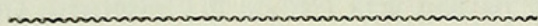


c. The third is where an impossible thing is supposed by the force of *if* or its equivalent, as—

“If the orb of the treasury of ambrosia (the moon) were void of spots at its full, then would her face endure the defeat of having its parallel found.”

d. The fourth consists in mentioning the effect *first*, to impress on the reader the rapid efficiency of the cause, as in these lines from the drama of Málaviká and Agnimitra.

“Málaviká’s heart was *first* possessed by the god with the flowery bow,—and then by thee, beloved of the fair, standing as the object of her eye.”



*The Kirán-us-Sa'dain of Mír Khusrau.*—By E. B. COWELL, M. A.

Among the poetical names of Muhammadan India, none stands higher than Yamín-ud-Dín Abú-'l-Hasan, more commonly known as Mír Khusrau. His great fault is his boundless prodigality of authorship,—it is said that he has left behind him some half million of verses!

Amongst his various works, the most celebrated are his five Masnavis, in imitation of the Khamsah of Nizámí; containing the Matla'-ul-Anwár on Sufeyism and morals, the loves of Shírín and Khusrau, Lailí and Majnún, the Mirror of Alexander, and the Eight Paradises, or adventures of Bahrám Gúr. But beside these better known poems, there are two of a different class, which are, for many reasons, much more interesting to a European reader. In his more ambitious poems, Khusrau had given the reins to his fancy, and let it carry him as it willed far away from the actual world into the ideal land of a remote antiquity; in the eras of Shírín and Sekandar he had no fear of facts or dates, every thing was lost in distance and obscurity, and the traditions could be moulded at his pleasure. He had indeed but followed the example of his predecessors; all Persian poets in their narratives had similarly thrown themselves into a legendary past, and it is only in their smaller lyric effusions, that we can trace the lights and shadows of their own time. But in two of his poems,



as we have said, Mír Khusrau strikes out a new line for himself; and he is, we believe, the *first*, and we might almost add the *last*, of his country's poets who has been bold enough to look away from the past to the present, and seek for his inspiration in the actual scenes transpiring before his eyes.

He lived in a stirring time. His father was a military chief of the Pre-Moghul empire, and fell in battle when his son was nine years old. Khusrau was born A. H. 651 (A. D. 1253,) and he died A. H. 725 (A. D. 1325.) For many years he was attached to the court, and he shared many of the adventures of his royal patrons. He was contemporary, in his youth, with the last Slave Kings, and he outlived the whole Khilji dynasty. He had been born under Násir-ud-Dín, and his early patron was Prince Muhammad, the 'Black Prince' of Indian history, whose valour and taste and untimely death throw such a colour of romantic interest round his father Bulbun's court, in spite of his mean jealousies and tyrannical policy. He was at the court when the revolution took place, by which the sceptre passed from the Slaves to the Khilji dynasty, and he saw the whole course of Alá-ud-dín's strangely eventful career,—beginning with the basest ingratitude and murder, and ending Lord of all India, with a wider empire than any of his predecessors; though that empire was not fated to remain in his family, but passed soon after his death to a stranger. Nor was the aspect of India itself less stirring than the changeful history of its Kings. When Khusrau was born, the great storm of Moghul invasion which had devastated all central Asia, was still threatening from the North-west. He was five years old when the tidings came which spread a thrill of horror through the Muhammadan world, that Baghdad was taken and the last of the Caliphs slain by the idolaters! He saw Alá-ud-dín's adventurous plunge into the unknown forests of the Deccan, and he lived to see Warangol taken in 1323, the last Hindu kingdom of the South subverted and its Rája brought a prisoner to Dehlí!

Living then, as he did, in such a busy time, we need not wonder that a man who with all his faults was a true poet, could see materials for romance in the present around him, as well as in the legendary glories of Alexander and Chosroes. Two of his poems have, for their subjects, scenes which he had either witnessed or heard of from



others who witnessed them,—the story of the contest between the Sultan Kai Kobád and his father, and that of the Mahratta Princess Dawal Devi, and her marriage with the crown prince Khizr Khán.

We have a copy of each of these poems in the Society's Collection ;

1. No. 541. *قران السعدين*, 163 foll. 12 lines in a page.\*

2. No. 990. *عشيقه امير خسرو*, or, as it is sometimes called, *قصه خضرخان و دول راني*,—it contains 4200 baits.

The present paper will confine itself to the former poem, the latter may be similarly taken up at some future opportunity.

Dr. Sprenger has given a brief notice of the *Kirán-us-Sa'dain* in his Catalogue of the Oude MSS. but his account lacks his usual accuracy, as the more detailed analysis in the following pages will sufficiently testify. He says of it that "It is an historical poem, the heroes are Násir-ud-Din and Moizz-ud-Din, but the facts are so much clad in allegories that the only historical value of the book is, that it offers us a specimen of the singular taste of the age in which it was composed." The style of the poem (as of all Khusrau's works) is full of exaggeration and metaphorical description, but the facts of the history are generally given with tolerable fidelity. In fact, few historical poems in any language adhere more closely to the actual order and character of the events, and when we compare Ferishta's account with the poetical version, we are struck by their great agreement in the main points.

The poem is composed in a singular form, and I do not remember any Persian work from which Khusrau may be said to have borrowed it. The main body of the poem is like an ordinary Masnavi, as for instance any one of Khusrau's own Khamsah, composed in the Metre — U U — — U U — — U —

Jane pater Jane tuens, omnium

Principium fons et origo Deum ;

but the rubrics of the different Chapters are (like those in Spenser's Faery Queen) in a different metre

— U — — U U — — U U — — U U —,†

\* The *Kirán-us-Sa'dain* was lithographed, with a commentary, at Lucknow, A. H. 1261, but, since the mutiny, copies have become very scarce.

† Dr. Sprenger, not observing this peculiar novelty, has apparently confused these two different initial lines of the poem.



each forming a couplet of a continuous Kasídah in the rhyme *ان*, which if collected together would, of course, supply a running analysis of the whole poem. Beside this, every now and then at the end of many of the chapters there is given a ghazal, which is supposed to express the poet's feelings, contemporary with that part of the story which has been just described, something like the songs introduced between the parts of Tennyson's *Princess*. These ghazals are in various metres and serve admirably to diversify the poem, while at the same time they form a running commentary, like the choruses of a Greek play, on the progress of the action and the hopes and fears which it may be supposed to excite in the minds of the spectators. The poet, having been actually present throughout the campaign, is in this way enabled to throw himself into the scene, and we have thus an interesting mixture of the epic and lyric elements, each portion of the action being represented from an objective and a subjective point of view.

The first couplet of the Kasídah Analysis is

شکر گویم کہ بتوفیق خداوند جهان بر سر نامہ ز توحید نوشتم عنوان

but the opening lines of the poem itself are

حمد خداوند سرایم نخست تا شود این نامہ بنامش درست  
واجب اول بوجود قدم نی بوجودی کہ بود از عدم

The usual praises follow to the Prophet and his family, and fill several chapters ; then come the praises of the Sultán Moizz-ud-Din Kai Kobád in two chapters, followed by a description of Dehli and the Jámí' Musjid and other public buildings, &c.

At last, after this tedious series of preliminaries, the story itself opens with a description of December, "when the king of the sky lays his hand on the bow and shoots an arrow on the world in frost." A curious episode follows on the various means of exciting warmth in the cold season, by fires, warm clothes and festivities ; and the young king adopts the last remedy. His realm is in peace, no sounds of war are heard, "the face of the earth is controlled under his sword as the dust of the ground is laid by the cloud." His carousings are rudely disturbed by news from the East, of his father's meditated revolt. Násir-ud-Dín (or, as Ferishta calls him, Baghrá Khán,) had hoped to succeed his father Ghaias-ud-Dín Bulbun when the eldest son Muhammad died, and had been grievously disappointed when the



old man fixed his choice on his grandson,—like Lancaster and Richard II. in our own history. Bulbun died shortly after, a broken old man, and civil war seemed imminent, when the dispute was settled by both the rivals retiring and leaving the vacant throne to Násir's own son, Kai Kobád; the son of Muhammad contenting himself with the Government of the Punjab, and the young King's father returning to his old province of Bengal. But his ambition was only stifled for the time, and the tidings of his son's incapacity and follies stirred it into new life; and he prepares to wrest the sceptre from his feeble hands.

Fierce blew the rumour that the Sun of the East  
Has blazed like lightning across his meridian,  
The Násir of the world, the conqueror of kingdoms,  
Has drawn his sword seeking revenge.  
He marched his army to the river of Hind,  
That his host might raise up the dust of Sind.\*  
See his fortune what ambition it awoke,—  
The descending water inclines to mount up!

His army proceeds by land and by water into Oude and occupies the province.†

Night and day, his one speech is this,  
“ I am the Sekandar that shall break down Dárá.  
If my father is gone, then am I the world's keeper,  
I am the heir of Sulaimán's diadem.”

The King awakes from his dream, and prepares for the contest. He summons his various governors and jágírdars to supply their contingents, and a large army is soon collected from every quarter. If we could rely on the poet's accuracy in statistics, we could copy a roll call which he gives us; but we fear his laks are somewhat indefinite, like the sands and “sandillions” of older poets! Khusrau concludes his chapter by a warlike ghazal.

On “Monday in the early morning, in the month of Zúl Hijjah, at the end of the moon,” the king first shakes his banner to the breeze, and begins his march from Dehlí. He proceeds leisurely by slow

\* So the MS., the printed ed. reads

راند ز لكهتوتی و دریای هند تا سپهش گرد بر آرد ز سندا  
آمد و اقصای اود در گرفت وان همه اقلیم سراسر گرفت †



marches and his time is chiefly occupied in festivities and hunting-parties. The action of the poem now moves very slowly too, and we wade painfully through a long series of descriptions, the varying scenery of every month being minutely described, and the different employments of the young King and his courtiers. His first stage is Kílú Kharí (کیلوکھری) where a grand castle, belonging to the King, is described, as well as the festivities in which he indulges on his arrival. While lingering here, he receives news of the invasion of his North Western territories by an army of Moghuls.

By the violence of their torrent as it burst in,  
The glory (آب) of Láhore passed over to Multán.

The king despatches 30,000 chosen horsemen to meet this new foe under the command of an officer named Khán Jahán Bárbik.\* They march to the Punjab and soon disperse the enemy. We have the names of several of the Moghul leaders mentioned, such as Tamur (تمر), Sarmak, Kíli, Khajlik and Baidú.

سرمک و کیلی دویکرو شتافت خچلک و یدو بدگر سو شتافت

These transitory but desolating Moghul incursions are a continual feature in the Indian annals of this period, reminding us of those devastating inroads by the Danish pirates in our own Saxon period. We learn from Ferishta that such an invasion actually occurred at this time, and the poet has strictly kept to truth in narrating it; but he omits to mention, what is little to his hero's credit, that alarmed lest the many Moghul soldiers in his service should side with their countrymen, he assembled their chiefs and had them treacherously put to death,—a singular parallel to Ethelred's murder of the Danish hus-carles in a somewhat similar juncture.

When the Sun entered the bull (the signs of the Zodiac forming the poet's usual calendar,) the king seems to have commenced the campaign in a more business-like manner, and he makes his second start in the middle of the month Rabí'-ul-Awwal.†

برسر شان باریک تیغ زن خان جهان چابک و لشکر شکن \*

Ferishta gives Khán Jahán and Mullik Yarbég (in the printed text باریک Birlás as the leaders. General Brigg says elsewhere that Bárbik is a Turkish title for one of the classes of the gold stick; it may be rendered by the title "gentleman usher in the courts of Europe." (Ferishta, i. p. 281.)

† This month began April 16th in the year A. H. 686, A. D. 1287.



کوه بیک سوی و دگر سوی جون هردو شد از گرد سیه تیره گون

The pomp and circumstance of the march are of course not allowed to pass by unnoticed, but we may leave them to the readers of the original. The first halt is made in the district of Talpat and Afghánpúr, a district, according to the Scholiast, five or six cos from Dehlí, and there we have the old revelry renewed. It is singular to see by these ever-recurring scenes of dissipation and excess, how even the ideal descriptions of the court poet are bound down to the coarse actual world around him,—these days and weeks of debauchery being constantly referred to by the historians of the time as one main evil of the young king's reign, and as, in fact, ultimately leading to his early and miserable fall.

At this place, the court is enlivened by the arrival in the camp of 1000 Moghul prisoners from the Punjáb. The poet knew only too well the savage cruelty of these barbarians, for he had passed two years in captivity among them in Balkh, having been taken prisoner in the battle a few years before in which his patron prince Muhammad, then Governor of Cábul, had been killed. These captives are minutely described, the Tartar features, the high cheekbones, flat noses, yellow hue, &c.\* are dwelt upon with the exaggeration of the poet's hatred, and he evidently gloats on the fact, that they were all put to death by the royal order.

It is difficult to trace the King's route, as so few indications occur to define it, but we find the army starting from this last place and after two marches reaching the Jumna.

ماه علم بعد دو منزل بعون عکس نما شد بلب آب جون

The next stage mentioned is the city of Jaipur (جیپور); here Bárbik is sent forward with part of the army to the river Sarú. There

\* The description is so curious that I subjoin part of it.

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| روي چو آتش كله از پشم ميش  | آتش سوزان شد با پشم خویش     |
| رخنه شده طشت مس از چشم تنگ | دیده در انداخته در رخنه سنگ  |
| چهره شان دبه نم یافته      | جاي بجا کچلک وخم یافته       |
| از رخ تارخ شده بيدني پهن   | وز كله تا كله لب لب دهن      |
| بيدي پررخنه چو گور خراب    | يا چو تئوري كه ز طوفان پر آب |
| موي زبيدي شده بولب فراز    | سبليت شان گشته بغايت دراز    |
| ريش نه پيرامن چاه زنج      | سبزه کچا بردم از روي يخ      |



he is joined by several Zamindars with their contingents, among them by Chahjúí the Amír of Karrah,\* and the Khán of Awiz (عوض).

The father now determines to send a messenger to try his son's temper, to see if his thoughts be those of peace or war,—he accordingly sends a trusty ambassador named Shams Dabír. An interview takes place between the messenger and Bárbik, but of course little but idle compliments and threats passes between them. In the meantime the king continues his leisurely marches varied with the same round of festivities. At length he reaches and crosses the Ganges and enters the province of Oude. The sun at the same time enters Gemini, and we have a very elaborate description of the hot weather, but the poet represents the army as marching on without suffering any inconvenience, 'not a soldier knew aught of the heat of the sun, under the canopying shade of the king, the Shadow of God!' He at length reaches the city of Oude and encamps by the river Gogra.

نصب شد اعلام شهنشاه دهر بر لب گهگر بحوالی شهر  
گهگرازیں سو و سرو زان طرف ازتف لشکر بلب اورده کف

Here follows a striking incident,—the first meeting of the father and the son. The son is on one side of the river with all his troops, the father with his troops on the other. The father bursts into tears as he sees his son in the distance and sends a messenger across in a boat. "Carry," he bids him, "the news of a father's tears to him who is dear to that father as the apple of his eye." The son recognises the messenger from the opposite shore, but a feeling of evil pride rises in his bosom and he shoots an arrow at him, forbidding him to advance, and the messenger has to return without delivering the message. Thus ends the first interview.

The father then sends a more official ambassador who delivers a formal speech, chiefly upbraiding the king for his youth and indiscretion, and trying to recal him to a sense of filial duty. This message is delivered in full durbar, and the young prince haughtily answers it,—his claim is that crowns come not by inheritance but by fate,

\* We read in Ferishta that "Mullik Jujhoo, the nephew of Ghaías-ud-Dín Bulbun, assumed royal privileges in his government of Karrah," during the confusion which followed the accession of Jalál-ud-Dín Khilji.



—besides, he has a peculiar right to the throne from the choice of the old king, his grandfather.

The father, on hearing, at his messenger's return, these stormy words, "drooped his ear like a shell in the sea," but on maturer thought determined to send another messenger who might speed better in his mission. He accordingly despatches a very impersonation of Machiavellism—"a messenger he, who spent his whole life in discourse fine as a hair—if a secret came before him finer than a hair, he cleft its finest point with his keen wit." In this address the father assumes a bolder tone—he appeals from contests of the tongue to that of the sword—he boasts of the number and bravery of his forces, and especially the number of his elephants which he contrasts with the other's cavalry. He admits that his father *did* leave the throne to his grandson, but he maintains that it was the grandson's part to yield it up to the true heir. He concludes with a challenge,

If thou bindest firm the girdle of hatred  
I will enter ere thou dost on the conflict ;  
Or if this interchange of words leads to kindly feeling  
I will not turn my face from thy sincerity ;  
But on this condition that, according to my design,  
I take my father's place and thou take mine.

The young king easily repels his father's boasts of his elephants and extols his own cavalry—one of his arguments being a curious one—in chess an elephant (or bishop) is worth less than a knight.

بین کہ بشطرنج هم استاد کار پیل کم از اسپ نهد در شمار

However with all this he feels his inferior place—he owns the moral untenableness of his position.

With all this strength and might of my army  
I do not wish to harm my lord.  
I am not equal to thee in the battle  
Though I could sew Mount Káf with my javelin as a needle.  
It is an evil rumour on the lips of men and women,—  
The wrath of a child against his father.  
The sword which Sohráb drew against Rustam,—  
Hast thou not heard what he found from fate?  
If the jewels of peace could but be strung,  
With hearty goodwill would I bear the ring in my ear as thy slave.



He tries to justify his still occupying the throne, but with a faltering argument, and thus concludes,

But if in very truth this desire is in thy heart,  
I am thy slave—'tis thine to command.  
Thou askest for me my crown that touches the sky,  
Come and meet me that I may throw it at thy feet.

This message a little touches the father's heart and he now disclaims all idea of seizing the throne.

What though I could take the throne from thee?  
If I took it from thee, to whom should I give it?

He then expresses his loyalty and devotion in a style of truly oriental hyperbole and concludes by begging an interview. The son dictates an answer—"What though my crown reaches to the moon? my head shall be under thy foot." The father receives it with great joy, and sends his second son Káús with a reply and many magnificent presents.

The brother proceeds to the king whom he finds in all his magnificence, which is well described. He advances to the throne and "when the king's eye fell on him, straightway he recognised himself in that mirror; in haste he leaped from the lofty throne and seized his princely form in a close embrace." He seated him by his side on the throne and treated him with the most cordial affection.

The next day early the king calls for his own son Kaiomars (then quite a babe) and sends him to his grandfather with many rich presents,—with him he sends an experienced councillor to carry the secret instructions, and the two set off to the prince of Bengal.

They crossed the water—they went to the king of the East,  
Like rose and nightingale they went to the garden.  
The news came to the king of the realm  
That those fresh fruits are coming from the orchard.  
He went and sat on his Sakandar-like throne  
And with lines of elephants built up a Magog's wall.

The governor descends from his throne and meets his grandson as he enters his presence, and leads him to his seat where he places him by his side. He is at first absorbed in the pleasure of seeing his grandson, and totally neglects the minister and the presents, until his eye happens to fall in that direction, when he recalls himself



from his pre-occupation. The minister then presents his message, and, after a very lavish interchange of gifts, the great interview is fixed for the morrow and the two return to the king.

On the morning of the day every body is astir—the whole day passes in busy preparations—until evening draws near.

When the day waned to its close and the sultry heat had passed  
And the sun was about to sink into the ocean,  
The king of the East to cross the river  
Asked for a boat swift as the revolving heavens.

The description of this boat fills half a chapter and then follows the meeting. The prince of Bengal crosses.

The prince's boat flew swifter than an arrow  
And in the twinkling of an eye crossed the river.  
Soon as he had touched the shore  
He saw his pearl on the bank of the stream.  
He longed in the agitation of his restless heart  
To leap ashore and clasp it to his bosom.  
He sought for patience, but it came not to him,  
He sought not for tears, but lo! they came.  
On the other side stood the King Moizz-ud-Dín  
With all preparations of courtesy after the manner of kings.  
When the king's eye fell on his bewildered visitant,  
The more he gazed, the more bewildered himself became,  
He rushed forward and scattered a donative of tears,  
He flew to meet him and clasped him in his arms.  
Each locked the other in a close embrace,  
Each lingered long in the other's arms;  
Like rose and rosebud when they leap forth from winter,  
This parts not from that, nor that from this.

A tender dialogue ensues between them and all their jealousies and suspicions are soon set at rest in mutual confidence and affection.

The poet himself looked on the scene amid the crowd of courtiers, and he expresses his own feelings in a triumphant ode of joy, beginning :

Happy the moment when the lover gains the beloved.

The best couplets are the following.

None knows the joys of presence but he the sorrow-consumed one  
Who after long exile reaches the beloved.  
None knows the worth of the rose but he the captive bird  
Who has felt the cold of winter and *then* beholds the spring.



As a specimen of the series of Ghazals which, as we have said, are continually interspersed through the narrative, we subjoin it in the original.

### غزل

خورم آن لحظه که مشتاق بیاری برسد  
 آرزومند نگاری بنگاری برسد  
 دیده بروی چو گل بندد و نبود خبرش  
 گرچه در دیده زنون مژه خاری برسد  
 تن چو بیدنش که بر سیل مژه کشتی راند  
 از پس قطع سواحل بکناری برسد  
 لذت دیدن دیدار بجان گار کند  
 جان بیکار شده باز بکاری برسد  
 گرچه در دیده کشد هیچ غبارش نبود  
 هر کجا از قدم دوست غباری برسد  
 ای خوشا تلخی پاسخ که دهد بعد از هجر  
 که خماری شکن از بهر خماری برسد  
 لذت وصل ندارد مگر آن سوخته  
 که پس از دوری بسیار بیاری برسد  
 قیمت گل نشناسد مگر آن مرغ اسیر  
 که خزان دیده بود پس بهاری برسد  
 خسروا یارتو گرمی نرسد خود میگو  
 بهر تسکین دل خویش که آری برسد

We have next an account of the mutual gifts of the father and son, and the splendid entertainment which followed, and here the action of the poem may be said to terminate. The remainder 'drags its slow length along' through a wilderness of extraneous matter and irrelevant description.

The poet first describes the night of the festivity, then follows chapters devoted to the taper, the lamp, the 27 mansions of the moon, and the astrological position of the heavenly constellations at the hour of the "conjunction of the two auspicious planets" of the earth. After this we have a curious series of chapters on the wine, the flaggon, (صراحی) the flask (قرابه) the cup, the cupbearer, the harp, the *Kásrabáb*, the pipe, the tabour, the singers, the festal board, the betel, &c., and the king's crown and throne. Several



similar interviews are described, and in one of them the father takes an opportunity of instilling into his son's ear some salutary counsel as to his future reign, while in the parting visit he is represented as warning him against certain evil counsellors.\* We know from the narrative of Zíá Barní that such was actually the case, but the poet only gives us vague generalities where the historian adds a contemporary edge.

The Sultan returns to his capital in the rainy season, which is described, as each of the other seasons have been, at great length. Then follows a very pleasing and natural chapter of the poet's personal history, the best in the whole book.

He had accompanied the royal expedition and had been an eyewitness of many of the scenes described, but he returns with it only as far as Kantipúr. His immediate patron† had just received a jágír in Oude, and the poet stays behind with him and remains two years there. At last however he wishes to return to his family at Dehlí, and after some time he obtains leave, of which he gladly avails himself. After one month of weary travelling, he reaches the imperial city in the month Zú'l Ka'dah, and he describes his joy at meeting his aged mother and his friends. Two days after the king hears of his arrival and sends for him to court, where he is appointed to an office about the royal person. The king then in a private interview condescends to ask a favour. The poet expresses his astonishment at such condescension, and then the king bids him write in verse the history of the meeting of the two Sultans, "the conjunction of the two auspicious constellations of the time;" that he may divert his mind by its perusal while parted from his father, who of course remains in his quasi independent province of Bengal. From this command the poem itself took its birth. Khusrau tells us that it

دور مپندار فلانرا زپیش خاص مکن آن دگیرا بخویش \*  
در حق این شو بکرم ره نمون واین دگیرا بزمدین ریز خون

† His patron's name is given as

خان جهان حاتم مغلّس نواز

Amir Ali was Khusrau's patron at Dehli after the death of prince Muhammad, and we learn from Ferishta that in the beginning of Jalál-ud-Dín Khilji's reign, Amir Ali was "holding the government of Oude under the new title of Hátim Khán."



occupied him six months, it was finished in the month Ramazan of the year A. H. 688 corresponding to our A. D. 1289. The poet was then in the 37th year of his age and the number of baits in the poem he states to be 3944.

Then follows a description of the king's triumphant entry into his capital, and in the closing chapter the poet expresses himself as weary of making poetry, and declares, that he did not write the poem for the sake of gold but *fame*. "If the king gave me the treasures of Farídún and Jamshíd, they would be a poor payment for one letter, my desire for this highly decorated book is that my name may remain high in its place." The poem then ends with the usual moral reflections on the vanity of wasting life in the composition of verse and devotion to earthly objects.

Nor are these last commonplaces wholly inapplicable. The book is curious, rather for what it professes to be, than for what it *is*; it reminds us too much of what it *misses*, to be really a good poem. We read the simple account in Ferishta's plain prose, and we feel that the poet would have shewn a truer knowledge of his craft, had he kept closer to the actual facts as they occurred; and, little as he *has* deviated from them, every deviation is a positive blemish in his work. We miss too in the poem the evil genius of the true history, the treacherous vizier Nizám-ud-Dín, whose secret machinations had produced the lamentable rupture from the first. The poet's moral cowardice could only venture to disguise this power "behind the throne," and his characters act without sufficient motives in his pages; he dared not depict the arch villain\* of the court, for the vizier had returned to Dehlí in unbroken influence with the king. It was he who had endeavoured, by every means, to exasperate the parties into an open rupture, and to stop every attempt at pacific negotiations; and when Baghrá Khán had appealed too strongly to his son's unhardened heart to be wholly unheard, the vizier had endeavoured to frustrate all the good effects of the interview. He had drawn a line

\* The only allusion to him in the poem is perhaps in certain secret instructions and counsels of state which are two or three times mentioned in the interviews between Kai Kobád and Násir-ud-Dín. Zíá Barní gives long secret dialogues between the king and his father, where the latter warns his son against the minister's treachery.



of humiliating ceremonies round the king to chill the paternal heart from the approach. "To all these the prince submitted; until after repeated obeisances he found the king remaining unmoved on his throne, when, shocked by this unnatural behaviour, he burst into tears. This sight overpowered all the king's resolutions; he leaped from his throne and ran to throw himself at his father's feet; and the father hastening to prevent him, he fell on his neck and they remained for some minutes weeping in each other's arms, while the whole court was almost as much affected as themselves." One feels that there is nothing in Mír Khusrau's *poem* one half so truly pathetic as this plain prose; it is one of those touches of nature which make the whole world kin, but which Mír Khusrau completely overshoots in his endeavours to be original and sublime.

There is only one observation more, and that relates to the final issue of the *dramatis personæ*. We read that the poet wrote for the king in the year 688, but in that very year\* the king murdered the vizier who had been such an evil guide for his youth. Cowed by that superior will, he dared not openly to assume his authority, and he could only turn to the poison bowl to rid him of the too powerful servant. But his own hands were too enervated to seize the reins which the dying minister dropped; the whole empire relapsed into confusion, and the great military chiefs openly contended for the falling fragments. The dissolute young king found himself utterly powerless in the midst of the confusion which he had evoked, and he was soon assassinated in Kilú Khari, the scene of so many of his revelries; and one of these Turkish chiefs, Jelál-ud-Dín Khilji, mounted the vacant throne. A party in the court endeavoured to secure the crown for the little child Kaiomars whom we watched on his baby mission to his grandfather in Bengal; he was then an infant in arms, and he is even now only three years of age; but the attempt fails, and Khilji's first exercise of power is to sweep the poor child for ever out of his path. Baghrá Khán retained Bengal through *these* confusions as through the last, and thirty-six years after, we still find him there, as Ghaias-ud-Dín, the founder of the Toghlaq dynasty, confirms him in his government.

\* Ferishta gives 687 as the last year of his reign, but this must be wrong.

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