

"Isfahan built with the horns of wild animals. This valiant king was poisoned for reasons which cannot be ascertained, having for 15 years ruled the kingdom with very good fortune. His son, named Tahmasp, but afterwards called 'Shah' Tahmasp¹ because 'Shah' means 'king', father of the present king, succeeded to the kingdom at the age of 10,² and reigned over it 50 years. He warred with Sulaiman, notwithstanding that he would never come to a pitched battle, as a result of the experience which his father had of the (effect of) artillery. He lost Tabriz, a chief city of that empire, and won it back again. He made peace with the Turk, and promised never to break out in war against him (as, indeed, he acted accordingly), and in the terms among other things it was decided, and moreover put into effect, that the fortress of Kars should be razed to the ground, and that for 8 miles on either side the land should be devastated, so that there could never arise quarrels between the bordering people. Neither of them would ever take up arms against the other, but, rather, in time of need they promised to succour one another.

"After the peace Shah Tahmasp, desirous of repairing the harm done (by it?) and his lost reputation by some distinguished enterprise, made war on a Georgian prince, hostile both to him and to the Turks, and vanquished him easily, having found him unprepared from having rather thought of anything else being likely to happen than the king of Persia should go to war with him in the winter season when all around was snow. And, in addition to the sacking, and to the booty which he captured, he carried off 30,000 souls, men and women between the ages of 15 and 30 years.³ Of this Georgian king there were 14 children, all scattered in various towns of the kingdom, and, when they learnt of the loss of their father, and of the royal capital, each of them made himself king of the town in which he was, and so the kingdom remained divided into 14 parts. One of these brothers is Simon,⁴ and that one who last year was in the power of the king of Persia and promised the latter to overrun the countryside, and to let nothing go to the army of the enemy; and, so that he might be believed, he embraced Muhammadanism, as I wrote to Your Highness. He is a man very greatly esteemed, so greatly that some people hold that it is sufficient to put the enemy in the greatest predicament, if he be on the side of the king. These Georgians are excellent soldiers, and on account of their being very expert at it, they care for nothing else save cavalry work. . . . Their chief centre is now at Tiflis, which pays tribute to the kingdom of Persia. After the expedition mentioned above Shah Tahmasp turned to the kingdom of Gilan, which he captured together with its king, called Khan Ahmad [*? sic*] who was sent by him a captive to the fortress of Fars."

A

". . . Besides this present king" (i.e. Tahmasp I) "who was the first-born, Isma'il had three other sons, i.e. Ilyas⁵ Mirza, Sām Mirza and Bahram Mirza. Ilyas was a man of great valour and great energy, and, during the time when he was on good terms with the king his brother, captured — king of Shirwan and his towns and lands. That country is very extensive and important, and it is on the shores of the Caspian Sea. It fell entirely into the hands of the king, his brother" (i.e. Shah Tahmasp) "and the latter having made no show of gratitude towards him" (Ilyas Mirza) "for the acquisition of so many lands, this led to him (Ilyas Mirza) becoming his enemy and joining the Ottomans, and causing Sultan Sulaiman with a very large force to attack his brother and take from him many

¹ Here spelt "Satamas."

² Krusinski's memoirs say: 18 years—wrongly, for with this account B agrees E. G. Browne's *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Cambridge University Library*, 1906, which says: 10 years, 6 months, 28 days, on the day following Ismail I's death, 23.5.1524.

³ Shah 'Abbas I in forcibly transplanting some fifty years later the Armenians was not then the first to use these cruel measures against the Christian races of the trans-Caucasus.

⁴ Was this the same "Simeon," "King of Karthveli and Iberia," who sent a messenger with a letter to Pope Clement VIII in 1598, see the footnote to p. 63. Here the reference is to 1578.

⁵ More likely than the spelling Ilkhas of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed.