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## THE CITY OF TEHERÂN.

### FIRST PAPER.

THE present capital of Persia owes its importance to the fact that it was made the seat of government by Shah Aga Mohammed, the founder of the dynasty of the Khajârs, about a hundred years ago. Teherân (the circumflex is used in this article, to mark the accents, in proper names) is an old city; it was called by Pietro de la Valle the city of plane trees; and its well-ordered bazaars had a wide repute in his time. But until it became the capital it could not be considered in any sense a rival of Ispahân or Shirâz, or other important and ancient cities of Persia. The monarchs of the Khajâr dynasty have been men of ability and enterprise, and their capital, from being a small, comparatively unknown town, has become one of the most flourishing and active cities in the East, with a growing population of nearly two hundred thousand souls. Although it possesses few such noble examples of ancient architecture as one finds at Ispahân, yet a sketch of Teherân will give one a very good idea of life in Persia, while its suburbs present most of the features peculiar to Persian scenery.

On approaching Teherân by way of Resht on the Caspian, one ascends upwards of six thousand feet; and on reaching the Kharzân Pass, it would seem that a corresponding descent would lead to the great plains of central Persia. But, on the contrary, the southern descent is but two thousand feet; this accomplished, the traveler finds himself on a vast plateau four thousand to five thousand feet above the sea level. Teherân consequently occupies a lofty position, while appearing to be on a plain of ordinary elevation stretching east, west, and south as far as the eye can see. This accounts for the ease with which

in that region one gets short of breath with any unusual exertion, a difficulty which passes away after the lungs have become accustomed to an otherwise delightful atmosphere.

There could hardly be a greater contrast of scenery than that presented by the two sides of the pass above mentioned. On the north side, the mountains concentrate the moisture from the Caspian, and numerous streams descend to the sea. This abundance of humidity produces a vegetation almost tropical in variety and luxuriance. The road winds through primeval forests of extraordinary density and beauty. The venerable gnarled trunks are green with moss or embraced by the long tendrils of clambering vines. Often the emerald gloom of the forest is brightened by the vivid scarlet blossoms of the pomegranate gleaming like glints of light. Near the sea are noble lawns and vistas of green fields, old granges, thatched huts of the peasantry under superb masses of overarching foliage, and moist rice-fields where women wade bare-legged and regardless of veils. But in the forest lurk the panther and the tiger and the frequent and persistent mosquito; while the deadly miasma rises from the steaming rice-fields, there being few who are not wasted or destroyed by the all-pervading fever.

But as one begins to ascend the mountains he becomes aware that he is entering upon scenery of a different character—so different, indeed, that he seems to have passed into another hemisphere. The atmosphere is also entirely different. On the north side the damp heat causes the perspiration to start as if from a steam-bath; while the air on the ridge is dry, and although the temperature is even

higher, the heat is far less relaxing. When, therefore, the excessive dryness of the Persian climate is mentioned, exception should always be made of the Caspian provinces of Gilân and Mazanderân, the air of which is quite the reverse of dry.

Probably no drier atmosphere than that of Teherân exists except in Sahara. But this, after the stranger becomes acclimatized, is favorable to pulmonary, nervous, and rheumatic complaints. The spring and autumn are exceedingly delightful; in summer the heat in the city ranges from ninety-five to one hundred and ten in the shade, but is endurable because of its dryness, provided caution is exercised against exposure to the direct rays of the sun. The Europeans and many of the Persians generally spend the summer in the numerous and attractive villages nine or ten miles from the city, fifteen hundred feet higher, on the talus of the Shimrân. During the day a brisk breeze from the south-west blows like a trade-wind, and at night a cool gentle wind from the mountains lowers the temperature an average of ten degrees Fahrenheit. In the Shimrân the temperature ranges in summer from seventy-two to ninety degrees, rarely reaching the latter figure.

The Shimrân is a part of the great Elburz

chain which extends from the Caucasus to Merv. Shimrân or Shim-Irân means the Light of Persia. Gradually ascending directly from the walls of Teherân, the range at a distance of only ten miles soars with sudden precipitousness to the enormous height of thirteen thousand feet above the sea. During the whole summer snow is seen on the summit, while in winter it is clothed with a dense mantle of ermine to the plains. Nothing more magnificent in the way of mountain scenery could be imagined. From every part of the city, as I write, the glittering ridge of the Shimrân is seen above the house-tops, or forming a magnificent background at the end of the streets leading north and south. In summer these mountains are, it is true, nearly destitute of vegetation, but the grandeur of the rock formations and their varied color fully compensate for the absence of verdure.

North-east from Teherân, about forty miles distant, is another feature of the landscape which, when it has been once seen, can never be forgotten. I certainly shall always remember the moment when, on my way from Casbeen and yet ten miles from Teherân, we turned a sharp corner in the road, and the mighty peak of Demavënd burst on my view



A STREET IN TEHERÂN, NEAR THE PALACE.



THE SHAH, NUSR-ED-DEEN.

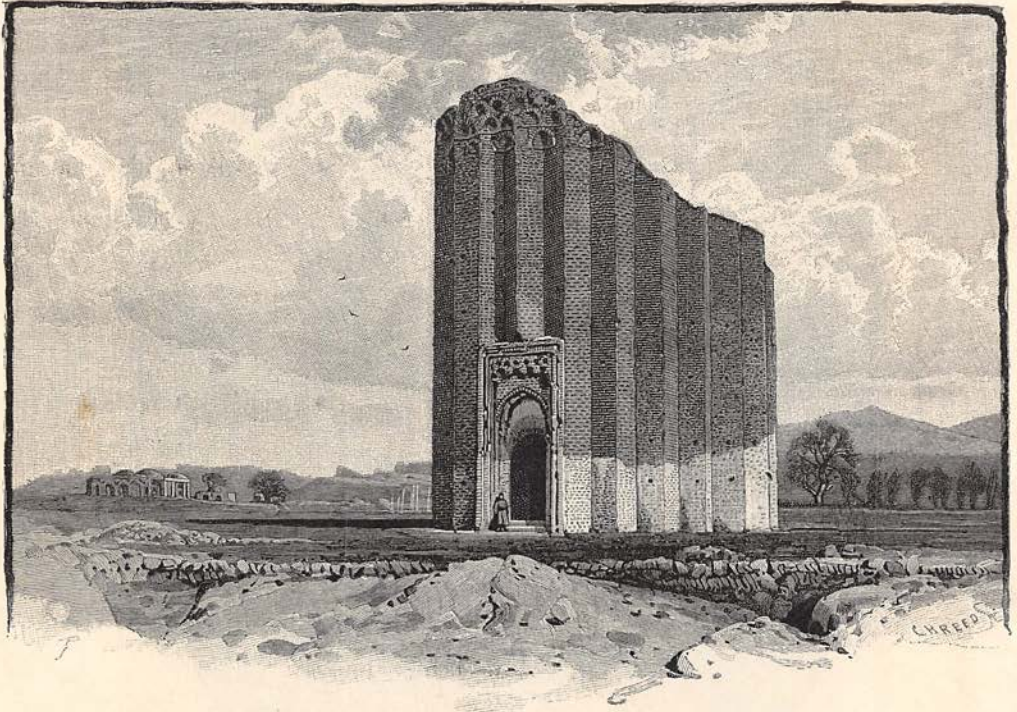
for the first time. Although still so distant, it produced an overpowering impression of solitude and sublimity. The height of Demavênd by barometrical pressure, has been variously estimated by the few adventurers who have reached the summit; the most recent and the most reliable calculations agree in placing it at nineteen thousand six hundred, to twenty-one thousand feet above the level of the sea. The form of the peak is very nearly pyramidal, with the extraordinary average inclination of thirty-six to thirty-eight degrees. Soaring, as it does, nearly ten thousand feet above any mountains in the immediate vicinity, it is invested with a spirit of regal isolation. The peak springs out of a vast wind-

ing crater two thousand feet deep and of great extent, called the Valley of the Lar. I visited this tremendous scene of desolation in summer, scaling the Aftcha Pass, thirteen thousand feet high. The Lar River, which winds through the valley, is well supplied with fine trout, many of which festooned my tent-pole and sated appetites made keen by the mountain air.

The mountains make a curve to the southwest of Teherân, terminating in a rocky ridge two thousand feet high. Around the base of this ridge is the site of the ancient city of Rhages, reputed to have had a million inhabitants in the time of Darius. In later ages the city was called Rhei, although by modern Per-

sians still known as Rhazee.\* Rhages is mentioned several times in the Book of Tobit. The abundance of salmon in the Persian rivers north of the Elburz, and the facility with which they are brought to Teherân, packed in ice, seem to suggest that the fish mentioned in

was captured and destroyed in the thirteenth century by Hulagu, the Mogul.† The ruins of Rheî are still found at intervals of considerable space, including a number of dilapidated towers. The peasants have picked up coins, gold necklaces, and bracelets there. But no



RUINED TOWER AT RHEÎ, NEAR TEHERÂN.

the Book of Tobit, in connection with the city of Rhages, belonged to that species. It is, however, singular that so little is said about this great city by ancient writers. It has not even separate mention in classical dictionaries. Yet Rheî was the capital of the Arsacidæ or Parthian dynasty, and later, in the twelfth century, of the celebrated Alp Arslân. The city

regular exploration has been made, although, if the Government were willing to grant permission, there can be little question that valuable discoveries would reward the intelligent explorer.

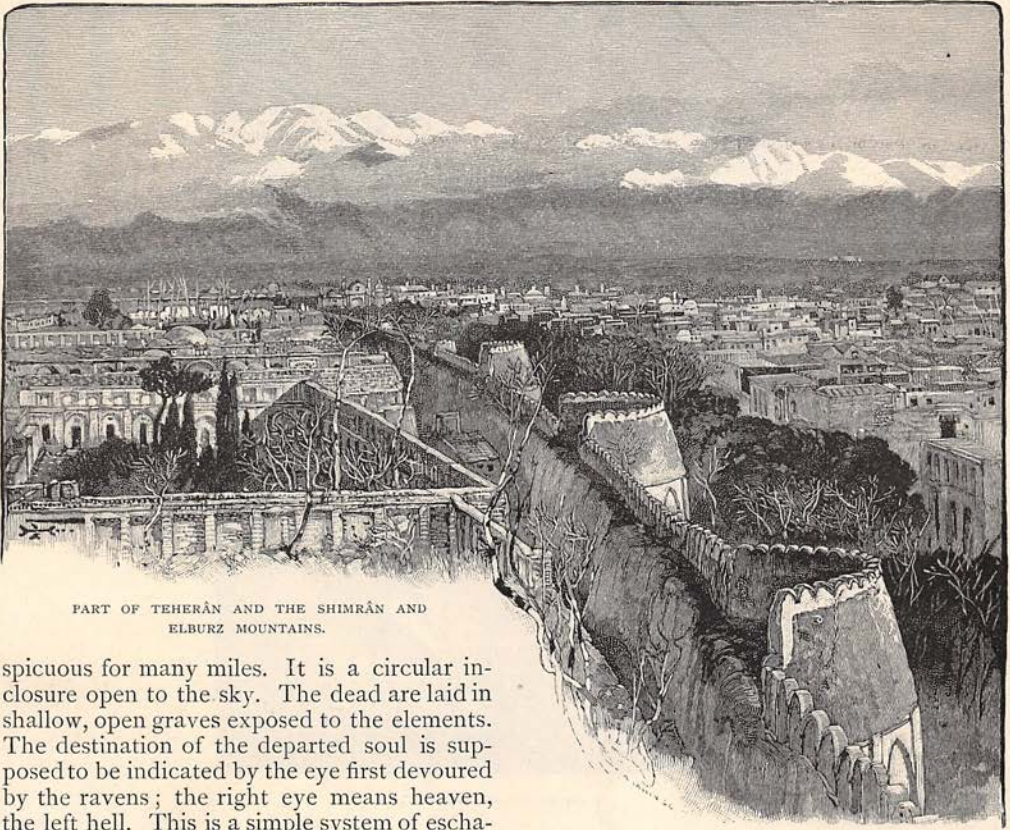
On a ledge overlooking the site of Rheî is the Parsee cemetery of Teherân, a white spot on the purple side of the bare mountain con-

\* It must be admitted that Rawlinson inclines to the theory that Rhages stood, not at Rheî, but on the site of the city whose ruins are near the village of Shahrî-Veramin, in the district of Veramin, about thirty miles south-east of Teherân. The basis of this opinion appears to be the statement of Arrian as to the distance from Rhages to the defile called Pylæ Caspiæ. But here Rawlinson and others who accept his conclusions must concede that their argument is possibly a begging of the question; for the exact position of the Pylæ Caspiæ is yet far from being a settled question. On the other hand, a personal observation of Veramin leads me to see nothing in the style and character of the antiquities at that place to indicate that they antedate the mausoleum or brick tower of Rheî, of which an engraving accompanies this article. While the widely spread ruins of Rheî thus suggest the former existence

of a much larger city than we are led to infer stood at Veramin, it is also an important point that the general traditions of the Persians themselves are altogether in favor of Rheî.

† Naizmudin, a Mohammedan author who was a native of Rheî and escaped with his life at the great destruction of that city by the Moguls, says: "Could there well be worse slaughter than there was in Rheî, where I, wretched that I am, was born and bred, and where the whole population of five hundred thousand souls was either butchered or carried into slavery?"

We who live in the present more favored age and more favored lands, find it difficult to realize the enormous crimes of history; so astounding are they that we pass them over without consideration, for the imagination fails to grasp their horrible details.



PART OF TEHERÂN AND THE SHIMRÂN AND  
ELBURZ MOUNTAINS.

spicuous for many miles. It is a circular inclosure open to the sky. The dead are laid in shallow, open graves exposed to the elements. The destination of the departed soul is supposed to be indicated by the eye first devoured by the ravens; the right eye means heaven, the left hell. This is a simple system of eschatology, although its results cannot always be satisfactory to the friends of the departed. Six miles from Teherân, and near the site of Rheî, is the celebrated shrine of Shah Abdûl Azeem, a famous saint of the Sheäh profession. The Turks are Sunnees, but the Persians are Sheäns, deeming the Holy Husseïn, the son of Alee, to have been the true heir to the caliphate. But the Holy Husseïn and his sons were slain by the caliph accepted by the Sunnees; hence an irreconcilable feud between the two sects. The Persians are a brilliant, intellectual race, vivacious, much given to lively conversation, speculation, and even religious skepticism. There are, doubtless, numerous intellectual Persian gentlemen who accept some form of Sufeism. The Babs or followers of the Bab, who founded a species of Mohammedan Pantheism, are also numerous, notwithstanding the fact that in public they practice the rites of Mohammedanism. But the Mollahs or hierarchy consider, from their point of view, that a theocratic government must depend largely for perpetuation on the outward profession at least of the doctrines that gave it birth. The Mollahs are thoroughly organized, and are strengthened by a strong *esprit de corps*. No one dares openly to defy

their authority. Believers and unbelievers are therefore united in devoting the Sunnees to the bad place. Their religious festivals come often enough to afford relaxation in making pilgrimages to the numerous shrines of the saints, into which as well as into the mosques no Christian can enter without risking his life. Meshêd enjoys great celebrity as a shrine, for there lies buried Imâm Rhezâh, one of the twelve holy Imâms who descended from Alee and Fathimêh. Koom is another resort of great sanctity, for, besides containing the bodies of several hundred saints, the mother of the Prophet is reputed to be enshrined in its holiest sanctuary.

But there is no sacred resort in Persia more celebrated than that of Shah Abdûl Azeem, which is so conveniently situated near the capital that, at a moderate estimate, it is visited annually by three hundred thousand pilgrims from Teherân alone. The gilded dome over the tomb of the saint may be seen for a great distance glittering like a star over the plain.

Here, then, surrounded by such scenes of natural, historic, and ethnic interest, lies the capital of Persia. But the city of Teherân



A THEOLOGICAL STUDENT.

merits description not only for the charms of its environments, but likewise for its own special attractions. It was formerly surrounded by battlemented walls, but as the city has developed and spread in every direction the old walls have been razed. Earthworks, supplied with a deep fosse and laid out after the modern system of city defenses, are now thrown around the entire circumference of Teherân, at a sufficient distance to allow space for the expansion of the population. Numerous avenues lead out of the city to the roads of Casbeen, Hamadân, Shimrân, Yusufabâd, Doshantepê, and elsewhere. A magnificent gateway has been erected where each of these roads enters the city. While they are alike in general style, each has a character of its own. A description of the gate of Shimrân will give one an idea of the later Persian system of constructive decoration, which began soon after the Saracenic invasion, and probably reached its culmination in the time of Shah Abbas, although arriving early at a high degree of excellence.

Whatever relates to Persian art is of importance, for no nation has ever borrowed so little from others in the arts, or lent so many

architectural and decorative ideas to other schools. The ancient Greeks had the double capacity to borrow art ideas from Egypt and Persia, and to adapt them to the materials and needs of their own climate and religion. The Arabs in Spain and Portugal, when they sought to beautify the Peninsula with admirable constructions, invited Persian artists to find there what is called Saracenic architecture. The results affected in hardly less degree the Christian architecture of those and the neighboring countries. One has but to reside a few months in Persia to find on every hand the germs of the Saracenic school, and the types of forms reproduced under other conditions elsewhere. Like all true architecture, that of Persia has always been constructive, combining at once use, adaptation to the materials at hand, and a harmonious blending of form and color. The principal features of the Persian Saracenic are the arch, glazed bricks or tiles of various colors, elegant designs in mosaic composed of small bits of glazed brick, and stucco-work. The Gate of Shimrân is a lofty central arch, supported by deep arched niches on either side and smaller ones above. The effect of what might perhaps seem a heavy design is lightened

by graceful turrets or pinnacles rising from the roof. The entire fabric is incrustated by an outer layer of orange-yellow, black, and azure bricks, highly glazed and arranged in elegant geometric designs. Over the main

square is entered through six stately gates; the two on the south side lead one to the *anderoon*, or woman's quarter of the palace, and the other to the palace itself, the foreign office, and the quarters of the Naib Sultanéh,



PARSEE CEMETERY, NEAR TEHERÂN.

arch is a colossal mosaic painting, including many colors, which represents Rustém, the Achilles of Persian legend, mounted on a rearing steed and armed with a coat of mail, engaged in a fierce conflict with his enemies.

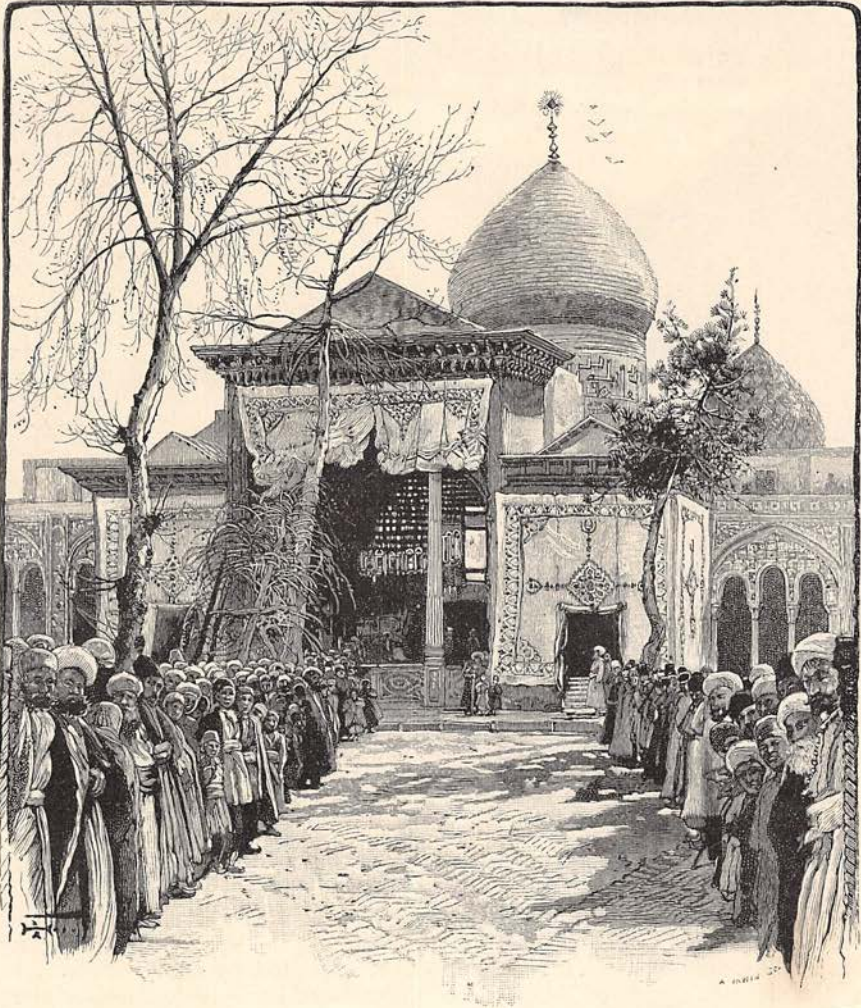
But of the many city gates of Teherân, the handsomest is probably the large one before the ark or citadel on the north. It faces the great square of the Department of War, which is in itself a handsome and imposing inclosure. In the center is an octagonal marble tank one hundred and fifty feet long and always full to the brim. At each corner of the basin an enormous cannon is mounted on a platform. The four sides of the square are taken up with barracks and government offices, in two uniform stories, constructed with graceful arches, and including on the east side a handsome balcony supported by light pillars and faced with mosaics of glazed tiles. This

or Minister of War, who is the third son of the Shah. The latter gate I have already alluded to. It is probably seventy feet high. Above the central gate the wall is pierced by a smaller arch, protected by a balustrade. Above fly the colors of Persia—the Lion and the Sun on a green ground. At sunrise and at sunset a band of musicians collect in this lofty gallery with horns, cymbals, and kettle-drums, and hail the hour with nondescript music such as Beethoven and Mozart never dreamed of. It is curious that, notwithstanding the highly cultivated artistic sense of the Persians, they have no better notion of the harmonies of sound. This does not appear to be for lack of a musical ear, for their stringed instruments are capable of fine expression, and the military bands instructed by Europeans, I am informed, very soon seize the *motif* of European music. At the diplomatic dinner given

by the Naib Sultanéh on the eve of the birthday of the Shah in 1884, the various national tunes, including "The Star-Spangled Banner," were played with spirit and effect.

The architectural decorations already described are not confined to the public buildings

nished with seats and niches and roofed by an arch. Above is a *balâhanê*, or lodge, provided with curtains and perhaps stained-glass windows. Strange to say, the street entrance itself is a low, square, modest door, simply relieved by heavy knockers of figured iron or brass.



PILGRIMS AT THE SHRINE OF SHAH ABAB ABDÛL, NEAR TEHERÂN.

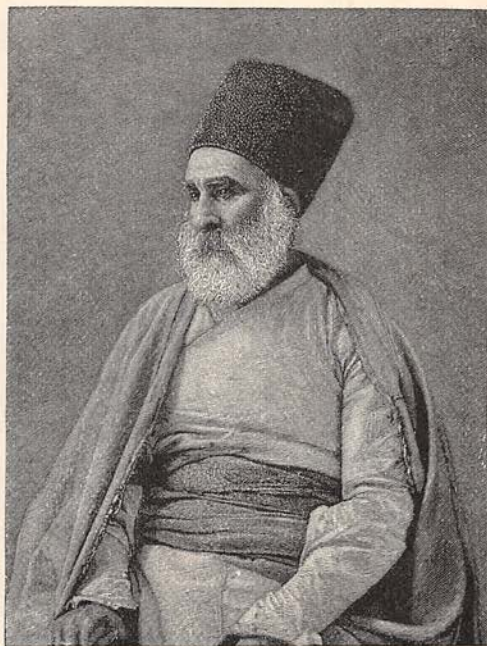
of Teherân. At every turn one discovers the love of beauty inherent in the national character. The arched doorways of the shops are decorated with a mosaic of glazed tiles or bricks, or with the peculiar honeycomb work so notable at the Alhambra. This is done in stucco, often colored and gilded, sometimes in a rude but always a thoroughly effective style. The entrances to the houses are generally ornamented in this manner, and are formed by the recession of the street wall in a semicircle, fur-

Through this unimposing entrance one passes into a darksome passage, which but little suggests the spacious and attractive court to which it leads. The court is paved, but laid out in the center with trees and shrubbery around a tank stocked with gold-fish. If the house belongs to a man of position, the first court is surrounded by the servants' rooms, offices, and stables. This, however, does not prevent the walls from being abundantly decorated with *gatch*, or stucco-work. Thence



we proceed to the chief court, which is rendered attractive by a wild luxuriance of foliage and flowers. Here is the main dwelling, as entirely secluded as if in the heart of a wilderness instead of a large city. Sometimes this building is of two stories; in general, however, it is only one lofty story in height. The first glance at the windows reveals the fact that the Persian architects are masters of the secret of successful decorative architecture. They appreciate the importance of massing the effect instead of scattering it by meaningless details, as in most Renaissance and all modern European and American architecture. It does not matter how exuberant the decoration may be, provided it is as far as possible constructive and relieved by simple lines and comparatively blank spaces. Thus only can repose, so essential in art, be obtained. The Greeks understood this. Study the Parthenon as the finest example extant of this principle; study also the façade of the Cathedral of Chartres as an example in Gothic architecture; and compare these with the new Houses of Parliament in London.

However Persian art may at the present day be inferior in grandeur to that of the Achæmenidæ, the Sassanidæ, and the Sefavees, the same love of beauty, the same fine artistic sense continue to inspire even the most ordinary workman. What implements they used in ancient times we know not; but to-day the Persian artisan has neither rule, compass, nor spirit-level. He is commonly ignorant of the fact that the diameter is the third of the circumference; his gimlets and augers are prods turned by a bowstring; he has no hatchet, but only an adze, and no carpenter's bench. If he desires to plane a board, he puts it on the ground; and if he would saw a block of wood, he squats on the ground himself and holds it between his toes, drawing the saw towards himself. Wood is scarce, and with such tools hard to work. If pillars are to be constructed, the trunks of poplars are raised and simply stripped of their branches and bark. They may be crooked, but that matters not; the master workman tells his subordinate to shape the timber into an elegant pillar with *gatch*. Depending only on his eye and the skill of his hand, this simple artisan applies the plaster round the trunk in the form of a fluted pillar and crowns it with a graceful capital and cornice, showing a lively inventive fancy. If judged by the strict application of rule and compass, these decorations may sometimes deviate slightly from a straight line, but of the artistic beauty of the conception there can be no question. Walls and ceilings are tastefully decorated in like manner.

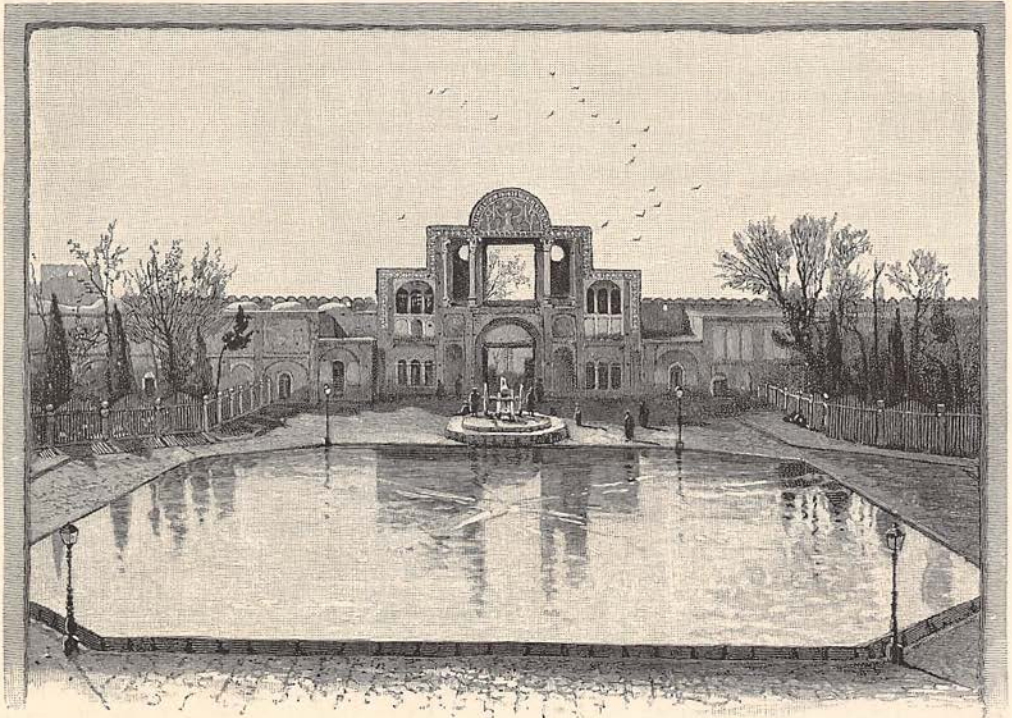


A GUEBRE OR PARSEE.

Now I have spoken of the windows of Persian houses as exponents of the national taste. Instead of piercing the wall of each apartment with several square, decorative apertures, the architect of Teherân groups all in one large square central window reaching from floor to ceiling. This is again divided by mullions into three or four spaces. The sashes are filled with small square or diamond-shaped panes of stained glass. Both the exterior and interior effect is very agreeable, while in warm weather the entire side of the apartment can be thrown open like a piazza by raising the sashes.

The larger apartments are often divided by partitions of sashes and mullions similar to the windows. In winter the rooms can be thus reduced in size, while in summer a current of air circulates everywhere, aided by picturesque wind-towers or shafts on the roof called *badger*. The doors are closed by superb portières, and the floor, which is invariably of earth beaten hard, is covered with a matting overlaid with rugs and carpetings. Latterly the Persian gentleman of Teherân, when receiving Europeans, has learned to offer them chairs; but when by themselves the Persians always sit on the floor, resting on their heels, but with cushions behind them. This posture must be acquired in childhood to be endurable.

Adjoining this court is the anderoon, or house devoted to the feminine portion of the family. It has a court of its own, and is as sacred from the impertinent eyes of men as if



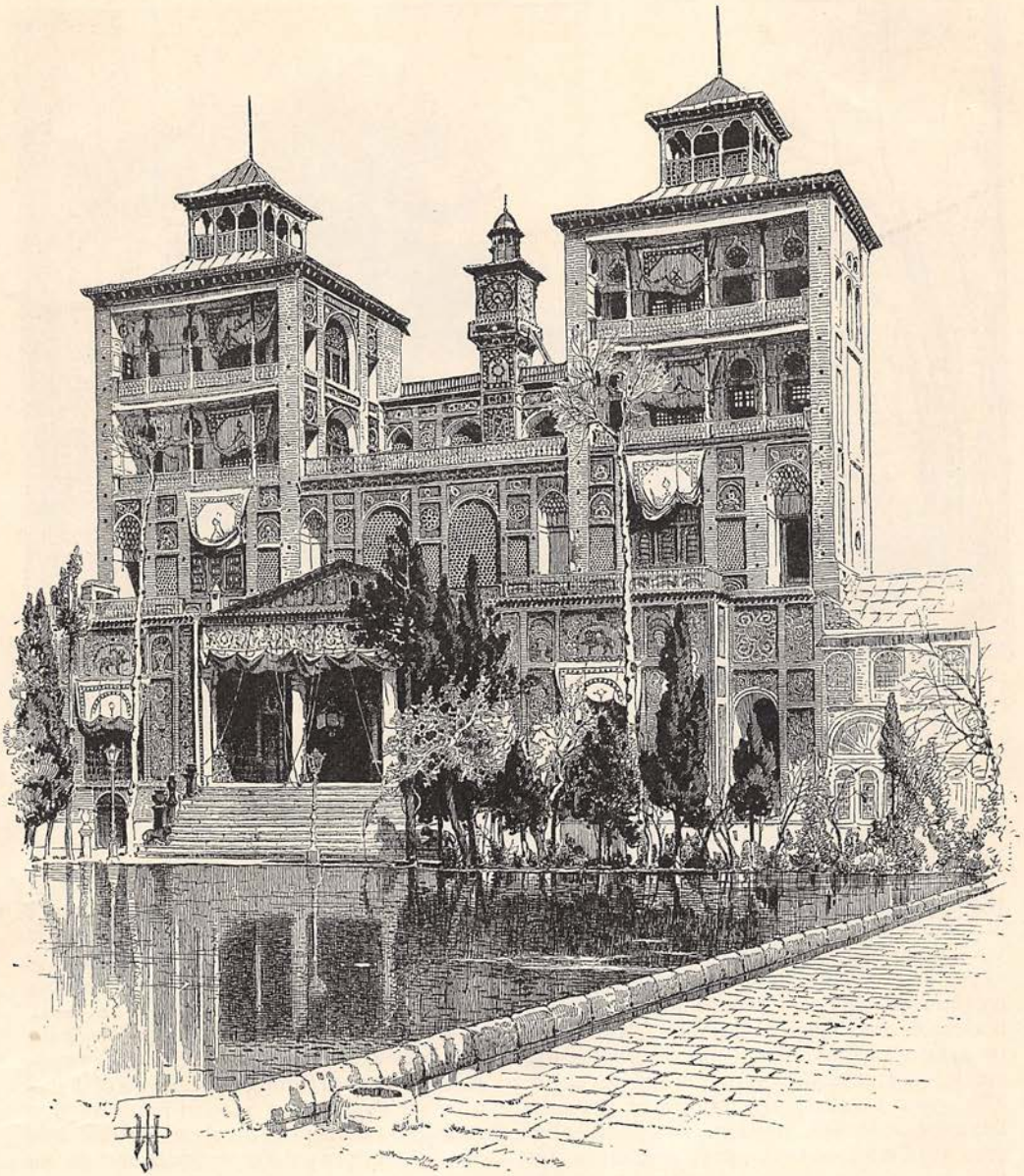
GATE BETWEEN THE SQUARE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR AND THE CITADEL.

it were a convent. The master of the house alone has access to the anderoon. And when he is there no one must disturb him; neither may one open a window overlooking any part of such an establishment.

After what has been said of the charms of a dwelling in Teherân, it may be a surprise to learn that even the most costly mansions are constructed of sun-dried bricks and that the flat roofs are of mud. But in a climate like this these bricks are very durable. Some of the towers of Rheï, still standing after twelve centuries, are of this seemingly perishable material. Lightness combined with strength is often gained in Persia by building a wall of square sun-dried bricks, ingeniously arranged in hollow cubes as in a block-house. They are cemented together by a layer of *cargel*, or mortar mixed with straw, over which, in turn, follows a coat of white plaster. Where great strength is required the angles are fortified by a layer of burnt bricks. Such a wall will stand for ages. It is interesting to watch the builders at work. They wear long tunics, which are tucked into their girdles when working, displaying a length and muscular development of limb I have never seen equaled elsewhere. The one above sings out in musical tone, "Brother, in the name of God, toss me a brick." The one below, as he throws the

brick, sings in reply, "O my brother (or, O son of my uncle), in the name of God, behold a brick."

Less can be said, however, in favor of the roofs of mud. The only reason why they should be used is the rarity and costliness of wood in central Persia; perhaps, also, because a roof of great density better protects the house from the long, penetrating heat of summer. In that temperature also lies the safety of these roofs. Heavy undressed timbers are laid across the walls. Over these comes the lathing. In the better houses square, broad burnt bricks are laid on the lathing and over these a layer of mud ten to twelve inches thick; but generally the bricks are dispensed with. During the summer such a roof becomes very hard, and when the surface is made slightly inclined to allow the water to run off, long and heavy rains are required to penetrate it. After the wet season the surface is rolled again for the next winter. With these precautions such roofs last a long time in Persia. But there comes a time with most of them when a little seam appears in the ceiling; then follows a trickling stream, and the occupants, thus warned, remove the furniture without delay to the adjoining apartment. If the rain continues, the ceiling falls in. Occasionally one hears of fatal accidents or very narrow escapes from falling roofs in

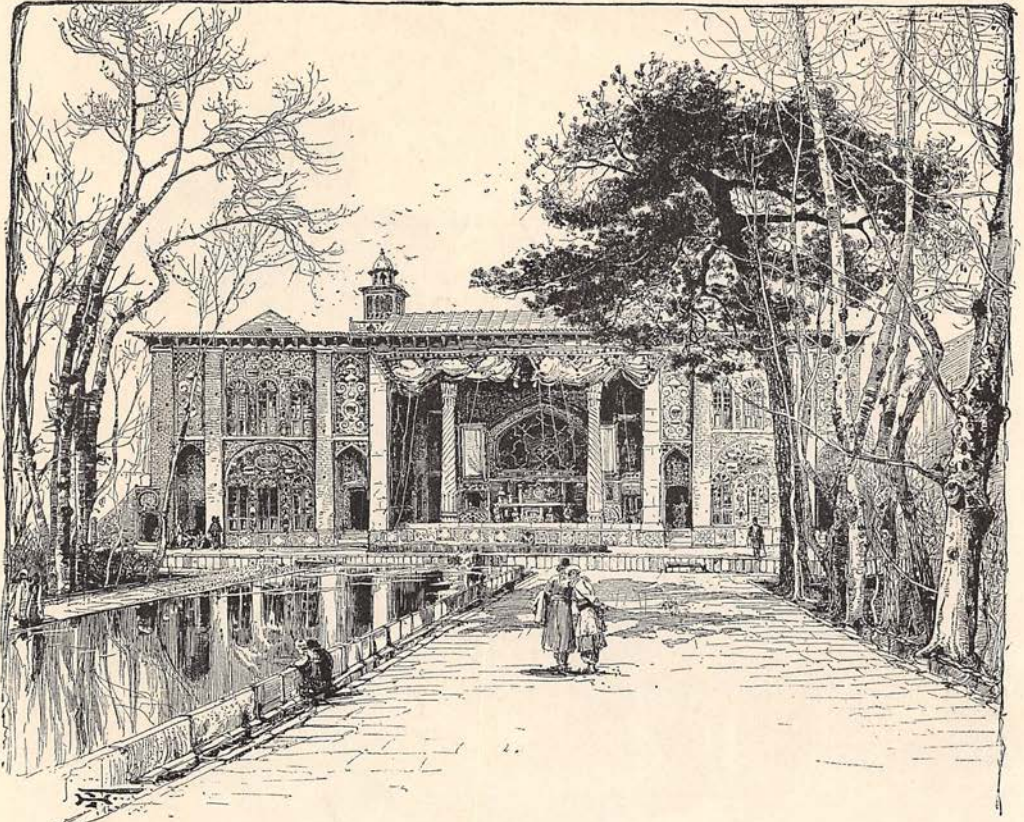


PAVILION OF THE ANDEROON, OR WOMEN'S APARTMENT, ROYAL PALACE, TEHERÂN.

Teherân, but accidents may generally be avoided by proper precaution.

The manners of the courtly occupant of this Teherân mansion are guided by an etiquette that is indeed "a law of the Medes and Persians, which changeth not." The visitor sends notice an hour or two previous to calling. If the visit is one of importance, notice is sent the previous day. You will go in a fashion suited to your social position and the rank of the host. Whether on horseback

or in a carriage, you will be accompanied by a number of mounted attendants. As you approach the house, servants, mounted or on foot, come forth to meet you, and one returns with speed to announce your coming. A dozen attendants escort you to the reception-room. According to your relative rank, the host meets you at the foot of the staircase, at the door, or at the upper part of the room. The question of seats is one also requiring the utmost circumspec-

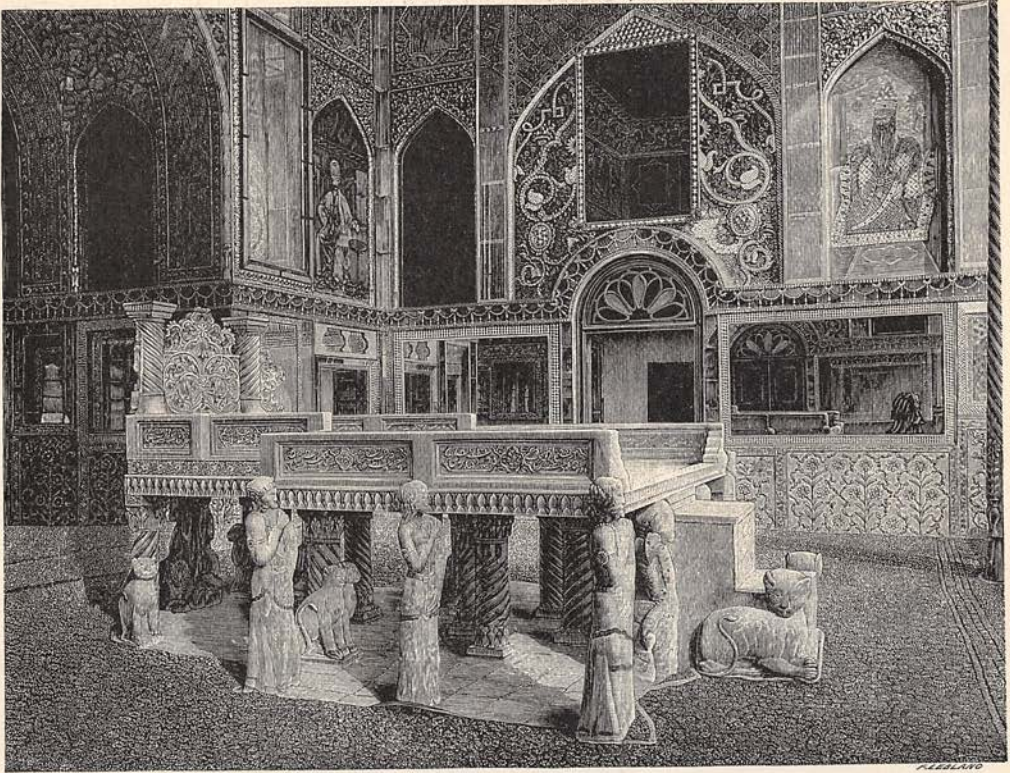


PAVILION OF THE ROYAL PALACE, TEHERÂN, WHERE THE SHAH HOLDS A GRAND RECEPTION AT THE NO ROOZ OR PERSIAN NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

tion in observing the various shades of rank. If your rank is superior to that of the host, you are invited to occupy a sofa alone, at the upper corner, while the host sits on a chair or on the floor at your right. The left is more honorable than the right in Persia. If of equal rank, he occupies the sofa with you; but if you are inferior, then the positions are reversed. The upper corner of the room is in any case the most honorable position. If a number are present of various ranks, each one knows his place at a glance. The passing of refreshments is also a matter of undeviating strictness, the number and quality depending upon the time of day and the character of the guest. The *kaliân*, or water pipe, offers a fine opportunity for a display of Persian manners. According to precept and custom, a Mohammedan cannot smoke the same pipe with a Christian, and, except on rare occasions when the host is a man of progressive views, a separate pipe is furnished for a European visitor. But among Persians it is the custom for the highest in rank to receive the pipe first, offering it to each in turn before smoking himself. For

an inferior to accept the offer is an incredible offense against good manners. But each in turn after this ceremony takes a few whiffs at the pipe, all taking care to eject the smoke from the bowl before offering it to the next. The attendants on such an occasion leave their shoes at the door and retire backwards.

When one goes through the streets of Teherân by night, the effect is even more singular than by day. Except in the Arsenal square and around the ark or palace precincts and one or two neighboring streets, where gas has been introduced and recently also the electric light, darkness reigns in Teherân after twilight; no one goes abroad without a lantern, while the rank of a gentleman is indicated by the number and size of the lanterns carried before him. Often the brass top and bottom of these lanterns are wrought in cunning designs, displaying to advantage the rich fancy and skillful handiwork in metals for which Persia has been and continues to be justly famous. An efficient police force organized by the Count of Monteforte keeps the streets sufficiently quiet and secure, but there is one danger which one is



MARBLE THRONE WITH GILDED CARVINGS IN THE PALACE, TEHERÂN.  
 PORTRAIT OF FETH ALI SHAH, GREAT-GRANDFATHER OF THE PRESENT SHAH, IN THE PANEL ON THE RIGHT.

liable to encounter in the streets of Teherân; I refer to the openings over the *connaughts* or watercourses. It is inexplicable, the indifference shown regarding these traps, into which many an unwary victim falls, often with loss of life, sometimes, indeed, dropping in an instant into oblivion.

The system of supplying Teherân and other Persian cities with water is remarkable and probably unique. There is scarcely a civilized country so poorly supplied by nature with wood and water as Persia south of the Elburz. During the short winter there is some rain and snow, upon which are dependent the crops of the neighboring district of Veramîn, the granary of Teherân; but the remainder of the year there is absolutely no rain, except on the extreme mountain-tops. The question naturally arises, how are the cities to be supplied with water, for it cannot always be obtained by digging wells that are necessarily of great depth. But the snow and rain on the mountains feed the streams dashing down the precipices or the springs near their base. These streams and springs are tapped and conducted to the city by subterranean aqueducts called *connaughts*. In order to carry these ducts in a straight direction, shafts are

dug at intervals of thirty to eighty yards. The earth thrown out of the shaft forms a hillock which is allowed to remain. Thus the landscape is marked by many hundreds of these elevations resembling ant-hills. The mouth of the shaft is left uncovered, and hunters or travelers by night must take good care not to fall in. The water thus obtained is naturally expensive, and each person pays a proportionate sum per month for the supply for his garden or household. Teherân is provided with no less than thirty of these aqueducts, excavated at immense cost and labor.

The city of Teherân properly consists of the old part, and the new called the European quarter. In the latter are the English, French, Turkish, and United States legations. The Austrian, German, and Russian legations are in the old quarter. The number of Europeans in Teherân is about three hundred, but they probably constitute not one-fortieth of the population of the European quarter, in which many Persians of wealth and station have elegant gardens and residences, among which may be mentioned the extensive and beautiful gardens of the Mohper-ed-Douüléh, or Minister of Mines and Telegraphs, and of the Prince Governor of Ispahân, the oldest son

of the Shah, called the Zil-i-Sultân. Here also are two spacious gardens of the Shah, and the new public garden. The former, for the benefit of the public, are inclosed by a fence instead of a lofty wall, and the latter is open to all and commands a noble prospect over the Shimrân and Mount Demavênd. The broad streets of this quarter are lined with shade trees. The main avenues run north and south, and towards evening the Persians enjoy strolling there and gazing upon the ridge of the Shimrân, roseate in the light of the setting sun.

But in the old quarter, occupied by over one hundred thousand people, the streets are generally narrow and tortuous, relieved at intervals, however, by squares beautified in the center by vast tanks and picturesque clusters of mulberry-trees and *chevârs*. Here, also, are the covered bazaars, considered to be the most interesting and complete in Persia. In threading these streets and bazaars, whether

on foot, on horseback, or in a carriage,—for there are over five hundred European carriages in Teherân,—one sees the advantage of having attendants to clear the way. Without them it would be very difficult to proceed, as there are no sidewalks, and the way is often blocked by a motley throng of veiled women, beggars, porters, fruit-venders, donkeys, horses, and camels. These attendants use no ceremony in jostling every obstacle out of the way, laying the lash on man and beast alike, and bestowing various epithets, of which the most common is, "O son of a burnt father!" From time to time a grave, handsome, heavily bearded and turbaned priest, mounted on a donkey or mule, gives a wonderfully ancient and oriental aspect to the scene, as he moves with immense dignity through the surging throng, followed by mounted attendants bearing his saddlebags and kaliân.

*S. G. W. Benjamin.*



### SAINT ELIZABETH.

SAINT ELIZABETH, laden with bread,  
 Seeks her people sore bestead  
 With hunger heavy and long.  
 Home rode Louis with jest and song:  
 "What bearest thou, Elizabeth?  
 Hast thou no courtier left,  
 Of knights art thou bereft?  
 Nay, blush not, my sweet love;  
 Nay, tremble not, my dove,  
 Unfold thy robe that I may see  
 What thou dost bear so secretly."

With sweetest shame and cheeks of red,  
 Forth she showed her stores of bread.  
 Lo! nought his eyes doth greet  
 But rarest flowers full meet  
 For hands and brow so sweet.  
 "Ah, fair saint, ah, sweet love,  
 Mine eyes can see the Dove  
 Alight on thy fair golden head,  
 Turning thy bloom again to bread."

*T. T. Munger.*

# THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

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## THE CITY OF TEHERÂN.

### SECOND PAPER.

IN such a climate as that of Teherân life is naturally passed chiefly in the open air. The chill of winter, rarely severe, seems to make little difference in the habits of the people. The shops are all open to the streets; the customers stand outside, and even the shop-keeper attends to most of his business from the exterior of the shop. If he is a baker, grocer, or costermonger, in all probability he and the customer both stand in the street, retreating into the shop only when a string of camels or a dashing cortège forces them to move out of the way. A carpenter may frequently be seen arranging a piece of joinery on the pavement in front of his shop. The schools often in no wise differ from the shops; in the midst of a crowded thoroughfare one may see twenty or thirty lads seated on their heels repeating the lesson together in monotonous tone.

Another common sight in the streets of Teherân is the itinerant barber. The Koran enjoins the masculine Mohammedan to shave his crown. The Sunnees shave the entire head excepting a long lock in the center whereby, it is said, the archangel may pluck them out of the grave. But the Sheahs or Persian Mussulmans shave from the forehead to the nape of the neck, leaving a highly prized lock on each side. It is therefore common to see a man of the lower classes seated on the pavement, going through the operation of having his head shaved. The remaining hair and the beard are dyed, and it is rare that one sees gray hairs in Teherân. The first tint applied is henna, an orange-yellow vegetable dye. Many consider this so handsome as to prefer it without the further application of indigo which most select. The last tint, combined with the henna, im-

parts a durable and rather agreeable dark-brown color to the hair. The women also have their hair dyed and join the eyebrows with the pencil. All classes make use of the bath at least once a week, the wealthy having steam-baths attached to their dwellings. No Christian is ever permitted admittance to the baths of the Persians. The public baths answer the purpose of clubs and sewing circles; the women go in the morning, take their sewing with them, and, after being thoroughly steamed and scrubbed, devote several hours to smoking the *kaliân*, embroidering, and discussing the scandal of the neighborhood, which they assiduously circulate on their return home.

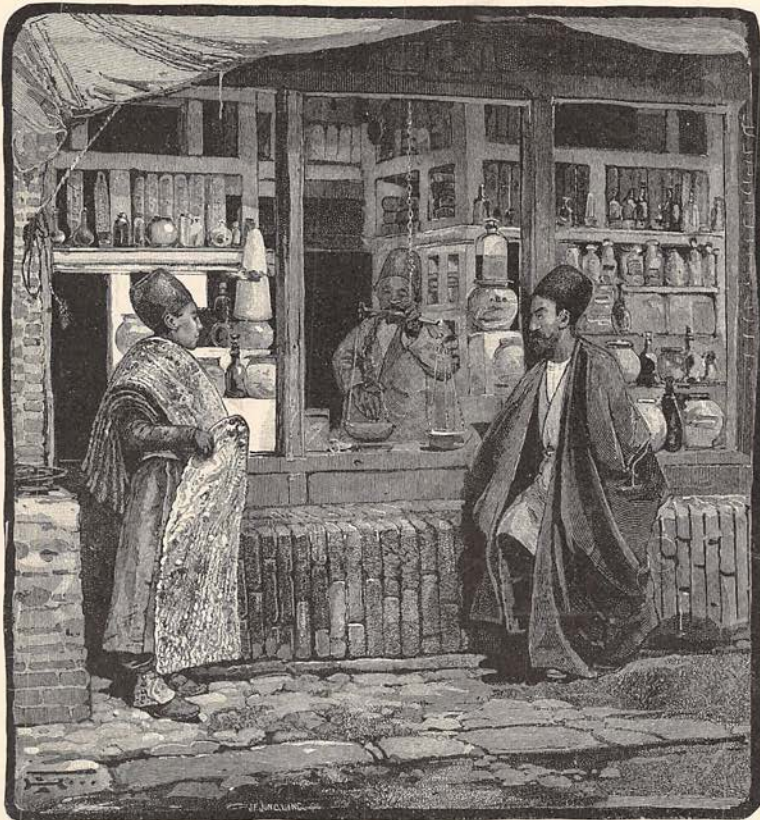
Another street sight of Teherân is the tea-house, equivalent to the coffee-house of Constantinople or the beer-garden of Munich. These establishments are generally thronged towards the close of the day. It is a curious fact that although Persia adjoins the coffee plantations of Araby the Blest, tea flavored with lime juice or lemon is more the beverage of Teherân than coffee. This is owing partly to contact with the Tartars on the north-eastern frontier, and in all likelihood, also, to the fact that from the tenth to the thirteenth century there was considerable commerce between Persia and China, at which period a colony of Chinese was imported into Persia, who produced the famous Perso-Chinese ware called Kashee, good examples of which are now rare and costly. Both wine-drinking and card-playing are forbidden to true believers, and therefore neither is seen in these places of public resort. But both are freely indulged in at home. The card-players of Persia use a set of twenty cards in five suits of four each. These suits are called the

Hunter, the Child, the Courtesan or Woman, the Prince, and the Soldier. They are made by hand, and preserved by a thick, glossy coat of varnish. While following the idea suggested by the name of the card, each artist varies the design according to his fancy, sometimes giving them high finish and rich chromatic effects, the colors being applied on a gold ground or decorated with gold tincture. Some of the sets used by the wealthy are valued at fifty dollars. The famous artist of Shiráz, Agâ Nedjéf, who lived early in this century, did not disdain to display his talents on playing-cards. It is an interesting fact that America must relinquish the claim of having invented the gambler's favorite game of poker, for it was known in Persia centuries ago. The game played by the Persians is in principle poker or brag pure and simple, and betting often runs high with them.

Another characteristic sight in the streets of Teherán is the bread. Persian bread is made in sheets the thickness of sole leather; the best quality is somewhat thinner. It is formed in the shape and size of a side of leather. The baker with bare arms dexterously raises a sheet of this dough from the

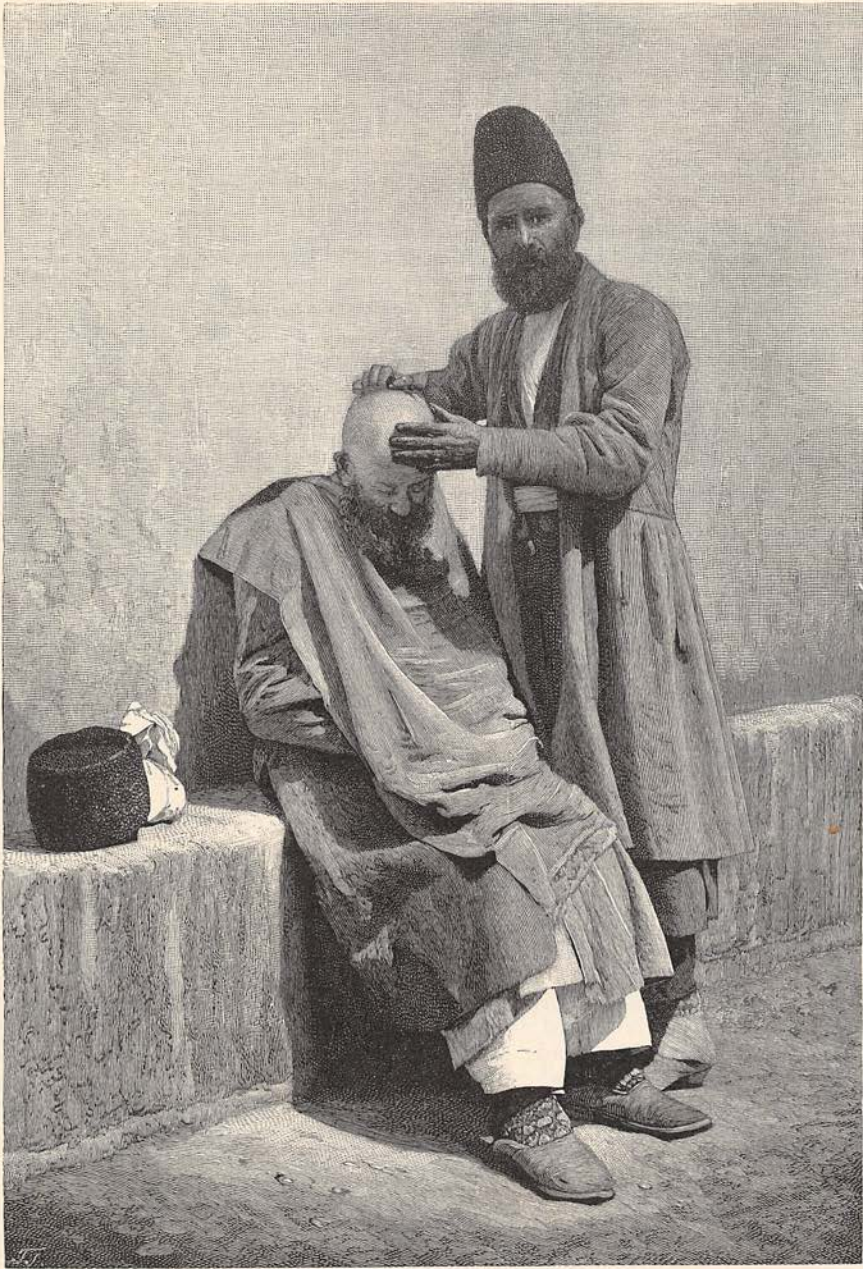
counter where it is rolled out, tosses and rolls it over his left arm until reduced to the proper tenuity. With a rapid fling of both arms he then spreads it over the hot floor of the oven. In a few moments it is baked and spread out to cool. If there is a convenient ledge in the street near the shop, one may see it covered with layers of bread. This bread is cheap, one cent a sheet, and what is more it is sweet and nourishing, and, with curds, cheese, and fruits, forms a staple article of diet with a large part of the population. Consequently, one constantly meets with people carrying sheets of bread home with them, the women holding them in front like leather aprons.

Speaking of fruit reminds me that the market of Teherán is in this respect one of the best in the world. Many varieties of grapes of excellent flavor abound for five months at less than a cent a pound. The melons of Persia are famous, especially the muskmelons. They cost a mere trifle, and the crop lasts for four months. A quality I have never seen elsewhere is the sugar-melon; in external shape and color it is like other muskmelons, but the inside presents a uniform gray-white color, and in texture and



CONFECTIONER IN THE BAZAAR.





A PERSIAN BARBER.

flavor it suggests the jelly cocoanut. The quinces are unsurpassed in size and flavor, and the same may be said of the pomegranate, which continues all winter and takes the place of our winter apples. The layers of ruby fruit shading off to a coral hue are exquisitely beautiful. The apricots and peaches are also good and abundant. The oranges of Ghilân are large and handsome, but inferior in flavor

to those of Sicily. Figs, apples, and pears are also common, but not equal in quality to the other fruits of Teherân. The abundance of grapes in Persia affords a capital opportunity for making excellent pure wine. Several varieties are made by the Armenians, but they are not properly prepared, and do injustice to the vineyards from which they come. Although forbidden by the laws, wine-making is

winked at; and there is little doubt that a European expert in wine-making who should come to Persia would find means to obtain permission to develop the wine product of the country to a degree beneficial at a time when the vineyards of France are yielding less than their average supply.

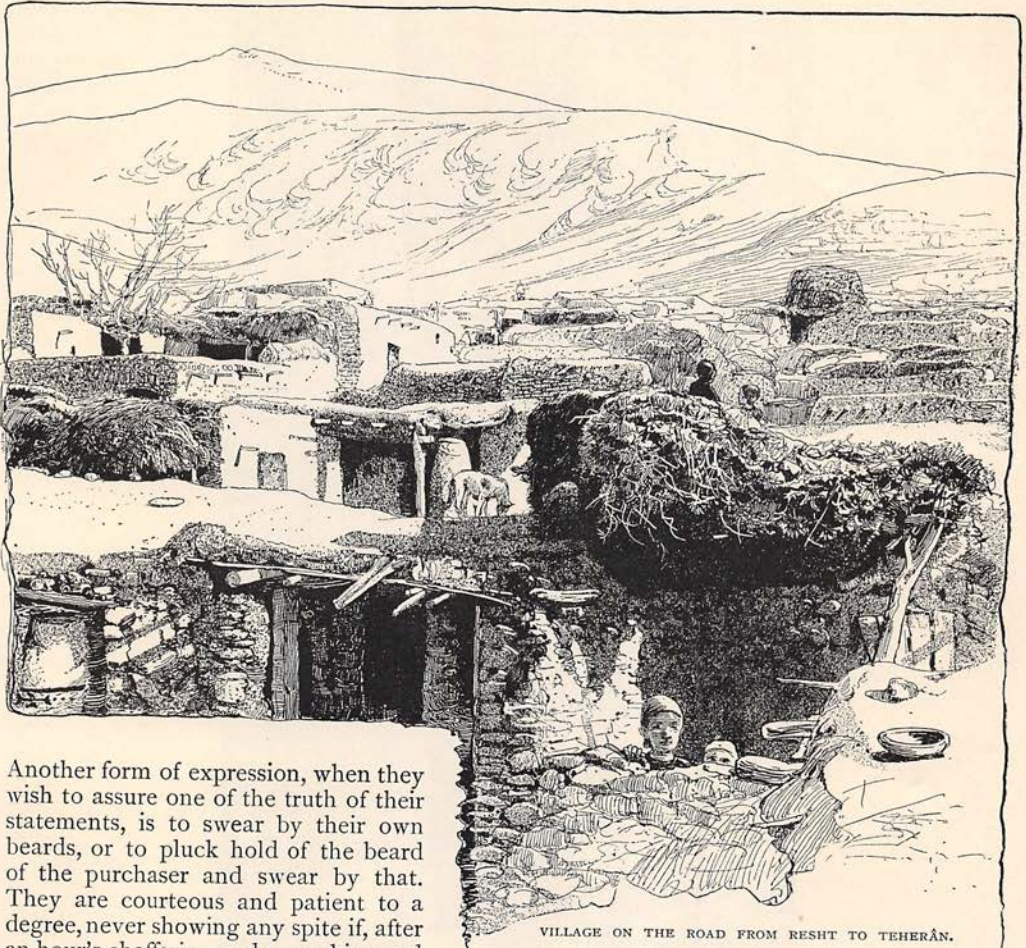
Although the bazaars and shops of Teherân are well stocked with the goods of native and foreign markets, yet the upper classes and the European population make most of their purchases through a numerous and intelligent class of itinerant venders who carry their wares from house to house on little donkeys. Keats, in his "Eve of St. Agnes," gives a delicious descriptive catalogue of Oriental fruits and sweets; what poetic figures, what glowing strophes would he employ if he were to behold the wares unfolded by these peddlers to the wondering sight of the purchaser! The imagination is kindled, the yearning to possess is stimulated to an unusual degree when the lover of the beautiful beholds the floor of his apartment spread with the various exquisite articles which the turbaned *dellâl* unfolds to his gaze. Not a day passes but one or more of these men appear. Bowing low, they beg permission to display their wares, holding up at the same time some choice antique rug, embroidery, or porcelain, such as you are known to prize. It is useless to resist; whether intending to buy or no, you order the saddlebags to be brought in and their contents revealed. Then shall you behold rugs, ancient and modern, of Kurdistan, Turkistân, or Kermân; shawls of price from Cashmere; dazzling embroideries from Resht and Shirâz; kaliâns of silver and gold inlaid, with superb boxes carved and painted with scenes of Persian life or inlaid with delicate ivory patterns; veils exquisitely embroidered; velvets massive with silver and gold thread; blades from Khorassân; wavy daggers and coats of mail inlaid with silver and gold; bowls and plaques of Kashee ware; reflet tiles seven hundred to one thousand years old; antique coins and gems, engraved with verses from Hafiz or the Koran; rare old manuscripts of the poets, illuminated and illustrated with quaint and characteristic designs; peacocks, elephants, salvers, vases, and bowls beautifully and elaborately engraved or wrought in open designs of brass; diamonds, rubies, pearls, and turquoises for which Persia is famous; coffee sets in silver filigree and bracelets wrought in yellow gold; tigers' skins from Mazanderân; furs from Astrakhân; old flintlocks with inlaid stocks, and even swords captured from the English in the Afghân wars; chess-men curiously carved; silk sashes fit for the person of royalty; gayly wrought

saddle-cloths; and superb bits of mosaic from the mosques and palaces of Ispahân.

Such is a brief *résumé* of the character of the wares almost daily exhibited at my house. One soon learns that if he does not buy an article when offered him, thinking he can get one like it at another time, the opportunity of doing so rarely returns. It is the great attraction of Oriental art that it is individual. Until a European firm in Persia unfortunately employed some of the carpet-makers to reproduce certain ancient designs, it was impossible to find two rugs or carpets in Persia identical in design. The same holds true about all Persian decorative art. Each artisan there stamps his own individual taste and fancy on the products of his labor. This is indeed art; how different from that everlasting repetition of the same design which is the bane and the blessing of European and American decorative art, especially in textile fabrics and furniture. It is a blessing for the poor, who can obtain pretty things for a price within their means, but a bane for the well-to-do who wish original objects, but cannot afford to pay the price demanded by European and American artists who produce only unique results for sale.

Therefore, if a Persian peddler offers a certain object that you desire, it must be bought then and there, or it will be snatched up by some one else. This is especially the case with antique curios. These *dellâls* generally sell on commission. It is not uncommon for a lady of rank, who wishes to realize on her treasures, to place a costly Cashmere shawl or embroidery in the hands of a *dellâl*, of a quality which, perhaps, one might seek for in vain through the bazaars. By shrewd management and much chaffering such an article may sometimes be bought at a great bargain.

The old armor is also difficult to find now, while the demand for this and also for old coins is such that the artisans of Hamadân and Ispahân, taking advantage of their genius for imitation and the low price of labor, make many fine reproductions of the antique, which are shipped to Europe or sold to European residents or travelers. The old armor of Persia is justly renowned for the picturesque beauty of the designs lavished upon it, and the admirable temper of the metal. Both are cleverly imitated now to the eye, and he who cannot secure the genuine antique may well purchase the imitations to decorate his dining-room or studio. The process of bargaining with these *dellâls* is very amusing. Their favorite phrases are "*Mali kadeem est*" (It belongs to the old time), and "*B'cheshm*" (On my eyes be it; *i. e.*, I swear by my eyes), a phrase constantly met in the "Arabian Nights."

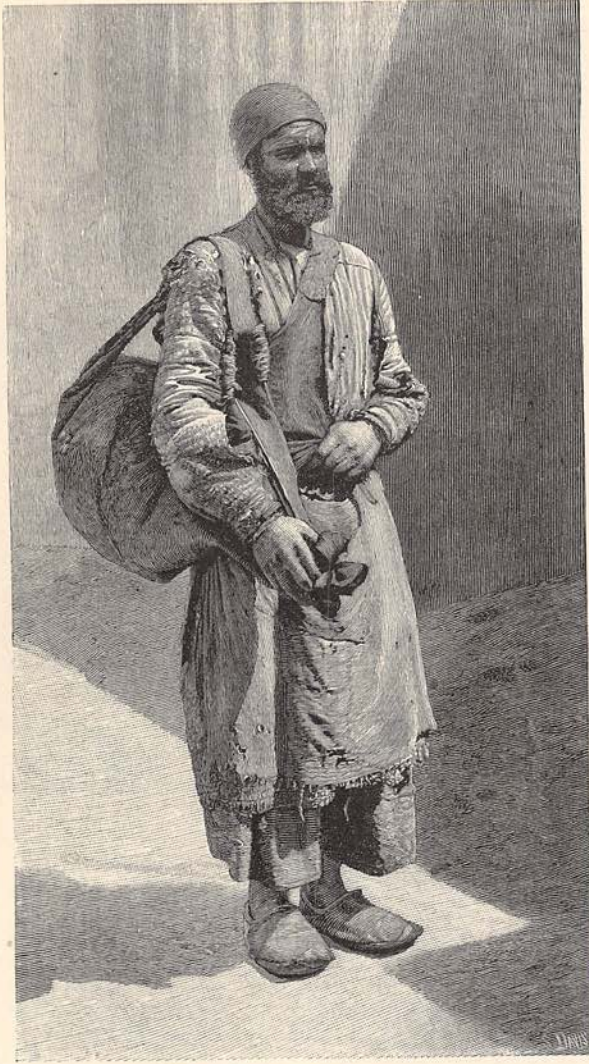


VILLAGE ON THE ROAD FROM RESHT TO TEHERÂN.

Another form of expression, when they wish to assure one of the truth of their statements, is to swear by their own beards, or to pluck hold of the beard of the purchaser and swear by that. They are courteous and patient to a degree, never showing any spite if, after an hour's chaffering and unpacking and repacking their goods, they have only sold a few cents' worth. In case an article is of value, it is common to leave it for a day or two to give the purchaser ample time to consider its attractions. It is a pleasant thing to deal with Persians, even if their slow ways sometimes try the patience of the more expeditious Westerner, for they are good-natured and respectful. It is another peculiarity of these dellâls that if one does not make a purchase they rarely return. It is well, therefore, to buy some trifle of them in order to have another chance at their wares at a more convenient hour. If an important sale is made, it is soon known among the whole fraternity, and for several days other dellâls will frequent the house with similar goods. There is also a somewhat annoying custom, not easily avoided, which allows the servants to levy a commission from the dellâl. If he does not agree to the terms, then the porter excludes him, and thus one may miss

some rare article, which is then grabbed by a fortunate neighbor.

The art in brass to which I alluded above is one of the most interesting now pursued in Persia. Fine examples are fortunately within the reach of every one, for the material is inexpensive and the cost of labor trifling. It would be impossible to surpass the beauty of form exhibited in some of these ewers, vases, censers, candlesticks, and salvers or lamp standards. They are generally of light, open tracery, the solid spaces being finished with engraved designs representing bits from the poets and intricate hunting, court, battle, or dramatic scenes, or public dancers and acrobats, interwoven with arabesques of extreme intricacy and beauty. Many of these articles in brass are purely ornamental, such as a pair of mantel ornaments in the possession of the writer whose form was suggested by the gracefulness of the Oriental cypress. A candlestick in my possession was also undoubt-



WATER-CARRIER, TEHERÂN.

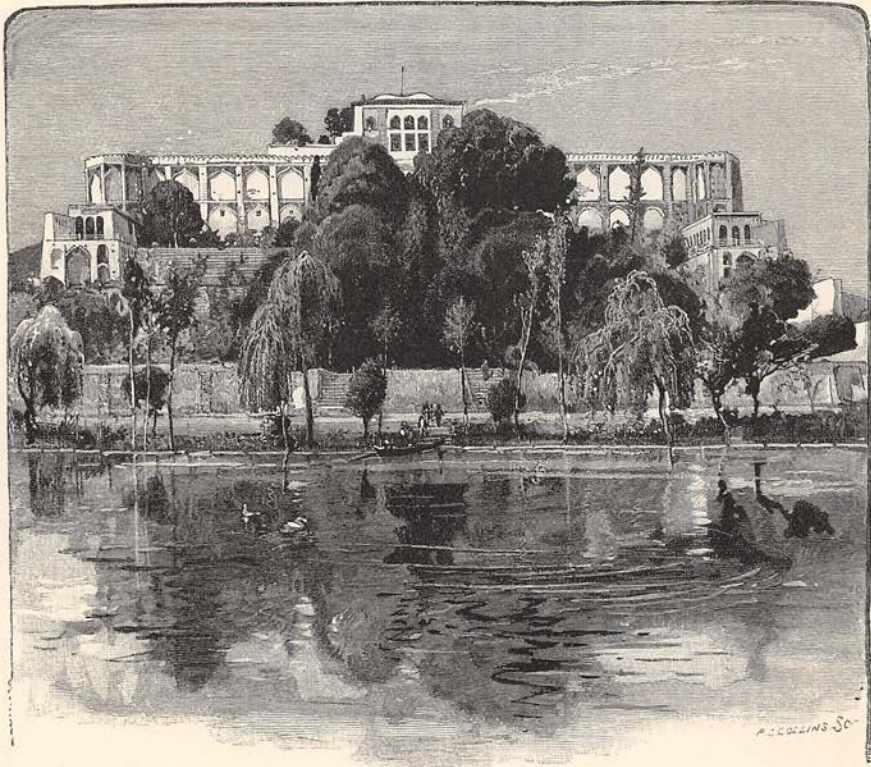
edly suggested by the palm-trees along the shores of the Persian Gulf.

As regards the rugs now for sale in Persia, it may be well to add that after the discovery of aniline dyes the embroideries and textile fabrics of Persia were injured by a large introduction of aniline colors. This affected both the beauty and durability of the design. One way to test them is to pass a wet cloth over the suspicious tints. No article that leaves a stain on the cloth can be recommended. But the importation of aniline dyes into Persia has been at last forbidden by the Government, who are well aware of the injury eventually to follow from them if used in the manufacture of one of the most important articles of the Persian export trade. There are many

varieties of Persian carpets and rugs; the most important bear the name of the province where they are made. The most valued are those having more or less silk; these are used chiefly for portières. Another highly prized sort are the rugs of Turkistân, which are distinguished by a fine velvety surface and a pattern of extraordinary richness. While the same general design enters into most of the Turkistân rugs, no two are exactly alike. The old Turkistân rugs are of great value; some which are undoubtedly fifty to eighty years old are still brilliant, while the colors are toned by time and the texture is admirable. As the Turkomans have opportunities of procuring aniline dyes from Russia, they sometimes use them in the rugs they now

produce, which must therefore be examined with great care, however attractive their appearance. The colors of old Persian carpets can invariably be relied upon.

mentioned here.) The one occupied by His Majesty Nusr-ed-Deen Shah is called the Ark. With the building reserved for the ladies of the royal household, it occupies the south-



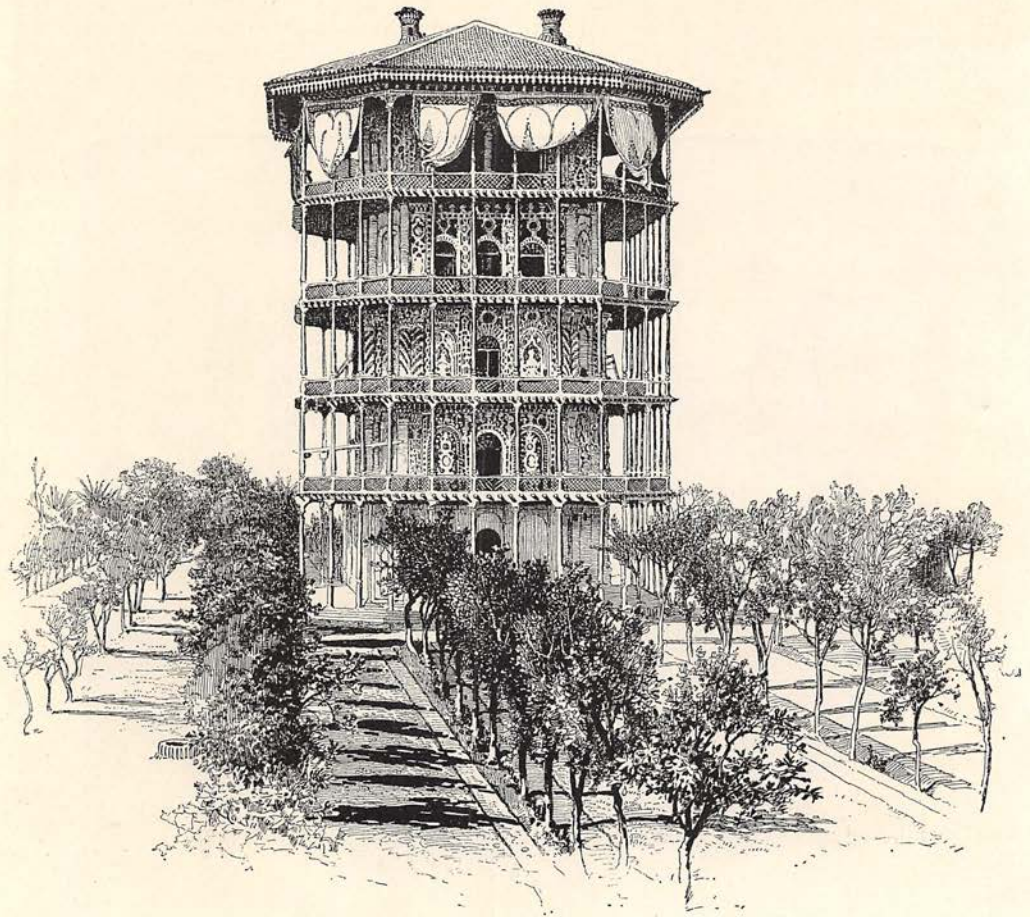
ROYAL SUMMER RESORT, KASR-KHAJÂR, NEAR TEHERÂN.

Another Persian fabric that has great beauty, but is now becoming scarce, is the intricate embroidery of silk formerly worn by the women. A change of costume or fashion has superseded these embroidered pantaloons. They present a solid mass of needle-work, and are admirably suited to cover ottomans or chairs in a drawing-room. The embroideries of Resht commend themselves for their wealth of decoration, but should be carefully examined as being liable to have aniline dyes. The designs of the best have many parts of the ground cut out and the colors represented by pieces delicately sewed into the apertures. The embroideries of Shirâz resemble those of Resht in appearance, but are executed by a reverse process, the colors being represented by pieces, often of velvet, applied to the ground cloth.

Among the most interesting objects in Teherân are the palaces and neighboring resorts of the King. (See the December CENTURY for illustrations of some of the buildings

eastern portion of a large district of the city devoted to the arsenal, the Government offices, the stately residence of the Prince Naïb Sultanéh, Minister of War, and the magnificent square of the barracks previously described where the garrison is chiefly quartered. The palace is surrounded by numerous courts and gardens handsomely laid out and abounding in shade-trees. The exterior of the palace is picturesque rather than imposing, having reached its present form by additions made from time to time. Much of it is pleasingly decorated with rich Oriental designs in tiles and glazed bricks. The interior apartments are planned on a spacious scale, elegantly combining European with Oriental luxury, and presenting a magnificence commensurate with a great and celebrated empire.

To many the most interesting spectacle in the Ark is the Museum or Treasury of Crown Jewels. The royal permission is necessary to an admittance to this inestimable storehouse of riches. A number of the royal houses of



SUMMER-HOUSE OF THE SHAH AT ENZELI.

Europe and Asia possess collections of crown jewels, such as that of Dresden or Constantinople; but it is safe to say that there is none which surpasses the splendor and importance of the one belonging to the crown of Persia. Let one consider the many ages of Persia's national existence, the pageantries for which her court has always been renowned, the vast extent of territory she once held, from the Oxus and the Crimea to the Indian Ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the Ganges; let him consider that it is less than two centuries since Nadir Shah returned from the sack of Delhi, his army loaded with treasure, while the conqueror reserved for his share gems and riches valued at upwards of one hundred millions of money. In this treasure-house at the Ark one sees, therefore, diamonds of the largest and rarest quality, including the famous Dar-i-Noor, or Sea of Light, and rubies and emeralds and other gems of like degree; several crowns and suits of armor of enormous price; the choicest examples of all that Ori-

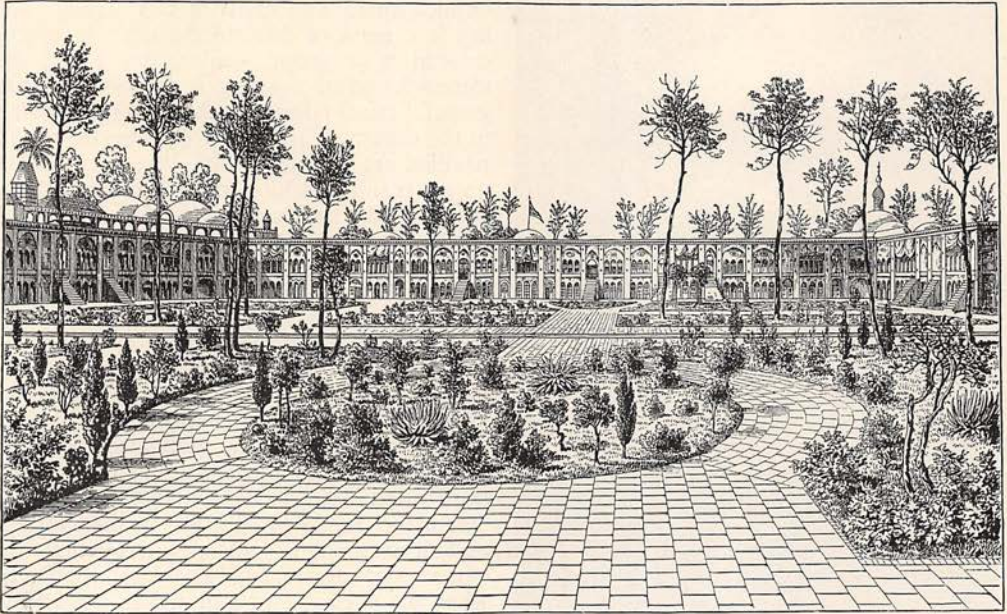
ental art has produced in metals, enamels, shawls, embroidery, swords of matchless temper whose hilts and scabbards are a solid mass of diamonds, together with presents innumerable received from the crowned heads of Europe and Asia for ages past. Prominent amid this dazzling profusion of splendor is the renowned Peacock throne, which is variously estimated to be worth from \$13,000,000 to \$25,000,000. Of less pecuniary value, but highly interesting as showing the wide range of subjects which occupy the attention of the Shah, is a finely arranged collection of specimens of all the minerals of Persia. One leaves the Treasury with his imagination dazed; it is indeed as if he had been studying the concentrated essence of the "Arabian Nights," and at last realized the "gorgeous East, or wealth of Ormus or of Ind."

A feature the visitor will notice at the Ark is the crimson curtains and awnings which protect the windows and doors from the heat of the noon-time. This hue for curtains, awn-

ings, and umbrellas is reserved for the royal family; the use of it for such purposes by any others in Persia is strictly forbidden.

Nusr-ed-Deen Shah, the present occupant of this stately palace, is one of the best known of modern Oriental sovereigns because of the two visits he has made to Europe. The fact of his undertaking these distant and costly excursions is in itself a decided indication of the progressive character of this distin-

too overtly resisted, as the system of government and laws is theocratic; and partly because any important radical measures the Shah may propose for the improvement of his dominions are hindered by the intrigues of powerful neighbors, whom it is not expedient to arouse to open opposition. If the powers would only let Persia alone, she has a vitality that would carry her to another epoch of national greatness. But under present



THE WOMEN'S APARTMENTS OF A ROYAL PALACE, TEHERÂN. (REPRODUCED FROM A DRAWING IN A PERSIAN PAPER.)

guished monarch. It is the fashion for the diplomats of certain courts to decry Persia, her court, and her King. This is done either through ignorance or with the secret but distinct intention of lowering the influence and power of Persia for the purpose of preventing that progress which would better enable her to resist the encroachments of ambitious and unscrupulous neighbors. There is no living sovereign more talented or more swayed by generous and progressive views than Nusr-ed-Deen Shah. He has been on the throne forty-five years, and is very popular in Persia. Humane in disposition, widely informed and patriotic, if his projects for the elevation of his dominions do not always succeed, it is partly because time is required to transform the habits and prejudices of an old, long-established people; partly because of the corrupt character of his *entourage*, who may not be more corrupt than Persian courtiers have been for ages, but who yet are corrupt; partly because of the natural opposition of the Mohammedan clergy, who must not be

circumstances her progress is constantly hindered and even her existence is menaced.

Nusr-ed-Deen Shah has three sons. The eldest, and probably the ablest and most ambitious, is the Zelee Sultân, governor of the central provinces, whose capital is Ispahân. But he cannot inherit the throne because his mother was of plebeian birth. He is a man of great force of character, who has been in office, as he told me, since his tenth year. The heir-apparent is the second son, who has the title of Vally-ahed, and is governor *ex officio* of the important frontier province of Azerbaïjân. It is my impression that he is playing a part, purposely concealing his aims and abilities. The third son, entitled the Naïb Sultânéh, is Minister of War, and a man of very affable disposition.

Another interesting and important palace of Teherân is Negaristân. It was built by Agâ Mohammed Shah, and added to by the great-grandfather of the present King, Feth Aleé Shah. At that time it stood nearly a mile beyond the city; but now Teherân has grown



VALY-AHED, OR HEIR-APPARENT.

some distance beyond it. The entrance faces a large square, whither, on the feast of Courbân Bâirâm, a camel is led forth decked with ribbons and drapery and slaughtered for a sacrifice. Over the gate is a graceful *balahanéh*, or lodge, supported by a row of elegant pillars. The carriage enters a spacious garden, beautified with a triple avenue of venerable plane-trees girt with ivy. No other building than a modest porter's lodge is visible. But on entering a winding passage in this structure we are surprised to find that it leads to an extensive continuation of the park, which is here laid out with graveled walks by whose side are stone

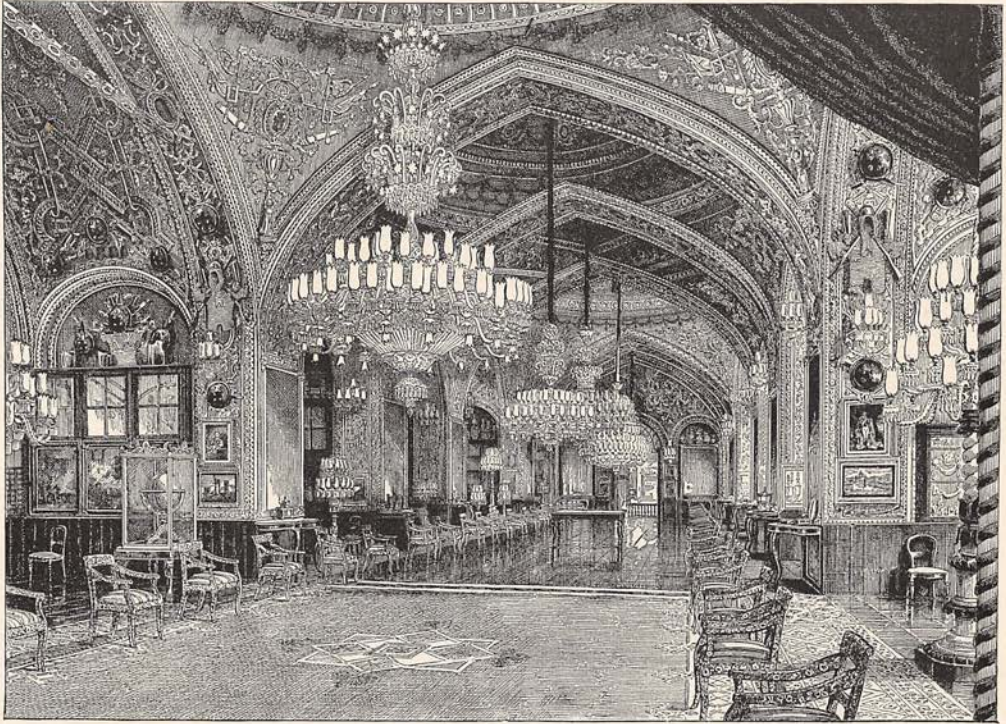
channels filled with running streams. About the whole scene is such an air of rural quietude, broken only by the twitter of sparrows or the rapturous melody of nightingales, that one can hardly imagine that he is still within the limits of a large city. The paths lead to a marble tank and a small but exquisitely beautiful pavilion beside it, whose exterior is decorated with the most beautiful stucco-work I have seen in Persia. The interior consists of a single cruciform apartment covered with a domical roof. The whole of this arched ceiling is a mass of delicate designs in stucco, colored with green, scarlet, and gold; the same scheme of coloring is followed on the graceful spiral pillars which support the dome in the center. Three arms or alcoves of the pavilion are furnished with luxurious divans on either side, reaching to the windows, which are closed by sashes capable of being raised and opening the entire side to the air and the prospect. The sashes are designed with the intricacy of a Gothic rose window, and are filled with stained glass. The floors are spread with expensive rugs. The plan is symmetrical, while the details are so rich and harmonious as to be highly poetical and artistic. The central truth which impresses one when comparing this little gem with attempts now made at elaborate decoration in England and the United States is its evident spontaneity. The man who designed it was at once a poet and an artist; it is useless to deny that the two are not always combined, and that only when the poetic fancy and fervor are added to the artistic instinct can the best results be achieved in art. In modern decorative art one perceives, notwithstanding its occasional successes, that it is wholly intellectual. The artist has studied the art of other ages, and out of this acquired knowledge deliberately seeks to evolve something original. The consequence is just what might be expected; there is an absence of spontaneity, the effect is scattered, the combinations are strained, and one is ever reminded of something he has seen elsewhere in a much more correct style. Now in Oriental art the artist or architect is not disturbed by what he has learned by study, nor is he striving after effect, but his imagination teems with original thoughts, and he cannot rest until he has given expression in his own way to his love of the beautiful. We, too, in time may have such decorative artists, but there is no question that they do not yet exist in the United States. To bestow too much praise on the present phase of American household and decorative art is to retard the coming of the genuine school that is to supersede it.

From this pavilion we reënter the park, and



continue our walk until it brings us to another broad tank and the apartments formerly occupied by the King. An interesting feature of this building is a small reception-room whose two largest sides are capable of being opened and protected from the sun by large awnings. At each end of the room is a life-size painting representing the sons of Feth Alee Shah. From this apartment we pass into an octagonal court around which the chief

decorations, are of a coarse style of art, evidently borrowed from cheap European prints. But one soon forgets to notice them in the magnificent historical frescoes which on every side fill the upper half of the walls. We see before us in well-arranged groups full-length, life-size portraits of Feth Alee Shah on his golden throne, with his thirty sons gathered around him, and on either hand the English, French, and Russian ambassadors,



AUDIENCE CHAMBER OF THE ROYAL PALACE, TEHERÁN.

building has been erected. The area of this court for a space of nearly eighty feet is occupied by an immense tank. Thence another walk through the park takes one to the anderoon, formerly occupied by some of the numerous wives of Feth Alee Shah. The parlor of the King in the lower story of this building offers another highly interesting example of Persian art. The vestibule is low, but richly tinted and gilded, and is separated from the parlor by light pillars of wood, whose form and capitals suggest the grand columns of Persepolis. The ceiling of the apartment is high, considering the small size of the room. Every portion is enriched with green, scarlet, and gold, alternated with panels representing hunting-scenes painted directly on the plaster. These pictures, although blending agreeably with the other

and the chief courtiers and officers of the realm. The portraits are evidently characteristic likenesses, while the various court costumes of eighty years ago, silks, embroidered sashes, tunics of Cashmere shawls, and glittering decorations and armor are represented with a fidelity that gives great historic value to the painting. Feth Alee Shah was a patron of the arts, and also one of the chief poets of modern Persia; his poems partake of the style of Hafiz. He was a man of striking appearance, giving much attention to the care of his person, and especially of the magnificent beard for which he was celebrated.

It was in this palace that the great Kaimakám or prime minister of Mohammed Shah met his untimely fate. This monarch, third in the succession of the Khajar dynasty, was not more cruel than most Oriental des-

pots, but was naturally made suspicious and jealous by his position. The Kaimakâm was not only a famous poet, he was also a statesman who had the address to acquire a very prominent part in the administration of affairs. This finally aroused the jealousy or apprehension of Mohammed Shah, although there seems to have been little reason for the tyrant's fears. One pleasant afternoon, when the vizier was sitting in the park of Negaristân, quietly sipping a cup of tea, the executioner brought him the order of the King that he had but five minutes to live. The vizier received the summons with calmness, and composed two lines on the spot, which have become proverbial in Persia: "Such is life; now it overwhelms us with honors, and anon it clothes us with thorns. Fortune, like a juggler, delights to play us a thousand tricks like this." Five minutes later he was suffocated, it is said, by a mattress laid over him in an apartment of the palace, although one living at the time told me he died by the cord.

Before leaving the anderoon we were taken to the bath, where the royal ladies were wont to disport themselves. Proceeding down an inclined plane, we entered a subterranean hall of marble supported by pillars clustered around a circular pool. Opposite to where we entered was a steep slide of polished marble. This was built to enable Feth Alee Shah to indulge in an original sport which reminds one of the delights of the gardens of Armida. From the upper story of the anderoon his wives proceeded, somewhat thinly clad, to the top of the slide, and with much merriment deftly slipped into the arms of the royal husband, who waited for them below. The bath is connected with this subterranean hall, and consists of several apartments faced with marble and floral designs on glazed tiles. No more are peals of laughter heard there, nor the song warbled by ruby lips. All are gone who once imparted life to this lovely scene. The livelong summer day the nightingale trills in the rose-bush and the turtle-dove coos in the *chenârs*, and the murmuring water dashes down its marble channels, but no one dwells there now save the solitary sentinel and the venerable guardian.

The Persians are a mercurial people, far different from most Orientals. They are passionately fond of poetry, and the stanzas of Ferdöusee and Hafiz are familiar to all classes. Shah Djemsheed and Rustêm, the hero of the Shah-na-meh, or Chronicle of Kings, are household words, even more than the Cid in Spain or King Arthur in England. The Persians are also influenced by what appears to the eye beyond any other people. "If you wish to reach a Persian's heart you must touch his

eye," said a distinguished Persian. For this reason they are greatly taken with spectacular effects, and find it difficult to regard with respect foreigners who live in simple style and avoid display when abroad. Power that is unostentatious is to them difficult of comprehension.

If Teherân should ever have a theater or opera, and Persians should be permitted to attend them, they would develop a passion which at present finds only incomplete expression in numerous feasts or the mourning festivities of the Moharrem. The greatest annual occasion in Persia is probably the Noh Rooz, or New Year, which comes in the spring. This festival, although sanctioned by the Sheahs, undoubtedly had its origin in the time when the Zendavesta was the acknowledged guide of religion in Persia. The Noh Rooz comes when the sun again asserts his brilliant reign over the earth in March, and drives away clouds and rain and storm for nine months from its special favorite, the land of Irân. Then the trees bourgeon and bloom, and the fields and gardens are resplendent with flowers. The Noh Rooz continues for ten days. One of these days is celebrated at Teherân with races held at the race-course outside the city walls. A handsome royal pavilion, furnished with arches and alcoves, affords a fine point of observation for the King and his wives, the latter guarded from view by lattices. The legations and principal Persian grandees erect tents adjoining the royal pavilion, and give receptions to their friends. The scene is gay with streamers and banners. The horses are fine steeds from the Arab breed of Shirâz, superb animals of grace and fire. But their gait is the run instead of the trot; the latter pace is not esteemed in the East for riding-horses, and justly, as it appears to me. Of course the entire population of Teherân turns out to see the races.

Another very important occasion at Teherân is what is called the Moharrem, or month of mourning. It is the celebration of the slaughter of Hussein, the son of Alee, and his family by the army of Moawiyêh, who had usurped the Caliphate. To the Sheahs the occasion is one of the highest importance. For nine days groups of fanatics, chiefly fakirs, go through the streets, chanting and howling "Ya Hussein!" Their clothes are rent, sometimes, indeed, entirely dispensed with, and their black locks hang disheveled over blood-shot eyes. With knives they gash themselves or pierce their limbs and cheeks with steel spikes, sometimes falling dead in the street from loss of blood. By the eighth, ninth, and tenth days these enthusiasts have wrought

themselves up to such a pitch of religious frenzy that it is prudent for Europeans to remain at home. He who has once seen one of these processions, or in the still of evening has heard the lamentation from all parts of the city, can never forget the singular impression produced.

A marked feature of the last days of the Moharrem is the Tazieh, or Passion Play, representing the death of Husseïn. Many of the wealthy Persians give presentations of the play in the court or patio of their own houses, which is covered with awnings, and all the faithful are invited to attend. To the women especially the opportunity of thus diverting themselves is so valuable, that this reason alone will probably render it difficult to abolish the custom for many years, were it, indeed, desirable to do so. But, of course, the royal Tazieh offers the most elaborate and complete representation of the Passion Play, if it may be so termed for want of a more descriptive phrase. The King has constructed a special building for this drama, surmounted by a light domical frame for supporting the awning. Galleries are ranged around the arena divided into boxes. Each minister is expected to furnish his loggia in a costly manner, with Cashmere shawls and elegant rugs.

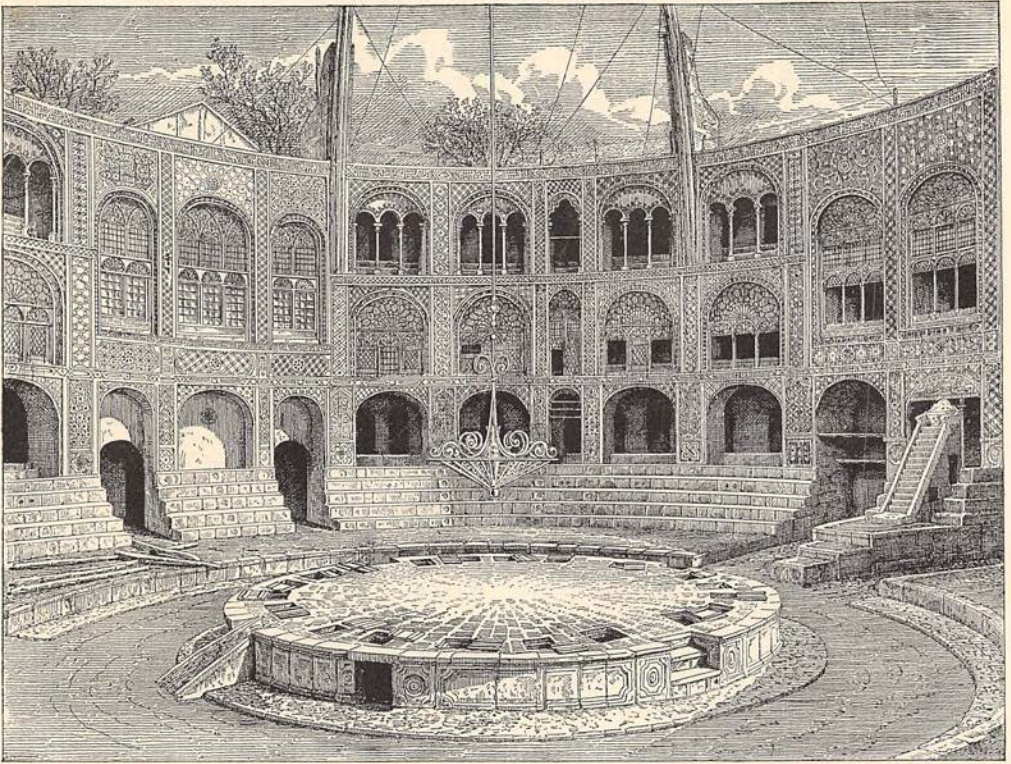
Much of the representation reminds one of the scene in "Midsummer Night's Dream" where *Bottom* figures as the lion with *Moonshine* and his precious companions. A man brings a bush into the arena, sticks it in the ground, and says "This is a tree." Another actor on all fours, with a lion's skin on his back, personates the devouring king of beasts. Notwithstanding such absurdities, which the lively fancy of the spectators causes them to accept as real, the general effect becomes solemn and impressive as the tragedy proceeds and the martyrs are slain by a multitude of assailants. The audience is moved to tears, and a wild wailing proceeds from every quarter of the house. The impersonation has been sometimes carried to such a realistic point that men have allowed themselves to be buried up to the neck in the ground, or concealed their heads in a hole, in order to represent a field strewn with headless trunks and bloody heads. The effort was, however, so violent that actors representing such objects in the above manner have been known to be suffocated when the weather has been warm.

It appears singular to proceed from the Tazieh to the College of Teherân, the former representing Oriental and reactionary and the latter modern and Western ideas. Although the standard of instruction in the college leaves much to be desired, the existence of

such an institution indicates a progressive spirit, and must eventually produce valuable results for Persia. It is, of course, under government auspices; it includes instruction in languages, geology, painting, medicine, and other branches. Several of the instructors are Englishmen and Germans. The Persians show much aptitude in the acquisition of languages, and especially of the French tongue, which is understood and spoken by the King himself, and by many of his ministers and numerous subordinate officers. The study of anatomy is pursued with a manikin. It would be impossible to introduce dissection in Persia at present; and the practice of surgery, when involving amputation or complicated cases, is attended with difficulties, for if the surgeon should lose his patient, the latter being a Mussulman, he would be liable to pay what is called blood-money, and might even risk his own life.

Want of space forbids a further account of a city which offers the stranger many novel attractions. But we may allude, in closing, to the numerous charming villas, pleasure-houses, and retreats in the suburbs of Teherân. Doshantépê is a favorite resort of the King, three miles from the city. It is perched on the summit of a lofty, isolated rock, and is approached by a picturesque winding stairway. At the foot of the eminence lies a spacious garden containing an interesting menagerie composed largely of native animals. One observes there several noble lions from the vicinity of Persepolis. Another very interesting palace is that called Kasr-i-Khajar or Castle of the Khajars. It is one of the most pleasing objects in the landscapes of Teherân. The present Shah inherits the love of the chase peculiar to the monarchs of Persia from the oldest periods, and often resorts to these choice retreats in order to be in the neighborhood of his hunting-grounds.

The European colony spends the summer at the Shimran in the villages of Tejrish, Gulahêk, and Zergendêh. The two latter were royal gifts to the English and Russian legations respectively. Besides the extensive grounds occupied by the two legations, these villages include houses rented to Europeans and Persians alike. The carriage-roads are numerous in the vicinity of Teherân, and most of them are excellent, and in several cases well protected by avenues of shade-trees. The most charming and romantic drive in the neighborhood is that of Yusufabad. It gently ascends towards the mountains, and commands a superb prospect of Demavend and the nearer ranges as well as the plains of Teherân far to the south beyond Kanaregird. When there is a slight haze or mirage, as often hap-



ROYAL THEATER, WHERE THE GREAT PASSION PLAY, OR TAZIEH, IS EXHIBITED ANNUALLY FOR TEN DAYS AT MOHARREM. CURTAINS ARE DRAWN OVER THE FRAME-WORK ABOVE.

pens, the plain assumes the deep purple of the sea when a fresh breeze is blowing over it; the rosy ridges beyond resemble islands as seen at sea, and the white houses glistening

here and there, mere gleaming specks, look like white-caps, while the walls of Teherân suggest surf beaten into foam on far-extending reefs.

*S. G. W. Benjamin.*

### THE CRICKETS IN THE FIELDS.

ONE, or a thousand voices?—filling noon  
 With such an undersong and drowsy chant  
 As sings in ears that waken from a swoon,  
 And know not yet which world such murmurs haunt:  
 Single, then double beats, reiterant;  
 Far off and near; one ceaseless, changeless tune.

If bird or breeze awake the dreamy will,  
 We lose the song, as it had never been;  
 Then suddenly we find 'tis singing still  
 And had not ceased.—So, friend of mine, within  
 My thoughts one underthought, beneath the din  
 Of life, doth every quiet moment fill.

Thy voice is far, thy face is hid from me,  
 But day and night are full of dreams of thee.

*Anthony Morehead.*