. They immediately advanced a little way and bowed with great respect. He nodded in a familiar sort of manner back, and passed on towards the palace without stopping to speak to them. An interview between Akbar and his youngest son, Prince Danial, for the new arrival was he, was always a melancholy affair. The Emperor's affection for the youth was great. But even affection's eye could not escape seeing the shadow of ruin on poor Danial's countenance. He was drinking himself to death: and neither passionate entreaties, nor stern warnings, nor menace, nor ridicule could arrest the slow, certain and inevitable suicide. This interview resembled, in all respects, many that had preceded it. Fair promises and angry threats on the Emperor's part met by sullen silence from the prince; than nature getting the better of both of them, Akbar wrung his hands and fell in tears on the youth's neck—and Danial, whose nerves were too much out of order to stand a scene, sank into maudlin hysterics of alternate weeping and laughter. By the time this visit was over, signs of the evening began to occur. The splash of water on the ground was heard where the watermen were laying the dust before houses. The paroquets came out from shady corners where they had spent the heat of the day, and screeched about the eaves.



The roar of the town swelled up, but to a fanciful ear, it seemed unlike the same sound in the morning—there was a subdued exhaustion perceptible—in character with the heavy atmosphere and the dead sky. The Emperor attended by his household servants, passed on foot out of the palace, where he had spent the day, into the *khwabgah*. He sat for a short time there, in the garden, by the side of the fountain and partook of fruit. Then putting a costly shawl over his shoulders, and taking a jewelled sword in his hand, he moved into the *diwan-i-khass*. Carpets were spread in the middle of the square, and cushions of faint blue velvet and silver laid on them. When Akbar was seated, he ordered Abul Fazl and Feizi to be admitted. They were close at hand, and entering, were directed to sit down. Then the two ecclesiastics were summoned, whom the Emperor had seen in the morning at the serai. One of them was a young man of pleasing countenance; the other much older and of a very battered appearance. The elder priest held up a crucifix in his hand, as soon as he entered, at which Akbar smiled, and, putting his hands together, slightly bowed his head. Abul Fazl, at this juncture, remarked with a malicious sneer, that he was sorry Abdul Kadir was not present. The Emperor laughed and immediately sent for him. Conversation with the Portuguese priests was a difficult matter, but, however, it was effected after a fashion. The discussion was not very profitable, for it consisted chiefly of Akbar's relating cures, which had been effected by Mussulman Saints and miracles which had been wrought at their tombs, and insisting that if the priests religion were true, they ought to be able to authenticate it with miracles. The priests replied that in their own country there were relics of good men, which had often effected cures, but that on account of these supernatural qualities, they were esteemed very precious, and people were

not willing that they should be removed out of the kingdom.

Conversation was going on in this desultory way, when the younger priest remarked—that he had something very singular to show the Emperor, if it was his pleasure to see it. Curiosity was excited ;—Akbar said, certainly, that he wished to see every thing novel and rare, and begged the priest to exhibit. The young man feeling in a pouch under his cassock, said that he required a light. This was immediately ordered, and than he, retiring a little, applied the fire to something which he held concealed in his hand, after which smoke was seen issuing out of his mouth. At this Akbar laughed contemptuously, and said, that every juggler in the country that frequented fairs would do it ten times better. “Why,” he cried, “they will bring fire out of their nostrils as well as smoke. If your magic was no better than this, you would not make one rupee a month.”

This badinage was put an end to by the young priest explaining, that there was no feat intended in producing the smoke, but that the curiosity was, that the smoke itself was very soothing and agreeable, and that from partaking of it, the mind of man became philosophic and cheerful. The priest then opened his hand and showed a small clay pipe, he also exhibited some of the fragrant weed from out of his pouch. Akbar was much interested, and sent immediately for Hukeem Abul Futteh Gilanee to ask his opinion of the herb. He insisted in the meantime on trying it, much against the remonstrances of Abdul Kadir who was now present, and who assured him it was a device of the devil, and had probably been brought direct from his satanic majesty by his servants and emissaries the priests. When the hukeem came, he found the Emperor coughing very much ; for Akbar not being quite up to the mysteries of the pipe, had swallowed a good deal



of smoke and was suffering accordingly. The hukeem with a grave face examined the herb, and afterwards being ordered by the Emperor to try it, declared that it was a pleasant, and possibly, a healthful weed, but that the smoke required purifying before it was imbibed—"What is it called?" asked Akbar, "TOBACCOO," answered the priest. Akbar agreed with the hukeem, that the smoke would be better for purification, but inquired how this could be effected. The hukeem replied that he thought it might be made to pass through water, and from that night he commenced the series of experiments, which ended in the invention of the hookah.

Shortly after, the priests obtained permission to retire. Akbar then rose up and went with his friends through the aperture in the wall, which leads into the *dewan-i-amm*. There were great crowds of people in this enclosure, anxiously watching the little door, which opens at the back of the throne gallery. As soon as Akbar appeared through this, and took his seat, a great shout of applause rose up from all sides. In this place he sat nearly half an hour, talking and laughing with Abul Fazl, who stood by his side. Occasionally a horse would be put through the menage in front of his seat: now a wild-looking man would try and attract his attention with a pair of tiger cubs, or a jogee with both his arms stiff and attenuated from being held up aloft, would stand, like a prophet denouncing a city silently before him. At length another shout announced that the Emperor had again withdrawn into the *dewan-i-kass*. And now seated with a small circle of courtiers around him, he reclined back on his cushions to listen to an old man with a white beard, who was going to give an oriental version of the Ring of Polycrates.

"There was once a king," began the old man, "very rich, very powerful, very just and wise. He had

thousands, thousands of soldiers, lakhs of cavalry, an innumerable multitude of servants. This king also had a very wise Vizeer, of high birth, noble mien, extensive learning; Roostum in battle, Solyman on the judgment seat, without peer in the days gone by, and wholly unmatched by men of the present day. This Vizeer had a daughter, of exquisite beauty, sharp intellect, gentle disposition. A nightingale in voice, a cypress in stature, a partridge in her gait. The plenty of the morning lay on her cheek, and the blackness of midnight in her raven hair; a Zuleikha! a Leila! hoo, hoo" cried the old man in great enthusiasm."

Then he told the tale of the ring which Mr. Taylor has given in his account of Futtehpore Sikree.

"More stories succeeded to this, and when at length the old man's voice ceased, after the last tale, no approbation followed:—

"And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
To thank his tale, he wondered not—  
The king had been an hour asleep."

However the complete hush, after the long flow of animated words, awoke the Emperor, and, bidding farewell to his friends, he moved off into the khwabgah for the night.

And now the city was mostly silent; but there was a large house in a lane below the brow of the hill on which the palace stood, from which, though all the doors outside were closed, a sound of music and singing was heard. This dwelling belonged to a friend of Prince Danial, a young spingal of a Chieftan, who was rapidly spending a large sum of money, which his father had accumulated in the days of Humayoon.

"Ah me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,  
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee!"



The court-yard in the centry of this house was lighted with torches, and on one side on cushions lay a small party of young men, amongst whom was Prince Danial ; on his right, sat Mozaffur Khan plying him with wine ; he was the master of the house, a handsome youth, but rendered effeminate in appearance by a profusion of long hair. A company of actors were exhibiting on the other side of the court, and going through a buffoonish scene, which had little more point in it, than that a man wished to go a journey, and had great difficulty in procuring a quiet horse.

After the acting a natch commenced, to which the spectators paid considerable attention, as the principal danseuse was a girl who had lately arrived, and whose name was Choonee. She was Hindoo by birth and had handsome Rajpootnee features. But what was most interesting about her, was, that though surrounded with drunken glaring eyes, and accompanied by the dregs of society, there was still an expression in her face (we cannot call it innocence, for of that she could never have even dreamt in sleep, but) of a pensive sort of despair like indifference, which almost stood in the place of purity. Was it her fault that she had been born or bred as she had been—that she had seen what she had seen, or come to what she had come ? No. Let who dare throw the first stone. If there be a creature in the universe for whom there is uncovenanted pardon, it must be for one, who from the cradle to the grave, could never possibly have found a place for repentance, though she had sought it carefully and with tears.

Near Prince Danial was laying a matchlock. This was a very favorite piece of his, to which, as indicating its fatality to the animals against which it was raised, he had given the jocose name of *Jenazeh* or the bier. This pleasantry falls in the same category with that of

a noble Marquis of our own age, who called a favorite hunter, Saltfish, because it was good for a fast day.

At one time the Emperor had been so distressed with Danial's habits, that he had determined to make an effort to break them off by violence. The prince was therefore made a prisoner in his own apartments, and strictly watched. But a knavish servant had managed to bring wine, clandestinely, in the barrel of Jenazeh. This exploit had, of course, endeared the matchlock still more to its owner, and a poetical friend had by his request written some verses on it which at late hours of the night the Prince was accustomed to sing himself. To-night there was a call for the composition in question—so Danial taking a sitar, on which instrument he played a little, and being accompanied by Mozuffur Khan on a small drum, struck up, to a monotonous air some Persian verses, which may be freely given in English, in lines resembling these :—

### DRINKING SONG OF PRINCE DANIAL.

#### I.

Jenazeh! oh Jenazeh under the greenwood tree,  
Many a time and many have I shot the deer with thee,  
Have I shot the antlered roe-buck as I saw him nobly pass,  
First listening for an instant, and then topping o'er the grass.  
And when the shades of evening fell, and the bigots went to pray,  
I thought a draft of wine, a better finish for the day,  
But they blustered and the flustered and they took the Prophets name,  
So I smuggled it through thee old gun, and found it just the same,  
Jenazeh! oh Jenazeh, what a pleasant friend thou art!  
In my sporting and carousing thou hast ta'en the foremost part.

#### II.

They tell me I am dying from the fatal joys you bring,  
And the nick-name I have given you may mean another thing:  
But it is better thus to die, then live in sober pain,  
And if I had a hundred lives, I'd lose them so again,  
For some are praying half the night, for forgiveness of their sins,  
And some are dreaming half the night, of power they hope to win;  
But I am full of laughter, and full of giddy wine,  
And if there be a careless heart, I swear it must be mine.  
Jenazeh, oh Jenazeh! what a pleasant foe is this!  
That kills me so deliciously, and makes me die of bliss.

Let us leave the convivial party, and ascend the gateway of the Shekh's tomb. All is dark and silent



—rising from the city amidst the few specks of light beneath, come the cries of watchmen ; while from the darker mystery beyond the walls, swell faintly and dismally the bark of jackals, and the sudden yelp of fiercer beasts. A night breeze blows over one, like that dreary wind, which in Moslem belief is to precede the day of judgment. Why is there such terror—such awful forlornness in its moan ? The air is big with doom. The scene we have witnessed to-day is to pass not by the common operations of change and time, but in blackness and darkness away. Danial is to find the death of horrors he is seeking. For young Khosru a life of trouble and imprisonment, and a sudden end is in store. The gay head of Abul Fazl is to be brought one day, dripping with gore before his Royal Master, Akbar is to come one midnight to the couch of Feize—but he cannot hear—he is spitting blood, and barking, and dying in agonies. The cheerful Beer-Bul is to be murdered far away, amongst the Eusufzai ; and when the inevitable hour comes to the Emperor himself, his son and his grandson are to be intriguing over his death-bed for the vacant diadem. Thus as over the flowers of pleasures, so too, over the gems of glory, is ever discernible the trail of the serpent.”

The ideas of this sketch have been suggested by the accounts given in *Masir-é-Rahimi*, of Abdul Baki, Abdul Kadir's history. The *Kholasut-ul-Tibb*, a treatise on medicine by Hukeem Imam Buksh, and Sir Henry Elliott's Works.”

Agra is now reached by railway from Calcutta, and very soon will be so, from Bombay. There are several Hotels, and all kinds of carriages are there procurable, and in the cool weather a week may be spent at Agra and its environs with great pleasure. Small inlaid marble models of the tomb, paper weights, and knives, and even large inlaid tables, &c., of superior

make, can be procured of one Nuthoo,\* who has a shop in the Nâf-kî-Mandî; inferior things made of marble can be bought at the Taj gate.

I will conclude my Guide-Book with the words of many Persian Writers at the finale of their effusions:—

"Khwaninda khoosh-bashud !

May the reader be pleased.—SALAAM !

J. T. N.



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\* I believe Nuthoo is now dead, but some Native has taken his place, and exquisite models of the Taj can be purchased made of Soap Stone.



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