

- “(b) the province of *Kandahar*, which marches with the Mogul’s dominions and country
 “of the Afghans (the first to conquer Persia, who later submitted to Quli Khan),
 “obeys Ahmad Shah, a monarch of their own race, just as
- “(c) the Uzbek Tatars have recovered their freedom and are living under an independent
 “chief,
- “(d) the province of Lar, which extends from Kirman to Bandar ’Abbas is ruled by a
 “certain Zakharia Khan, one of the rivals of Karim Khan,
- “(e) the countries of Sind, Hurmuz, Masqat, Georgia, Baluchistan and various other
 “provinces have their own particular independent princes,
- “(f) all the towns and ports of the Persian Gulf, beginning from the borders of India
 “up to Basra—with the exception of *Bushire*—have each their independent Arab
 “chief, the principal of whom is a certain Mir Muhanna who has made himself,
 “and is considered, very famous because of his piracies at sea, and raids on land
 “up to the gates of Shiraz.

“Besides all these persons, in the very part of the country ruled by and dependent on
 “Karim Khan there are to be found many other small chieftains and despots, who con-
 “stantly infest the roads and plunder caravans without the least apprehension because of
 “the inaccessible places in the mountains which they inhabit.

“So your Eminence will see now how much still remains before it can be asserted truthfully
 “that Persia has regained its former tranquillity and splendour.

“As to the political rule of Karim Khan it should not be imagined that he is *solely*
 “favourable to Jews, Zoroastrians and to Muhammadans of any nationality and sect, his
 “main object being to seek every means to repopulate Persia, which has been rendered
 “little short of deserted of people, at least in those parts which he possesses: and in truth,
 “although up till now he has been unable to induce the Christians emigrated (taught too
 “much by the past) to do so, the Persians have not failed to return in large numbers,
 “especially those who had taken refuge in Baghdad and Basra, in order to be able to *have*,
 “as previously, *free exercise of their religion according to the sect of ’Ali, which was not permitted*
 “them in the dominions of the Grand Signor where those tenets called ‘Sunni’ are professed.

“Since Karim Khan is not of the royal blood, but of low birth and from a race¹ which
 “is considered one of the most ignoble in Persia, so far he has not dared to assume the
 “title of ‘king’, foreseeing very well that, if he were to do so, he would very greatly alienate
 “from their allegiance to him the fickle minds of the Persians, who would call him a usurper.
 “For that reason up till now he has only assumed that of ‘Wakil’, which means ‘representa-
 “tive’ and with us would be equivalent to ‘regent’. Notwithstanding this real or feigned
 “moderation of his, he has been a number of times in danger of assassination² by his
 “principal officials themselves, many of whom he was compelled to put to death, or to
 “blind—among them his own nephew—of whose arm and valour he had made use till
 “then to gain the victories he has done. It is only a few months since Karim Khan was
 “seriously ill with an abscess in the inside of the throat, caused, it is said, by his habit of
 “using opium to excess. What however more displeases his Persian partisans is that this
 “prince is given to consume too much wine, which often makes him choleric and cruel:
 “and woe to whoever treads on his corns when his head is heated with it: to cut off noses
 “and ears, put out eyes—that is a mere nothing. One sort of execution never hitherto
 “seen in Persia, and perhaps less painful but which causes greater terror, is that he has
 “brought into use, i.e. of putting the condemned person, well pinioned, at the mouth of
 “a mortar (or bomb), and by means of gunpowder blowing him to pieces in the air.

“For about two years past this prince has been expected here with his army, but he was
 “detained in other parts, both on account of the rebellion of his own brother, Zaki Khan,³
 “as also by the illness mentioned above, which caused fears for his life: and were he to

¹ i.e. he was a Kurd of the small Zand tribal fraction.

² His associate ’Ali Mardan Khan Bakhtiari, his rival Hasan Khan Qajar, perished in that way.

³ Which must therefore be dated 1763-4.